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Coventry & Warwickshire

ISSUE 476 SEPTEMBER 2026

What's On

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inside:

FEELGOOD FACTOR

the amazing story of Wilko Johnson told live on stage



BEVERLEY KNIGHT

chats about her starring role in award-winning musical Sylvia



A PLACE IN THE SUN

live version of Channel Four's hit show returns to the NEC



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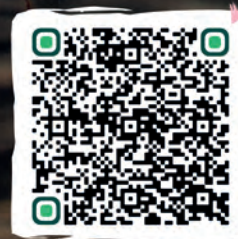


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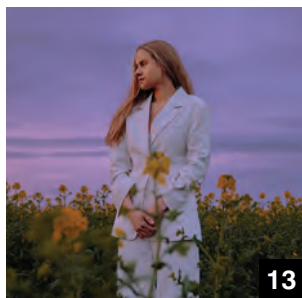
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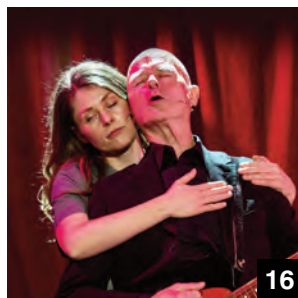
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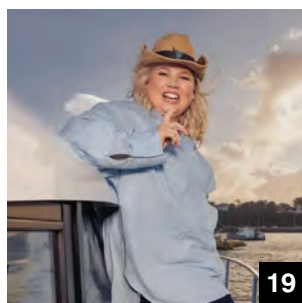
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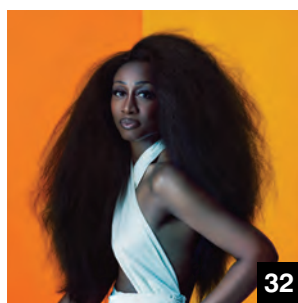
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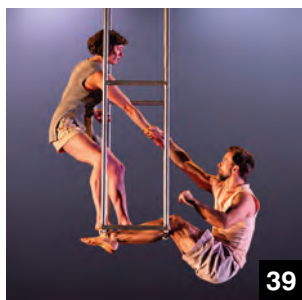
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What's On

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New exhibition celebrates Coventry Then & Now...

Coventry's LTB Priory Undercrofts venue is hosting an exhibition of photographs and film in the middle of the month (Friday 11 - Saturday 19 September).

Coventry Then & Now features photos from the archive of visual artist Elizabeth Tyler, who studied in the city during the 1960s. The exhibition also includes a selection of recent images of Coventry, submitted by the Jaguar Photographic Club, and a special screening of Barnard Rayner's never-before-shown cine film documenting the construction of Coventry Cathedral in the late 1950s. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit heritageopendays.org.uk

Reaching new heights at Worcester Cathedral

Worcester Cathedral is running a series of expert-led architecture, archaeology and graffiti tours this autumn.

The Reaching New Heights tours will afford visitors the chance to explore the cathedral's stonework and find out more about the people who built it.

For further information and to purchase tickets, visit worcestercathedral.org.uk



TV roles for BOA alumni

The BOA Group is celebrating another alumni success after two former students secured roles in the highly anticipated historical television drama, *The Cadburys*.

Former BOA Stage & Screen Production Academy student Maisie Britton and former BOA Creative, Digital & Performing Arts Academy student Leah Swain-Heath have both been cast in the upcoming six-part drama, which tells the story of brothers Richard and George Cadbury as they build one of Britain's most iconic chocolate empires in 1860s Birmingham.

New stage version of *The King's Speech* set to tour

A new stage adaptation of Oscar-winning film *The King's Speech* will make two West Midlands stop-offs early next year as part of a spring tour. The production visits Coventry's Belgrade Theatre from Tuesday 19 to Saturday 23 January and then shows at the Wolverhampton Grand from Tuesday 20 to

Saturday 24 April.

To find out more and purchase tickets, visit the website of the relevant theatre.

Explore the Philippines with Sir Michael Palin...

Monty Python comedy legend and long-time television globetrotter Sir Michael Palin visits Coventry's Warwick Arts Centre next month (Friday 16 October) as part of an autumn tour. Sir Michael's latest show accompanies his Channel Five travel-documentary series *Michael Palin In The Philippines* and sees him 'taking audiences behind the scenes of his remarkable journey'. To find out more and purchase tickets, head to the venue's website at warwickartscentre.co.uk

Acclaimed Swiss cellist to join Katherine Jenkins

Much-loved Welsh singer Katherine Jenkins is performing in Birmingham next month - and she will be joined for the occasion by Swiss cellist and online sensation Jodok Cello.

Jodok, who often performs bare-footed, will appear with Katherine - as part of her 25th-anniversary tour - at the city's Symphony Hall venue on Monday 12 October.

To find out more and purchase tickets, head to the website at bmusic.co.uk



Festival Of Light returning to Black Country museum

The Black Country Living Museum will come alive with the vibrant sights, sounds and spirit of Diwali later in the autumn.

The Dudley venue's Festival Of Light takes place on Saturday 7 November and comes complete with a lantern procession, hands-on workshops and activities, and the chance to sample some authentic cuisine.

For more information and to book tickets, visit the museum's website at bclm.com



Arthurian fantasy comes to the Bear Pit Theatre

A new Arthurian fantasy - telling the story of the sorceress Morgan Le Fay - will be performed at the Bear Pit Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon next month.

Mist Over Avalon stars Susannah Foy, who last year enjoyed a major success at the venue with her one-woman show about Frankenstein author Mary Shelley... The Lanternfish Theatre Company production shows at the venue on Friday 16 & Saturday 17 October.

To find out more and purchase tickets, visit the theatre's website at thebearpit.org.uk



Jennifer Ellison to star in Mean Girls

West End favourite and familiar television face Jennifer Ellison will play the roles of Ms Heron, Mrs George and Ms Norbury when hit stage musical Mean Girls visits Birmingham this festive season.

The production shows at city-centre theatre The Alexandra from Monday 14 December to Saturday 2 January. For further information and to purchase tickets, visit atgtickets.com



Veteran rockers to tour greatest hits

Veteran rock stars 10cc are heading to two local venues as part of their And Another Bloody Greatest Hits Tour.

The band will stop off at Stoke-on-Trent's Victoria Hall on Friday 26 February and then visit Coventry's Butterworth Hall on Wednesday 17 March. To find out more and book tickets, visit ticketline.co.uk

La Voix back on the road in 2027

Cabaret favourite La Voix is heading back to the Midlands next spring, bringing 'her most spectacular live theatre tour yet' to the Wolverhampton Grand on Friday 2 April... For more information and to book tickets, visit grandtheatre.co.uk



Join the congregation with Fatt Butcher in Coventry

Much-loved cabaret artist Fatt Butcher is heading for Coventry's Warwick Arts Centre later in the autumn with a brand-new avante-garde musical... Featuring a live choir of professional

queer vocalists, Congregational shows at the venue on Friday 27 & Saturday 28 November. For further information and to purchase tickets, visit the website at warwickartscentre.co.uk

Dr Who comes to Coventry

West Midlands-based Doctor Who fans should head for Coventry's Albany Theatre at the end of next month, to enjoy a special event celebrating 63 years of everybody's favourite Time Lord. Taking place from Friday 30 October to Sunday 1 November, Pandorica is being publicised as 'an action-packed weekend of stage entertainment, plus your opportunity to meet legends'. Doctor Who actors in attendance include Sylvester McCoy - who played the Doctor himself back in the 1980s - Peter Purves, Frazer Hines and Katy Manning. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit albanytheatre.co.uk

Wolverhampton Art Gallery to host major exhibition by Permindar Kaur

Wolverhampton Art Gallery is to host a major exhibition by British artist Permindar Kaur across the autumn, winter and early spring.

Permindar's largest show of new work to date, Dread

Naught features newly commissioned, 'monumental' figures formed from copper. Sculptural work from the early part of her career, in the 1990s, is also included.

The exhibition shows at the gallery from Saturday 24 October to Sunday 11 April. To find out more, visit wolverhamptonart.org.uk



Fascinating Aida bringing their new show to Coventry's Belgrade in 2027

Veteran UK cabaret troupe Fascinating Aida are heading to the Coventry Belgrade Theatre in the new year with a brand-new show. Dillie, Liza and Adèle will be stopping off at the venue on Wednesday 27 January. To find out more and purchase tickets, visit belgrade.co.uk



Prizes up for grabs at Gladiators final weekend

The Gladiators Experience - an event based on the hit TV series and which ran at Birmingham's NEC until the end of August - is making a return for The Final Whistle Weekend on Saturday 5 & Sunday 6 September.

The event will not only give visitors the chance to step into the world of Gladiators through a series of adrenaline-fuelled challenges inspired by the television show, but also to compete for £3,000 in cash prizes... To find out more and purchase tickets, visit gladiators-experience.co.uk

CBSO launches concert series for new audiences

The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra's Just Listen initiative - a concert series for new audiences - gets under way late this month with an event dedicated to Sir Edward Elgar's best-known composition, The Enigma Variations (Tuesday 29 September).

A second entry in the series - featuring Beethoven's Eroica - takes place in the new year, on Tuesday 16 February.

Schubert's unfinished Eighth Symphony and the suite from Strauss' Der Rosenkavalier are the subject of a third and final concert on Wednesday 28 April. To find out more and purchase tickets, visit cbso.co.uk/first-listen

A festive favourite at the Bridge House Theatre

The ever-popular Dyad Productions will be bringing a Bah! Humbug! attitude to Warwick's Bridge House Theatre later in the autumn, when they present a one-man stage adaptation of Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol (Saturday 28 November). To find out more about the show and purchase tickets, visit the website at bridgehousetheatre.co.uk



Plein Air event returns to Compton Verney mid-month

Compton Verney in Warwickshire is once again holding its Plein Air event this month. Taking place on Sunday 13 September, the day sees artists setting themselves up in the venue's grounds and spending a few hours

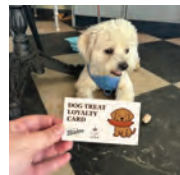
producing a work of art.

At the end of the day, the artworks will be displayed in a pop-up exhibition.

To find out more about the get-together, visit the website at comptonverney.org.uk

Venues set tails wagging with dog loyalty cards

Two of Coventry's best-loved dog-walking destinations are hoping to set tails wagging after launching a rewards scheme for four-legged visitors.



Cafe In The Park at Coombe Abbey Park and The Park Bistro at the War Memorial Park have unveiled a dog loyalty card to reward the hundreds of canine companions who visit the popular establishments each week. The new scheme invites owners to collect a stamp each time they buy their dog a Lincolnshire sausage, with the eighth treat being free after seven visits. Points can be collected at either location.

A flurry of fresh snow at the Birmingham Rep...

A brand-new staging of The Snowman will show at Birmingham Repertory Theatre next month (Tuesday 20 October - Sunday 1 November).



Based on the much-loved book by Raymond Briggs, which was made into a classic animated film in the early 1980s, the production features Howard Blake's iconic score - including the Christmas classic

Walking In The Air. To find out more and purchase tickets, visit birmingham-rep.co.uk

Local theatre favourites host 'taster session'

Worcester-based theatricals Vamos are hosting a special taster session at the city's Swan Theatre on Monday 14 September. The get-together is for anybody who's interested in joining their free-to-attend four-day training residency in mask and physical theatre, taking place in October. To find out more and secure your place, visit the website at worcestertheatres.co.uk



Stratford's film festival returns for a seventh year

Stratford-upon-Avon's Big Picture Film Festival returns for a seventh year this month (Thursday the 3rd to Sunday the 6th), taking the theme Popcorn & Perspectives. For full programme details and booking information, visit liveandlocal.org.uk

LEGEND | PIANIST | BEETHOVEN



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with **Martha Argerich**
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FAMILY FUN | MUSIC | LAUGHTER



Blippi: Be Like Blippi
06.09 | Town Hall

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10.09 | Town Hall

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12.09 | Town Hall



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Grimethorpe Colliery Band
13.09 | Symphony Hall

FILM | Q&A | ABSURDITY



John Cleese and the Holy Grail
20.09 | Town Hall

POWERFUL | EMOTIVE | SINGER



Freya Ridings
22.09 | Town Hall

COMEDY | LIVE ILLUSTRATION | INGENIOUS



Henry Paker: Pencil Case
23.09 | Town Hall

INTIMATE | TIMELESS | SOUL



Ashley Allen & Friends celebrate 50
years of Stevie Wonder's Songs in the
Key of Life 30.09 | JBPS | Symphony Hall

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Festive Gift Fair turns 30

The ever-popular Festive Gift Fair returns to Birmingham's NEC later in the autumn. An annual tradition that kicks off Christmas for thousands of shoppers, the event is now in its 30th year and takes place from Thursday 19 to Sunday 22 November. For more information and to book tickets, visit the show's website: festivegiftfair.co.uk

Open call launched for new jewellery biennial

Organisers have launched an open call for the inaugural Birmingham Jewellery Biennial, taking place next May at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery.



The open call offers jewellery practitioners from across the UK the chance to exhibit alongside internationally recognised names and win thousands of pounds... For further details, including how to apply, head to birminghamjewellerybiennial.com/open-call

Elgar at the asylum...

Edward Elgar's early career as a young composer - when he was commissioned to write music for patients at the Worcester County Pauper & Lunatic Asylum - is being celebrated with a promenade performance that will move between multiple spaces at Malvern Theatres. Created by people with learning disabilities, Elgar At The Asylum takes place three times on each of two days: Saturday 26 & Sunday 27 September. To find out more and purchase tickets, visit the website at malvern-theatres.co.uk

Jeezus! Camp musical comedy to visit the region

Smash-hit Edinburgh Fringe show Jeezus! is coming to Birmingham Hippodrome. Performed by award-winning



migrant-led company Alpaqa, the camp musical comedy - telling a story in which 'Catholic guilt collides with unrepentant queerness' - runs at the venue from Wednesday 21 to Saturday 24 October. For further information and to purchase tickets, visit birminghamhippodrome.com

Celebrity Traitor Celia at Stratford Literary Festival

Actor and Celebrity Traitor Celia Imrie will appear at this autumn's Stratford Literary Festival, which takes place in the town from Thursday 29 October to Sunday 1 November. Celia will be sharing stories from her new memoir, *The Elegant Hustler: My Life In Adventures*.

Other well-known festival contributors include Radio Four Rewinder presenter Greg James, Haircut 100 star Nick Heyward, former One Show presenter Matt Baker, comedian Lucy Porter, Queen of Shops Mary Portas, broadcaster Dr Xand van Tulleken and theatre director Sir Nicholas Hytner. For the full Festival line-up, and to find out what's happening where and when, visit the event's official website at stratlitfest.co.uk



A Roaring Boy: new play to show in Worcester

Midlands theatre company Lost Cause is taking new play *A Roaring Boy* to two local venues in November (Hereford's Courtyard on Wednesday the 4th and Worcester's Swan Theatre on Thursday the 5th).

The production explores the issue of gender identity, as experienced by a young male actor in Shakespeare's theatre company. To find out more and purchase tickets, visit the website of the relevant venue.

Taste Worcestershire set to return next month

Worcestershire diners can enjoy exclusive discounts, special menus and 'great-value meals' in October when Taste Worcestershire returns for its annual celebration of the county's flourishing food & drink sector. For more information, head online to the visitworcestershire.org website.

Christmas by candlelight at Coventry Cathedral

Coventry Cathedral will host a Christmas By Candlelight event on Friday 11 December. Featuring a cast of West End singers and a live band, the concert will feature a selection of much-loved seasonal singalong classics, including *Santa Baby*, *White Christmas*, *Winter Wonderland*, *Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!* and *O Holy Night*. For further information and to purchase tickets for the event, head to the website at coventrycathedral.org.uk

Comedy festival offers a platform for new talent

Birmingham Comedy Festival once again takes place across the second city next month (Friday 2 to Sunday 11 October). This year's event includes contributions from - among many other talented laughter merchants - Daniel Sloss, Stevie Martin, Laura Smyth, Jason Byrne and Olga Koch. The festival also sees homegrown comedians from across the West Midlands region going head-to-head for the Breaking Talent Award. The event, held at the Glee Club on Friday 2 October, will see Tarik Badwan, Andy Bucks, Naph, Nina Semple and Eden Voss (all pictured below) battle it out for the coveted title... To find out more and purchase tickets, visit the website at bhamcomfest.co.uk



Bunny Galore to star in Aladdin at Malvern

Britain's Got Talent semi-finalist Bunny Galore will this Christmas star as Widow Twankey in Malvern Theatres' pantomime production of *Aladdin*. Coronation Street's Tristan Gemmill has also signed up for the show, with Sev Keoshgerian taking on the title role. *Aladdin* runs at the venue from Thursday 10 December to Sunday 3 January. For more information and to book tickets, visit malvern-theatres.co.uk

BELGRADE



Book now **belgrade.co.uk**

The return of Heritage Open Days...

Heritage Open Days is England's largest festival of history & culture, taking place every September and involving thousands of local volunteers and organisations. Stories are told, traditions explored and histories brought to life. The festival provides members of the general public with the chance to see usually hidden places and try out brand-new experiences. And what's more, it's all absolutely FREE... The event returns this year from Friday 11 to Sunday 20 September - and here are just some of the venues you can explore around the region...

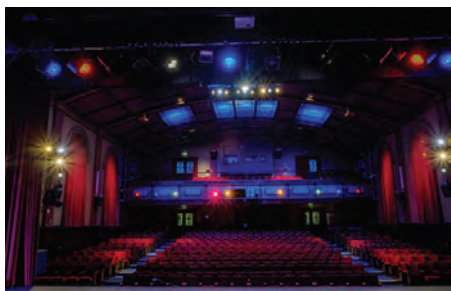
Warwickshire

Albany Theatre Backstage Tours

The Albany Theatre, Albany Road, Coventry, CV5 6JQ

Enjoy exclusive backstage access to The Albany, a 1930s art deco theatre, and discover its fascinating history. Learn about the building's origins as a college lecture hall, its role during World War Two, and its transformation into a much-loved theatre. Tour guide Adam Wood will share notable dates, stories and moments from the venue and surrounding area. The tour lasts around 30 minutes, with tea, coffee and refreshments available to purchase before or after.

Sun 13 & Sat 19 Sept | 10am, 11am and 12pm, pre-booking required



Dame Goodyvers Daye

Broadgate City Centre, Coventry, CV1 1NH

Celebrate Coventry's historic feast day, dating back more than 500 years, with a colourful celebration bringing together the city's diverse communities, cultures and faiths. Enjoy a vibrant musical procession featuring traditional costumes, a giant phoenix, Chinese dragon, Indian elephant, Coventry horse, handmade umbrellas and flags. The celebrations then continue at Priory Gardens, with dancing, music, craft stalls and a community picnic. Led by the official Lady Godiva and her multicultural Godiva Sisters, the event celebrates Coventry's heritage while showcasing the city's diverse modern-day community.

Fri 11 Sept | 10am-11.30am, pre-booking not required

Faces Of The Somme - 110th Anniversary Exhibition & Activities

Pageant House, Jury Street, Warwick, CV34 4EW

Mark the 110th anniversary of the Somme Offensive by visiting this special exhibition exploring the Royal Warwickshire Regiment's experiences during the First World War. Discover personal stories through diaries, photographs, letters, uniforms and other objects, gaining an insight into the lives of soldiers who served on the Somme. Family activities will bring the history to life through real artefacts and creative activities, including those inspired by AA Milne, who served as a signal officer with the regiment and later became famous as the author of Winnie the Pooh.

Fri 11, Sat 12, Tues 15 - Sat 19 Sept | 10am-5pm, pre-booking not required

Hall's Croft: Behind The Scaffold - Everyday Histories, Extraordinary Lives

Halls Croft Museum, Old Town, Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 6BG

Enjoy a rare opportunity to visit and discover the fascinating history of Hall's Croft, the former home of Shakespeare's daughter, Susanna Hall, and her husband, John. Temporarily closed to the general public while a major conservation project is carried out, the Jacobean house will open its doors on designated Heritage Days to showcase the work being undertaken. Visitors can meet the conservation team, enjoy talks, live workshops and tours, and discover traditional 17th-century building techniques. They can also try their hand at Tudor peg house building and peg-cutting workshops, learning how craftspeople have helped preserve the historic home through the centuries.

Sat 12 & Sun 23 Sept | 10am - 4pm, pre-booking preferred



Upton House & Gardens

Upton House, Upton, Banbury, Warwickshire, OX15 6HT

Explore Upton House & Gardens, the former country retreat of Lord & Lady Bearsted, and discover one of the finest private collections of European art assembled in the 20th century. Admire works by artists including Stubbs, Hogarth, Bosch and El Greco, presented alongside an impressive collection of porcelain. Outside, explore the beautifully designed gardens, including terraced planting, the Kitchen Garden and Mirror Pool. During Heritage Open Days, visitors can also enjoy Meet Rembrandt, a guided slow-looking experience. Check for details with visitor reception on arrival.

Sat 12 & Sun 13 Sept | 10am-5pm, pre-booking not required

River Festival Coventry at Charterhouse

National Trust Charterhouse, London Road, Coventry, CV1 2JR

Celebrate the River Sherbourne at this free Charterhouse festival, with a packed programme showcasing local creativity, culture, nature and heritage.

Enjoy theatrical performances, live music, storytelling, guided river walks, crafts and workshops, plus the chance to meet Lady Good-Diver, the Sherbourne Valley Project's mascot. Local nature and heritage organisations will be hosting stalls and activities, and visitors can explore the historic Charterhouse building, including its remarkable medieval and Tudor wall paintings. The on-site café offers food and refreshments if you fancy taking a break.

Sat 19 & Sun 20 Sept | 11am - 4pm, pre-booking preferred



Worcestershire

Forge Mill Needle Museum and Bordesley Abbey Visitor Centre

Forge Mill Needle Museum, Needle Mill Lane, Redditch, B98 8HY

Step into Redditch's industrial and medieval heritage at Forge Mill Needle Museum, home to the only surviving water-powered scouring mill, which has recently been refurbished. Enjoy free entry to the museum and current exhibition, tours of the Needle Museum and nearby Bordesley Abbey ruins, plus family activities and a newly refurbished children's play area. The event will also feature classic Royal Enfield motorbikes and model boats, plus contributions from local artists, wildlife organisations and community groups. Visitors can browse local produce and gifts before enjoying refreshments at the Mill View Coffee Bar.

Sun 13 Sept | 11am-4pm, pre-booking not required



North Malvern Clock Tower - Open Day

North Malvern Water Tower, North Malvern Road, Malvern, WR14 4LX

Discover the historic Clock Tower near Tank Quarry, a striking brick and red terracotta water tower dating from 1901. Featuring a four-faced clock, crenellations and distinctive animal waterspouts, the tower also incorporates an earlier stone commemorating the water tanks built in 1835/36. Nearby, visitors can see Cascade Gates. The contemporary welded-steel artwork, created in 2007 by artist & sculptor Rose Garrard, provides a fascinating contrast between Malvern's heritage and modern art.

Sat 19 Sept | 2pm-3.30pm, pre-booking not required

Pershore Abbey Welcome Festival

Abbey Church of the Holy Cross, Church Walk, Pershore, WR10 1BB

Uncover the fascinating history and architectural beauty of this spectacular Abbey Church, built in the 11th century as part of a Benedictine monastery. Explore its magnificent stained glass, distinctive 'ploughshare' vaulting and impressive Ruffatti pipe organ, installed in 2023. Members of the Abbey community will be on hand to share stories and answer questions, with organ performances taking place throughout the day. Visitors can also join a tower tour, to enjoy stunning views across the surrounding area, before relaxing with tea and cake.

Dogs on leads are welcome.

Sat 19 Sept | 10.30am-4pm, pre-booking not required, book on the day



Royal Worcester Factory Site Walking Tour

Museum of Royal Worcester, Severn Street, Worcester, WR1 2ND

Discover the history of Royal Worcester on a free 30-minute guided walking tour around the original factory site. Along the route, six unique wall-mounted 'hallmarks' combine historic kiln drawings, iconic porcelain transfer prints and archive photographs to tell the story of Worcester's world-famous pottery.

Bring your smartphone to scan the QR codes on each marker and hear immersive audio soundtracks, bringing the sights, sounds and stories of the former pottery to life.

Sat 12, Tues 15 & Thurs 17 Sept | 1.30pm, pre-booking required



The Firs: Elgar's Birthplace

National Trust: The Firs - Elgar's Birthplace, Crown East Lane, Lower Broadheath, WR2 6RH

Visit the birthplace of composer Sir Edward Elgar - a charming cottage surrounded by a traditional cottage garden, orchard and woodland, with views towards the Malvern Hills. Step inside the humble home where Elgar was born, then explore the modern visitor centre, featuring personal belongings, artefacts, photographs, videos and interactive displays telling the story of his life and work. Families can enjoy the outdoor Sound Garden and free-to-play piano, while Little Al's Café serves homemade cakes, brunch and refreshments. There are also plenty of peaceful outdoor spaces to explore.

Fri 11 - Mon 14 Sept | 10am-5pm, pre-booking not required



Worcester News Newspaper Archives

Friary Walk Shopping Centre, 54 Friary Walk, Worcester, Worcestershire, WR1 3LE

Saved from landfill by the Worcester Civic Society, the Worcester News archives offer a fascinating glimpse into the city's past. The collection includes more than a million press cuttings, negatives and photographs, historic glass plate negatives and hundreds of image discs, along with 250 bound volumes of Berrow's Journal - dating from 1801 to the 1990s.

Volunteers are currently cataloguing the collection in a secure room beneath the History & Heritage Pod.

Visitors can join a free guided tour to find out more about this remarkable archive and the stories it preserves.

Mon 14 Sept | 10.15am & 11.15am, pre-booking not required



WHEREFORE ART THOU, RUSSELL?

Comedian Russell Kane is this month making his debut in a Shakespeare play, starring as a middle-aged Romeo...

Much-loved comedian Russell Kane is dipping his toe into fresh waters this month, making his stage debut as Romeo in a modern-day retelling of ‘the world’s greatest love story’ at Newcastle-under-Lyme’s New Vic Theatre. What’s On recently caught up with the host of the hit TV series *Evil Genius* to find out more...

Russell Kane is best known for the quick wit of his stand-up comedy shows, but this autumn he fulfils a long-held ambition - to tread the boards in a Shakespeare play. Russell is starring as Romeo, alongside Natalie Casey as Juliet, in *Not Too Tame* Theatre Company’s new staging of the Bard’s classic love story at the New Vic Theatre in Newcastle-under-Lyme. But it’s a re-telling with a difference, because the couple, who are usually played as bright-eyed teenagers, are instead presented as fortysomethings discovering true love for the first time.

The idea for the show was sparked by a conversation between Russell and Jimmy Fairhurst, *Not Too Tame*’s artistic director.

“I went to see their *Twelfth Night* at Shakespeare North and it was fantastic,” Russell recalls. “I was standing up and clapping at the end; a few of the cast saw me, and that got back to Jimmy. He said ‘You’d make a great Shakespearian actor - meet me for a coffee.’ So I met him for a coffee and he said ‘If you could do anything in Shakespeare, what would you do?’ And I said ‘I won’t do a clown or a comedy part; I would love to do an older Romeo. The tragedy of finding love later on in life would say a lot about where men are, and where we are as a culture.’ Then he texted me and said ‘Let’s do it!’”

Alongside stand-up, Russell has written books, created the podcast and subsequent television show *Evil Genius*, and appeared in numerous television programmes. Now, playing Romeo is a dream come true.

“I’ve always wanted to do Shakespeare. I’ve toured three of my own plays, and two of them were in a sort of mock blank verse, so it’s not as though it’s an alien world to me - but I’ve never had the nerve to do real Shakespeare.

“I love language and the musicality of Shakespeare. I love the wordplay, the rhetorical devices, the use of metaphor, paradox, contrast. I use it in my stand-up. I think Shakespeare is the greatest writer in any language - certainly in English - ever to have lived. Why wouldn’t I want to be part of that tradition?”

Russell hopes an older Romeo gives the story of his fated love with Juliet a new dimension: “Every single person will know men aged 40 who still haven’t grown up, who are still living in the studio flat above the Chinese, still going to Marbella, doing cocaine in the

pub and so on. We all know men who are still boys. Never underestimate the ability of fully grown-up people to act like children and ruin their whole life in an impulsive moment.

“Then there are more people than you realise who will die never having been in love.

And it’s not a good thing to not know true vomiting-in-the-toilet, wanting-to-tear-each-other’s-skin-off love. So to get that Cupid’s arrow through the heart at 40, for the first time and when you have all that wisdom, that raises the stakes. If you finally, after living with your cat and not having had a partner in years, fall in love with someone, and your family say you cannot fall in love with this person, you cannot be with this person - just imagine that.”

Although the production moves the tale to contemporary times and includes a few tweaks to cater for the older characterisations, the story remains true to the original, says Russell: “We haven’t re-written the words, but I’d call it a radical re-staging. Part of the reason I love working with Jimmy Fairhurst is that he loves to play - all of it is up for grabs.

“The people who say they’ve never understood Shakespeare are the ones I’m interested in bringing to Shakespeare for the first time. If you’ve been to see Shakespeare and you were bored, then it wasn’t done properly - end of. When it’s done right, the audience should come out and say ‘It’s a shame they used modern language, I’d like to go and watch one of the originals now.’ That’s what happens with Jimmy’s work all the time: people leave saying ‘*that* was Shakespeare!’”

When he chat, Russell has been on a photo shoot in St Mark’s Church near Newcastle-under-Lyme for the production. And he’s waxing lyrical about the New Vic Theatre - partly because of its in-the-round staging.

“In-the-round is better for Shakespeare and stand-up because you want to feel you’re part of the audience, that you’re connected to them. The other great thing is the front row being on the same level as the performers, so their feet are touching the same surface I’m touching. That is a direct electrical link and changes everything from being up on an eight-foot stage front-on with a proscenium arch - it’s a completely different experience.

“As an audience member, you want that feeling that you’re invisible, watching someone in their bedroom or lounge. This love story plays out and you cannot believe

you have such a voyeuristic view.”

Russell is only too aware that he’s stepping outside his comfort zone with *Romeo And Juliet* - but that is the attraction: “I don’t know if any other British comedian has gone from just generating laughter in the most gut-wrenching way to true naked vulnerability on stage - metaphorically; it remains to be seen whether physically!

“I’ve never kissed another person on stage in my life. I’ve never even held hands with another performer, I don’t think. It’s so far from what I’ve done, and there’s only one way to do it - to actually truthfully fall in love every night when I step into that world, so that it will be raw, real, funny, different and clear as a bell.”

Aware of these challenges, Russell is keen to ensure he brings all his talents to the role: “If you knew the amount of training and processing I’ve done for this play, on top of my schedule. I’ve got the bit you can’t teach at drama school, which is years and years of comfort and being able to connect with an audience when onstage. You can’t learn that at RADA, but the bits I was missing are the bits you *can* learn at RADA! I won’t necessarily use them, but they’re a box ready for an emergency. It’s like if you go on a long drive and pack a first-aid kit and a glittery triangle. You may not need it, but you drive more calmly knowing it’s in the boot.

“I did a workshop about a year and a half ago, when we first started this project, to try and find out what I was weak at. I felt like I was struggling with my listening and reacting, so I’ve done some training that’s helped me really become obsessed with what the other person is saying. My wife has loved this training; I’ve become her best listener!”

And the hard work had an unexpected bonus...

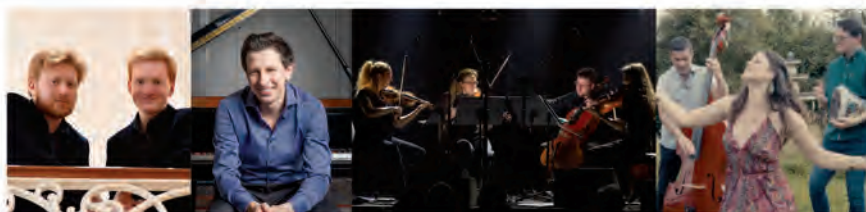
“I’m in the gym 24/7, and my fitness is really high because I wanted my body to be up to the task of these long performances, and as a consequence, I got myself a cover shoot for a health magazine out of it! I was the cover of *Men’s Fitness* in April - that was a giggle.”

.....

Romeo And Juliet shows at the New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, from Thursday 17 September to Saturday 10 October



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Live music from across the region...

Glyders

Just Dropped In, Coventry,
Thurs 17 September

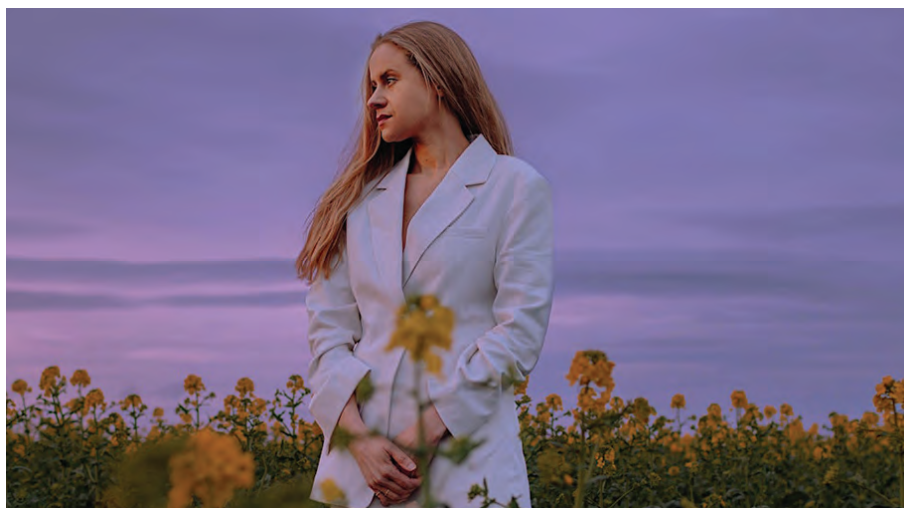
Chicago-based psychedelic rock band Glyders was formed by guitarist/vocalist Joshua Condon and bassist Eliza Weber back in 2014. However, it was the better part of a decade before they released debut album *Maria's Hunt*, a well-received creation widely praised for its vibrant blend of garage-rock and cosmic country-blues. Sophomore offering *Forever* followed last year, and as with its predecessor, found favour with the critics. In recent times, Joshua and Eliza have been joined by drummer Joe Seger, an addition which has seen the high-energy rockers rapidly flourish and evolve. They drop in to Just Dropped In as part of a short tour of the UK and Europe.



Grace Petrie

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry,
Wed 30 September

Long-hailed the folk scene's funniest lesbian, Grace Petrie has spent much of her career writing protest songs. "I sing a lot of shouty songs about politics, and obviously in this current climate, I don't have a lack of things to write about. I'm a socialist, feminist, political singer really, so it's all lefty stuff. I'm a proud queer artist as well, and that's quite a big part of what I write and sing about. It's definitely not for the faint-hearted!"



Anna Pancaldi

Temperance, Leamington Spa, Sun 20 September

A Temperance favourite, Anna Pancaldi makes a Sunday afternoon return to the venue with another selection of her achingly beautiful songs. The London-based singer-songwriter counts Joni Mitchell and Carole King among the artists who have influenced

her musical output, the quality of which has been ably demonstrated by the slew of TV programmes to have featured her songs, among them *Grey's Anatomy*, *Strictly Come Dancing*, *Pretty Little Liars*, *The In Between* (Paramount) and *Love Is Blind* (Netflix).

Marillion

Symphony Hall, Birmingham,
Wed 23 September

They've been going strong for more than 40 years now, and given that they're visiting the second city with a collection of new songs to perform, it's fair to say that Marillion remain in impressively rude health.

One of the UK's most dynamic live bands, the boys maybe don't tour as much as some other groups, but when they do, they're well worth the ticket price.

"If it was practical and made financial sense to play everywhere, we would," they explain. "The spirit is willing. The reality is more complicated... Touring takes us away from writing, recording and our families. We have to remain alive, and sane, so schedules have to be sustainable as well as practical. We're not as young as we used to be..."

Jeffrey Lewis & The Voltage

Marrs Bar, Worcester, Sun 6 September

If scuzzy urban indie-rock-folk is your thing, then the hard-touring Jeffrey Lewis & The Voltage are a definite must-see. Songwriter and comic-book artist Jeffrey has been churning out his critically acclaimed word-dense songs for the better part of 30 years,

releasing his first official album, *The Last Time I Did Acid I Went Insane And Other Favorites*, in 2001. Touring to the four corners of the world across the last quarter-century, he's successfully carved out a pretty unique niche for himself in the modern-day music-industry landscape.

Evanescence

Utilita Arena Birmingham, Fri 11 September

Arkansas-originated two-time Grammy Award winners Evanescence came to prominence back in the early years of the new millennium, grabbing music-industry attention with a fabulous fusion of gothic themes and heavy alternative and symphonic rock. Debut album *Fallen*, nowadays considered a modern classic, propelled them to stardom in double-quick time - although their 'overnight' success had actually been nearly a decade in the making. They're visiting Birmingham in support of their sixth studio album, *Sanctuary*.



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Classical music from across the region...



Focus On Poland Festival Weekend

Royal Pump Rooms, Leamington Spa, Fri 25 - Sun 27 September

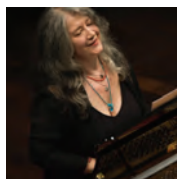
Performances by world-class artists, a new commission from much-admired composer Daria Kwiatkowska, and a programme of activities designed to bring together Polish and local communities through shared cultural experiences, are all on the agenda when Leamington Music hosts its Poland Festival Weekend late in the month.

The concerts across the three days will feature music by several Polish composers, presented alongside works from Mozart, Schumann, Ravel, Franck and Britten. Warsaw-based Royal String Quartet (pictured) will perform at the Royal Pump Rooms on Saturday the 26th.

Munich Philharmonic Orchestra

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Fri 4 September

This early-month concert provides West Midlands-based classical music fans with not one but two rare opportunities: to enjoy a UK performance by Munich Philharmonic Orchestra outside of London, and to delight in the talents of legendary pianist Martha Argerich (pictured), who last performed in Symphony Hall way back in the 1990s.



The long-established orchestra's recently appointed chief conductor, Lahav Shani, takes the baton for a concert which features 19th-century French pianist-composer Louise Farrenc's attention-grabbing second overture and Beethoven's exuberant second piano concerto. Brahms' fourth symphony - complete with its lilting opening movement and much-loved thrilling finale - will bring proceedings to a memorable conclusion.

Coull Quartet

All Saints Church, Leamington Spa, Thurs 17 September

The University of Warwick's quartet-in-residence for 43 years - their tenure came to an end in 2020 - Coull have made a name for themselves in places as far-flung as the Americas, Australia, India and the Far East. This latest performance - an early entry in the 2026/27 Leamington Music season - sees them presenting works by Haydn, Dvořák and Beethoven. The concert will include a special guest appearance by the Rugby-based Ukrainian Shchedryk Choir.



Armonico Consort: Supersize Polyphony 3

Collegiate Church of St Mary, Warwick, Sat 26 September; Great Malvern Priory, Tues 6 October; Coventry Cathedral, Tues 26 January

Armonico Consort turn 25 this year and are ready to party! Concert-goers who've enjoyed the ensemble's previous two Supersize Polyphony performances will no doubt be waiting with bated breath for the next in the series. And why wouldn't they be? After all, what's not to like about an immersive 360-degree surround-sound concert celebrating large-scale 16th- and 17th-century choral music?

Armonico director Christopher Monks is typically effusive about the forthcoming celebration: "For those who have loved the cinema sound-effects of our polychoral performances from Spem in Alium in 40 parts surrounding the audience, you will simply love this! We will be working with special guest choirs around the UK in celebration of our momentous milestone."



Andre Rieu

bp pulse LIVE, Birmingham, Sat 19 September

Often referred to as the King of Waltz, Andre Rieu is a superstar violinist whose album sales have now topped the 40 million mark. Andre is also the creator of the waltz-playing Johann Strauss Orchestra, which he conducts using his violin bow, mimicking the famous characteristics of Strauss himself. His concerts are well known for inspiring audience members to leave their seats and dance in the aisles, an activity which counts as something of a phenomenon at a classical music gig!



FEELGOOD FACTOR

Jonathan Maitland's new play pays tribute
to Dr Feelgood legend Wilko Johnson...



Wilko: Love And Death And Rock 'n' Roll - a brand-new play with live music that tells the miraculous tale of how Dr Feelgood guitarist Wilko Johnson survived a terminal-cancer diagnosis - comes to Coventry this month. Here, its writer, Jonathan Maitland, explains why the incredible story will appeal to a wide audience, not just fans of the legendary Essex rock band...

"It is one of the greatest, if not *the* greatest rock & roll story ever told. If it wasn't real and you invented it, people wouldn't believe you."

Playwright and former journalist Jonathan Maitland is animatedly effusive about the inspiration for his latest play: the truly extraordinary life of Wilko Johnson - guitarist and founder member of legendary 1970s pub rock band (and punk trailblazers) Dr Feelgood.

In 2012, the iconic and bullet-headed star - who also had a recurring role in TV's *Game Of Thrones* - was given the devastating news that he had inoperable cancer and less than 12 months to live. The notoriously grumpy rocker refused all treatment, deciding instead to spend time with friends, make a final album (with The Who's Roger Daltrey) and play a farewell concert tour. It proved an unlikely new lease of life for the perennial curmudgeon, according to Maitland.

"When he got the diagnosis, he was on the verge of giving up rock & roll - he'd had enough of travelling to gigs and playing to audiences of five, 10, 15 people," he says, noting that the diagnosis not only rejuvenated Wilko but changed his typically antagonistic, downbeat demeanour.

"The way he dealt with his illness and the way he just said [adopts note-for-note Canvey Island accent] 'I'm not taking any chemotherapy. I'm gonna die, and it's made me a new person - I love life. It's incredible. I'm tingling all over.' It was amazing. There's footage on YouTube of him saying, 'I'm alive. I feel alive.' He wasn't faking it."

And then a miracle happened. At his farewell gig at KOKO in Camden, which included a poignant singalong encore of *Bye Bye Johnny* - Wilko's real name was John Wilkinson - a cancer doctor and amateur photographer called Charlie Chan (yes, really) told Wilko 'for a man who's about to die, you look surprisingly well' and convinced him to get a second opinion.

Charlie introduced him to a French surgeon called Emmanuel Huguet, who determined he had a cancerous tumour but not actual cancer. Without treatment it would kill him, but it could be removed... which it was, during a risky 12-hour operation at Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge. Wilko went on to live another decade, eventually passing away in 2022, aged 75.

The extraordinary tale of his (mis)diagnosis, acceptance of his fate, new-found love of life and miraculous survival are now the subject

of Maitland's latest play, *Wilko: Love And Death And Rock 'n' Roll*.

The writer has penned a number of dramas based on real-life people and events - subjects have included Margaret Thatcher, Lady Diana, Boris Johnson and Jimmy Savile - but this one evidently means more, given his lifelong admiration of the subject.

"I've always been a massive, massive fan of Wilko, primarily because of the music he made with Dr Feelgood, but also afterwards because he was so exciting and so funny and so mesmeric and brilliant. You listen to the music and it just sends 50,000 volts of electricity through you."

Not that he ever intended to write a play about the man, he admits: "There was always something extraordinary about him, but I didn't think there was a play there. You can't just write a play about somebody you like. I love the Electric Light Orchestra, and Jeff Lynne is wonderful, but he's probably the most boring man in the world."

That said, Jonathan had been trying and failing to develop a play involving a musician who faked his own death in order to become famous.

"The best thing you can do for your career if you're a rock star is die like all those kids who died at 27 - Jim Morrison, Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, Kurt Cobain... the 'Stupid Club', as Cobain's mother called them. I didn't get very far with it, but I thought, what a great story; this rock star goes missing, he goes to number one, and then they find out he's still alive. When Wilko got ill, I thought, my god, it's happened for real - these two things have come together! One of, if not my favourite rock star, has done my idea for real - not pretending but basically being given 12 months to live! In the process, he does a sell-out tour, his album goes to number one and he becomes a national treasure all over again."

Jonathan instantly got to work bringing the two threads together, even contacting Wilko to get his blessing, something the English Literature graduate and self-professed 'man of letters' was delighted about.

"He understood theatre and loved it. He used to take his son, Simon, to see Shakespeare, so I think he was quite honoured that somebody who could write plays wanted to make a play about him. I said 'I'm going to have to take a bit of a dramatic licence' and he said [adopts accent again] 'Well, it's a play, right, just f*cking make it up.'"

Once he had a first draft, Jonathan visited

Wilko to get his opinion and instantly found himself being corrected on an all-important element. Having been read a stage direction saying 'Wilko sniffs a line of coke', the guitarist jumped in: 'No, no, stop - it's not coke, it's speed.'

"He then tells this story about how he and Lemmy from Motorhead used to stay awake all week on speed," recalls Jonathan. "He said day three was the best 'because it's like someone's taken off the top of your head, poured in Rice Krispies and then milk on top - snap, crackle and pop inside your brain'."

"It's such a great line - I put it in the play and it gets a massive laugh every night."

There are plenty of laughs in the show, of course, but there's angst, tragedy and heartbreak too. Wilko was effectively kicked out of his own band (they had their biggest chart hits less than a year later, as singer Lee Brilleaux was quick to remind him), his wife died of cancer in 2004, and sadly he never got to see the play performed before he passed.

It all adds up to a drama that Jonathan believes has a life way beyond lovers of Dr Feelgood - something demonstrated by the show's sold-out runs in London: "The reason the play's been a success and has made people laugh and cry is because it's imbued with Wilko's spirit and his words. A lot of the best gags in it are his gags - I just fashioned a narrative and scenes around it."

The mixture of drama, quotes from the man himself and live music - including a number of Dr Feelgood hits as well as cover versions such as *Route 66* - make for a suitably emotional but ultimately uplifting journey of redemption that also draws comparisons with a certain well-known festive tale.

"It's a real-life Christmas Carol but with cancer and guitars," laughs Jonathan.

"[Wilko] is Scrooge, gets cancer, sees his death, sees his demons and thinks 'Oh my God, I've been appalling.' After his death sentence, he became a better person. Or, as he put it: 'less of an arsehole.'"

.....

Wilko: Love And Death And Rock 'n' Roll shows at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, from Monday 7 to Wednesday 9 September; Malvern Theatres, Tuesday 22 to Saturday 26 September; and Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Thursday 22 to Saturday 24 October

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Comedy previews from across the region...

Lucy Beaumont

Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Fri 25 September; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Thurs 8 October

No less a comedian than the highly praised Arthur Smith once described Lucy Beaumont as 'the next Victoria Wood in the making'. Others have called her 'a riot' and praised her 'devastating comic timing'. For Lucy's part, though, she's just grateful that performing no longer feels like an out-of-body experience.

"I started out acting but quickly realised I needed to try something else," says the Hull-born comedian, who was diagnosed with ADHD a couple of years back. "I've had all sorts of humorous things happen to me in my life, so I thought it made sense to see how I'd do at being funny."

Lucy visits the region this month and next with new stand-up offering Bad At Quiz Shows, Good With Weirdos.



Maisie Adam

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Mon 28 September; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 9 October; Birmingham Town Hall, Thurs 5 November; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Fri 26 February; Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Thurs 4 March; Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Fri 12 March

Quirky. Effervescent. A female Peter Kay. Descriptions of Maisie Adam abound - a sure

sign that she's serving up a brand of comedy that critics are keen to talk about.

Widely considered to be one of the brightest stars in the UK comedy firmament, Yorkshire-born Maisie has become a familiar face on television screens, appearing in everything from Live At The Apollo to her very own comedy special on Sky... She's out on tour this autumn and winter with her latest stand-up show, Whatsherface.

Jen Brister

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Wed 23 September

As she attempted to establish herself on the circuit back in the early noughties, Jen Brister received a much-needed boost from a comedy legend.

The occasion was the BBC New Act semi-finals in Brighton; the legend in question, Spike Milligan, who was one of the judges. Although Jen didn't get through to the final, she did find out from the show's producer that Spike had voted for her. "He'd also remarked that I had 'a great pair of Bristols,'" she recalls. "So clearly he had great taste in comedy and, er, tits!"



Kane Brown

The Core Theatre, Solihull, Wed 23 September; Civic 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 much-loved 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.



Urzila Carson

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Sat 26 September

South African-born New Zealand comic & actress Urzila Carson's career in comedy is certainly going from strength to strength, not least thanks to her deadpan delivery of delightfully self-deprecating material. Last year making a splash in hit Netflix rom-com Kinda Pregnant, she's visiting the West Midlands region with latest stand-up offering Fatty On A Yacht. Urzila describes the show as being "for anyone who's ever tried to squeeze into a space - physical or social - and thought 'This can't be right.'"



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What's On

Comedy previews from across the region...

Tez Ilyas

The Glee Club, Birmingham, Wed 2 September; Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Sat 26 September; The Old Rep, Birmingham, Wed 11 November; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sun 22 November

Silly, smart and subversive humour is the name of Tez Ilyas' comedy game. And as the rapid growth of his fanbase ably illustrates, he's extremely good at what he does.

Tez's political stand-up has been likened to candyfloss with a razorblade hidden inside, while his television work has brought him to the attention of a whole new audience. The fact that he's been able to hit the right notes with so many people comes as no surprise to Tez himself: "It doesn't matter what walk of life we're from, I think we're all united by the British sense of humour. "Whatever creed, colour, sexual orientation or gender type we are, we have a connection based around a mutual appreciation of that sort of comedy."

Fin Taylor

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Wed 9 September; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Sat 19 September; Birmingham Town Hall, Thurs 26 November

Fin Taylor has got some way to go before he becomes a real household name, but he's certainly heading in the right direction.

A comedian who doesn't shy away from engaging with provocative issues, he's stopping off at three West Midlands venues this autumn as part of his biggest-ever tour.



Matt Winning

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, Sat 19 September

Acclaimed climate scientist Matt Winning may not find much to smile about in the day job, but that hasn't stopped him looking for laughs with his stand-up offering and Edinburgh Fringe hit, Solastalgia.

"From karaoke with a bunch of bankers, to petrol-station bathrooms and the United Nations," explains the publicity for Matt's show, "Solastalgia is an epic story about fatherhood, finance and facing the future, together."



Gary Pownland

The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton, Sat 26 September

"Life was tough growing up," says Gary Pownland, the alter-ego of Wolverhampton laughter merchant Jack Kirwan. "My mom and dad popped out for a loaf when I was younger, which is quite an ordinary thing. But I realised as they were leaving that they were carrying suitcases. Straight away I

thought to myself, 'How much bread do they think we can eat?'"

Jack is very much enjoying his creation Gary's time in the spotlight, but his own career in comedy hasn't always been plain sailing. "I've done my share of driving up to Newcastle for a 20 quid gig, getting back at 1am and needing to be up for work at five," says Jack. "And then there was the time I played Edinburgh and basically died on my arse every night for a month!"

Barry From Watford

Walsall Arena, Sat 26 September; The Glee Club, Birmingham, Thurs 1 October

'Fierce one-liners, biting satire, plus some effing and that sort of thing for the teens' all feature on the menu when Barry From Watford visits the Midlands with his latest stand-up show, Shooting From The New Hip. The critically acclaimed creation of actor, comedian & voice artist Alex Lowe, Barry is a swearsy nonagenarian who first came to the wider public's attention courtesy of a series of prank calls to a London phone-in show. He later became a regular contributor to BBC Radio Two's Steve Wright In The Afternoon... Alex is also well known for playing the character of hapless clairvoyant, medium & psychic Clinton Baptiste, who will be making a guest appearance in Barry From Watford's two West Midlands shows.

four years ago. Described by spellbound critics as a nutball with a touch of genius, he has since firmly established himself on the UK comedy circuit and developed an enviable television career.

Sam's absurdist loops and razor-sharp observational wit will be much in evidence when he stops off in Birmingham mid-month with latest stand-up offering Kid Gibley.

Mark Simmons

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Thurs 17 September; The Glee Club, Birmingham, Thurs 26 November

A runner-up in the 2022 'top 10 jokes of the Edinburgh Fringe competition' - "Did you know, if you get pregnant in the Amazon, it's next-day delivery" - Mark Simmons went one better two years later, emerging from the summertime get-together in the Scottish capital with the Funniest Joke award: "I was going to sail around the globe in the world's smallest ship, but I bottled it."

And there's plenty more where those little gems came from, with Mark's talent for one-liners seemingly knowing no bounds. He's visiting the Midlands this month with currently touring show Jest To Impress.

Sam Campbell

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Thurs 17 & Fri 18 September

UK-based Australian comic Sam Campbell spent many a year enjoying a cult following before emerging into the sunlight with a prize-winning show at the Edinburgh Fringe

BOSTIN' TAY PARTY

Jonny Cole chats about his spectacular rise to fame...



Comedian Jonny Cole's meteoric rise has seen him graduate from the back rooms of pubs in his native Black Country to comedy clubs, theatres and - for one night this autumn - Birmingham's Utilita Arena. His overnight success has actually been a decade in the making, and the former diesel salesman is determined not to leave anything in the tank - as he explains to What's On...

The past couple of years have been nothing short of extraordinary for Black Country musical comedian Jonny Cole. His current show, *Armagudd'n*, kicked off in September 2024 to little fanfare. Eleven shows presented in and around the Black Country struggled to gain traction, with gigs in Tipton and Bewdley on the verge of being pulled - after barely selling 30 tickets between them - and the remaining dates struggling to sell half their seats.

Everything changed when manager and promoter (as well as friend and fellow comic) Wayne Beese put a few clips online that he'd filmed at a 2023 performance at the Glee Club in Birmingham. Two went viral, getting more than a million views each, and Jonny became a star overnight. All 11 shows sold out within days, and the tour was extended by 90 dates, culminating in a sold-out gig at Wolverhampton Civic Hall at the end of 2025. That was supposed to be the finale, but another 64 dates were then added for this year. The final show - which Jonny assures me really *will* be the last one - takes place at Utilita Arena, Birmingham's biggest indoor venue, in November.

Despite being as surprised as anyone by the stunning turnaround in fortune, the affable Wednesbury native appears to be taking success in his stride, and seems completely unfazed by the prospect of an arena show.

"I'm often just blindly led by Wayne," he admits. "He's come into the dressing room and said 'If you had the opportunity to do this, would you?' Firstly I said, is that even a conversation? And secondly, do you think we'd get anyone to come?"

With over 50 million views on YouTube and more than 150,000 followers on social media ("Wayne does all that - I don't really understand it"), there are serious grounds for optimism. Jonny's hardly expecting to fill the venue, but a crowd of around 4,000 will still comfortably be the biggest of his career, either as a comic or as a musician gigging in bands for years prior to the switch to stand-up.

Had he given much thought to performing in such a vast auditorium? It's clearly a different beast to the three nights he's playing at Katie Fitzgerald's in Stourbridge (capacity 120) just

weeks before...

"I'm more intrigued than nervous about it, to be honest. I started out doing the backstreet pubs and clubs, which really did me a lot of good, [making me] pretty thick-skinned and relentless. It's grown to the bigger stages, so I'm aware that when I'm performing, it's got to be a bit bigger. My mannerisms have got to be a bit bigger, I've got to travel a bit further, and my exclamation needs to be a bit larger."

The expanded audience is also likely to include more people from further afield, as this year's tour has seen him performing all over the UK. Given that his act - a mix of gags and comedy songs with a Black Country twist - relies heavily on local dialect and knowledge, had he been surprised by its success, or felt the need to water down any elements when performing away from home?

"You know, I think it isn't so much a Black Country thing as a working-class thing. Wherever you go in the country, you've got pockets of working-class people that have got exactly the same sort of culture as we have in the Black Country and the Midlands, so I think that's what travels. Sometimes, though, I *will* slow down the accent a little bit, just to make sure they're actually understanding it." That being said, Jonny's use of, and riffs on, the Black Country are precisely what people come to see. The two clips that went viral are a case in point. One was about how locals speak in letters rather than words, the other a routine about what Disney would've been like if it was located in the Black Country. Better yet, his initial breakthrough came from a song he wrote about Wednesbury.

"I woke up with a hangover, wrote this tongue-in-cheek parody and sent it to my dad to give him a laugh. He put it on YouTube and it got a couple of thousand hits. He told me I should do more of the comedy 'because no one likes your other stuff'."

Jonny still runs new material past his dad, as well as a couple of mates, all of whom he credits with helping make things funnier. He also admits that members of the audience or people in pubs have provided some prize material - such as the punter who gave him the title 'No Woman No Sky', about a man whose partner takes the remote control when they break up.

"I don't profess to be any sort of genius," laughs Jonny, suggesting his Black Country 'family' are naturally funny and a constant source of inspiration. "It's so easy to pick up on little ideas and bits of banter that you hear in pubs. I've been doing a gag for years about the pronunciation of the word mosque because I remember when a mosque was something the Lone Ranger wore."

Endearing the accent to non-natives is one thing, but he's also delighted when people who have migrated away from the area turn up to shows when he plays further afield, suggesting the tour posters are effectively "a bat signal" to lure them in.

"You put that up and Yammers far and wide come to have a look what's going on and support it, just because it's Black Country and we look after our folk."

He also admits he's had to start looking after himself in recent times, giving up alcohol four years ago after it was doing him rather more harm than good.

"I'd get very drunk before going on stage - I mean *really* drunk. So that just had to stop. I came from a rock & roll background, where you'd get hammered and then go and play. When I transitioned into comedy, no one told me that wasn't the gig. One night, when I was warming up for Joe Lycett, I drank a whole bottle of JD Honey. I then went on and did the same song three times!"

Sobering up has improved his ability to perform, as well as changed his mindset about the whole endeavour: "I'm a lot sharper on stage now. I can think two or three gags ahead, and my timing's better. Personally, when I was pissed, it was all about how much fun I was having, but since sobering up, it's about how much fun I can get [the audience] to have. And, coincidentally, my career has gone from strength to strength."

.....

**Jonny Cole plays Utilita Arena
Birmingham on Tuesday 3 November
Check out all of Jonny's upcoming gigs at
funnybeeseness.co.uk/jonnycole**



Mrs Doubtfire

Birmingham Hippodrome, until Sat 19 September

When a messy divorce leaves devoted dad Daniel Hillard faced with the prospect of no longer being able to see his children on a daily basis, he decides to take drastic action. An out-of-work thespian, Daniel makes use of his acting skills to create an alter-ego - the splendidly named Euphegenia Doubtfire, a Scottish 'supernanny' - to look after his beloved kids...

That's the basic premise of both this hit stage musical and, of course, the original much-loved 1993 film starring Robin Williams.

"I learned a lot of comedy from watching people like Robin, Steve Martin and Jim Carrey," says Gabriel Vick, who's playing Daniel/Mrs Doubtfire. "There's a lot of Jim Carrey in what I do. You kind of borrow from these people, and then bring your own thing to it."

The Last Laugh

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Wed 9 - Sat 12 September

No discernible plot, three aging men chewing the fat and gently ribbing each other in a shabby dressing room...

At first sight, *The Last Laugh* doesn't seem a top contender for an evening of great entertainment. But when the three men in question are three of the greatest English comedians in living memory, the unpromising surroundings and absence of a strong storyline fade into insignificance.

The show's premise is simple: an imagined meeting between Tommy Cooper, Eric Morecambe and Bob Monkhouse - names that will surely evoke memories of Christmas specials and cheesy game shows for any member of the audience who's reached at least their half-century. The scene is perfectly set, the jokes come thick and fast, and anybody looking for an evening of laugh-out-loud, uplifting entertainment is in for a real treat.



Heathers The Musical

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Tues 15 - Sat 19 September

Although far from being an unqualified success with the critics, *Heathers The Musical* did great business in the West End, and is equally likely to pack them in on this latest UK tour.

Based on the cult 1989 movie starring Winona Ryder and Christian Slater, the show follows the character of Veronica Sawyer, a high-school student who's tired of being part of a feared and popular clique with three girls named Heather...

Eager to opt out, she finds herself drawn to new student Jason 'JD' Dean, a rebellious young man with murder in mind...







The Mousetrap

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Thurs 3 - Sat 12 September; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Mon 1 - Sat 6 March; Lichfield Garrick, Mon 8 - Sat 13 March; Malvern Theatres, Tues 4 - Sat 8 May

Not only has everybody *heard* of Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap*, everybody's also actually *seen* the show... haven't they? Okay, maybe not, but as the play debuted some 75 years ago and has been running non-stop in the West End ever since (Covid disruption aside, of course), it's fair to say its capacity to put bums on seats is absolutely beyond question.

Not surprisingly, the play is the world's longest-running show, and has been performed in excess of 30,000 times. This touring version stars Nicholas Bailey and Susan Penhaligon.

Murder, She Didn't Write

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Mon 21 September; Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Sat 10 October; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Wed 13 January; Lichfield Garrick, Tues 19 January; Swan Theatre, Worcester, Tues 2 & Wed 3 February

Improvised shows are seemingly all the rage nowadays - and this one has certainly got plenty to recommend it...

First and foremost, it was a multiple-sell-out hit at the Edinburgh Fringe...

Secondly, it's presented by a critically acclaimed company - Degrees Of Error - who are past masters of the improv genre...

Thirdly, the show is a real hoot. An Agatha Christie-inspired whodunnit, it features a classic murder-mystery which is created 'on the spot'... The show runs for two hours, including an interval.



Private Peaceful

Lichfield Garrick, Fri 11 - Sun 13 September

On the eve of battle, First World War soldier Private Tommo Peaceful recalls his short but joyful past growing up in rural Devon - his schooldays, his father, the deep bond with his brother, and the innocence of first love... A short play that packs a real punch - and is perfectly pitched for the young audience at which it's aimed - *Private Peaceful* is based on the same-named novel by War Horse author Michael Morpurgo.

"The question I'm asking myself at the heart of my books about war is 'How would I have coped?'" Michael told the *paper*. "I hope I'd have coped well enough, but I have my

doubts. *Private Peaceful* is written in huge admiration of generations who did what was expected of them."

Present Laughter

Malvern Theatres, Tues 15 - Sat 19 September

This brand-new version of *Present Laughter* sees Noel Coward's famous play given a gender-swapping

makeover: the main character, actor Garry Essendine, has been replaced by *Geri* Essendine, a hugely successful actress (who has been 39 for the better part of a decade). As *Geri* prepares to leave for a tour of Africa, a series of romantic entanglements, personal complications and professional demands threaten to overwhelm her... Tracy-Ann Oberman takes the lead role, having previously gender-swapped in order to play Shylock in *The Merchant Of Venice* 1936. James Dreyfuss co-stars.



An Evening With Jack The Ripper

Halesowen Town Hall, Thurs 10 September

Fancy spending the better part of a pair of hours in the company of the world's most notorious serial killer? Well, sort of.

Award-winning producer & broadcaster Steve Morgan is using this show to bring to life the legend of Jack the Ripper, having adapted for the stage his celebrated 'Ripper walks' through the East End of London.

An entertaining and educational evening seems very much in prospect.

As You Like It

Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Sat 26 September - Sat 7 November

Royal Shakespeare Company Co-Artistic Director Daniel Evans directs an *all-male* cast in this brand-new version of the bard's highly likable comedy.

The story revolves around the character of Rosalind, banished by her usurping uncle to the Forest of Arden, where her exiled father is already living. Revelling in the naturalness of the surroundings, Rosalind and her devoted cousin, Celia, find a happiness they hadn't known existed...

Tony and Grammy Award-winning American actor Jonathan Groff (pictured) makes his RSC debut in the role of Rosalind.



Macbeth

The Amphitheatre, Telford Town Park, Thurs 3 September

Shakespeare's bloodiest tragedy is here played for laughs by the ever-inventive HandleBards. The trio of thespians are promising audiences an evening of mishaps, mayhem and mirth.

The show is being performed outdoors, so dress for the weather.



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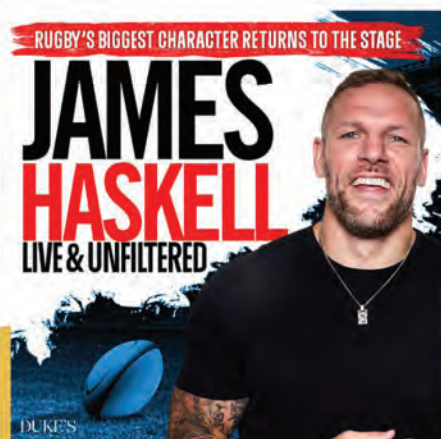
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Theatre previews from around the region



Twelve Angry Men

The Rep, Birmingham,
Mon 21 - Sat 26 September

Reginald Rose's gripping courtroom drama makes a welcome return to the region. Best known from the 1957 film starring Henry Fonda, *Twelve Angry Men* tells the story of one juror's battle to save the life of a man on trial for the murder of his father. Initially a lone voice in the wilderness, Juror Eight is faced with the monumental challenge of persuading his 11 fellow jurors to spare the defendant's life. His task is made all the harder by the other men's prejudices and preconceptions about the trial. The cast includes soap-opera veterans Gray O'Brien and Bill Ward.

The Haunting Of Blaine Manor

Stourbridge Town Hall, Sun 20 September

When Doctor Roy Earle - a renowned American parapsychologist famous for discrediting hauntings and exposing fake mediums - accepts an invitation to attend a seance at 'the most haunted building in England' (the Blaine Manor of the title), he finds himself, along with his companions for the evening, temporarily cut off from the outside world by a raging storm... And as every lover of the ghost/horror genre very well knows, where there's a raging storm *and* a haunted house, there are also, inevitably, things that go bump in the night... An award-winning love letter to both the Golden Age of Hollywood and the era of Hammer Horror movies here in the UK, *The Haunting Of Blaine Manor* is described by its publicity as the new *Woman In Black* - only scarier.

The Curious Incident Of The Dog In The Nighttime

The Rep, Birmingham,
Sat 5 - Sat 19 September

The National Theatre stage adaptation of Mark Haddon's award-winning novel bagged an impressive seven Olivier Awards in 2013 and was met with almost universal acclaim. The story is here being told in a brand-new production presented by Birmingham Rep and Melting Pot. And there's every reason to believe the show will prove to be just as impressive as that original stage version. At the centre of the action is the character of teenager Chris, who self-describes as "a mathematician with some behavioural difficulties". Initially coming under suspicion

after discovering the lifeless body of the neighbour's dog, Chris decides to investigate the crime - and in so doing embarks on a journey that will ultimately see some truly shocking family secrets being revealed... Charlie Brooks and Joe McFadden top-bill.

Woodhill

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, Fri 18 & Sat 19 September; Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Tues 22 & Wed 23 September

Documentary theatre and 'gut-punching' choreography combine to thought-provoking effect in this 'explosive' true story from multi-award-winning company Lung.

Suitable for audience members aged 16-plus and with a running time of 80 minutes, the production focuses on events at Woodhill prison, where three deaths leave the families of the deceased desperate for answers. The show is being promoted as 'a call to arms about the crisis facing prisons'.

The performance at the Belgrade on the 22nd will be followed by a Q&A with the company.

After Party

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry,
Wed 9 - Sat 12 September

The Belgrade here joins forces with Traverse Theatre and Paines Plough to present playwright Morna Young's latest offering. Actress and matriarch Vivienne Blackwood



summons her fractured family to an 80th-birthday celebration. As old tensions surface and beliefs collide, Vivienne's real reason for gathering her relatives together soon becomes apparent...

Wilko: Love And Death And Rock 'n' Roll

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Mon 7 - Wed 9 September; Malvern Theatres, Tues 22 - Sat 26 September; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Thurs 22 - Sat 24 October

A play with live music, *Wilko: Love And Death And Rock'n'Roll* recounts the remarkable story of musician Wilko Johnson. Having been told he had inoperable cancer and less than a year to live, the Dr Feelgood star later discovered that the diagnosis was wrong and that his life could be saved...

A Brief Case Of Crazy

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Wed 16 September; Lichfield Garrick, Sat 19 September; Swan Theatre, Worcester, Sun 20 September; Wolverhampton Arts Centre, Tues 6 October

A silent love story told via a blend of mime, choreography, clowning and puppetry, this co-production from



Skedaddle and Shoddy Theatre focuses on the character of Thomas, an awkward and introverted office worker who has a quiet crush on his equally shy colleague, Daisy... Tugging a forelock in the direction of Mr Bean, Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton, the show has garnered plenty of five-star reviews since premiering in Edinburgh a couple of years back.

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Horrible Histories

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury,
Thurs 17 - Sat 19 September

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...

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 at Theatre Severn on each of the three days. Visit the venue's website to check starting times.

Dear Zoo

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Thurs 17 - Sun 20 September; Swan Theatre, Worcester, Sat 26 & Sun 27 September; Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Sat 13 & Sun 14 March; Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Wed 24 & Thurs 25 March; Birmingham Hippodrome, Thurs 8 - Sun 11 April

First published in 1982, Dear Zoo - a lift-the-flap book by Rod Campbell - has delighted generations of children and accumulated millions of sales worldwide. This hugely popular stage version of the story features music, child-friendly puppets and lots of audience participation.



The Ultimate Bubble Show

Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent,
Sat 26 September

International bubbleologist and Guinness world record holder Ray Bubbles is back in the region and determined to make the ultimate bubble...

Ray will be using



various gases to create all manner of bubble sculptures and displays in this fast-paced show that's promising plenty of surprises.

The Dinosaur That Pooped

Lichfield Garrick, Sat 12 September;
Birmingham Town Hall, Sun 8 November

Tom Fletcher and Dougie Poynter's touring production features new songs, a lot of laughs and (not surprisingly given the show's title) a whole load of poo!

Based on Tom and Dougie's bestselling children's books, The Dinosaur That Pooped follows Danny and Dino as they try to get hold of the last two tickets to their favourite rock band's final concert.

But with a villainous band manager lurking, nothing goes according to plan...

Will the band perform? Will Danny rock out? Or will Dino's rumbling tummy save the day?...



Be Like Blippi

Birmingham Town Hall, Sun 6 September

If you're not 'in the know' about Blippi, then here's the lowdown on him...

A digital entertainer and educator - created over a decade ago by American filmmaker Stevin John - he wears a blue & orange outfit with a beanie cap and bow tie. He also posts educational videos, in which he visits places such as zoos, museums, farms and fire

stations. For this month's touring stage production - described by its publicity as 'a high-energy live show packed with music, laughter and surprises' - Blippi will be joined by his cartwheel-loving best friend, Meekah.



Fireman Sam Live! The Lost Pirate Treasure

Malvern Theatres, Sun 6 September

Next year celebrating four decades spent putting out blazes in Pontypandy and lighting up children's eyes with delight, Fireman Sam finds himself yet again saving the day. This time he's called into action when perpetual troublemaker Norman Price discovers clues to a pirate treasure and goes exploring deep into the caves...



SISTER SUFFRAGETTE

Midlands-born Beverley Knight will star in acclaimed musical Sylvia when it visits Birmingham Hippodrome next month...



Sylvia, a musical bursting with dance, soul and hip-hop, retells an essential and ever-relevant slice of British history: the fight for universal suffrage. The play revolves around the Suffragettes in the Pankhurst family, particularly hard-line matriarch Emmeline and her daughter Sylvia. After first playing the part of Emmeline in 2017, the Midlands' very own Beverley Knight is returning to the role when the show visits the region next month. What's On caught up with the Wolverhampton-born singer, songwriter & actor to find out more...

Sylvia, a new British musical illuminating the lives of the Suffragettes, visits Birmingham Hippodrome next month. Named after the rebellious and headstrong middle daughter of Emmeline Pankhurst - the leader of the Suffragettes - the story sees Sylvia Pankhurst defy her mother, advocating for universal suffrage.

Midlands icon Beverley Knight originated the role of matriarch Emmeline Pankhurst, and has remained with the production as it's gained traction. Her performance saw her named 'best actress in a supporting role in a musical' at the 2023 Olivier Awards.

"Sylvia Pankhurst goes against her mother's orders and agitates for everyone to get the vote, and that puts her on a collision course with her mother," explains Wolverhampton-born singer, songwriter & actor Beverley. "It's a fabulous, fast-paced show, using R&B, hip-hop, garage and soul ballads to tell the story of how these ordinary women became extraordinary... It's a brilliant piece. There's a lot of humour, there's a lot of darkness, but ultimately there's a hell of a lot of joy."

Involved in the production from its very beginnings - London-based workshops in 2017 - Beverley knew early on that the musical was going to be something special. She recalls the moment she was approached by its writer, director & choreographer, Kate Prince: "Kate said 'I'm developing this show about the Suffragettes, and I would love you to play Emmeline,' and I was in! I'm a history freak; I love history. The first song I heard was a song called March Women March, which is almost like [the play's] theme tune. I lost my mind. I was in, and I've been in it since."

It was at the 2018 premiere performance, at London's Old Vic theatre, when the real weight and impact of the production became clear.

"We got to the interval - that's the real pivot-point of the show. A terrible thing happens to the women - they are beaten terribly by the police - and then the women come back stronger in Act Two. I saw people holding each other in the audience, weeping... I had to take a minute - this is British history. There are people in this audience, especially some of the older people who had come, whose grandmothers or mothers would have been

involved in the fight for women's suffrage. I mean, this is *that* near in terms of history. We're not quite a hundred years into full universal suffrage, and that really puts things into perspective. This is not 'way back many centuries ago'. This is only just falling out of living history."

As a self-professed history fan, Beverley has taken the opportunity to find out more about Emmeline.

"I've loved it. I've gone into the deepest search when it comes to researching her. I have her book, I have Sylvia's book, I've managed to track down a DVD that was copied from a VHS tape of an old series that was on TV in the 70s, about the fight for women's suffrage. I've read everything I can. I've researched old files to listen to Christabel Pankhurst's speaking voice - she sounds really high-pitched, like old transcriptions of the Queen. It's quite funny how people spoke back then. I've done everything I can to try and transport myself back to Edwardian Britain, and for me, I couldn't be in a better place. I'm fascinated by it."

In the national tour, Beverley is joined by Naomi Katiyo, who takes the title role. The familial relationship which the pair bring to the stage is the backbone of the drama.

"It starts out as this wonderful, loving, united Pankhurst family, all of them agitating for the same thing: votes for women. They're all pulling in the same direction, until it becomes increasingly obvious that the government isn't going to bend, isn't going to shift, isn't even gonna listen to these women. Emmeline says, 'Well, a Suffragist would *like* to have the vote, and a Suffragette will *fight* for the vote.' It's that fight where the cracks begin to show in the family. Adela Pankhurst is not comfortable with it. Christabel loves it - Christabel is the strategist who is thinking of all these wonderful schemes that her mother implements. Sylvia at first goes along with it, but her pacifism means that she just can't continue on that road. Then she sees how her mother, over time, becomes this autocrat - 'My way or the highway' - and that sets mother and daughter on a collision course. Eventually, the relationship is fractured beyond repair and they never speak again. It's quite a serious drama - high stakes."

Since the early days of the production, the

play has been refocused to centre the action around the women themselves.

"When I first started, [Labour Party founder] Keir Hardie and his relationship with Sylvia was very much at the forefront. It takes a little bit more of a back seat this time round, to concentrate on the dynamic between Sylvia and her mom, and Sylvia with the other women. Christabel is also important because she's very much her mother's henchwoman. The focus is around the Pankhursts as a family."

The play doesn't shy away from the realities of the Suffragettes' protests - including the famously public death of Emily Wilding Davison at the 1913 Derby. Beverley believes that these historical events remain shockingly relevant: "The cruelty of what happens to these women and how they are ridiculed - we see the echoes of that today. A lot of the arguments and the problems that the women came up against almost 100 years ago are things that we are seeing repeating today. The right to protest - who has that right, what protest is acceptable, when does it cross the line? What is the role of women in today's society - has it changed? The more things change, the more they stay the same."

While there are undoubtedly some heavy themes, the uplifting and rousing music brings joy back to the production. And, with the tour's second stop-off being Birmingham Hippodrome, Beverley is buzzing with excitement to perform on home turf once again.

"Just glorious! There's this extra frisson of excitement from my point of view because I know I'm going to be coming back to God's own country, and to know that I'm in a place where people know my journey. They know what it's taken for me to stand on these stages - that's always extra special, and I appreciate them. There's gonna be a lot of people who are part of my story in that audience watching, and I don't take a single one for granted. It's always a joy to come home and to play - and the Hippodrome is one of the great stages in this country."

.....
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Light entertainment from around the region



Piff & Pops Magic Shoppe

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Wed 16 September

Alongside its winning blend of 'jaw-dropping magic, unforgettable showmanship and side-splitting comedy', this brand-new show is notable for one other reason: it marks the first time that legendary magician Penn Jillette has performed in the UK without his equally legendary partner-in-magic Teller (who, in a legal move many a year ago, dropped his other names).

Penn is joined in the show by London-born America's Got Talent and Las Vegas favourite Piff The Magic Dragon - aka John van der Put - who will be performing in the UK for the first time in more than a decade... Mr Piffles - 'the world's only magic-performing Chihuahua' - will also be making a sure-to-be-telling contribution to events.

General Medical Emergency Ward

Lichfield Garrick, Fri 18 September

Fancy checking out a cliché-ridden comic homage to pretty much any and every hospital-located television drama you can possibly think of? If so, make an appointment to have your funny bone thoroughly examined by two highly rated comedy ensembles: Dyad Productions and Company Gavin Robertson. Teaming up for the very first time, Gavin, Andrew Margerison and Rebecca Vaughan are promising a show that will have you in, er, stitches...



Jane McDonald: Living The Dream

Utilita Arena Birmingham, Sat 12 September

Almost 30 years after first coming to the wider public's attention in observational documentary series The Cruise on BBC One, singer, songwriter & television presenter Jane McDonald is still going strong, touring to arenas and recently releasing her 11th studio album, Living The Dream. Recorded in Nashville, the record is a celebration of Jane's little-known passion for country music. Not surprisingly, she's now supporting the



album's release with a UK tour, with this Birmingham gig marking her only visit to the West Midlands region.

Miriam Margolyes' Full English Live

The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton, Fri 18 September

Memories and mammaries, Arsenal and a*seholes, politics, filth, and absolutely everything in between is the menu which veteran entertainer Miriam Margolyes is promising to serve up when she stops off in Wolverhampton this month. Miriam is urging her West Midlands fans to secure their seats for the show asap - at nearly 85, she says, "this old dyke can only go on so long."



5 Mistakes That Changed History

Lichfield Garrick, Tues 8 September; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sun 27 September

The death of Alexander The Great and the introduction into Europe of the humble tomato have featured among the history-changing errors to which the title of this Edinburgh Fringe hit refers (the five mistakes vary across the show's tour cycles). The production is written and presented by historian/comedian Paul Coulter, who has published an associated book entitled 10 Mistakes That Changed History.

Paul Zerdin: Shut Your Mouth

Swan Theatre, Worcester, Thurs 3 September; Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Fri 25 September

"As a ventriloquist, I can get away with jokes that other comedians can't," Paul Zerdin explains. "I've got the luxury of taking the p*ss out of myself, but through the characters, rather than me just being relentlessly self-deprecating. I can get away with having a go at the audience much more, too; you get to be cheekier. Mocking the front row is a trademark of my characters, but I'm evolving my audience interaction beyond that."

Comedian & ventriloquist Paul, the 2016 winner of America's Got Talent, here returns to the Midlands with a show that's definitely not appropriate for young children (the age suitability is 14-plus). "They might be cute little puppets," Paul says of his numerous characters, "but leave the kids at home!"



GLORIOUSLY GRACEFUL

**Birmingham Royal Ballet presents Sir Peter Wright and
Galina Samsova's magnificent retelling of Swan Lake...**



Birmingham Royal Ballet (BRB) returns to the Birmingham Hippodrome stage this month with one of the company's most popular works: Sir Peter Wright and Galina Samsova's Swan Lake.

Set to a dramatic score by Tchaikovsky, the ballet tells the tale of Princess Odette, who has been turned into a white swan by the evil sorcerer Baron Von Rothbart. Her only chance of freedom is true love, and when Prince Siegfried meets her and pledges his heart, it seems the spell will be broken. But Rothbart has a trick up his sleeve: the black swan Odile. So can Odile tempt Siegfried, or will the prince remain true?

BRB principal Céline Gittens has played Odette/Odile many times and says the two swans need to have very different characters: "Audiences want a form of escapism, to be taken away from their everyday life into this magical world of ballet, and I think the way to succeed with that is to really understand the character fully so that I can portray the story and the character properly.

"So when I first approached the role in 2012, I did a lot of background research on other ballet dancers and different productions, which provided inspiration for how I interpreted the role. In 2012, I also became the first mixed-race female ballet dancer to perform the role of Odette/Odile in the UK" Born in Trinidad, Céline grew up in Vancouver, where she trained with her mother, Janet Gittens, and at the Goh Ballet Academy. It was from watching Canadian principal Evelyn Hart that she found the key to creating Odette/Odile.

"Evelyn was just stunning in the way she made both roles so different, and that really inspired me. That is where I've drawn a lot of my interpretation from.

"I feel that Odette is maybe a little bit naïve and very tender. What's driving her is to find love. And then along comes Odile, who is quite different. There are a variety of possible interpretations, whether Odile is a transformation of Odette or a completely different character, and I feel like Rothbart has transformed her and given her a new persona to lure Siegfried."

A gold medallist and audience choice award recipient at the prestigious Margot Fonteyn international ballet competition, Céline joined BRB in 2006, becoming a principal in 2016. She has danced many of the lead roles with the company, including Juliet in Sir Kenneth Macmillan's Romeo And Juliet, the Sugar Plum Fairy in Sir Peter Wright's The Nutcracker, Aurora in Sir Peter's Sleeping Beauty, Kitri in Carlos Acosta's Don Quixote

and Fortuna in Sir David Bintley's Carmina Burana. And it is getting to the heart of a character that matters for her: "Sir Peter Wright says this - you have to act to be a classical ballet dancer, you have to act to be in love or in hatred or remorse, but also you have to feel it. When you feel it, that's when it carries through to the audience. And that is when you get the audience on your side."

Taking the role of Prince Siegfried in the full-length ballet for the first time, Mason King joined BRB2, a two-year initiative for young dancers, in 2022, becoming a member of the main company in 2024.

"This is my first big character ballet," he says, "but I actually played Siegfried in the White Swan pas de deux from Act II the year I joined BRB2, and then the next year as well. In fact, I've done it every year but one in my professional career.

"BRB2 set us up really nicely because I was able to do these big solo roles and these big pas de deux; not in a full ballet context, of course, but a snippet - and I think that did help me.

"Any young dancer would hope that eventually they would get to do the role of Prince Siegfried, and I was the same. I didn't think it was going to come around so fast, but I always had the drive for it."

Born in the UK, Mason grew up in New Zealand, training at New Zealand School of Dance. He then attended The Royal Ballet School in London, after which he joined BRB2, where he's performed pieces including Carlos Acosta's Dying Swan pas de deux, Agrippina Vaganova's Diana & Actaeon pas de deux, and Ben Stevenson's End Of Time. But Siegfried is one of ballet's most demanding male roles.

"From watching other principals do it when I first joined, I'd say the challenge is partly the length. This is probably the longest ballet for a male dancer. In Swan Lake, you're in all four acts, so you're doing quite a lot of work.

"You really have to carry the story throughout all four acts. and you need to be able to show the emotion at the end of the ballet. So you need the technique but also the stamina - that will be the biggest challenge."

Mason's approach is to focus on the constituent parts of the work: "It's almost broken down into acts for me. So in Act I, Siegfried is very sorrowful; you're by yourself, you're surrounded by all these other people dancing for you, but you're very internal. And then you progress, and in Act II you meet Odette and you slowly fall for her and you have to show the progression

through that.

"Then Act III is with Odile. For me, that's almost a completely different role because of how Céline will portray that part, and I will respond to that. And then there's all the emotion of Act IV. That emotion is essential - if you don't feel it and show it to the audience, then it's just steps on stage."

Mason is also benefiting from partnering with Céline.

"Because Céline has performed this role so many times, she knows what she wants, so then I just have to find my way of doing it."

BRB founding director laureate Sir Peter Wright is due to turn 100 later this year, but he has always made a point of attending rehearsals for his ballets, to help the dancers fine-tune the roles. And Céline says his input is appreciated: "Sir Peter will tell you when you've done a good job. Even in a principal position, principals still need to hear that. I'm open to corrections because that's what ballet dancers do - we live off being corrected and receiving constructive criticism. But don't forget to also praise the dancers! The fact that Sir Peter is almost 100 and still praising the dancers, that means a lot."

Former ballet mistress Marion Tait, who now holds the role of guest répétiteur, will also be in the rehearsal room.

"Marion often comes to set Sir Peter's ballets," says Céline. "She's been a huge influence in my career, because coming from Vancouver, she helped me switch into the British style of dancing.

"She's very understanding of the dancers. For example, Mason and myself are tall, and she understands what works to bring out the best in ourselves as tall dancers, using the space on the stage and making the most of our aesthetic."

So why does Céline believe Swan Lake has remained central to the world of ballet?

"It's a classic which has stood the test of time. I think what makes it stand out is the fact that it's so technically demanding; it has every classical step, thrown into one ballet. And then there's the music. Tchaikovsky's score elevates this ballet to another level entirely.

Birmingham Royal Ballet's Swan Lake shows at Birmingham Hippodrome from Wednesday 23 September to Saturday 3 October

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Dance showing in the region



Birmingham Royal Ballet: Swan Lake

Birmingham Hippodrome, Wed 23 September - Sat 3 October

Birmingham Royal Ballet here presents its much-loved Sir Peter Wright & Galina Samsova version of a timeless favourite. Set to Tchaikovsky's mesmerising score. Swan Lake tells the story of Odette, a beautiful princess who, caught under the spell of the evil

Von Rothbart, must spend the daytime hours as a swan, returning to human form only when night falls...

A sumptuous visual feast, the production offers a spectacle which is ideal for the first-time trier as well as the more-seasoned ballet-goer.

Lord Of The Dance

The Alexandra, Birmingham,
Mon 28 September - Sun 4 October

Since catapulting Irish music into the limelight back in 1996, Michael Flatley's choreographed adventure has become an international phenomenon. The production presents a tale of good versus evil, in the process combining precision dancing with state-of-the-art lighting and pyrotechnics... This Birmingham performance is part of a nationwide 30th-anniversary tour.



production which sees them taking a deep-dive into the challenges of navigating a relationship while 'trying to make something with someone else'... The show is a last hurrah as performers for husband & wife team Alex and Charlotte. Following the birth of their daughter, they decided to focus their attention on the challenges of directing shows, so are framing the production, which is titled Collaborator, as a 'farewell to performing'.

Emerald Storm

Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Sat 5 September;
Kidderminster Town Hall, Wed 9 September;
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Wed 23 September; The Albany Theatre, Coventry, Fri 23 October; Lichfield Garrick, Mon 29 October; Palace Theatre, Redditch, Fri 6 November

From gentle ballet to fiery salsa, and from Irish dance to modern tap, the critically acclaimed Emerald Storm offers something for dance fans of every persuasion.

The high-energy show has been co-written and co-choreographed by Australian tap dancer and two-time Olivier Award nominee Adam Garcia. Expect mesmerising moves and lightning footwork aplenty...

Ballroom Fever

Swan Theatre, Worcester, Tues 29 September

One-time Strictly Come Dancing professional Flavia Cacace is the big-name draw for this brand-new ballroom and Latin American dance extravaganza. The show is promising to take its audience on a truly dazzling journey, experienced in the company of a cast of international champion dancers.

Ockham's Razor

Malvern Theatres, Tues 29 September

Highly rated aerial theatre company Ockham's Razor are back in the region with a show that features two performers who are well-versed in the business of working with one another. Having made circus together for 20 years, the company's artistic directors, Alex Harvey and Charlotte Mooney, are here returning with a





Practical Magic 2 CERT tbc (110 mins)

Starring **Sandra Bullock, Nicole Kidman, Stockard Channing, Dianne Wiest, Joey King, Maisie Williams** Directed by **Susanne Bier**

The season of the witch has returned - 28 long years after Nicole Kidman and Sandra Bullock last stepped into Practical Magic's world of moonlit mischief and powerful ancestral sorcery. The Hollywood A-listers once again play Gillian (Kidman) and Sally (Bullock), sister witches who find themselves having to confront the dark curse that threatens to finally unravel their family...

The original 1998 film, based on the same-named novel by Alice Hoffman, was by no means a resounding success, either with critics or at the box office. However, subsequent decades have seen it achieve cult status, which is nowadays a surefire reason for film studios to back a sequel.

Kidman and Bullock are co-producing the new movie alongside Denise Di Novi, who also produced the first film.

"I think the big mistake people make with sequels is when they kind of want to reinvent the wheel and be totally original and surprise people," Di Novi told People.com. She added that they "[get] how important the first movie is to so many people, women in particular, and we want to honour that for sure."

Released Fri 11 September



The Incomer CERT 12a (102 mins)

Starring **Gayle Rankin, Domhnall Gleeson, John Hannah, Emun Elliott, Michelle Gomez, Grant O'Rourke** Directed by **Louis Paxton**

Dark comedy combines with modern folk fairytale in *The Incomer*. The winner of the Next Innovator Award at the Sundance Film Festival, the movie stars Domhnall Gleeson as Daniel, a painfully awkward land-recovery coordinator whose boss sends him to a remote and tiny Scottish isle on which two siblings - Isla and Sandy - have lived alone since the loss of their parents 30 years earlier. Daniel's brief is straightforward enough: to evict the pair and have them return to the mainland within 10 days. But Isla and Sandy are set in their ways, survive by hunting and eating seabirds, speak to mythical beings, and most pertinently of all from Daniel's point of view, have vowed to fight off any 'incomers'...

Released Fri 4 September

Pressure

CERT 12a (100 mins)

Starring **Andrew Scott, Brendan Fraser, Kerry Condon, Chris Messina, Damian Lewis, Tamsin Topolski** Directed by **Anthony Maras**

There can't have been many bigger decisions to make in the 20th century than the one facing General Dwight D Eisenhower and chief meteorological officer Captain James Stagg in the three days prior to the D-Day Landings. With the fate of the free world hanging in the balance, do they launch the largest and most dangerous seaborne invasion in history, or risk losing the war altogether?

Based on the 2014 stage play of the same name by David Haig - who co-wrote the screenplay with director Anthony Maras - *Pressure* focuses on the impact which meteorological conditions had on crucial decisions about the D-Day operation. It's certainly an impressive work of cinema, which in itself is no small achievement given that its action basically revolves around the rather prosaic subject of a weather forecast.

Released Wed 9 September



The Runner CERT 15 (107 mins)

Starring **Alan Ritchson, Owen Wilson, Leila George, Rodrigo Santoro, Peta Sergeant, Geraldine Hakewill** Directed by **Scott Waugh**

A former soldier is thrown into a brutal race against time when a critical medical delivery makes him and his unlikely partner the targets of a ruthless cartel. As the mission spirals into a deadly manhunt, they must survive the chase and successfully deliver their cargo, to save the life of a little girl... That's the synopsis for a film that pairs Owen Wilson - perhaps best known from Ben Stiller comedies such as *Zoolander* and *Starsky & Hutch* - with Alan Ritchson, who's come to prominence over the last few years for his portrayal of Midlands born-and-bred author Lee Childs' action-hero Jack Reacher.

"*Runner* is the kind of theatrical film audiences have been waiting for," says the movie's director, Scott Waugh. "Big action, real heart, and a story that brings light into this world. When everything's on the line to save a life, real men don't run from the fire; they drive straight into it."

Released Fri 11 September

Sense And Sensibility

CERT PG (131 mins)

Starring **Daisy Edgar-Jones, Esmé Creed-Miles, Bodhi Rae Breathnach, Fiona Shaw, Caitriona Balfe, George MacKay** Directed by **Georgia Oakley**

Focus Features and Working Title Films once again team up to present another cinematic adaptation of a Jane Austen novel; they previously harnessed their talents for a 2020 adaptation of *Emma*, while their 2005 version of *Pride & Prejudice* earned four Academy Award nominations and secured Focus' status as a leading independent film company. For those whose interest in Austen has at best been cursory, *Sense And Sensibility* revolves around the characters of Georgian-era sisters Elinor and Marianne Dashwood. The storyline follows the siblings as they busily make their first forays into the excitingly decadent world of 18th-century high society, where the giddy excitement of love and the terrible pain of heartbreak await them...

Released Fri 25 September



Shaun The Sheep: The Beast Of Mossy Bottom

CERT U (91 mins)

With the voices of **Justin Fletcher, John Sparkes, Kate Harbour** Directed by **Steve Cox** and **Matthew Walker**

Halloween's a-coming and the residents of Mossy Bottom Farm are suitably excited - until, that is, the clumsy Farmer trashes the flock's beloved pumpkin patch!

With no time to waste, Shaun the Sheep turns 'mad scientist' to fix the problem. But he quickly finds things rapidly spiralling out of control when the farmer goes missing and a wild creature appears in the woods...

The *Beast Of Mossy Bottom* is the third film in stop-motion studio Aardman's *Shaun The Sheep* franchise, following on from *Shaun The Sheep Movie* (2015) and the Academy Award-nominated *Farmageddon* (2020).

Released Fri 18 September



Resident Evil

CERT 15 (90 mins)

Starring **Austin Abrams, Paul Walter Hauser, Zach Cherry, Kali Reis, Johnno Wilson, Devon Stewart** Directed by **Zach Cregger**

The latest entry in the well-established *Resident Evil* franchise sees medical courier Brian unwittingly finding himself in a race for survival 'as one fateful, horrifying night collapses in chaos around him'.

Based on the famous Japanese video-game franchise, the *Resident Evil* movies have done exceptionally well at the box office, despite almost universally being panned by the critics.

This brand-new offering is the second reboot of the series and runs parallel to the timeline of the *Resident Evil 2* computer game.

"So I had this idea for a story in the world of *Resident Evil*," explains the film's director, Zach Cregger, "but it's kind of like me; like if I was dropped into a *Resident Evil* game. I'm terrible with guns. I wouldn't know how any of them work. I would miss 99 percent of all of my shots!"

Released Fri 18 September

Heart Of The Beast

CERT tbc (101 mins)

Starring **Brad Pitt, JK Simmons, Anna Lambe** Directed by **David Ayer**

After a harrowing plane crash, Special Forces officer James Belmont (Brad Pitt) and his combat dog, Odin, find themselves stranded deep in the Alaskan wilderness. Together, they are forced into a brutal fight for survival against the elements...

Described by its publicity as 'an intense adventure thriller exploring the unbreakable bond between a man and his best friend', *Heart Of The Beast* is helmed by David Ayer, who brings to bear his experience of being involved with such muscular two-handers as *Training Day* and *The Fast And The Furious*. "Working with animals is its own experience," he told GQ, "and sometimes you can see the lack of connection when people do these movies, but we really made the dog a living, breathing, fully formed character, with a soulful presence. And you can feel their history, their connection."

Released Wed 23 September





A CURIOUS TALE

**Joe McFadden talks about starring in a new version of
The Curious Incident Of The Dog In The Night-Time...**

Mark Haddon's bestselling novel, *The Curious Incident Of The Dog In The Night-Time*, has captured the imaginations of readers all over the world. Since being adapted for the stage and premiering at the National Theatre in 2012, the story has consistently wowed audiences and critics alike. A new production of the show premieres at Birmingham Rep this month, with Joe McFadden top-billing alongside ex-EastEnder Charlie Brooks. Joe recently chatted to What's On about his love of the original novel - and his delight at being involved with this latest stage version...

When actor Joe McFadden first read Mark Haddon's bestselling novel *The Curious Incident Of The Dog In The Night-Time* more than 20 years ago, he immediately fell in love with its story and its characters. So he's genuinely delighted to now be a part of a brand-new staging of the novel.

Premiering at Birmingham Rep early this month, the show sees Joe playing the character of Ed, alongside Charlie Brooks as Judy - the parents of autistic teenager Chris Boone. Discovering that neighbour's dog Wellington has been killed with a garden fork, Chris turns detective to uncover the perpetrator. However, in doing so, some shocking secrets within the Boone family are also revealed...

The production uses the Simon Stephens adaptation - which proved such a hit for the National Theatre in 2012 - but recreates the story with new sets and designs by Eleanor Bull. Ned Bennett is in the director's chair. Joe is very much enjoying being part of the process: "I absolutely loved the book back in 2003. It was one of those books that it seemed everyone was reading. I loved it so much that I then went and saw the play because I was fascinated with what they were going to do with it. And I loved the play! It was such a hit, and it was great in so many different ways.

"The Simon Stephens adaptation is just brilliant, and we're very lucky that that's the adaptation we're using. We were very fortunate that he came in and talked to us during rehearsals. It was really interesting hearing his take on it all and his process of adapting such a loved book, capturing all the elements that everyone loves but still making it work as a piece of theatre.

"I'm just really excited knowing that this is a new production, and how exciting it's going to be to reinvent a story that is so loved by so many people."

Ed is far from the perfect dad, but for Joe, that's what makes the part so interesting: "Ed doesn't always get everything right as a parent. He makes mistakes, he's fallible, and that's the thing that I related to in him. The great thing about this story is that no-one is perfect. There's no good guys and bad guys; it's very nuanced storytelling. Sure, we all do some quite horrendous things, but we do them for the right reasons. Ed loves his child dearly, and he's absolutely doing his best for her."

This is definitely the point at which we should mention that this new telling sees the character of Christopher, the boy in the

original book, being replaced by the character of a girl named Chris. Alex Keenan and Imi Price will share the role during the show's run.

"Having female leads is really interesting because the dynamic changes," Joe says. "The fact that this family unit has broken down, and how that plays itself out. So it's a father and his daughter being left behind and how devastating that would be and how a daughter absolutely needs her mother.

"It feels so important that we do this. There has been a lot of misconception that more boys are autistic than girls, and that's absolutely not true. It's just that it presents itself in different ways, and I think it's harder to diagnose, so it feels really important that people realise that it's just as prevalent in girls. The two girls we've got, Alex and Imi, are brilliant and heartbreaking and completely immersed in it, so the scenes feel really fresh.

"If you've seen this story told from a male perspective, now you can come and see it from a female perspective - and it absolutely will be different. If you loved it before, you'll still love it now. It's a re-invention and a re-interpretation.

"You're sort of seeing inside someone who is neurodivergent, and you're seeing the processes of their mind. Mark Haddon did it brilliantly in the book, where absolutely we are seeing the world from Chris' perspective. "The question is, when is Chris going to figure it out? What the play did really well, and I think our production is also going to do really well, is show you the whimsy and the fantasy and the excitement of being a 15-year-old, of having this wonderfully adept mind. Chris is so wonderful at mathematics and is really into space exploration, and you get to see into their mind and it's really entertaining.

"Her school and her father underestimate her. One of the things that Simon talked about is that essentially this story is about bravery and people's kindness at a time when we need those qualities more than ever. We do sort of put Chris into this box that she can't cope, and it turns out that's her journey and her quest during the play. How much can she cope with? And can she do a lot more than the people around her feel that perhaps she can?"

Produced by Birmingham Rep and Melting Pot, the new show will tour the UK after premiering in the second city this month. The hope is that neurodivergent people will go along and enjoy the experience.

"I think for the first time we are making it friendly for neurodivergent audiences. It's going to be explained at the beginning, and how loud and how bright it's going to get. I think the reasoning behind that, which I absolutely agree with, is that as this story is about neurodivergent people, they should be able to come in and see it - there shouldn't be any barrier to stop them.

"The aim is that, in the same way 15-year-old boys came along, spotted themselves [in Christopher] and thought 'I'm like that, my mind works like that,' hopefully we are now going to get 15-year-old girls coming along and feeling the same way."

It isn't the first time Joe has played to Birmingham audiences, having previously starred as Andy Dufresne in *The Shawshank Redemption* and drag queen Tick/Mitzi in *Priscilla Queen Of The Desert*, both at The Alexandra. *Curious Incident* will mark his first appearance at The Rep.

"I hear it's a really big space, and it's exciting to be able to fill a space that size. On the tour, we're playing some really big places but some much smaller venues as well, and that's the challenge for the designer: different-sized shows. Eleanor's design is a feast for the senses; there's so much lightness and so much humour. At Birmingham Rep, it's going to look amazing."

Before we finish chatting, I ask Joe about his own dog, black cockapoo Douglas, who died last year.

"I decided against getting another dog. I'm on the road too much, so for the moment it doesn't make sense. It's great, though, that having loved a dog, you know how devastating and heartbreaking it is when they die. And so I realise the gravity of the death of this dog in the show for Chris. It's a shocking and a brilliant way to open a novel and a play because everyone wants to know who has done this horrible thing, just as much as Chris wants to know and goes on this quest to find out."

.....

The Curious Incident Of The Dog In The Night-Time shows at Birmingham Rep from Saturday 5 to Saturday 19 September. The production then returns to the Midlands in 2027, showing at Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, from Tuesday 6 to Saturday 10 April & Malvern Theatres from Tues 18 to Saturday 22 May



Raqib Shaw: Night Sonnets

Compton Verney, Warwickshire,
Sat 19 September - Sunday 21 February

It's been more than a decade since Raqib Shaw mounted an exhibition of new work in the UK, so his admirers will surely be eager to check out this brand-new offering.

Night Sonnets brings together a cycle of nocturnal paintings and tapestry which has been informed by the 52-year-old artist's lifelong interest in moonlight and the conditions of the night.

The paintings act as vehicles via which Raqib Shaw contemplates difficult issues such as human consciousness, environmental loss and destruction of knowledge, exploring questions about the human condition and the complexities of modern-day existence. The exhibition includes a number of works which have never before been exhibited in the UK. These include The Retrospective 2002-2022, an epic, highly detailed painting which functions as a visual inventory of the Calcutta-born artist's impressive career.

Michael Pinsky

The Final Bid.

Open daily until Sun 4 Oct 2026

First Floor Gallery | 11am - 5pm | Free entry

This striking interactive installation invites us to rethink waste and value. Watch as suspended pre-loved chairs gently rise in real-time in response to bids placed via a live online auction. The dynamic sculpture showcases how creativity can sustain and reimagine objects before they move to new homes.

Join us for our exhibition events

Life Drawing Evening | Fri 11 Sep

Artist Talk: Michael Pinsky | Sat 19 Sep

Live Auction Finale | Sun 4 Oct



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Surreal Solihull

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, Wed 16 September - Sun 22 November

Art lovers are being invited 'to see the familiar in unexpected ways' in this brand-new exhibition. The display is a celebration of the legacy of Emmy Bridgwater, who was born in Edgbaston, spent her final years in Solihull, and

whose bold, uncanny artwork made a significant impact on British surrealism. Art historian & author Ruth Millington is the curator of the show, which takes the theme 'surreal' and features work by 29 West Midlands-based artists.

Tereza Bušková: Mothers Without Hands

New Art Gallery, Walsall, until Sun 15 November

Prague-born and Birmingham-based artist Tereza Bušková is the driving force behind the international project Mothers Without Hands.

The initiative, which aims to raise awareness of violence against women and girls, saw diverse communities in Folkestone, Prague, Brno, Erdington and Walsall engage in creative workshops and public processions. The exhibition includes photographic prints, a major video work, and a selection of costumes, headdresses and ceremonial crowns.



Every Thing Must Go by Joe Lycett

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, until Sun 21 February

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery here plays host to a first major solo exhibition of art by Brummie comedian Joe Lycett. Exploring the theme of 'things that are no longer with us', and inspired by objects from the City of Birmingham's collection, Joe's exhibition covers subjects including deceased celebrities, extinct animals, destroyed buildings and discontinued chocolate bars, all presented in the popular funnyman's usual tongue-in-cheek style.

Joe's stated desire with the show is to "overwhelm and delight with a neon graveyard".

Andy Warhol: Art Star

Wolverhampton Art Gallery, until Sun 4 October

Wolverhampton Art Gallery's tribute to Andy Warhol includes both iconic and lesser-known drawings, screenprints, paintings and photographs from the 1950s to the 1980s.

Warhol's famous Campbell's soup tin features in the show, taking its place alongside images of The Beatles, Marilyn Monroe and Elizabeth Taylor.



Reflections

Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum, Sat 12 September - Sun 3 January

Immerse yourself in the fluid beauty and immense power of water...

That's the suggestion being made by Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum in its publicity for this brand-new exhibition.

Featuring works from Worcester City's own collection - presented alongside high-profile loans from national collections and numerous pieces by contemporary artists - Reflections aims to inspire the viewer's imagination. It also serves as a vital reminder of the human responsibility to protect seas, rivers, streams and waterways, all of which are so important for the future.

Paula Rego: Visions Of English Literature

Rugby Art Gallery & Museum, Sat 19 September - Sat 21 November

Unseen preparatory sketches and etching plates are among the items on show in this exhibition of work by the late Paula Rego, who is widely considered to be one of the finest artists, printmakers and storytellers of modern times. The display features three series of graphic works by the Lisbon-born artist: Jane Eyre, Nursery Rhymes and Peter Pan.

Each series is accompanied by a variety of Paula's personal items, many of which have never before been displayed in public.



HOBBITS IN THE SHIRE

A brand-new Tolkien-inspired festival is taking place at Weston Park this month...



Tolkien fans will be in their element this month when a brand-new festival takes place in the beautiful setting of Weston Park. Promising lantern-lit lanes, woodsmoke, music - and the chance to live life as a hobbit - Brandywine offers five days of unique and immersive fun. What's On recently caught up with one of the team responsible for bringing the festival to the Shire...

Lord Of The Rings fans are being invited to explore their inner hobbit when the immersive Middle-earth festival Brandywine comes to the UK for the first time this month.

A live-action role-playing (LARP) event, Brandywine will turn the grounds of Weston Park near Shifnal into The Shire, home of the hobbits in JRR Tolkien's beloved books *The Hobbit* and *The Lord Of The Rings* trilogy.

Festival-goers will take on the role of a hobbit and follow immersive storylines created by a team of performers. Plus, they can join in with a whole host of hobbit-related activities, including games, live music, dancing, and workshops exploring cookery and textiles.

Visitors to the festival have the option of staying for the full event and camping, or just attending for one day on Saturday the 12th.

The first Brandywine Festival took place last year in Kentucky and was an immediate sell-out. The organisers, German-based LARP experts Burgschneider, were keen to bring the event not just to the UK but as close as possible to Birmingham - the childhood home of Tolkien.

"How Tolkien imagined The Shire was specifically the West Midlands and the Cotswolds," says Burgschneider chief creative officer Thomas 'Beol' Miller. "Those regions are really the spiritual home of Middle-earth, and Tolkien was clear about this in some of his writing. Therefore, we very much loved the idea of having the festival so close to his home in Birmingham. This was very much on the wish list, and when it came to finding the right venue, the team at Weston Park were able to help us bring that to life by having a wonderful site there on the estate. They are a wonderful team - capable and knowledgeable - and helped us with all the questions that we had as we developed the event."

Once visitors step into the festival, they will be entering a whole different world.

"The Brandywine Festival is a fully immersive, multi-day experience set in The Shire," explains Beol. "so from the moment you arrive, the modernity of the world fades and we're focused on being 'in character', roleplaying and being as hobbits; everything from lantern-lit little lanes between tents, woodsmoke over fires, live music, and a living community of hobbits who are there to roleplay that world and embody that world for the four days of the event."

"We have the Four Farthings Games and a series of Shire games, camping, and the

storytelling of what is happening within The Shire in that period. We've picked a very specific date within The Shire, which gives us a lot of context [in terms of] what is happening within the world of the hobbits. So what would be the gossip? What would there be to do? And then we try to explore those ideas in the story."

From the time the Burgschneider team were first asked by Middle-earth Enterprises - which holds the worldwide rights to *The Hobbit* and *The Lord Of The Rings* books - to create Brandywine, it took around 18 months to develop the concept. Beol says it was essential from the outset that the festival be faithful to Tolkien's novels.

"We treat the event almost as if it is a re-enactment of that world, just as much as it is a game of make-believe at its core. We are treating Tolkien's work almost as a primary source for a historian. We look at the books and then try to surmise and understand what and how he described it, so that we can attempt - as best we can within reason - to recreate that feeling and those moments."

On the Brandywine website, the team provide helpful guides to costuming, creating a character and all the other elements of the festival, to ensure visitors can fully immerse themselves in the fun.

"The idea is that you are stepping into the world that exists there, and you aren't Bilbo but you can decide who you are. And because we are giving players a very clear set of guidelines and railings [within which] they can interact and roleplay, it's very easy for them to go through the process of designing a character."

"We have wonderful tools on our website that help you to design a character, and tools to help you to understand what it is to roleplay as a generic hobbit of your own accord. There is no limitation to the creative opportunities within the world of Tolkien. We want to see a visitor's story through their character; we want to see their creativity come out, and the expression and the love that they have for Tolkien's work."

This even extends to the camping, where visitors have the choice of recreating a Shire camping experience or stepping out of the game and bringing more modern equivalents. The aim, says Beol, is to ensure Brandywine is as accessible as it can be.

"This event is really for everyone, even if you haven't done LARP before. This is a wonderful place to be able to explore

roleplaying and being in a character in a way that is very accessible and fun. The event very much welcomes you in with open arms, with a wonderful community of like-minded people who are there to play to life.

"If you love *The Lord Of The Rings* and you can imagine yourself enjoying a Saturday spent relaxing, having a picnic as a hobbit, playing games, listening to music, dancing, eating food and spending time with good friends, then this is the event for you. Tolkien said 'If more of us valued food and cheer and song above hoarded gold, it would be a merrier world' - and that is what we are trying to bring here."

Tolkien's *The Hobbit* and *The Lord Of The Rings* are among the most popular books ever written and were memorably made into a series of hugely successful films by Peter Jackson. Beol believes the key to their success lies in Tolkien's vision.

"At the end of the day it's an endearing story that touches the core of our wanting a world in which there is a clear division between good and evil and a clear opportunity for us to make a difference in the world; and then, further than that, to explore a space in which myth and legend still hold sway. I think that speaks to who we are as people, and to our love for adventure and for the triumphing of a classic hero story, despite the fact he's nothing but a simple hobbit."



Brandywine Festival takes place at Weston Park, on the Shropshire/Staffordshire border, from Wednesday 9 to Sunday 13 September

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2-Tone Legacies
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80's Showcase
Selector Showcase
2-Tone Bands Showcase
Venues & Studios Showcase
Rudies Room
The Specials Showcase
Artist of the Month Showcase
90's and 00's Showcases
The Studio - Make Some Noise
Temporary Exhibition Gallery
Godiva Festival Exhibit
Every 2-Tone single Exhibit
Rave Wall
Delia Derbyshire Showcase

EXHIBITIONS FOR 2026



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Events previews from around the region



Malvern Autumn Show

Three Counties Showground, Worcestershire, Fri 25 - Sun 27 September

Malvern Autumn Show returns to the Three Counties Showground late this month with a packed programme of entertainment, family activities and food & drink experiences. Visitors can enjoy animal encounters, dinosaur-themed shows, circus skills, arts & crafts, a vintage funfair and live arena displays featuring everything from agility dogs to Exmoor ponies.

Food lovers can browse artisan markets, sample street food from a range of independent traders, and discover local

producers in dedicated food & drink areas. The popular Great Malvern Cake Off also returns, alongside giant vegetable displays, harvest exhibits and expert demonstrations. New for this year, visitors can explore the reimagined On The Farm area and enjoy an expanded programme of free family-friendly workshops and activities.

Special guests from the worlds of gardening, baking and television will also be making contributions, including Monty Don and Gavin & Stacey favourite Joanna Page.



A Place In The Sun Live NEC, Birmingham, Fri 18 - Sun 20 September

The live version of long-running Channel Four television series A Place In The Sun returns to the NEC mid-month, bringing together special guests, exclusive content and practical advice for anyone considering a new life or holiday home abroad. Visitors can browse property-purchasing

opportunities in destinations including Spain, Portugal, France, Cyprus and Dubai, while a series of live seminars, Q&A sessions and expert-led presentations provide valuable insights into the challenges of navigating the overseas property market.

Living History Weekend

Moseley Old Hall, Wolverhampton, Sat 26 & Sun 27 September

Step back in time at Moseley Old Hall this month as the Sealed Knot brings to life the dramatic story of King Charles II's escape. The Living History Weekend recreates the events of 1651, when the young king arrived at the hall following his defeat at the Battle of Worcester.

Visitors can explore a 17th-century living-history camp, discover traditional crafts and clothing, meet soldiers and civilians, and watch musket, pike and drum drills.

A selection of child-friendly interactive activities is also included in the event's line-up of attractions.

Medieval Experience

Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove, Sat 12 & Sun 13 September

History lovers can sample a taste of life in the 15th century at Avoncroft this month, where the Wars of the Roses takes centre stage.

Expect dramatic re-enactments featuring sword fighting, cannon fire and archery, presented alongside demonstrations of weaponry and gunpowder.

Visitors can explore living-history camps and learn all about everyday life during medieval times, from cooking and clothes-making to traditional trades, skills and games. The Beaufort Company will be on hand to showcase costumes and crafts, while families can enjoy rides on the museum's miniature railway.



The Strongman Open

Utilita Arena Birmingham, Sat 5 September

Prepare for an evening of jaw-dropping shows of strength as Giants Live brings The Strongman Open to Birmingham.

The world's strongest men will go head-to-head in five gruelling tests of strength, speed and raw power, all competing to be crowned Strongman Open Champion.

Expect incredible feats of lifting, throwing, dragging and flipping, as some of the biggest names in the sport battle it out.

The action-packed show is promising spectacular entertainment for the whole family and forms part of the Official Strongman World Arena Tour.



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Events previews from around the region



Hills Ford Stages Weston Park, Shropshire, Sat 19 September

Motorsport fans can enjoy an action-packed day out when the Hills Ford Stages Rally visits Weston Park mid-month.

Part of a two-day event taking place across Shropshire, the rally will see some of the UK's top drivers compete on challenging stages at one of the sport's most iconic venues.

Beyond the high-speed action, visitors can

enjoy the new Rally Festival, featuring trade stands, motorsport displays, family-focused entertainment, interactive experiences and a selection of food & drink.

The event will also showcase the Pathways education zone and DriveWise road safety initiative, offering insights into careers in motorsport and promoting safer driving.

Peaky Blinders Night

Black Country Living Museum, Dudley, Sat 26 September

Step into the world of the Peaky Blinders this month as Black Country Living Museum hosts another of its popular nighttime events. From 7pm to 10.30pm, visitors to the venue can explore the historic streets and locations featured in the hit BBC television series. Expect live music, interactive performances and fun betting games, presented alongside a selection of Black Country food, including pork cobs, steak pie and traditional pub snacks. Guests are encouraged to dress in their finest 1920s-inspired outfits for the occasion



Firework Champions

Eastnor Castle, Herefordshire, Sat 5 September; Ragley Hall, Warwickshire, Sat 19 September; Arley Hall, Cheshire, Sat 26 September

Firework Champions is celebrating its 20th anniversary with a number of spectacular events this autumn, bringing explosive entertainment to Eastnor Castle, Ragley Hall and Arley Hall.

Each event sees three professional firework teams go head-to-head, creating dazzling displays set to music as they compete to be crowned the evening's winner.

A spectacular finale brings proceedings to a sky-illuminating close.

Summer Fun at Lichfield Cathedral

Lichfield Cathedral, Staffordshire, until Sun 6 September

If you haven't yet visited Lichfield Cathedral's two popular summer attractions, there's still a few days to catch them before they finish.

Artist Tessa Campbell Fraser's impressive installation Whales features three sperm-whale sculptures suspended in the cathedral's nave. The sculptures have been created from materials including recycled ghost netting, silk chiffon and latex, to highlight the impact of plastic pollution and climate change...

Meanwhile, outside the cathedral, early-autumn visitors can check out The Beach. Returning for its fifth year, the free-to-enjoy seaside escape comes complete with sand, buckets, spades and deckchairs.



Photo credit: Bob Green

Severn Valley Railway's Autumn Steam Gala

Severn Valley Railway, Worcestershire, Thurs 17 - Sun 20 September

Get ready to soak up steam-age sights and sounds as Severn Valley Railway hosts its nostalgic and ever-popular Autumn Gala. The four-day event boasts a busy timetable of locomotives travelling between Kidderminster and Bridgnorth, with not only home-fleet favourites but also visiting

engines taking to the tracks.

A major highlight will be the first-ever SVR appearance of Isle of Wight Steam Railway's Ivatt Class 2 tank No 41313.

Pannier Tank 9681 (pictured), GWR Small Prairie No 5526 and BR Standard Class 4 Tank No 80097 also feature.

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

thelist



Heathers The Musical at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry - Tue 15 - Sat 19 September

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

What's On

Tues 1 - Sun 6 September



Game of Thrones: The Mad King -
RST, Stratford-upon-Avon
until Sat 5 September

Mon 7 - Sun 13 September



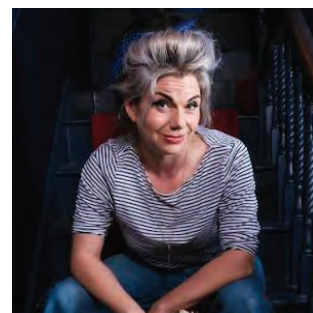
Ludlow Food Festival -
Ludlow Castle, South Shropshire
Fri 11 - Sun 13 September

Mon 14 - Sun 20 September



Phil Wang -
The Alexandra, Birmingham
Sun 20 September

Mon 21 - Wed 30 September



Caitlin Moran -
Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry
Fri 25 September

EXHIBITIONS ACROSS THE MIDLANDS

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

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

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

Compton Verney, Warwickshire

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

THE PATTERN OF LIFE: ENID MARX AND MODERN BRITISH DESIGN Step into a world of pattern, creativity and modern British design, in the first exhibition to explore the influential patterns of Enid Marx and her community, until Sun 3 Jan

Coventry Music Museum

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

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 Discover the Sun like never before through the lens of University of Birmingham research/Exhibition inspired by artist Luke Jerram's illuminated sculpture, Helios, until Sun 1 Nov

EXHIBITION: UNLOCKING THE VAULTS Set within the former safe deposit facility beneath The Exchange, this free exhibition explores how the Birmingham Municipal Bank shaped everyday life in the city, until Sat 7 Nov

Herbert Museum & Art Gallery, Coventry

WARWICKSHIRE'S JURASSIC SEA Discover the amazing creatures that lived in Coventry and Warwickshire during the time of the dinosaurs, until Sun 21 Feb

CURIOUS CREATURES, STONES AND BONES Explore incredible specimens from the venue's natural sciences collection and discover fascinating facts about them. From tiny insects to mighty mammals, sea creatures to rocks from outer space, there's something for everyone, until July 2028

Ikon Gallery, Birmingham

BALRAJ KHANNA: LINES OF FLIGHT Major survey exhibition bringing together more than 40 paintings made across six decades and celebrating the artist's connection to Birmingham, Wed 30 Sept - Wed 2 Feb

Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum

UNRULY DESIRES: REFRAMING THE PAST Featuring Gupta's New Pre-Raphaelites series and Singh's The Promise Of Beauty series, both artists explore and disrupt ideas relating to the canon of western art, queerness, the gaze, love and intimacy, until Sun 6 Sept

Midlands Arts Centre, Edgbaston, B'ham

MAC CREATIVES Featuring work by 33 staff at MAC, this mixed-media exhibition showcases the huge variety of talent and artistry to be found within the venue, until Sun 13 Sept

MADE AT MAC: CAPTURING THE HUMAN FORM From life drawing to dance and sculpture to photography, artists across the full breadth of MAC's courses are constantly looking to the human form for inspiration. This mixed-media exhibition showcases work by tutors and participants inspired by

our bodies, until Sun 7 Feb

RESISTANCE, RE-IMAGINE An international dialogue and exchange on the themes of resistance and reimagining, and an exploration of the climate emergency. Featuring works by Mushfiq Mahbub Turjo and Zillah Bowes, Sat 19 Sept - Sun 29 Nov

SURREAL CREATURES TRAIL Curious creatures have crept, crawled, swooped and slithered their way into the building, and they're waiting to be discovered! Children aged three-plus and their families are invited to explore a menagerie of extraordinary animals, Sat 26 Sept - Sun 21 Feb

New Art Gallery, Walsall

TEN.8 AFTERIMAGE Photography exhibition exploring the legacy and enduring impact of Ten.8, a photography journal that emerged from the Midlands' radical cultural and political landscape, until Sun 13 Sept

WHAT GROWS IN BETWEEN A group exhibition of newly commissioned work made during the third iteration of Assembly, a development programme for local artists Dan Booth, Abraham Babajide Cole and Hannah Rollason, until Sun 11 Oct

FACE VALUE Inspired by the strong focus on portraits in the Garman Ryan Collection, this temporary exhibition brings together a selection of artworks from the Gallery's Permanent Collection, until Sun 23 May

Nuneaton Museum & Art Gallery

INGENIOUS GADGETS: MAURICE COLLINS Exhibition featuring 100 fascinating objects, many over 100 years old, until Sat 19 Sept

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

OUR FAVOURITE THINGS Show bringing together items handpicked by the museum and archives teams, who also share the reasons why they chose the objects, until Sun 20 Dec

BETHESDA GARDENS: PAST TIMES Outdoor exhibition bringing together a variety of paintings from the museum's

art collection that explore the rhythms of daily life across generations, until Sun 31 Jan

RBSA Gallery, Birmingham

NEXT GENERATION RBSA 2026 Exhibition of works by early-career artists based within easy reach of the RBSA gallery, Tues 1 - Sat 12 Sept

GUILD OF AVIATION ARTISTS: DEFENCE OF THE REALM New exhibition featuring some 180 aviation paintings, Tues 15 - Sat 26 Sept

Rugby Art Gallery

GIZMOBOTS: FOUND OBJECT ROBOT SCULPTURES A series of sculptures made by artist Mark Haig. Some are purely decorative, whilst others have functions such as being a lamp, radio or music player, until Wed 9 Sept

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

Wolverhampton Art Gallery

ANDY WARHOL: ART STAR Major exhibition of both iconic and lesser-known drawings, screenprints, paintings and photographs. The included works highlight Warhol's fascination with fame, celebrity and commercial culture, until Sun 4 Oct

Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

54321 FAB! Nostalgic exhibition featuring original puppets, models, art and memorabilia from the much-loved 1960s TV shows of Gerry and Sylvia Anderson - including Thunderbirds, Captain Scarlet, Joe 90 and Stingray, until Sun 6 Sept

DAVID COX: THE ART OF WATERCOLOUR Celebrating Worcester's collection of watercolours by one of the West Midlands' greatest painters, until Sun 1 Nov

Elsewhere:

MOTHERSHIP EXHIBITION 2026 Exhibition celebrating the inspiring work created by

mother-artists and their children during the Mothership Residency, until Sat 5 Sept, Stryx, Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

WHALES BY TESSA CAMPBELL FRASER Striking installation in which three majestic sperm-whale sculptures appear to glide through the Cathedral's nave - a reminder of what can be lost if people fail to care for the planet, until Sun 6 Sept, Lichfield Cathedral

MEET REMBRANDT AT UPTON HOUSE Visitors are invited to practice 'slow looking' at Rembrandt's self-portrait masterpiece and other artworks from the house's collection, until Sun 8 Nov, Upton House & Gardens, Warks

LUDLOW: THE PAGEANT Exhibition of costumes, ephemera and footage documenting a historic theatrical event and parade which took place over 4 days in the summer of 1934, until Fri 18 Dec, Shropshire Museums Collection Centre, Ludlow, South Shropshire

TROPICAL FISH: THE NANO WORLD A vibrant collection of tropical fish-inspired prints celebrating the fascinating world of nano and small aquarium species, until Sun 31 Jan, Stryx, Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

EOP SUMMER CAMP SHOW Members of EOP - Eastside Projects' artist development scheme - take over the gallery in a celebration of the membership and the work they make, Sat 5 - Sat 19 Sept, Eastside Projects, Birmingham

WE ARE STAFFORDSHIRE: STITCHED FOR STAFFORDSHIRE YOUTH PROJECT Further-education students across the county have contributed squares to a communal quilt, Fri 11 Sept - Sun 4 Oct, Lichfield Cathedral

BEAR STEPS SOLO EXHIBITIONS Featuring works by Rob Davis & Kirstie Edwards, Sun 13 - Sat 26 Sept, Bear Steps Art Gallery, Shrewsbury

THE ENCHANTED WAY EXHIBITION Exhibition of paintings, calligraphy and photographs by Elizabeth and Gerard Beattie, Tues 15 Sept - Mon 5 Oct, Worcester Cathedral

Tuesday 1 - Sunday 6 September

Gigs

CARDINALS Tues 1 Sept, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

LORENZO RICHARDS Tues 1 Sept, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

DIGBETH JAZZ Tues 1 Sept, The Night Owl, Birmingham

DAVID ESSEX Tues 1 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

DEVIN TOWNSEND Tues 1 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

GILBERT O'SULLIVAN Tues 1 Sept, Malvern Theatres

TRADITIONAL FOLK NIGHT Tues 1 Sept, The Red Lion, Evesham

MAN IN THE MIRROR - MICHAEL JACKSON TRIBUTE Tues 1 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

THE SUKIS + THE JACQUES + PISTOL DAISYS Wed 2 Sept, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

A PLACE TO BURY STRANGERS Wed 2 Sept, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

TAD NEWTON'S JAZZ FRIENDS Wed 2 Sept, Boldmere Sports and Social Club, Sutton Coldfield

GARRETT T. CAPPS + LITTLE MAZARN Wed 2 Sept, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

GORDIE TENTREES + KIERAN POILE Wed 2 Sept, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

WEIRD NIGHTMARE Thurs 3 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE DARLING BUDS Thurs 3 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE SOUTH Thurs 3 Sept, The Jam House, Birmingham

JOHN YOUNG Thurs 3 Sept, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

SPELL SONGS Thurs 3 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE BROTHERS COMATOSE Thurs 3 Sept, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

WE THREE KINGS - OF COUNTRY Thurs 3 Sept, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

JUST LIKE LUTHER Thurs 3 Sept, The Robin, Bilston

TOMÁS DONCKER & THE TRUE GROOVE ALL-STARS Thurs 3 Sept, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

PROM + HAN SANDY Thurs 3 Sept, The Underground, Stoke-on-Trent

ARRIVAL: THE HITS OF ABBA Thurs 3 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

MAN OF THE WORLD: THE MUSIC OF PETER GREEN Thurs 3 Sept, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

JILTED GENERATION - PRODIGY TRIBUTE Fri 4 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

ELM GROVE + THE KASTERS + SHIM GIBBS AND YESTERDAYS FOOLS + WRITER Fri 4 Sept, O2 Institute, B'ham

ZZ TOPPD Fri 4 Sept, Jo Jo Jims, Birmingham

BRAD HENSHAW Fri 4 Sept, Tower of Song, Birmingham

THE JAM UK Fri 4 Sept, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

BLOOD DEALER Fri 4 Sept, The Flapper, Birmingham

THE KILKENNYS Fri 4 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

LUKE COMBS EXPERIENCE Fri 4 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE BARRY MANILOW TRIBUTE Fri 4 Sept, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

SKA TRAIN Fri 4 Sept, Temperance, Leamington Spa

UNDER THE COVERS Fri 4 Sept, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

FROM THE JAM Fri 4 Sept, hmv Empire, Coventry

THE MUSIC OF THE FOUR TOPS Fri 4 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry

THE SIMON & GARFUNKEL STORY Fri 4 Sept, Bedworth Civic Hall

SNOG + POIZON Fri 4 Sept, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

THE TANNAHILL WEAVERS Fri 4 Sept, The Market Theatre, Ledbury

ULTIMATE RNB Fri 4 Sept, Marris Bar, Worcester

LINDISFARNE Fri 4 Sept, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

THE ELO EXPERIENCE Fri 4 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

THE SIGNATURES NORTHERN SOUL LIVE Fri 4 Sept, Malvern Theatres

NIGHTBLADE Fri 4 Sept, Kidderminster Town Hall

PETE JONES Fri 4 Sept, The Red Lion, Evesham

ROCK FOR HEROES Fri 4 Sept, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

THE ELO ENCOUNTER Fri 4 Sept, The Robin, Bilston

CHRIS HELME Fri 4 Sept, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

AS IT IS + GREYWIND Fri 4 Sept, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

THE YEAR GRUNGE BROKE Fri 4 Sept, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

A FOREIGNERS JOURNEY Fri 4 Sept, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

MAX DE BERNARDI & VERONICA SBERGIA Fri 4 Sept, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

AIRTIGHT Fri 4 Sept, Riff Factory, Stoke-on-Trent

THE VARUKERS + BLITZKRIEG + THE THIRTEENTH TURN Fri 4 Sept, The Rigger, Newcastle-Under-Lyme

CURVED AIR Fri 4 Sept, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

ULTIMATE QUEEN Fri 4 Sept, The Station, Cannock

AIN'T NO DISCO Fri 4 Sept, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

DS:UK Fri 4 Sept, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

DANNI'S PEOPLE Fri 4 - Sat 5 Sept, The Jam House, Birmingham

TRUE ORDER - THE SOUND OF NEW ORDER Sat 5 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE SKASTUDS Sat 5 Sept, Actress & Bishop,

Birmingham

ISABEL VAN GELDER Sat 5 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SOULFLY + NAILBOMB Sat 5 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SEEDHE MAUT Sat 5 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

UNDER THE COVERS Sat 5 Sept, Jo Jo Jims, Birmingham

BRUM PUNX PICNIC 2026 Sat 5 Sept, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

LUNGS - PERFORMING

FLORENCE AND THE MACHINE Sat 5 Sept, The Flapper, B'ham

SANS FROID Sat 5 Sept, The Rainbow, Digbeth, Birmingham

ROBBIE WILLIAMS BY DAN BUDD Sat 5 Sept, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER MOTOWN SHOW Sat 5 Sept, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

KILLERSTREAM Sat 5 Sept, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

HELLA ROCK FESTIVAL Sat 5 Sept, hmv Empire, Coventry

THE ROY ORBISON STORY Sat 5 Sept, Rother Street Arts, Stratford-upon-Avon

CRUCIBLE BAND + BAZZAR + LUCK OF THE DRAW Sat 5 Sept, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

CURVED AIR Sat 5 Sept, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

KAST OFF KINKS Sat 5 Sept, Swan Theatre, Worcester

SUGAR PIE HONEY BUNCH Sat 5 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

TUBULAR BELLS Sat 5 Sept, Kidderminster Town Hall

THE GREAT COVER UP Sat 5 Sept, The Valkyrie Bar, Evesham

THE GEORGE HARRISON PROJECT Sat 5 Sept, Brierley Hill Civic

AMNESIA Sat 5 Sept, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

SEX PISTOLS EXPOSÉ Sat 5 Sept, The Robin, Bilston



Isabel Van Gelder - O2 Institute, Birmingham

FLOYD IN THE FLESH Sat 5 Sept, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

LUCCA MAE + ANNE-MARIE ALLEN Sat 5 Sept, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

ANGELS OF DARKNESS Sat 5 Sept, Riff Factory, Stoke-on-Trent

THE STORY OF JOHNNY CASH AND JUNE CARTER Sat 5 Sept, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

JACQUI MCSHEE'S PENTANGLE Sat 5 Sept, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

LOADED REVOLVER Sat 5 Sept, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

AN EVENING OF KATE BUSH Sat 5 Sept, Lichfield Cathedral

ROGER PARKES - ELECTRIC DREAMS Sat 5 Sept, Rugeley Rose Theatre

WILD CANDY Sat 5 Sept, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

MOSHTALGIA Sat 5 Sept, The Firefly, Oakengates, Telford

HEJIRA: THE MUSIC OF JONI MITCHELL Sat 5 Sept, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

TALIA MAR Sun 6 Sept, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

SHALLOWATER + TWINE Sun 6 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE BLACKHEART ORCHESTRA Sun 6 Sept, Kitchen Garden, B'ham

DAY WE RAN Sun 6 Sept, O2 Institute, B'ham

DANCE GAVIN DANCE +

AS DECEMBER FALLS + DWELLINGS Sun 6 Sept, O2 Academy, B'ham

LOZ RABONE Sun 6 Sept, Jo Jo Jims, B'ham

THE GARRY ALLCOCK TRIO Sun 6 Sept, Tower of Song, Birmingham

1986 + XENITH Sun 6 Sept, Subside Bar, Birmingham

THE KILKENNYS Sun 6 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

JOHN DOYLE Sun 6 Sept, Temperance, Leamington Spa

JEFFREY LEWIS & THE VOLTAGE Sun 6 Sept, Marris Bar, Worcester

FOREVER JACKSON Sun 6 Sept, Swan Theatre, Worcester

THE QUARKNESS - A TRIBUTE TO HAWKWIND Sun 6 Sept, The Robin, Bilston

THE MERSEY BEATLES Sun 6 Sept, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

AC/DSHE + STATEASE QUO Sun 6 Sept, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

TUBULAR BELLS LIVE Sun 6 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

BLUES IN THE NIGHT Sun 6 Sept, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

NEW AMEN CORNER SOUL Sun 6 Sept, Rugeley Rose Theatre

THE ROY ORBISON STORY Sun 6 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

HEARTBREAK // THE TOM PETTY SHOW Sun 6 Sept, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury



Game of Thrones: The Mad King - Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

Classical Music

ROYAL NORTHERN COLLEGE OF MUSIC CONCERT Featuring Maisy Shaw (flute), Felix Ashley (baritone) & Oliver Ashley (piano), Tues 1 Sept, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

FRAN AMBROSE (BASS) & MARTYN RAWLES (PIANO) RECITAL Tues 1 Sept, Lichfield Cathedral

PAUL CARR ORGAN RECITAL Programme includes works by Mozart, Haydn, Boëly & more..., Thurs 3 Sept, St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham

MUNICH PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA WITH MARTHA ARGERICH Featuring Lahav Shani (conductor). Programme includes works by Farrenc, Beethoven & Brahms, Fri 4 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

MARK SWINTON ORGAN RECITAL Fri 4 Sept, St Mary's Church, Warwick

QUINTUS BRASS QUINTET Featuring Corey Kohut & George Sharman (trumpets), Wald Liu (french horn), Tiegian Lowthian (trombone) & Inioluwa Kutu (tuba), Sat 5 Sept, Shrewsbury Cathedral

THE HANOVER BAND Featuring Leon Bosch (conductor) & David Blackadder (trumpet). Programme includes works by Beethoven, Haydn & Schubert, Sat 5 Sept, Malvern Theatres

ALISON HOWELL ORGAN RECITAL Sat 5 Sept, St Laurence's Church, Ludlow, South Shropshire

Comedy

JONNY COLE Tues 1 - Thurs 3 Sept, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

TEZ ILYAS Wed 2 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

CLOSEUP COMEDY Wed 2 Sept, Herbert's Yard, Birmingham

THE ALTER COMEDY CLUB Wed 2 Sept, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

PROJECT MAYHEM Thurs 3 Sept,

Scruffy Murphy's, Birmingham

CHRISTIAN REILLY, KAREN BAYLEY, DEVIN GRAY, MACKENZIE PIKE & DAVE TWENTYMAN Thurs 3 Sept, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

JASON MANFORD Fri 4 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

JOEL DOMMETT, DARREN HARRIOTT, LOUISE YOUNG & WAYNE BEESE Fri 4 Sept, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

PHIL NICHOL, TOM TOAL, SCOTT BENNETT & CHRISTOPHER MACARTHUR-BOYD Fri 4 - Sat 5 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

MARCUS TISSON & HESKI Sat 5 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

MARK THOMAS Sat 5 Sept, Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

ANDY PARSONS Sat 5 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

ROUGH WORKS: NEW MATERIAL NIGHT Sun 6 Sept, The Glee Club, B'ham

DAN NIGHTINGALE, ESHAAN AKBAR & ROB MULHOLLAND Sun 6 Sept, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

Theatre

ERIC IN DOWNTOWN ABBEY New Vic favourite Eric returns - and takes a job at a run-down stately home in deepest Staffordshire..., until Sat 5 Sept, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

GAME OF THRONES: THE MAD KING Sweeping new stage epic from the world of George RR Martin, revealing a legendary chapter in Westeros history, until Sat 5 Sept, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

MRS DOUBTFIRE THE MUSICAL Hit West End comedy musical based on the 1993 Robin Williams film of the same name. Gabriel Vick takes the title role, until Sat 19 Sept, Birmingham Hippodrome

9 TO 5 THE MUSICAL Smash hit musical comedy about friendship, courage

and standing up for what's right, Tues 1 - Sat 5 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

MACBETH Cycling Shakespearean actors The Handlebards present an outdoor version of the Bard's bloodiest tragedy, Wed 2 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

GOODNIGHT MR TOM Amateur version of Michelle Margorian's wartime story concerning an elderly recluse and a young evacuee, Wed 2 - Sat 12 Sept, Priory Theatre, Kenilworth

THE PHANTOM RASPBERRY BLOWER OF OLD LONDON TOWN Jack the Ripper parody, originally written by Spike Milligan in 1971 and then adapted by Ronnie Barker for The Two Ronnies' BBC television series in 1976, Thurs 3 Sept, Malvern Theatres

AN EVENING WITH JACK THE RIPPER A show that takes a deep-dive into Victorian London to 'unmask' history's most famous serial killer, Thurs 3 Sept, Kidderminster Town Hall

MACBETH Cycling Shakespearean actors The Handlebards present an outdoor version of the Bard's bloodiest tragedy, Thurs 3 Sept, The Amphitheatre, Telford Town Park

NEXT TO NORMAL Five Towns Theatre present an amateur version of Brian Yorkey's American rock musical, Thurs 3 - Sat 5 Sept, Stoke Rep Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

THE MOUSETRAP Seventy-fifth-anniversary touring version of Agatha Christie's iconic thriller. Nicholas Bailey (EastEnders) and Susan Penhaligon (A Fine Romance) star, Thurs 3 - Sat 12 Sept, The Alexandra, Birmingham

THE PHANTOM RASPBERRY BLOWER OF OLD LONDON TOWN Jack the Ripper parody, originally written by Spike Milligan in 1971 and then adapted by Ronnie Barker for The Two Ronnies' BBC television series in 1976, Fri 4 Sept, Crown Wharf Theatre, Stone, Staffs

NERDY PRUDES MUST DIE Horror comedy musical, Fri 4 - Sat 5 Sept, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

SHE: THE LIVE EXPERIENCE Keneish Dance present 'a celebration of every woman and girl taking up space, unapologetically', Sat 5 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

ROMEO & JULIET Outdoor version presented by The Dukes Theatre Company, Sat 5 Sept, Spetchley Park Gardens, Worcestershire

JANE EYRE New version of Charlotte Brontë's gothic romance, Sat 5 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

EDUCATING RITA Amateur version of Willy Russell's iconic comic drama, Sat 5 - Sat 12 Sept, The Oldbury Rep

THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME Joe McFadden &

Charlie Brooks star in a new stage version of Mark Haddon's acclaimed murder-mystery novel, Sat 5 - Sat 19 Sept, The Rep, Birmingham

SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE MYSTERY OF THE GOVERNOR'S NOSE Jenny Wren Productions present a comic new play inspired by The Naval Treaty and The Man With The Twisted Lip, Sun 6 Sept, The Lenches Amphitheatre, Evesham

ROMEO & JULIET Outdoor version presented by The Dukes Theatre Company, Sun 6 Sept, Stoneleigh Abbey, Kenilworth

Kids Theatre

FUN FOR LITTLE ONES - A UK TRIBUTE TO MS RACHEL Lively show for younger audiences featuring lots of audience participation, interactive screen content, puppetry and more..., Fri 4 Sept, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

BLIPPI: BE LIKE BLIPPI TOUR Brand-new interactive adventure for younger audiences, packed with music, laughter and surprises, Sun 6 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall

FIREMAN SAM LIVE! THE LOST PIRATE TREASURE New swashbuckling adventure for younger audiences and their families, Sun 6 Sept, Malvern Theatres

THE TALE OF THE LONELIEST WHALE Hoglets Theatre present a deep-sea adventure for younger audiences, complete with beautiful puppets, sea creatures, original music and audience interaction, Sun 6 Sept, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

Dance

ADAM GARCIA'S EMERALD STORM Fusion of Irish dance with urban tap. Britain's Got Talent finalist Tom Ball stars, Sat 5 Sept, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

Light Entertainment

THE BEST OF HANS ZIMMER & FILM FAVOURITES ILLUMINATED The Illuminated Orchestra present an immersive tribute to cinema's most iconic music, set to a 'stunning' light show, Tues 1 Sept, Civic Hall, Wolverhampton

DREAMBOYS 'The UK's most famous strip show' takes to the stage, Wed 2 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

WOT ITALIAN? Award-winning comedy and music from Boothby Graffoe & Antonio Forcione, Thurs 3 Sept, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

BI-CURIOUS GEORGE: SNAIL TRAIL Bi-

Curious George (Queer Planet) returns with a slimy exploration of trans-masculinity, hormones and being a pest, Thurs 3 Sept, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

PAUL ZERDIN - SHUT YOUR MOUTH New comedy tour from the master ventriloquist and former winner of America's Got Talent, Thurs 3 Sept, Swan Theatre, Worcester

WEST END SEASONS Matinee performance bringing to life the iconic story and music of Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons, Thurs 3 Sept, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

SING THE MUSICALS Live-band event with a giant screen and singalong lyrics. Expect hits from Mamma Mia!, The Greatest Showman, Dirty Dancing, Les Misérables and more..., Fri 4 Sept, Dudley Town Hall

THE MAGIC OF THE MUSICALS Tribute to music from the West End and Broadway. Note that this is a relaxed performance, Fri 4 Sept, Rugeley Rose Theatre

HAIRBRUSH HITS - ULTIMATE 80S PARTY ANTHEMS The Brighthearts present a singalong party night packed with hits from Madonna, Whitney, Bon Jovi, Michael Jackson and more..., Sat 5 Sept, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

TUBULAR BELLS Live performance of one of the most influential albums in music history, performed by a 10-piece electro-acoustic ensemble led by Tubular Bells maestro Phil Toms, Sat 5 Sept, Kidderminster Town Hall

VOICES OF A GENERATION - A CELEBRATION OF THE SONGS, SHOWS AND SOUNDS THAT DEFINED GENERATIONS Sat 5 Sept, The Little Theatre, Donnington, Telford

POP'N'POLLY'S DANCE STORYTIME Join award-winning storyteller Olly Pike for an interactive storytime session blending heartwarming tales and easy-to-follow dances, Sun 6 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

Talks & Spoken Word

JOE WICKS - HEALTHY START An in-conversation event in which the fitness coach and bestselling author talks about his new family cookbook, Healthy Start, Wed 2 Sept, The Heath Bookshop, Kings Heath, Birmingham

AN EVENING WITH SIR GEOFF HURST - LAST MAN STANDING Join the England legend and 1966 World Cup hat-trick hero for an evening of exclusive stories, insights and memories from a remarkable career, Wed 2 Sept, Malvern Theatres

AN EVENING WITH ASTON VILLA LEGENDS... Andy Townsend and Lee Hendrie talk about their action-

packed football careers, Thurs 3 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

AN EVENING WITH SIR GEOFF HURST - LAST MAN STANDING Join the England legend and 1966 World Cup hat-trick hero for an evening of exclusive stories, insights and memories from a remarkable career, Sun 6 Sept, Kidderminster Town Hall

Events

FARMARAMA Five gigantic paddling pools and over 250 tonnes of golden sand transform the farm into a beach, until Tues 1 Sept, National Forest Adventure Farm, Staffordshire

THE GREAT SUMMER ADVENTURE Featuring the brand-new Around The World In 80 Maize maze, until Tues 1 Sept, Hatton Adventure World, Warwickshire

SIX WEEKS OF SUMMER FUN @ PLAY Featuring a new wildflower meadow, animal interactions and more, until Tues 1 Sept, Lower Drayton Farm, Stafford

BAGS OF FUN - FAB CREATIONS Featuring activities inspired by the Gerry & Sylvia Anderson exhibition, 54321FAB!, until Sun 6 Sept, Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum

SEA CREATURE RESCUE SQUAD Take on 'fun interactive challenges' and discover how even small actions can help protect the oceans, until Sun 6 Sept, National SEA LIFE Centre Birmingham

WHALES BY TESSA CAMPBELL FRASER Three majestic sperm-whale sculptures, made from recycled ghost netting, silk chiffon and latex, appear to glide through the Cathedral's nave, until Sun 6 Sept, Lichfield Cathedral

THE BEACH Take along your buckets and spades, build sandcastles, sit back, relax and enjoy a taste of the seaside, until Sun 6 Sept, Lichfield Cathedral

FAMILY TRAIL: INTERNATIONAL RESCUE Enjoy different activities in a countdown from 10 to take off, until Sun 6 Sept, Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum

54321FAB! Exhibition celebrating the much-loved 1960s TV shows of Gerry & Sylvia Anderson, until Sun 6 Sept, Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum

ELMER HIDE & SEEK ADVENTURE TRAIL Find all seven friends hidden along the augmented reality trail, until Sun 6 Sept, Weston Park, Shropshire

LEGO NINJAGO: THE TRUE NINJA TRIALS Train with fellow Ninjas as you battle the elemental monsters through hands-on brick challenges, until Mon 7 Sept, Legoland Discovery Centre Birmingham



Tutankhamun: The Immersive Exhibition - NEC, Birmingham

TUTANKHAMUN: THE IMMERSIVE EXHIBITION Exhibition bringing Ancient Egypt to life and leading visitors on a cutting-edge journey back in time, until Sun 13 Sept, NEC, Birmingham

PEPPA PIG SPACE ADVENTURE Blast off with Peppa Pig and her friends for an 'out of this world' adventure, until Sun 8 Nov, NEC, Birmingham

FLORA FIELDS A pick-your-own dahlia field, until early October, Webbs at Wychbold, Worcestershire

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS: CELLARS, STORES, AND STATE ROOMS Join the house & collections team on a behind-the-scenes tour of the mansion, Thurs 3 Sept, Shugborough Estate, Staffordshire

PLANETARIUM LATES: EYES ON THE SKY, WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN AUTUMN/WINTER Join Dr Radmila Topalovic to explore the night sky, Sat 5 Sept, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

MURDER MYSTERY - A BLACK COUNTRY MYSTERY Step into the heart of the Black Country in 1928 and become part of Black Country Living Museum's first-ever immersive mystery experience, Sat 5 Sept, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

SHADOWS, SECRETS AND STRANGE TALES Join Professor Black as the past stirs, secrets surface, and the stranger tales of the Hall are revealed, Sat 5 Sept, Himley Hall, Dudley

LICHFIELD PROMS Free open-air concert, Sat 5 Sept, Beacon Park, Lichfield

FIREWORK CHAMPIONS Four of the UK's top firework companies present 10-minute displays to music, Sat 5 Sept, Eastnor Castle, Herefordshire

THE STRONGMAN OPEN 2026 The greatest names in Strongman go head-to-head in five tests of strength, speed and raw power, Sat 5 Sept, Utilita Arena Birmingham

BATTLE OF EDGEHILL GUIDED WALK

Discover 'stunning' views and hear stories of pitched battles, Sat 5 Sept, Upton House, Warwickshire

RETRO TRUCK SHOW Show bringing together over 300 trucks, from 1971 to 2001, Sat 5 & Sun 6 Sept, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

FOR THE LOVE OF RETRO Celebrating all things pop culture, Sat 5 & Sun 6 Sept, Telford International Centre

SPOTLIGHT TOUR BY AUTHOR KEITH KAHN-HARRIS OF OZZY OSBOURNE (1948-2025): WORKING CLASS HERO Join Dr Kahn-Harris for a special guided tour of selected exhibits, Sun 6 Sept, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

WAKE UP THE ZOO Early-morning guided tour, giving visitors the opportunity to go behind the scenes and get up close to a variety of exotic animals, Sun 6 Sept, Dudley Zoo & Castle

THE DRAGON KEEPER Charlie will be walking around the woods with a number of dragons for you to meet, Sun 6 Sept, Warley Woods, Smethwick

SPETCHLEY FESTIVAL OF TREES Family-friendly celebration of all things trees and wood, Sun 6 Sept, Spetchley Park Estate, Worcester

Festivals

MOSELEY FOLK & ARTS Line-up includes Kingfishr (pictured), The Dead South, Super Furry Animals, Fri 4 - Sun 6 September, Moseley Park, Birmingham



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Altered Images - Birmingham Town Hall

Gigs

STEPHEN RUSSELL Mon 7 Sept, Bill's Kitchen, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shrops

THOMPSON TWINS' TOM BAILEY + BLANCMANGE Tues 8 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall

ENDLESS LOVE THE SHOW - A TRIBUTE TO DIANA ROSS & LIONEL RICHIE Tues 8 Sept, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

CHANEL YATES Wed 9 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

JOHN DOYLE Wed 9 Sept, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

ARCY DRIVE Wed 9 Sept, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

UPTON BLUES FESTIVAL TAKEOVER Wed 9 Sept, Temperance, Leamington Spa

EASY STREET SPANKERS JAZZ BAND Wed 9 Sept, Boldmere Sports and Social Club, Sutton Coldfield

THE SIMON SPILLETT BIG BAND Wed 9 Sept, Rother Street Arts, Stratford-upon-Avon

BEN THOMPSON LIVE AS ELVIS PRESLEY Wed 9 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

THE MAGIC OF THE BEATLES Wed 9 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

DEVLIN Thurs 10 Sept, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

JOHNNY FOREIGNER + VICTOR VILLARREAL Thurs 10 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE SONGS OF NICK

DRAKE Thurs 10 Sept, Kitchen Garden, B'ham

GUSTAVO ANDRADE & THE BRASUKAS Thurs 10 Sept, The Jam House, Birmingham

A SKYLIT DRIVE + VAMPIRES EVERYWHERE Thurs 10 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

JAMIE WEBSTER Thurs 10 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

MULAA JOANS + ORLANDO Thurs 10 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

LOUISE ROGAN AND FRIENDS Thurs 10 Sept, Catshill Club, Bromsgrove

JENNY COLQUITT Thurs 10 Sept, Temperance, Leamington Spa

BOOMSLANG Thurs 10 Sept, Marrs Bar, Worcester

UK PINK FLOYD EXPERIENCE Thurs 10 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

MARTIN TURNER Thurs 10 Sept, The Robin, Bilston

MARK CHADWICK Thurs 10 Sept, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

JUNG + SUTLEJ + BALABAN + TBI Thurs 10 Sept, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

THE SIGNATURES: NORTHERN SOUL LIVE Thurs 10 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

CHRISTIE REEVES Thurs 10 Sept, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

THE THREE DEGREES Thurs 10 Sept, Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shrops

MOSCOW DRUG CLUB Thurs 10 Sept, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

ANDY BENNETT Fri 11 Sept, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

LETZ ZEP Fri 11 Sept, Jo Jo Jims, Birmingham

DEARTHWORMS + KNORKE Fri 11 Sept, Centrala, Birmingham

EVANESCENCE + POPPY + K.FLAY Fri 11 Sept, Utilita Arena B'ham

MANTRA + BULLET FOR A VALENTINE + BREAKER Fri 11 Sept, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

THE FLEETWOOD MACK EXPERIENCE Fri 11 Sept, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

DREAM STATE + KNIFE BRIDE + NEWSHAPES Fri 11 Sept, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

WILL FINN AND ROSIE CALVERT Fri 11 Sept, Fenton Town Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

ANTARCTIC MONKEYS Fri 11 Sept, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

RED LEMONS Fri 11 - Sat 12 Sept, The Jam House, Birmingham

WORCESTER MUSIC FESTIVAL Fri 11 - Sun 13 Sept, Marrs Bar, Worcester

ALLEGAEON + GOROD + ABYSMAL DAWN Fri 11 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

BLACK PARADE Fri 11 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

REM BY STIPE Fri 11 Sept, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

SLUMP Fri 11 Sept, The Flapper, Birmingham

KING KING Fri 11 Sept, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

THE BLACKHEART ORCHESTRA Fri 11 Sept, Temperance, Leamington Spa

TOTALLY BLONDE Fri 11 Sept, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

MARK GREEN AS ELVIS Fri 11 Sept, The Rhodhouse, Sutton Coldfield

METEORA - LINKIN PARK TRIBUTE Fri 11 Sept,

hmv Empire, Coventry
SLACKRR Fri 11 Sept, Arches Venue, Coventry

THE MERSEY BEATLES Fri 11 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry

THE KILKENNYS Fri 11 Sept, The Benn Hall, Rugby

GENESIS CONNECTED Fri 11 Sept, Swan Theatre, Worcester

THE EMINEM SHOW Fri 11 Sept, The Robin, Bilston

DAVID GEDGE + DARREN HAYMAN Fri 11 Sept, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

FUN LOVIN' CRIMINALS Fri 11 Sept, Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

BRAVADO - TRIBUTE TO RUSH Fri 11 Sept, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

VIRGIN MARYS + TWO STEP GOODBYES Fri 11 Sept, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

DAN WALSH Fri 11 Sept, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

THE REVOLVERS Fri 11 Sept, Two Gates Club, Tamworth

"IT'S COUNTRY" Fri 11 Sept, The Station, Cannock

THE MAGIC OF THE BEE GEES Fri 11 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

GIACOMO SMITH QUARTET Fri 11 Sept, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

THE SEVERN Fri 11 Sept, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

WES BANDERSON PERFORM THE MUSIC OF WES ANDERSON Sat 12 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

BONES ATE ARFA Sat 12 Sept, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

SAINT ETIENNE + NICK HEYWARD Sat 12 Sept, O2 Institute, B'ham

KILLERSTREAM Sat 12 Sept, Jo Jo Jims, Birmingham

KARMA POLICE Sat 12 Sept, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

SOUNDS OF SEATTLE Sat 12 Sept, The Flapper,

Birmingham

ALTERED IMAGES Sat 12 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall

KURT VILE & THE VIOLATORS Sat 12 Sept, XOYO, Digbeth, B'ham

THE CARPENTERS EXPERIENCE Sat 12 Sept, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

PHIL BEER Sat 12 Sept, Temperance, Leamington Spa

SYSTEM EIGHTIES + DURAN DURANISH + MAD DONNA Sat 12 Sept, The Rhodhouse, Sutton Coldfield

TOTAL-REX Sat 12 Sept, Arches Venue, Coventry

SLEEP BROKEN + DEFTUNES Sat 12 Sept, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

NEARLY ELTON Sat 12 Sept, Swan Theatre, Worcester

CLAUDE BOURBON Sat 12 Sept, West Malvern Social Club

THE KILKENNYS Sat 12 Sept, Halesowen Town Hall

ULTIMATE NIGHT AT THE DISCO Sat 12 Sept, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

BEATLEMANIA Sat 12 Sept, The Robin, Bilston

KIKI DEE AND CARMELO LUGGERI Sat 12 Sept, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

LE BONE Sat 12 Sept, Dive, Wolverhampton

LIMEHOUSE LIZZY Sat 12 Sept, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

NICKELBACK UK Sat 12 Sept, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

THE GLORY DAYS BAND Sat 12 Sept, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

THE SHAKIN' STEVENS STORY Sat 12 Sept, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

A FOREIGNERS JOURNEY Sat 12 Sept, The Station, Cannock

KEITH JAMES: THE SONGS OF NICK DRAKE Sat 12 Sept, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

ROCK THE 80S Sat 12

Sept, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

DARKSIDE Sat 12 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

MANOR HEIGHTS Sat 12 Sept, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

FIDDLEBOP Sat 12 Sept, Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

DAISY CHAPMAN DUO Sat 12 Sept, Wem Town Hall, North Shropshire

THE BLOW MONKEYS Sun 13 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

CHARLOTTE CARPENTER Sun 13 Sept, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

FRANCES MISTRY Sun 13 Sept, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

BRIGITTE CALLS ME BABY Sun 13 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

ALLIE SHERLOCK Sun 13 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

KING PARROT Sun 13 Sept, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

THE MAGIC OF THE BEATLES Sun 13 Sept, The Alexandra, Birmingham

GEORGIA SHACKLETON AND AAREN BENNETT Sun 13 Sept, Temperance, Leamington Spa

THE THREE DEGREES Sun 13 Sept, Kidderminster Town Hall

MICE IN A MATCHBOX Sun 13 Sept, The Red Lion, Evesham

THE DREAM MACHINE Sun 13 Sept, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

XODUS - BOB MARLEY & THE WAILERS TRIBUTE Sun 13 Sept, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

RODINA Sun 13 Sept, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

KASPER BERRY RAPKIN & THE SWAMP DOGS Sun 13 Sept, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

THE JOURNEMEN - ERIC CLAPTON TRIBUTE Sun 13 Sept, The Station, Cannock

THE MERSEY BEATLES Sun 13 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Classical Music

KEITH HEARNshaw ORGAN RECITAL

Programme includes works by Handel, Stanley, Gigout & more..., Mon 7 Sept, Coventry Cathedral

MARIA LINARES PIANO RECITAL

Tues 8 Sept, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

THE SIXTEEN: THE CHORAL PILGRIMAGE

2026 Featuring Harry Christophers (conductor). Programme includes works by Vivanco, Morales & Kerensa Briggs, Thurs 10 Sept, Hereford Cathedral

OHMI 15TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Sat 12 Sept, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

THE SIXTEEN: THE CHORAL PILGRIMAGE

2026 Featuring Harry Christophers (conductor). Programme includes works by Vivanco, Morales & Kerensa Briggs, Sat 12 Sept, Tewkesbury Abbey

CHANDOS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Featuring Jack Lovell-Huckle. Programme includes works by J Lee, Holst & Tchaikovsky, Sat 12 Sept, Pershore Abbey

IF MUSIC BE THE FOOD... Featuring

Katherine Manley (soprano) & Ann Ward (piano). Programme includes works by Handel, Poulenc, Hahn & more..., Sun 13 Sept, St Laurence's Church, Ludlow, South Shropshire

Comedy

SIMON BRODWIN Tues 8 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

REUBEN SOLO Wed 9 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

FIN TAYLOR Wed 9 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

DR. JASON LEONG Thurs 10 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

KANAN GILL Thurs 10 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall



GARY DELANEY Thurs 10 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

SIMON BRODWIN Fri 11 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

GLENN WOOL, PETER BRUSH, VINCE ATTA, GARRIE GRUBB & WILLIAM THOMPSON Fri 11 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

BOB MILLS, ANNETTE FAGON, DAVID EAGLE & DAVE TWENTYMAN Fri 11 Sept, Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton

GLENN WOOL, PETER BRUSH, VINCE ATTA

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& COMIC TBC Sat 12 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

CHRIS RAMSEY Sat 12 Sept, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

RHYS JAMES Sat 12 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

STEWART LEE Sat 12 Sept, Aston Hall, Wrexham

MILTON JONES Sat 12 Sept, The Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

JONNY COLE Sun 13 Sept, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

STEWART LEE Sun 13 Sept, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre



LINDSEY SANTORO, CHARLIE LEWIS, JAMES COOK & SUSAN MURRAY Sun 13 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

PAUL MERTON & SUKI WEBSTER'S IMPROV SHOW Sun 13 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

REGINALD D. HUNTER, PATRICK MONAHAN, TONY LAW & JAY NEALE Sun 13 Sept, Malvern Theatres

Theatre

WILKO: LOVE AND DEATH AND ROCK N' ROLL A play with live music about the

iconic rock star and founder of legendary Essex band Dr Feelgood, Mon 7 - Wed 9 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

TITANIC TALES Don't Go Into The Cellar present a new stage show commemorating the maritime disaster, Tues 8 Sept, Middleport Pottery, Stoke-on-Trent

NEW DAWN FADES A play about Joy Division and Manchester, Tues 8 - Wed 9 Sept, Malvern Theatres

CALAMITY JANE Amateur version presented by Coleshill On Stage, Tues 8 - Sat 12 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

WE WILL ROCK YOU Amateur version of the hit Ben Elton musical, presented by Obsidian Theatrical Productions, Tues 8 - Sat 12 Sept, The Dovehouse Theatre, Solihull

WUTHERING HEIGHTS Tread The Boards Theatre Company present an amateur version of Emily Bronte's only novel, Tues 8 - Sun 27 Sept, The Attic Theatre, Cox's Yard, Stratford-upon-Avon

THE THREE MUSKETEERS Our Star Theatre Company present a re-telling of Alexandre Dumas' swashbuckling tale, Wed 9 Sept, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

THE LAST LAUGH Paul Hendy's smash-hit play imagines three of Britain's all-time greatest comedy heroes - Tommy Cooper, Eric Morecambe and Bob Monkhouse - coming together in a dressing room to discuss the secrets of life, death, comedy and what it means to be really funny, Wed 9 - Sat 12 Sept, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

THE BALLAD OF MARIA MARTEN Stone Revellers present an amateur version of Beth Flintoff's play, reimagining one of Britain's most infamous true-crime stories: the murder in the red barn, Wed 9 - Sat 12 Sept, Crown Wharf Theatre, Stone, Staffs

AFTER PARTY 'Sharp, darkly funny and unflinching story' about a life-ending decision, Wed 9 - Sat 12 Sept, The Belgrade Theatre, Birmingham

SURINDERELLA Rifco Theatre present an evening of laughter, romance and 'larger-than-life entertainment', Wed 9 Sept - Sat 3 Oct, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

THE PHANTOM RASPBERRY BLOWER OF OLD LONDON TOWN Jack the Ripper parody, originally written by Spike Milligan in 1971 and then adapted by Ronnie Barker for The Two Ronnies' BBC television series in 1976, Thurs 10 Sept, The Old Rep, Birmingham

AN EVENING WITH JACK THE RIPPER A show that takes a deep-dive into Victorian London to 'unmask' history's most famous serial killer, Thurs 10 Sept, Halesowen Town Hall

NEW DAWN FADES A play about Joy Division and Manchester, Thurs 10 Sept, Crewe Lyceum Theatre

DUNE! THE MUSICAL Science fiction and songwriting collide in 'a unique exposition of the seminal novel'. Expect strong language and massive worms..., Thurs 10 Sept, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

THE NARCISSIST Staging of Dr Carlette L Norwood's exploration of toxic relationships. Based on true events, Thurs 10 - Sat 12 Sept, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

THE (ALMOST) TRUE STORY OF HANSEL AND GRETEL A very different take on the Brothers Grimm story, complete with twists and turns, audience interaction and appearances from other well-known fairytale characters, Thurs 10 - Sat 12 Sept, The Rugeley Rose Theatre

SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE MYSTERY OF THE GOVERNOR'S NOSE Jenny Wren Productions present a comic new play inspired by The Naval Treaty and The Man With The Twisted Lip, Fri 11 Sept, The Elms School, Colwall, Malvern

PRIVATE PEACEFUL The Production Garden present a new version of Michael Morpurgo's wartime tale, Fri 11 - Sun 13 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

THE BEST OF G&S The National Gilbert

& Sullivan Opera Company present a one-night concert performance, featuring 19 orchestral musicians and five solo singers, Sat 12 Sept, Malvern Theatres

THE THREE MUSKETEERS Our Star Theatre Company present a re-telling of Alexandre Dumas' swashbuckling tale, Sat 12 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE MYSTERY OF THE GOVERNOR'S NOSE Jenny Wren Productions present a comic new play inspired by The Naval Treaty and The Man With The Twisted Lip, Sat 12 Sept, Malvern Theatres

BULL Mike Bartlett's darkly funny examination of workplace bullying, power and survival, presented by Deafinitely Theatre, Sat 12 - Sat 19 Sept, The Rep, Birmingham

Kids Theatre

THE DINOSAUR THAT POOPED Stage show for younger audiences based on Tom Fletcher & Dougie Poynter's bestselling books, Sat 12 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

THE GROOVY UV SHOW Award-winning show featuring puppetry, mayhem and silliness, Sat 12 Sept, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

Dance

ADAM GARCIA'S EMERALD STORM

Fusion of Irish dance with urban tap. Britain's Got Talent finalist Tom Ball stars, Wed 9 Sept, Kidderminster Town Hall

BLUE / GLAS National Dance Company Wales present a double bill of works: Theo Clinkard's Ordinary Courage and Alesandra Seutin's Untamed, Fri 11 Sept, Malvern Theatres

Light Entertainment

JOHN BARROWMAN: MY LIFE IN

MUSICALS John recreates some of his most iconic roles in the West End and on Broadway, Mon 7 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

VOX LUMIERE METROPOLIS Fritz Lang's iconic 1927 silent masterpiece is brought to life by a live band, original new music and powerhouse vocals, Tues 8 Sept, The Old Rep, B'ham

5 MISTAKES THAT CHANGED HISTORY

Paul Coulter's storytelling show, exploring five people whose mistakes (big and small) changed the world, Tues 8 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

THE ARCHERS: LIVE AT 75 Set at the Ambridge Flower & Produce Show, this celebratory event features cast favourites Charles Collingwood, Ryan

Kelly, Susie Riddell and Sunny Ormonde. The show is hosted by comedian and Archers superfan Angela Barnes, Wed 9 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

BOX OF FROGS Birmingham's premier improv group present an evening of high-octane comedy nonsense based entirely on audience suggestions, Wed 9 Sept, 1000 Trades, Birmingham

THE PRAT PACK'S BACK 2026 Bradley Walsh, Brian Conley, Joe Pasquale & Shane Richie present a masterclass in variety that blends effortless banter with world-class vocals, Thurs 10 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham



SINS A dark, live experience in which theatre, psychological challenge and audience power collide..., Thurs 10 Sept, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

SIXTIES EXPLOSION! Journey through the songs that defined a decade, Thurs 10 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

RED Amber Topaz stars in a musical revue celebrating redheaded stars of stage & screen, Fri 11 Sept, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

KARL LOXLEY - SONGS FROM THE STAGE & SCREEN Featuring songs from The Greatest Showman, The Phantom Of The Opera, Les Miserables, The Lion King and more..., Fri 11 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

JANE MCDONALD: LIVING THE DREAM Sat 12 Sept, Utilita Arena Birmingham

MASTERS OF DECEPTION A show that brings together 'two of the very best' magic & illusion acts in the country: Richard Jones and Matricks Illusion, Sat 12 Sept, Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

PIAF BY CHRISTINE BOVILL - THE PARIS ICON AND THE GLASGOW GIRL Christine Bovill shares stories of her life with Edith Piaf, interspersed with the singer's greatest songs - sung in French and English, Sat 12 Sept, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

THE PHANTOMS STARRING LEE MEAD Celebrating iconic musicals Les Miserables, Miss Saigon, West Side Story, Jesus Christ Superstar, The Phantom Of The Opera and more..., Sat 12 Sept, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

THE NIGHT SKY SHOW 'Spectacular' theatrical experience that journeys around the constellations, stars, planets and more..., Sun 13 Sept, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

THE PHANTOMS STARRING LEE MEAD

Celebrating iconic musicals Les Miserables, Miss Saigon, West Side Story, Jesus Christ Superstar, The Phantom Of The Opera and more..., Sun 13 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

PAUL MERTON & SUKI WEBSTER IMPROV SHOW Featuring improvised games, scenes, stories and laugh-out-loud surrealism, Sun 13 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

Talks & Spoken Word

GRAEME SOUNESS Behind-the-scenes stories from the former professional football player, manager & television pundit, Tues 8 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

AN EVENING WITH MELVIN HAYES An in-conversation event in which the It Ain't Half Hot Mum star chats to his daughter, Charlie Hayes, about his remarkable 75-year career, Fri 11 Sept, Number 8, Pershore

Events

COMPTON VERNEY REVEALED: AN ARCHITECTURAL TOUR OF THE HOUSE Walking tour introducing Compton Verney's architectural styles, features and design choices, Wed 9 Sept, Compton Verney, Warwickshire

THE BRANDYWINE FESTIVAL Fully immersive multi-day Tolkien-inspired hobbit experience, set in The Shire, Wed 9 - Sun 13 Sept, Weston Park, Shropshire

BIRMINGHAM HERITAGE WEEK: YARDLEY HERITAGE WALK Join a local expert for an informal walk around Yardley's historic old village, in the process discovering almost 1,000 years of history, Fri 11 Sept, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

BILSTON LIVE - BRITPOP REUNION Celebrating the iconic sounds of the 1990s, Fri 11 Sept, Bilston Market Square

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS Get free entry to the venue and its 120 acres of grounds, Fri 11 & Sat 12 Sept, Compton Verney, Warwickshire

LUDLOW FOOD FESTIVAL Championing local producers, artisan makers and top chefs, Fri 11 - Sun 13 Sept, Ludlow Castle, South Shropshire



BIRMINGHAM HERITAGE WEEK Discover Birmingham's rich industrial, cultural and architectural heritage through a diverse programme of events, Fri 11 - Sun 20 Sept, venues across B'ham

SHADOWS, SECRETS AND STRANGE TALES Join Professor Black as the past stirs, secrets surface, and the stranger tales of the Hall are revealed, Sat 12 Sept, Himley Hall, Dudley

WORCESTER'S AFFLICTIONS: THE PLAGUE IN WORCESTERSHIRE IN THE 14TH AND 17TH CENTURIES Medical historian Kevin Goodman examines the symptoms, causes and treatments of one of the most feared diseases of the past, Sat 12 Sept, The Commandery, Worcester

DISCO IN THE DAHLIAS Silent disco, taking place in the flora fields, Sat 12 Sept, Webbs Wychbold, Pershore

WEDDING OPEN DAY Meet venue staff and wedding suppliers, Sat 12 Sept, Weston Park, Shropshire

SAUSAGE & CIDER FESTIVAL Featuring over 30 different ciders across the site, Sat 12 Sept, St Nicholas Park, Warwick

CINNAMON THE CAPYBARA'S BIRTHDAY PARTY Fun-filled day dedicated to one of Hoo Zoo's best-loved residents, Sat 12 Sept, Hoo Zoo & Dinosaur World, Telford

HERITAGE OPEN DAY Experience Packwood for free, Sat 12 Sept, Packwood House, Warwickshire

THE CAT SHOW LIVE BIRMINGHAM 2026 The UK's only non-competitive cat expo, Sat 12 Sept, NEC, Birmingham

THE LEAMINGTON FOOD AND DRINK FESTIVAL Celebrating the best in local and regional food and drink, Sat 12 & Sun 13 Sept, Pump Room Gardens, Royal Leamington Spa

PIG FEST ON THE FARM Featuring special demonstrations, themed activities and the chance to get up close to pigs and piglets of all different breeds, Sat 12 & Sun 13 Sept, Cotswold Farm Park, Cheltenham

SPACE INVASION Stand by for action, as a host of costumed characters from the worlds of film & television sci-fi take to the streets, Sat 12 & Sun 13 Sept, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

RECORD FAIR WITH RASPBERRY RECORDS Featuring local independent traders, Sat 12 & Sun 13 Sept, Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

HERITAGE OPEN DAY 2026 Discover the 'world-class art collection' for free, Sat 12 & Sun 13 Sept, Upton House, Warwickshire

INTERNATIONAL N GAUGE SHOW Explore an array of layouts showcasing modern, steam, continental and American themes, along with live demonstrations and society displays,

Sat 12 & Sun 13 Sept, Warwickshire Event Centre, near Warwick

THE MACABRE MUSEUM - STORIES OF MURDER AND MAYHEM Hear tales of true crime and horrendous acts and deeds, Sun 13 Sept, West Midlands Police Museum, Birmingham

PLEIN AIR WITH WARWICKSHIRE OPEN STUDIOS Discover the grounds through new eyes as you observe artists creating works inspired by the surrounding landscape, Sun 13 Sept, Compton Verney, Warwickshire

ANTIQUES & COLLECTORS FAIR Browse a variety of stalls in a historic atmosphere, Sun 13 Sept, Hartlebury Castle, Worcestershire

TALKING PICTURES TV & RENOWN PICTURES FESTIVAL OF FILM AND TV Celebrating all things film and television, Sun 13 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

SUMMER IN NASHVILLE Featuring live country bands, DJs, line dancing and more, Sun 13 Sept, St Nicholas Park, Warwick

FAMILY DISCO IN THE DAHLIAS Afternoon of feelgood family fun in the flora fields, Sun 13 Sept, Webbs Wychbold, Pershore

Festivals

BROMYARD FOLK FESTIVAL Line-up includes Richard Thompson with Zara Phillips, Sharon Shannon Trio, Kris Drever (pictured) & Cahalen Morrison, Thurs 10 - Sun 13 Sept, Bromyard, Herefordshire



ONBOARD THE CRAFT Line-up includes Doctor and the Medics, Quantum Fantasy, The Vampyres, Thurs 10 - Sun 13 Sept, Stoke Prior Sports and Country Club, Bromsgrove

AVONSTOCK TRIBUTE FESTIVAL Line-up includes T-Rex, Elvis, The Rolling Stones, Fri 11 - Sat 12 Sept, Stratford-upon-Avon Racecourse

HEAL PRESENTS THE GATHERING Line-up includes Eva Lazarus, Tom Hingley plays Inspiral Carpets, Triers, Fri 11 - Sat 12 Sept, DMOS People West Mid Showground, Shrewsbury

Gigs

UNNATURAL ORDER Mon 14 Sept, Subside Bar, Birmingham

CINE TOKYO PROMOTIONS Mon 14 Sept, Marrs Bar, Worcester

MULL HISTORICAL SOCIETY Tues 15 Sept, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

DEAD CALM Tues 15 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE DUNWELLS Tues 15 Sept, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

BLUE Tues 15 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

JON ANDERSON & THE BAND GEEKS Tues 15 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE ILLEGAL EAGLES Tues 15 Sept, The Alexandra, Birmingham

FASTER PUSSYCAT + BLACKLIST UNION + FEMME FATALE Tues 15 Sept, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

THE ELO EXPERIENCE Tues 15 - Sat 16 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

DON-E & FRIENDS Wed 16 Sept, The Jam House, Birmingham

BABY KEEM Wed 16 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

HOLY HOLY Wed 16 Sept, XOYO, Digbeth, Birmingham

SAM BROOKES Wed 16 Sept, Temperance, Leamington Spa

TRUDGEON'S TROUBADORS JAZZ BAND Wed 16 Sept, Boldmere Sports and Social Club, Sutton Coldfield

KANGARŪ Wed 16 Sept, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

KARL LOXLEY Wed 16 Sept, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

DESSIE MAGEE Wed 16 - Thurs 17 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

ROBERT ARKINS Thurs 17 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

TESSA ROSE JACKSON Thurs 17 Sept, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

TIPPA IRIE Thurs 17 Sept, The Jam House,

Birmingham

FANCY HAGOOD Thurs 17 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

BE NICE Thurs 17 Sept, The Victoria, B'ham

THE DRIFTERS Thurs 17 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

MARTIN ALVARADO AND LOS AGUIRRE Thurs 17 Sept, Temperance, Leamington Spa

THE BOOTLEG BEACH BOYS Thurs 17 Sept, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

CLOUDBUSTING - THE MUSIC OF KATE BUSH Thurs 17 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry

GLYDERS Thurs 17 Sept, Just Dropped In, Coventry

FREDERICO HELIODORO Thurs 17 Sept, Marrs Bar, Worcester

KING KING Thurs 17 Sept, The Robin, Bilston

THE MAGIC OF MOTOWN Thurs 17 Sept, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

MERCURY - THE ULTIMATE QUEEN TRIBUTE Thurs 17 Sept, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

ARLSTON + DOROTHY BIRD + HEIDI Thurs 17 Sept, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

OZRIC TENTACLES Thurs 17 Sept, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

MARK MORRISS Thurs 17 Sept, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

PIGS PIGS PIGS PIGS Fri 18 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

TRICKY BUSINESS + EBBY VALLANCE Fri 18 Sept, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

SEAN REEVES Fri 18 Sept, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

DIZZY LIZZY Fri 18 Sept, Jo Jo Jims, B'ham

THE CROOKS Fri 18 Sept, Dead Wax, Digbeth, Birmingham

THOMPSON TWINS' TOM BAILEY + BLANCMANGE Fri 18 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall

DILJIT DOSANJH Fri 18 Sept, Utilita Arena Birmingham

RITUAL FOR JOHN COLTRANE Fri 18 Sept, Midlands Arts Centre, (MAC), Birmingham

PINK TRIBUTE - BEAUTIFUL TRAUMA Fri 18 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

FROM THE JAM Fri 18 Sept, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

THE HISTORY OF SOUL Fri 18 Sept, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

MITCHELL JOSEPH THOMPSON: UB40 & REGGAE SHOW Fri 18 Sept, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

PULSTAR - TRIBUTE TO VANGELIS Fri 18 Sept, Anglican Chapel, London Road Cemetery, Coventry

KORN AGAIN + SPOUKY KIDS Fri 18 Sept, Arches Venue, Coventry

THE BOOTLEG EAGLES Fri 18 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry

THE BOOTLEG BEACH BOYS Fri 18 Sept, The Benn Hall, Rugby

STEAL THIS BAND + TONEDEFS Fri 18 Sept, Marrs Bar, Worcester

MERRY HELL Fri 18 Sept, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

LEGEND - THE MUSIC OF BOB MARLEY Fri 18 Sept, Dudley Town Hall

MARK KINGSWOOD Fri 18 Sept, Stourbridge Town Hall

THE PHONICS Fri 18 Sept, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

LIVE/WIRE - THE AC/DC SHOW Fri 18 Sept, The Robin, Bilston

FRED ZEPPELIN Fri 18 Sept, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

ELTON & THE JETS Fri 18 Sept, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

MIDDING Fri 18 Sept, Riff Factory, Stoke-on-Trent

RISKEE & THE RIDICULE + THE OTHER THINGS + FLUTTER Fri 18 Sept,

The Rigger, Newcastle-Under-Lyme

JACK RUTTER Fri 18 Sept, Marstons Sports & Social Club, Burton upon Trent

THE HISTORY OF ROCK Fri 18 Sept, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

ULTIMATE GREENDAY Fri 18 Sept, The Station, Cannock

THE BLACKHEART ORCHESTRA Fri 18 Sept, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

THE DIRTY ROCKIN SOUNDBRELS Fri 18 Sept, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

ESSENTIALLY CHER Fri 18 Sept, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

THE JOE MASTERSON TRIO Fri 18 Sept, Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shrops

DIRE STREETS Fri 18 Sept, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shrops

SLADE FANS CONVENTION 2026 Fri 18 - Sat 19 Sept, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

COVTEMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL Fri 18 - Sun 20 Sept, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

THE DOORS RISING Sat 19 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

LAURA VEIRS Sat 19 Sept, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

SPLIT CHAIN+ FALSE REALITY + ROMAN CANDLE + MIRRORTALK Sat 19 Sept, The Flapper, Birmingham

LACUNA Sat 19 Sept, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

DEBASE INVADERS Sat 19 Sept, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

XANDRIA + SEVEN SPIRES + TULIP Sat 19 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

CAPLETON + LUCIANO Sat 19 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

FENG Sat 19 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

SYNTH Sat 19 Sept, Jo Jo Jims, Birmingham

SLAUGHTERHOUSE FESTIVAL 2026 - PART 2 Sat 19 Sept, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

AJA IRELAND + IRKED + BROWN RING + RATTLE + RANZFOLD + K. WHYTE + HAROLD PRINTER + LLD Sat 19 Sept, Centrala, B'ham

ECHOES OF THE EQUINOX Sat 19 Sept, Jennifer Blackwell Performance Space, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

ROB LAMBERTI PRESENTS PERFECTLY GEORGE Sat 19 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE GREATEST HITS OF 10CC AND ELO Sat 19 Sept, Old Rep, B'ham

THE JOHNNY CASH ROADSHOW Sat 19 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

THE WHISKY FLOWERS Sat 19 Sept, Temperance, Leamington Spa

SUPERSONIC QUEEN Sat 19 Sept, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

THE FOOZ Sat 19 Sept, Arches Venue, Coventry

HARVEST - A CELEBRATION OF NEIL YOUNG Sat 19 Sept, Regal, Tenbury Wells

THE POP PUNK REVOLUTION TOUR Sat 19 Sept, Marrs Bar, Worcester

PURPLE ZEPPELIN Sat 19 Sept, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

THE ULTIMATE EAGLES Sat 19 Sept, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

NO JACKET REQUIRED - THE PHIL COLLINS TRIBUTE Sat 19 Sept, Stourbridge Town Hall

ESSENTIAL ANTHEMS BAND Sat 19 Sept, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

BIG UP THE 90S Sat 19 Sept, The Robin, Bilston

COLD YEARS Sat 19 Sept, Dive, Wolverhampton

ARKAYLA Sat 19 Sept, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

JOHN OTWAY & WILD WILLY BARRETT Sat 19 Sept, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

JIVE TALKIN' Sat 19 Sept, Stafford

Gatehouse Theatre

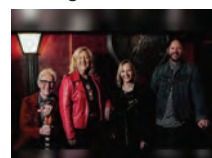
DRIVING FORCE Sat 19 Sept, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

COSMIC RAYS + WREN + HEADCASE + SPAGHETTI O'Z Sat 19 Sept, The Hive, Shrewsbury

YOUNG ELTON Sat 19 Sept, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

LITTLE BARRIE Sun 20 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

JULIE JULY BAND Sun 20 Sept, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham



AND ALSO THE TREES + SONS OF GEOMETRY Sun 20 Sept, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

THE BOOTLEG BEACH BOYS Sun 20 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

ANNA PANCALDI Sun 20 Sept, Temperance, Leamington Spa

CHRIS STAPLETON UK Sun 20 Sept, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

AMY LOU Sun 20 Sept, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

THE BEAST UK - IRON MAIDEN TRIBUTE Sun 20 Sept, Dudley Town Hall

SHAAM MASTANI - BOLLYJAZZ VIBES Sun 20 Sept, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

FASTLOVE - GEORGE MICHAEL TRIBUTE Sun 20 Sept, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

TEACHERS PET Sun 20 Sept, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

MARK CHADWICK Sun 20 Sept, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

LICHFIELD FOLK ON THE FARM Sun 20 Sept, Woodhouse Farm and Garden CIC, Lichfield

LEGEND: THE MUSIC OF BOB MARLEY Sun 20 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE BLACKHEART ORCHESTRA Sun 20 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Classical Music

THOMAS TROTTER ORGAN RECITAL
Programme includes works by Mozart, JS Bach, Pepusch & more..., Mon 14 Sept, Symphony Hall, B'ham

HUGH ROWLANDS ORGAN RECITAL
Programme comprises Liszt's Fantasy and Fugue on 'Ad Nos, ad salutarem undam', Mon 14 Sept, Coventry Cathedral

ADAM HERON PIANO RECITAL Tues 15 Sept, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

DAVID PIPE ORGAN RECITAL Tues 15 Sept, Lichfield Cathedral

CBSO: KAZUKI CONDUCTS MAHLER'S 2ND SYMPHONY Featuring Kazuki Yamada (conductor), Eleanor Lyons (soprano), Jess Dandy (contralto) & CBSO Chorus, Thurs 17 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

EX CATHEDRA: CAN BEAUTY SAVE THE WORLD? Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor). Programme includes works by Byrd, Britten, Joubert & more..., Thurs 17 Sept, St George's Church, Edgbaston

CBSO CENTRE STAGE: SCHUMANN'S PIANO QUINTET Featuring Georgia Hannant & Gabriel Dyker (violins), Isobel Doncaster (viola), Miguel Fernandes (cello) & John Thwaites (piano). Programme also includes Three Pieces for String Quartet by Stravinsky, Fri 18 Sept, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

WILLIAM JACK CELLO RECITAL Fri 18 Sept, St Mary's Church, Warwick

THE KING'S SINGERS: CHARITY GALA CONCERT In aid of The Rufus Trust, Fri 18 Sept, Warwick Hall

RBC OUT AND ABOUT: OLIVER MATTHEWS (PIANO) Sat 19 Sept, Shrewsbury Cathedral

SPIRES MUSIC ORCHESTRA PLAYDAY: PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION Sat 19 Sept, Baginton Road URC, Coventry

THE GENTS OF ST JOHN'S CAMBRIDGE: A CHARITY CONCERT In aid of Mandalay School for the Deaf, Sat 19 Sept, Great Malvern Priory

RBC JUNIPER FOLK TRIO Sat 19 Sept, St Laurence's Church, Ludlow, South Shropshire

VICTORIA HALL ORGAN PROMS: ALEX GOLDSMITH Programme includes works by JS Bach, Hollins, Bizet & more..., Sat 19 Sept, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

BIRMINGHAM CONTEMPORARY MUSIC GROUP: CYCLE THE SCORE Experience contemporary music by bicycle with this unique, participatory journey along the River Rea - bring your own bike. Programme includes works by Stockhausen, Cage, Hindley & more..., Sun 20 Sept, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

THE KING'S SINGERS: SUCH STUFF AS DREAMS ARE MADE ON Featuring Peter

Hicks & Edward Button (countertenors), Julian Gregory (tenor), Joseph Edwards & Nick Ashby (baritone) & Piers Connor Kennedy (bass), Sun 20 Sept, Malvern Theatres

VERISMO OPERA: PUCCINI'S LA Fanciulla del West Featuring Bedwyn Lloyds Phillips (musical director), Alex Postlethwaite (ensemble leader) & Ensemble SY1, Sun 20 Sept, Shrewsbury Abbey

Comedy

ED PATRICK Tues 15 - Wed 16 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

JAZZ EMU Wed 16 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, MARC JENNINGS & COMIC TBC Thurs 17 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

MARK SIMMONS Thurs 17 Sept, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

CHRIS MCCAUSSLAND & COMICS TBC Thurs 17 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

MILTON JONES & GUESTS Thurs 17 Sept, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

SAM CAMPBELL Thurs 17 - Fri 18 Sept, The Alexandra, Birmingham

NICK DOODY, JOE HADDAD, JOSEPH EMSLIE, MARK JENNINGS & COMIC TBC Fri 18 Sept, The Glee Club, B'ham

TOM WARD Fri 18 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

NICK DOODY, MARK JENNINGS, PATRICK MONAHAN & COMIC TBC Sat 19 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SASHI PERERA Sat 19 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

FIN TAYLOR Sat 19 Sept, The Alexandra, Birmingham

MATT WINNING Sat 19 Sept, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

ALASDAIR BECKETT-KING Sat 19 Sept, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

ALFIE BROWN Sat 19 Sept, Swan Theatre, Worcester

KAE KURD'S COMEDY CLUB Sun 20 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

PHIL WANG Sun 20 Sept, The Alexandra, Birmingham



Theatre

THE SOUND OF MUSIC Lichfield Operatic Society present an amateur version of the classic Rodgers & Hammerstein musical, Tues 15 - Sat 19 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

HEATHERS THE MUSICAL Award-winning musical based on the iconic Winona Ryder and Christian Slater movie, Tues 15 - Sat 19 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

JEKYLL & HYDE THE MUSICAL The Mellow Dramatics present an amateur version of Robert Louis Stevenson's gothic tale, Tues 15 - Sat 19 Sept, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

PRESENT LAUGHTER Tracy-Ann Oberman, James Dreyfus & Adrian Lukis star in Noel Coward's famous commentary on the temptations and pitfalls of theatrical celebrity, Tues 15 - Sat 19 Sept, Malvern Theatres

A PASSIONATE WOMAN The Highbury Players present an amateur version of Kay Mellor's poignant play exploring the themes of love, repression and identity, Tues 15 - Sat 26 Sept, Highbury Theatre Centre, Sutton Coldfield

A BRIEF CASE OF CRAZY 'Heartwarming physical comedy inspired by the genius of Mr Bean, Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton'. Told via choreography, mime, clowning and puppetry, Wed 16 Sept, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

THE TIME MACHINE Jonathan Goodwin stars in a one-man adaptation of HG Wells' famous story, Wed 16 Sept, The Regal, Tenbury

WONDERLAND Backstreet Theatre Company present an amateur version of Frank Wildhorn's pop-rock musical - a contemporary telling of Lewis Carroll's Alice In Wonderland, Wed 16 - Sat 19 Sept, The Rugeley Rose Theatre

FACTORY Unflinching verbatim play, 'shaped by the voices inside the classroom and celebrating the lives and creativity within it', Wed 16 - Sat 19 Sept, The Other Place, Stratford-upon-Avon

CLUEDO The Abbey Players present an amateur stage version of the cult-classic film and popular board game, Wed 16 - Sat 19 Sept, The Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton

9 TO 5 THE MUSICAL Amateur version of the Dolly Parton musical, Wed 16 - Sat 19 Sept, Crewe Lyceum Theatre

ROMEO + JULIET Russell Kane plays a fortysomething Romeo in a new production of Shakespeare's classic tragedy, Thurs 17 Sept - Sat 10 Oct, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

WOODHILL LUNG Theatre present a form of documentary theatre and dance, exploring the crisis facing

prisons, Fri 18 & Sat 19 Sept, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

P*SSSED UP PANTO - CINDERELLA Adult panto featuring strong language and adult themes. Not suitable for the easily offended, Fri 18 Sept, Swan Theatre, Worcester

QUEERS Featuring seven poignant and personal monologues, curated by Mark Gatiss and celebrating 'a century of evolving social attitudes and political milestones in British gay history', Fri 18 - Sat 19 Sept, Priory Theatre, Kenilworth

HOME, I'M DARLING Amateur version of Laura Wade's contemplation on the pull of nostalgia and the pressures of perfection, Fri 18 - Sat 26 Sept, The Bear Pit Theatre Company, Stratford-upon-Avon

THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES Gothic thriller based on the famous novel by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Sat 19 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

SANSKRUTI DANCE THEATRE: TREE OF LIFE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SAMPAD Show exploring the connection between science and spirituality through the medium of trees and dance..., Sat 19 Sept, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

A BRIEF CASE OF CRAZY 'Heartwarming physical comedy inspired by the genius of Mr Bean, Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton'. Told via choreography, mime, clowning and puppetry, Sat 19 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

THE THREE MUSKETEERS Our Star Theatre Company present a re-telling of Alexandre Dumas' swashbuckling tale, Sat 19 Sept, The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING Amateur version of Shakespeare's romantic comedy, Sat 19 - Sat 26 Sept, Rugby Theatre

THE HAUNTING OF BLAINE MANOR Haunted-house chiller set in a manor 'with a twisted history of madness, witchcraft, tragedy and death', Sun 20 Sept, Stourbridge Town Hall

A BRIEF CASE OF CRAZY 'Heartwarming physical comedy inspired by the genius of Mr Bean, Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton'. Told via choreography, mime, clowning and puppetry, Sun 20 Sept, Swan Theatre, Worcester

Kids Theatre

HORRIBLE HISTORIES: TERRIBLE TUDORS From the horrible Henries to the end of evil Elizabeth, hear the legends (and the lies!) about the torturing Tudors... Family show featuring actors and 'eye-popping 3D special effects', Thurs 17 - Sat 19 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

HORRIBLE HISTORIES: AWFUL

EGYPTIANS LIVE ON STAGE! From the fascinating pharaohs to the power of the pyramids, discover foul facts about death and decay with the meanest mummies in Egypt. Family show featuring actors and 'eye-popping 3D special effects', Thurs 17 - Sat 19 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

DEAR ZOO Rod Campbell's children's classic is brought to life on stage via puppetry, music and lots of audience participation, Thurs 17 - Sat 20 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

MAGICAL HONEY Fusion of dance, magic, storytelling and live music. Suitable for audience members aged five-plus, Sun 20 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

Light Entertainment

JOHN BARROWMAN: MY LIFE IN

MUSICALS John recreates some of his most iconic roles in the West End and on Broadway, Mon 14 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

DAZ AND WILL UNHOOKED Immersive show promising laughter, audience participation, and maybe a mystery box or two..., Mon 14 Sept, The Alexandra, Birmingham

PIFF & POP'S MAGIC SHOPPE Unique show which sees the union of legendary magician Penn Jillette and comedy-magician Piff the Magic Dragon. Expect 'jaw-dropping magic, side-splitting comedy and unforgettable showmanship', Wed 16 Sept, The Alexandra, Birmingham

MICHAEL BALL IN CONCERT Michael's Glow UK tour coincides with the release of his latest album, Wed 16 Sept, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

JOHN BARROWMAN: MY LIFE IN

MUSICALS John recreates some of his most iconic roles in the West End and on Broadway, Thurs 17 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

CAN I BE CANDID? LIVE Host Perrie Sian is joined by her fiancé Ricci and best friends Harry and Renée for a high-energy, fully interactive live podcast show, Thurs 17 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall

GINGER JOHNSON: SHOW PONY Join the Drag Race favourite and Celebrity Masterchef champion for a 'psychedelic adventure' soundtracked by original songs, Thurs 17 Sept, Swan Theatre, Worcester

GENERAL MEDICAL EMERGENCY WARD

10 Dyad Productions and Company Gavin Robertson join forces to present a medical-based comedy mash-up spoof, Fri 18 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

MIRIAM MARGOLYES' FULL ENGLISH

LIVE 'Memories & mummies, Arsenal & arseholes, politics, filth, and absolutely everything in between' from 'Britain's most outspoken national treasure', Fri 18 Sept, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

LUKE BAKER - REAL MAGIC Featuring 'mind-reading, magic, laugh-out-loud comedy and plenty of audience participation', Fri 18 Sept, The Norbury Theatre, Droitwich

THE KING'S SINGERS CHARITY GALA CONCERT In aid of The Rufus Trust, Fri 18 Sept, Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

BOYBAND IN THE BUFF: STARRING GARETH GATES Throwback concert featuring hits from the 90s and the noughties - and a cast of 'ripped and ridiculously talented performers', Fri 18 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

DAME IDA'S INTERNATIONAL CABARET SHOW Comedy extravaganza featuring a medley of hits from 'your favourite musicals', Sat 19 Sept, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

TOM GILBEY: ABSOLUTE FILTH Join the author, broadcaster and wine expert for games, blind tastings, crowd challenges and more..., Sat 19 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall

THE PHANTOMS STARRING LEE MEAD Show celebrating some of the best-loved musicals of all time, including Les Miserables, Miss Saigon, West Side Story, Jesus Christ Superstar, The Phantom Of The Opera and more..., Sat 19 September, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

RICHARD JONES: THE SOUND OF MAGIC Spend an evening with the only magician ever to win Britain's Got Talent, Sat 19 Sept, The Albany Theatre, Coventry



A GUITAR EVENING WITH PETER 'DANISH PETE' HONORÉ AND BEN SMITH A show which is part Q&A and part 'gear show & tell', with lots of jamming and playing in-between, Sun 20 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

RUSSELL WATSON: AN EVENING WITH THE VOICE Sun 20 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

JOHN CLEESE AND THE HOLY GRAIL Join the Monty Python favourite for a screening of the classic 1975 film, followed by behind-the-scenes stories and an audience Q&A, Sun 20 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall

Talks & Spoken Word

DES TONG AND BEV BEVAN - HISTORY OF MIDLANDS ROCK Des Tong (Sad Café & Birmingham TV) and Bev Bevan (The Move, ELO, Black Sabbath & Quill) take audiences on a nostalgic trip around the Midlands' music scene, Mon 14 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

THE MAKINGS OF A MURDERER - THE UNDERCOVER DETECTIVE Join Peter Bleksley - founding member of Scotland Yard's Undercover Unit - as he lifts the lid on the most dangerous and hidden aspects of murder investigations, Tues 15 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

RONNIE, REGGIE, AND ME WITH FRED DINENAGE A definitive insight into the real lives of Britain's most notorious gangsters, Wed 16 Sept, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

AN AUDIENCE WITH JEFF STELLING Expect hilarious anecdotes, behind-the-scenes tales, and stories from an amazing career, Wed 16 Sept, Swan Theatre, Worcester

MURDEROUS MINDS WITH EMMA KENNY Join the psychologist & crime commentator for a brand-new show that probes the darkest corners of humanity, Fri 18 Sept, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

AN AUDIENCE WITH BRIAN BLESSED A show 'packed with stories, laughter and unforgettable moments', Fri 18 Sept, The Regal, Tenbury Wells

ARTIST TALK: MICHAEL PINKSY In-conversation event with MAC's senior curator, Roma Piotrowska, discussing Michael's Final Bid exhibition, Sat 19 Sept, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

Events

REACHING NEW HEIGHTS TOURS Look beyond the stone with expert-led architecture, archaeology and graffiti tours, Mon 14 Sept, Worcester Cathedral

PANORAMA TOWER OPEN DAY Enjoy panoramic views of the countryside from the balcony, Wed 16 Sept, Croome, Worcestershire

AUTUMN STEAM GALA Featuring both guest and home-fleet locomotives operating a busy timetable between Kidderminster and Bridgnorth, Thurs 17 - Sun 20 Sept, Severn Valley Railway, Worcestershire

BIRMINGHAM HERITAGE WEEK: WOOLEY WALKING TOUR Join archaeologist Mike Hodder for a special guided walk, Fri 18 Sept, Weoley Castle, Birmingham

BEER AND BAT WALK (FUNDRAISING EVENT) Fri 18 Sept, Hartlebury Castle,

Worcestershire

HERITAGE OPEN DAY Visit the only complete Victorian pottery factory from the days when coal-burning ovens made the world's finest bone china, Fri 18 Sept, Gladstone Pottery Museum, Stoke

THE PATTERN OF LIFE: ENID MARX AND MODERN BRITISH DESIGN Enjoy an exclusive guided tour with Curator Dr Az Crawford, Fri 18 Sept, Compton Verney, Warwickshire

THE MURDER OF MICHAEL O'SULLIVAN Victorian-inspired murder-mystery night, Fri 18 Sept, West Midlands Police Museum, Birmingham

SLADE FANS CONVENTION Featuring live tribute performances from Slade UK and Sladest, Fri 18 - Sat 19 Sept, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

ADVENTURE CINEMA 'The UK's number-one open-air cinema' returns, Fri 18 - Sun 20 Sept, Ludlow Castle, South Shropshire

A PLACE IN THE SUN LIVE BIRMINGHAM The UK's biggest overseas property exhibition, Fri 18 - Sun 20 Sept, NEC, Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM HERITAGE WEEK: EXPLORE BLAKESLEY Gain special access to the attics of the hall, not normally open to the public, Sat 19 Sept, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

FIREWORK CHAMPIONS Four of the UK's top fireworks companies present 10-minute displays to music, Sat 19 Sept, Ragley Hall, Warwickshire

WILD: THE DRONE LIGHT SHOW Watch the animal kingdom come to life in the night sky, Sat 19 Sept, Spetchley Park Estate, Worcester

COVENTRY CATHEDRAL ABSEIL Event for thrill-seekers and adventurers in aid of Mytton Hospices, Sat 19 Sept, Coventry Cathedral

YOUR WORCESTER: GALLERY TOUR

Enjoy a guided tour of permanent display Your Worcester, Sat 19 Sept, Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

MAC'S BIG GREEN WEEKENDER Take part in creative workshops, listen to inspiring talks, enjoy live performances and much more, Sat 19 - Sun 20 Sept, MAC (Midlands Arts Centre), Birmingham

DRIVR SHOW Event bringing together modern and classic stance, track builds, and timeless classics, Sun 20 Sept, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

HOME RUN HOUNDS PEDIGREE, SIGHTHOUND AND FUN DOG SHOW Raising funds for the rehoming charity, Sun 20 Sept, Himley Hall, Dudley

HERITAGE OPEN DAY Enjoy free entry to The Commandery, Sun 20 Sept, The Commandery, Worcester

WALK FOR MYTTON Sponsored challenge in aid of Mytton Hospice, Sun 20 Sept, Warwick Mytton Hospice

Monday 21 - Wednesday 30 September

Gigs

GOOD KID + LAST DINOSAURS Mon 21 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE MEAT LOAF STORY Mon 21 Sept, The Alexandra, Birmingham

NEWTOWN NEUROTICS + ATTILA THE STOCKBROKER Mon 21 Sept, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

THE SURFRAJETTES Tues 22 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

FLUFFY MACHINE Tues 22 Sept, The Flapper, Birmingham

FREYA RIDINGS Tues 22 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall

NIALL HORAN + FLOWEROVLOVE Tues 22 Sept, Utilita Arena Birmingham

BEN HOLDER AND SOPHIE-JAYNE HOLDER Tues 22 Sept, Temperance, Leamington Spa

SHE HER HER HERS Thurs 23 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

HOLLY CLARKE Wed 23 Sept, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

LEE JOHN OF IMAGINATION Wed 23 Sept, The Jam House, Birmingham

HOME FREE Wed 23 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

MARILLION + HAUNT THE WOODS Wed 23 Sept, Symphony Hall, B'ham

KEVEN GRENFELL'S JAZZ FALCONS Wed 23 Sept, Boldmere Sports and Social Club, Sutton Coldfield

ANASTACIA Wed 23 Sept, Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

LAURA ASTON Wed 23 Sept, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

THE SIMON AND GARFUNKEL STORY Wed 23 Sept, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

MINA FATEMI Wed 23 Sept, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

PETUNIA Thurs 24 Sept, Kitchen Garden, B'ham

OLLIE COOK & THE

HOGWASH + THE GREAT UNWASHED Thurs 24 Sept, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

THE MAINE + GRAYSCALE Thurs 24 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE MOLOTOVS Thurs 24 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

PETE MOLINARI + MILA MOLINARI Thurs 24 Sept, The Tin Music and Arts, The Canal Basin, Coventry

WARD THOMAS Thurs 24 Sept, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

NEIL ANGILLEY TRIO Thurs 24 Sept, Marrs Bar, Worcester

THE SIMON AND GARFUNKEL STORY Thurs 24 Sept, Palace Theatre, Redditch

THE CARPENTERS EXPERIENCE Thurs 24 Sept, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

SLEEP BROKEN Thurs 24 Sept, The Robin, Bilston

ZOE RAHMAN TRIO Thurs 24 Sept, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

SCOUTING FOR GIRLS Thurs 24 Sept, Keele University, Stoke-on-Trent

THIS FLIGHT TONIGHT - THE SONGS OF JONI MITCHELL Thurs 24 Sept, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

STARS OF IRISH COUNTRY Thurs 24 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE GRATEFUL DUDES Fri 25 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

FAYE Fri 25 Sept, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

THE SKINNER BROTHERS + CARSIK + HUTCH Fri 25 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

LYCIO Fri 25 Sept, The Victoria, Birmingham

THE STARS OF IRISH COUNTRY SHOW Fri 25 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

JACKSON: THE ULTIMATE TRIBUTE Fri 25 Sept, The Dovehouse, Solihull

GRAHAM PARKER Fri 25 Sept, Artrix,

Bromsgrove

MOTLEY CRUDE + KISS Friday Fri 25 Sept, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

THE AMBA TREMAIN BAND Fri 25 Sept, Temperance, Leamington Spa

GEORGE BENSON TRIBUTE Fri 25 Sept, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

GERRY CINNA-MAN EXPERIENCE Fri 25 Sept, hmv Empire, Coventry

ANNA RYDER Fri 25 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry

SANCTUM SANCTORIUM Fri 25 Sept, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

HARVEST - A CELEBRATION OF NEIL YOUNG Fri 25 Sept, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

VICKY JACKSON AS PINK Fri 25 Sept, Kidderminster Town Hall

DREW NEIRIN Fri 25 Sept, The Red Lion, Evesham

DIRTY DC Fri 25 Sept, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

THE ROCKET MAN - ELTON JOHN TRIBUTE Fri 25 Sept, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

HI ON MAIDEN Fri 25 Sept, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

QUEEN OF THE NIGHT - A TRIBUTE TO WHITNEY HOUSTON Fri 25 Sept, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

CLOSE TO TEARS Fri 25 Sept, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

THE GUITAR EXPERIENCE Fri 25 Sept, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

SCOPYONS + UFOLOGY Fri 25 Sept, The Station, Cannock

BLACK BEARDS TEA PARTY Fri 25 Sept, Lichfield Guildhall

NEW SOUNDS Fri 25 Sept, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

UNDERCOVER HEROES Fri 25 Sept, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

SEAMUS FOGARTY Fri 25 Sept, Morris Hall, Shrewsbury

CALL OF THE KRAKEN Fri 25 Sept, Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

MOUNTAIN SONG Fri 25 Sept, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shrops

SPEAKING IN TONGUES - TRIBUTE TO TALKING HEADS Sat 26 Sept, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

UNDER THE COVERS Sat 26 Sept, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

LUKE BROHAM Sat 26 Sept, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

LAURA ASTON + GEORGIA NEVADA Sat 26 Sept, O2 Institute, Birmingham

KOZMIC PEARL Sat 26 Sept, Jo Jo Jims, Birmingham

MOVING PICTURES - A TRIBUTE TO RUSH Sat 26 Sept, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

BIG BIG TRAIN Sat 26 Sept, The Asylum, Birmingham

HARVEST - A CELEBRATION OF NEIL YOUNG Sat 26 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

BILLY JOEL TRIBUTE UK Sat 26 Sept, Artrix, Bromsgrove

SURELY DAN - TRIBUTE TO STEELY DAN Sat 26 Sept, Temperance, Leamington Spa

MAN MADE MOON + THE SESSION Sat 26 Sept, Temperance, Leamington Spa

POST MORTEM - TRIBUTE TO SLAYER Sat 26 Sept, Arches Venue, Coventry

THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC Sat 26 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry

COURTNEY PINE Sat 26 Sept, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

RAILCARD + FOGLIGHTS Sat 26 Sept, Just Dropped In, Coventry

RULE THE WORLD - TAKE THAT TRIBUTE Sat 26 Sept, Bedworth Civic Hall

COLDPLACE Sat 26 Sept, Dudley Town Hall

BYOB PERFORMING SYSTEM OF A DOWN Sat 26 Sept, The Robin, Bilston

SAM CARTER SINGS NIC JONES Sat 26 Sept, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

THE GREATEST HITS OF MOTOWN - HOW SWEET IT IS Sat 26 Sept, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

MOLLY VULPINE BAND + CLAYHEAD Sat 26 Sept, The Rigger, Newcastle-Under-Lyme

ALMOST IN CHAINS + SOUNDS GARDEN Sat 26 Sept, The Station, Cannock

DOWNLOADED Sat 26 Sept, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

BEN JORDAN Sat 26 Sept, Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

I PREVAIL + POLARIS + AMIRA ELFEKY + GORE. Sat 26 - Sun 27 Sept, O2 Academy, B'ham

NWOCR LIVEFEST 5K Sat 26 - Sun 27 Sept, KK's Steel Mill, Wolves

MARY IN THE JUNKYARD Sun 27 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

ROCKETMAN - ELTON JOHN TRIBUTE Sun 27 Sept, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

CARMICHAEL MUSICLOVER Sun 27 Sept, The Jam House, Birmingham

INES RAE Sun 27 Sept, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

SAN2 SING Sun 27 Sept, The Glee Club, B'ham

SEAMUS FOGARTY Sun 27 Sept, Temperance, Leamington Spa

LATA & ASHA Sun 27 Sept, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

JOHN VERITY BAND Sun 27 Sept, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

HARVEST - A CELEBRATION OF NEIL YOUNG Sun 27 Sept, The Robin, Bilston

MORGAN WALLEN UK Sun 27 Sept, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

ATHOMKRAFT Mon 28 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

FLETCHER FLETCHER Mon 28 Sept, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

ARKELLS + PHANTOM PLANET Mon 28 Sept, O2 Academy, B'ham

SPLITDOGS Mon 28 Sept, Just Dropped In, Coventry

LE VENT DU NORD Tues 29 Sept, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham



JILL SCOTT Tues 29 Sept, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE PUSSYCAT DOLLS + LIL' KIM + DEJA VU Tues 29 Sept, Utilita Arena Birmingham

CHRISSE CHLAPECKA Tues 29 Sept, Mama Roux's, Birmingham

LAVINIA BLACKWALL Tues 29 Sept, The Tin Music and Arts, The Canal Basin, Coventry

TRUE FOXES Wed 30 Sept, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

TCHOTCHKE + CANNED PINEAPPLE + ZIMMERMAN Wed 30 Sept, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

MEHIGA Wed 30 Sept, The Flapper, B'ham

THE MOON POPPIES Wed 30 Sept, Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

ASHLEY ALLEN & FRIENDS - STEVIE WONDER'S SONGS IN THE KEY OF LIFE Wed 30 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CAITLIN KRISKO AND THE BROADCAST Wed 30 Sept, Temperance, Leamington Spa

LOVE HURTS - ROCK ANTHEMS & POWER BALLADS Wed 30 Sept, Albany Theatre, Coventry

GRACE PETRIE Wed 30 Sept, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

JO CARLEY AND THE OLD DRY SKULLS Wed 30 Sept, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

GRAHAM PARKER Wed 30 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Classical Music

OLIVER HANCOCK ORGAN RECITAL

Programme includes works by Dupré, JS Bach, Howells & Bédard, Mon 21 Sept, Coventry Cathedral

KAZUKI CONDUCTS GRIEG'S PIANO

CONCERTO Featuring Kazuki Yamada (conductor) & Alice Sara Ott (piano). Programme includes works by Bax, Clyne & Debussy, Tues 22 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

ELEANOR TURNER HARP RECITAL Wed 23 Sept, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

LIVE AT THE CBSO CENTRE: WALTON'S

FAÇADE Featuring Kazuki Yamada (conductor) & Jennifer France (narrator). Programme also includes works by Ibert & Milhaud, Thurs 24 Sept, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

DIVINE HARMONY CONCERT Featuring Birmingham Cathedral Choir & Conor McGlone (accompanist). Programme includes works by Parry, Franck & Handel, Fri 25 Sept, St Philip's Cathedral, Birmingham

TENEBRAE: SPANISH GLORIES Featuring Nigel Short (director). Programme includes works by Lobo & Luis de Victoria, Fri 25 Sept, Great Malvern Priory

THE DEVINE MUSICK PIANO TRIO

Featuring Steven Devine (keyboard), Caroline Balding (violin) & Andrew Skidmore (cello). Programme includes works by Haydn, Mozart & Beethoven, Fri 25 Sept, Maidment Building, Shrewsbury School

ARMONICO CONSORT: SUPER SIZE

POLYPHONY 3 Featuring Christopher Monks (director). Programme includes works by Monteverdi, Valls, Buckley & more..., Sat 26 Sept, St Mary's Church, Warwick

MUSICIANS STRIKE UP: MEDIEVAL

MUSIC, STORIES AND SONG Sat 26 Sept, Worcester Cathedral

NEW WORLD SYMPHONY Featuring Anthony Brown (conductor) & Katy Smith (violin). Programme includes works by Barry, Vaughan Williams, Horner & Dvořák, Sat 26 Sept, Tewkesbury Abbey

COME AND SING: THE BREATH OF LIFE

Featuring Matthew Coleridge (composer) & Shrewsbury Choral, Sat 26 Sept, Shrewsbury Abbey

ROCKSPRING COMMUNITY CHOIR

Featuring Chris Lacey (musical director) & Jane Hughes (accompanist) Sat 26 Sept, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

STONE CHORAL: COME AND SING JOHN

RUTTER'S REQUIEM Featuring Harriet Johnson (musical director) & Jennifer Hames (accompanist) Sat 26 Sept, St Dominic's Priory Hall, Stone

SARGAM: A VIBRANT EVENING OF LIVE INDIAN CLASSICAL MUSIC An inclusive family friendly evening featuring

some of the best British South Asian musicians and vocalists from the West Midlands, and across the UK, Sat 26 Sept, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

KING EDWARDS VI COLLEGE 50TH

ANNIVERSARY CONCERT Featuring both current students and alumni. Programme includes works by Brahms, Strauss, Faure & Vivaldi, Sat 26 Sept, Stourbridge Town Hall

KING'S TRUST 50TH CELEBRATION

ANNIVERSARY Featuring Joan Armatrading (composer), Isata Kanneh-Mason (piano), Jennifer France (soprano), Ruby Hughes (soprano) & Darren Jaffrey (baritone). Charity concert with a programme including Joan Armatrading's Symphony No.1, Sat 26 Sept, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

ELGAR AT THE ASYLUM A promenade performance reframing the music and legacy of Edward Elgar, Sat 26 - Sun 27 Sept, Malvern Theatres

STRINGS SERENADE Featuring Midland Chamber Orchestra, Sun 27 Sept, St Mary's Church, Moseley, Birmingham

CANDELA STRING QUARTET PRESENTS:

MOVIE NIGHT BY CANDLELIGHT

Featuring Anna Tulchinskaya & Emma Donald (violins), Liam Brolly (viola) & Harry Broom (cello). Programme includes works by Zimmer, Williams & more..., Sun 27 Sept, Stourbridge Town Hall

THOMAS TROTTER ORGAN RECITAL

Programme includes works by Best, Schubert, Gounod & more..., Mon 28 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall

RACHEL MAHON ORGAN RECITAL

Programme includes works by Byrd, JS Bach & Laurin, Mon 28 Sept, Coventry Cathedral

FIRST LISTEN: ELGAR Featuring Jess Gillam (presenter) & Stephanie Childress (conductor). Programme comprises Elgar's Enigma Variations, Tues 29 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

ELGAR'S ENIGMA VARIATIONS Featuring Stephanie Childress (conductor), Jess Gillam (saxophone), Sheku Kanneh-Mason (cello), Ben Goldscheider (horn) & Gwilym Simcock (orchestral piano). Programme also includes works by Britten & Simcock, Wed 30 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CHEVALIER DE SAINT-GEORGES

Featuring Leon Bosch (conductor) & Christopher Dingle (speaker), Wed 30 Sept, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

ECHOES OF WATER

Featuring Hyelim Kim & Kah Hoe Yi (composer/performers), Wed 30 Sept, The Lab, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

REVERIE WITH LUCY PARHAM (PIANO)

AND ALISTAIR MCGOWAN (NARRATOR) Programme includes works by

Debussy, Wed 30 Sept, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

ZLATA CHOCHIEVA PIANO RECITAL

Programme includes works by Chopin, Wed 30 Sept, St Mary's Church, Shrewsbury

Comedy

GARY DELANEY Tues 22 Sept, The Alexandra, Birmingham

HENRY PAKER Wed 23 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

GRACE CAMPBELL Wed 23 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JASON MANFORD Wed 23 Sept, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

JAZZ EMU Wed 23 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

JEN BRISTER Wed 23 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

KANE BROWN Wed 23 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

PHIL ELLIS Thurs 24 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY

ROBINSON, PAUL F TAYLOR & MATT REED Thurs 24 Sept, The Glee Club, B'ham

PAUL SMITH Thurs 24 Sept, Utilita Arena Birmingham

PROJECT MAYHEM COMEDY Thurs 24 Sept, The Wellington, Birmingham

CLOSEUP COMEDY Thurs 24 Sept, Dockworks Waterfront, Brierley Hill

LUCY BEAUMONT Thurs 24 Sept, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

ALFIE BROWN Thurs 24 Sept, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

MILTON JONES, BRENNEN REECE & JO ENRIGHT Fri 25 Sept, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

GARY MEIKLE Fri 25 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

LEROY BRITO, JULES O'BRIAN, NICK EVERITT & CARL JONES Fri 25 Sept, Bedford Civic Hall

ALAN DAVIES Fri 25 Sept, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

KEMAH BOB, DARREN CONNELL, PAUL F TAYLOR & MATT REED Fri 25 - Sat 26 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

URZILA CARLSON Sat 26 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

KATE MARTIN, JON CAPEWELL, ROGER MONKHOUSE & CARL JONES Sat 26 Sept, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham

LI JIN HAO Sat 26 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

CLOSEUP COMEDY Sat 26 Sept, Top of the World, Stafford

MANFORD'S COMEDY CLUB Sat 26 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

BARRY FROM WATFORD Sat 26 Sept, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

GARY POWNDLAND Sat 26 Sept, The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

DANIEL O'REILLY Sat 26 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

ALFIE MOORE Sat 26 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

SERGI POLO Sun 27 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

KANE BROWN Sun 27 Sept, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

OLAF FALAFEL Sun 27 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

TEZ ILYAS Sat 26 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

MRS SMITH Sun 27 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

MAISIE ADAM Mon 28 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

RADU ISAC Tues 29 Sept, The Glee Club, Birmingham

DOM JOLY Tues 29 Sept, The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

GIANMARCO SORESI Wed 30 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Theatre

ANIMAL FARM Guy Masterson's solo adaptation of George Orwell's barnyard masterpiece, performed by Sam Blythe, Mon 21 Sept, Macready Theatre, Rugby

MURDER, SHE DIDN'T WRITE Improvised sleuthing comedy in which a classic murder-mystery is created live on stage using audience suggestions, Mon 21 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

TWELVE ANGRY MEN Reginald Rose's gripping courtroom thriller stars Gray O'Brien (Coronation Street/Peak Practice), Bill Ward (Emmerdale/Coronation Street), Ricky Norwood (EastEnders), Tristan Gemmill (Casualty/Coronation Street) and Ben Nealon (Soldier Soldier), Mon 21 - Sat 26 Sept, The Rep, Birmingham

2:22 A GHOST STORY The Nonentities Society present an amateur version of Danny Robins' acclaimed thriller, Mon 21 - Sat 26 Sept, The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster

FIRST ENCOUNTERS: JULIUS CAESAR

Harriet Walter reprises her role as Brutus in Phyllida Lloyd's groundbreaking 2012 Donmar Warehouse production, Mon 21 Sept - Fri 23 Oct, The Other Place, Stratford-upon-Avon

WOODHILL LUNG Theatre present a form of documentary theatre and dance to explore the crisis facing prisons, Tues 22 - Wed 23 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

DIAL M FOR MURDER New version of Frederick Knott's classic thriller, Tues 22 - Sat 26 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

WILKO: LOVE AND DEATH AND ROCK N' ROLL A play with live music about the iconic rock star and founder of legendary Essex band Dr Feelgood,

Tues 22 - Sat 26 Sept, Malvern Theatres

TELL ME WHERE IT HURTS Powerful comedy drama that sheds light on the resilience required to manage women's health issues in a world that often fails to recognise them, Wed 23 Sept, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

HADESTOWN Lichfield Musical Youth Theatre present an amateur version of the award-winning musical, Wed 23 - Sat 26 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

MIDDLE Amateur version of David Eldridge's moving and funny portrait of a fortysomething couple whose marriage hangs in the balance, Wed 23 Sept - Sat 3 Oct, The Loft Theatre, Leamington Spa

TELL ME WHERE IT HURTS A powerful comedy drama that sheds a light on the resilience required to manage women's health issues in a world that often fails to recognise them, Thurs 24 Sept, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

THE LIGHTNING THIEF - THE PERCY JACKSON MUSICAL Amateur version of the family-friendly musical adventure, bringing the world of modern mythology to life, Thurs 24 - Sun 27 Sept, Playbox Theatre, The Dream Factory, Warwick

THE ONLY KING The first fully sung-through Biblical Cantonese musical in concert, telling the story of King Saul and David. Presented by Stage One, Thurs 24 - Sat 26 Sept, The Old Rep, Birmingham

THE JUNGLE BOOK Musical pantomime adventure based on Rudyard Kipling's much-loved tale. Presented by Cannock Chase Drama Society, Thurs 24 - Sun 27 Sept, The Rugeley Rose Theatre

THE BALLAD OF JOHN AND PAUL The story of John Lennon and Paul McCartney, told via live music and storytelling, Fri 25 Sept, The New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

THE (ALMOST) COMPLETE HISTORY OF BRITAIN The Pantaloons Theatre Company present a breathless race through the centuries in a show that tells the entire story of Britain in under two hours, Fri 25 Sept, The Regal, Tenbury

A WOMAN OF NO IMPORTANCE The Crescent Theatre Company present an amateur version of Oscar Wilde's classic comedy, Sat 26 Sept - Sat 3 Oct, The Crescent Theatre, B'ham

UNDERDOG: THE OTHER BRONTE Amateur version of Sarah Gordon's play, telling the story of the Brontë sisters and the sibling power dynamics that shaped their uneven rise to fame, Sat 26 Sept - Sat 3 Oct, Criterion Theatre, Coventry

AS YOU LIKE IT Jonathan Groff makes his RSC debut as Rosalind in Shakespeare's comedy, Sat 26 Sept - Sat 7 Nov, Royal Shakespeare

Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

ERIC & ERN A homage to the much-loved comedy duo, featuring renditions of 'those famous comedy sketches', Sun 27 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

FINDING BARRY Malvern Theatre Players present an amateur version of Steve Burford's lighthearted journey through the life of Barry Jackson, the man who changed British theatre, Sun 27 Sept, Malvern Theatres

THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO Wild Arts present Mozart's comic opera in a new production in which servants outsmart masters and love triumphs against the odds..., Sun 27 Sept, The Rep, Birmingham

ERIC & ERN A homage to the much-loved comedy duo, featuring renditions of 'those famous comedy sketches', Mon 28 Sept, Crewe Lyceum Theatre

THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME Amateur stage version of Mark Haddon's bestselling novel, Mon 28 Sept - Sat 3 Oct, Talisman Theatre & Arts Centre, Kenilworth

THE PHANTOM RASPBERRY BLOWER OF OLD LONDON TOWN Jack the Ripper parody, originally written by Spike Milligan in 1971 and then adapted by Ronnie Barker for The Two Ronnies' BBC television series in 1976, Tues 29 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

WE WILL ROCK YOU Bilston Operatic present an amateur version of the Ben Elton musical, set to Queen's greatest hits, Tues 29 Sept - Sat 3 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

MADE IN DAGENHAM Walsall Operatic Society present an amateur version of the uplifting musical comedy about courage, community and standing up for what's right, Tues 29 Sept - Sat 3 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

THE GHOST TRAIN Stoke Rep Players present an amateur version of Arnold Ridley's classic comedy thriller, Tues 29 Sept - Sat 3 Oct, The Stoke Rep, Stoke-on-Trent

IT'S A MYSTERY One-man show that takes a deep-dive into the enduring appeal of murder-mysteries, Wed 30 Sept, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

THE HOLY MATRIMONY Amateur version of a new play showcasing 'the highs and lows of grieving', Wed 30 Sept - Sat 3 Oct, The Bear Pitt Theatre Company, Stratford-upon-Avon

DEAR EVAN HANSEN WBOS present an amateur version of the hit musical, telling the story of an anxious high-school kid who wants nothing more than to fit in, Wed 30 Sept - Sat 3 Oct, Dormston Mill Theatre, Sedgley, Dudley

Kids Theatre

THE ULTIMATE BUBBLE SHOW Show for younger audiences in which international bubbleologist Ray Bubbles showcases his skills at crafting 'bubble sculptures, effects and magical displays', Sat 26 Sept, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

DEAR ZOO Rod Campbell's children's classic is brought to life on stage via puppetry, music and lots of audience participation, Sat 26 - Sun 27 Sept, Swan Theatre, Worcester

Dance

ADAM GARCIA'S EMERALD STORM Fusion of Irish dance with urban tap. Britain's Got Talent finalist Tom Ball stars, Wed 23 Sept, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

SWAN LAKE Birmingham Royal Ballet revive Sir Peter Wright and Galina Samsova's glorious production, set to Tchaikovsky's famous score, Wed 23 Sept - Sat 3 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome

LORD OF THE DANCE: 30TH ANNIVERSARY UK tour of Michael Flatley's global phenomenon, Mon 28 Sept - Sun 4 Oct, The Alexandra, Birmingham

OCKHAM'S RAZOR PRESENT COLLABORATOR A highly physical and heartfelt exploration of the challenges of navigating a relationship, and the negotiation involved in making stuff, Tues 29 Sept, Malvern Theatres

BALLROOM FEVER New ballroom and Latin American dance show, featuring guest star Flavia Cacace, Tues 29 Sept, Swan Theatre, Worcester

Light Entertainment

STEVE STEINMAN'S ANYTHING FOR LOVE - THE MEAT LOAF STORY Acclaimed show featuring powerhouse vocals and classic numbers from Bat Out Of Hell, Mon 21 Sept, The Alexandra, Birmingham

ATTENTION ALL SHIPPING - A CELEBRATION OF THE SHIPPING FORECAST Charlie Connelly brings the shipping forecast vividly to life in a 'hilarious and moving celebration of an iconic cultural institution', Wed 23 Sept, Kidderminster Town Hall

150% BADGERS WITH MATT HOBBS Stand-up comedy show about how the worlds of humans and badgers collide, Thurs 24 Sept, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

STARS OF IRISH COUNTRY 'Music, memories and pure country magic', Thurs 24 Sept, Theatre Severn,

Shrewsbury

MUSIC OF THE NIGHT A cast of West End singers present a celebration of the music of Andrew Lloyd Webber, Thurs 24 Sept, Halesowen Town Hall

THAT'LL BE THE DAY Nostalgic show featuring comedy sketches and chart-topping favourites from the 1950s through to the 1980s, Thurs 24 Sept, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

ALEX MCALEER: MIND READER Evening promising a blend of 'laugh-out-loud humour and jaw-dropping psychological feats', Thurs 24 Sept, Number 8, Pershore

THE OPERA BOYS FAREWELL TOUR - STARRING PAUL POTTS Thurs 24 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

OPERATION MI6 Former MI6 intelligence officer Matthew Dunn takes audiences inside the secretive world of Britain's foreign intelligence service in a live theatre experience 'unlike any other', Thurs 24 Sept, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

VOX LUMIERE METROPOLIS Fritz Lang's iconic 1927 silent masterpiece is brought to life by a live band, original new music and powerhouse vocals, Thurs 24 Sept, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

SEND IN THE CLOWNS: QUEENY TODD Drag celebration of the music of Stephen Sondheim. Fatt Butcher, Dahliah Rivers, Blü Romantic and Alanna Boden star, Thurs 24 - Sat 26 Sept, The Rep, Birmingham

PAUL ZERDIN - SHUT YOUR MOUTH New comedy tour from the master ventriloquist and former winner of America's Got Talent, Fri 25 Sept, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

HAM A 'kinky eco-hijacking' of Shakespeare's Hamlet about meat, madness and the power of shame, Fri 25 Sept, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

READY STEADY 60S SHOW A four-piece live band bring the energy and excitement of the 60s music scene to life, Fri 25 Sept, Walsall Arena

THAT'LL BE THE DAY Nostalgic show featuring comedy sketches and chart-topping favourites from the 1950s through to the 1980s, Fri 25 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

JAMES BOND CONCERT SPECTACULAR A concert of big Bond themes, compered by former Bond actor Caroline Bliss (Miss Moneypenny in 1987's The Living Daylights), Sat 26 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall

BAGA CHIPZ - BAGZ TO RICHES TOUR Join the international drag superstar for an evening of 'outrageous comedy, untold stories, anecdotes, memories and more'..., Sat 26 Sept, Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

SLAY THE VAMPS DOWN: A BUFFY

BURLESQUE PARODY Show celebrating the cult classic and featuring cabaret, burlesque, drag and live music, Sat 26 Sept, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

AN EVENING WITHOUT KATE BUSH

Sarah-Louise Young's critically acclaimed show, celebrating one of the most influential voices in British pop culture, Sat 26 Sept, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry



RICHARD JONES: THE SOUND OF MAGIC

Enjoy an evening with the only magician ever to win Britain's Got Talent, Sat 26 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE D-DAY DARLINGS A nostalgic journey through the defining sounds of the 20th century - from the harmonies of the 1940s through to the swinging rhythms of the post-war eras, Sun 27 Sept, Walsall Arena

5 MISTAKES THAT CHANGED HISTORY

Paul Coulter's storytelling show, exploring five people whose mistakes (big and small) changed the world, Sun 27 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

CANDELA STRINGS QUARTET: MOVIE

NIGHT BY CANDLELIGHT An evening of orchestral classics from well-known movie scores, including Harry Potter, Batman, The Lion King, Dune and more..., Sun 27 Sept, Stourbridge Town Hall

A JAMES BOND CONCERT SPECTACULAR

A concert of big Bond themes, compered by former Bond actor Caroline Bliss (Miss Money Penny in 1987's The Living Daylights), Sun 27 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

UNDERTALE: THE DETERMINATION

SYMPHONY With gameplay footage displayed on a screen above the stage, audiences will be fully immersed in the world of Undertale, 'experiencing its story and music like never before', Mon 28 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

MEERA SYAL: VIGILAUNTIE Join the Goodness Gracious Me co-creator as she shares stories that have shaped her life and work, Mon 28 Sept, Birmingham Town Hall

SOLVE-ALONG-A-MURDER-SHE-WROTE

Featuring an interactive screening of a classic Murder She Wrote episode, alongside games, prizes and plenty of audience participation, Mon 28 -

Tues 29 Sept, Lichfield Garrick

LOVE HURST Tribute show featuring rock anthems and smash-hit power ballads, Tues 29 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

LEGENDS OF THE 60S SHOW

The ultimate feelgood show from the golden era of music, Wed 30 Sept, The Core Theatre, Solihull

FUNNY AS CUP - THE COMEDY

GAMESHOW A fast-paced, laugh-out-loud comedy clash in which two teams of three comedians go head-to-head in a chaotic battle of wit, Wed 30 Sept, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

BAGA CHIPZ - BAGZ TO RICHES TOUR

Join the international drag superstar for 'an evening of outrageous comedy, untold stories, anecdotes, memories and more'..., Wed 30 Sept, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

Talks & Spoken Word

ENTER THE CASTLE WITH JON RONSON

Darkly comic, live stage show in which the author & journalist brings to life stories from his book The Castle, Tues 22 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

AN EVENING WITH CLARE BALDING

Join the award-winning author & broadcaster as she discusses her life and career, Thurs 24 Sept, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

CAITLIN MORAN: HOW TO BE HOPEFUL

Join the author & journalist as she celebrates the release of her brand-new memoir, Fri 25 Sept, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry



AN EVENING WITH THE COVENTRY CITY

LEGENDS Join Gordon Strachan and Gary McAllister as they recall their glory days and share behind-the-scenes stories from the dressing room, Fri 25 Sept, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

OMAR EL AKKAD - ONE DAY, EVERYONE WILL HAVE ALWAYS BEEN AGAINST THIS

The award-winning author & journalist discusses his bestselling book, Sat 26 Sept, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

DAVE ROWNTREE - NO ONE YOU KNOW

The former Blur drummer talks about the band's formative years, their

world tours, and the challenge of going head-to-head with Oasis, Sat 26 Sept, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

MURDEROUS MINDS WITH EMMA KENNY

Join the psychologist & crime commentator for a brand-new show that probes the darkest corners of humanity, Sun 27 Sept, The Alexandra, Birmingham

AN EVENING WITH NIGEL MANSELL

The former F1 world champion looks back at a career on the tracks, Sun 27 Sept, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

JORDAN WYLIE: FINDING PURPOSE

The adventurer, author & TV personality shares stories about his extreme challenges and life-changing experiences, Mon 28 Sept, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Events

REACHING NEW HEIGHTS TOURS

Look beyond the stone with expert-led architecture, archaeology and graffiti tours, Tues 22 Sept, Worcester Cathedral

A WALK IN THE PARK

Take a gentle walk in the park with Compton Verney Landscape Manager Fiona Tansey, Fri 25 Sept, Compton Verney, Warwickshire

HANBURY HALL'S APPLE HARVEST

Pick your own apples, learn more about different varieties, and discover some recipe ideas and cooking tips, Fri 25 - Sun 27 Sept, Hanbury Hall, Worcestershire

RUSTIVAL

A family-friendly show for car, commercial vehicle, bus and bike enthusiasts, Sat 26 Sept, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

REIGN: DEGALE VS PORTMAN A

'blockbuster night of action', headlined by the long-awaited return of James 'Chunky' DeGale, Sat 26 Sept, The Halls Wolverhampton

WARHOL IN WOLVERHAMPTON: TALK

AND TOUR LED BY JON SLEIGH Learn about the history of Andy Warhol in Wolverhampton, Sat 26 Sept, Wolverhampton Art Gallery

FIREWORK CHAMPIONS

Four of the UK's top firework companies present 10-minute displays to music, Sat 26 Sept, Arley Hall, Worcestershire

QUEENSBERRY PROMOTIONS BOXING

Featuring Davies vs Collins & Heaney vs Warburton, Sat 26 Sept, bp pulse LIVE, Birmingham

PEAKY BLINDER NIGHT

Walk in the footsteps of the show's biggest stars as the museum celebrates the popular BBC television series, Sat 26 Sept, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

BACKSTAGE TOUR

Explore the hidden secrets of the Rep, Sat 26 Sept, The Rep, Birmingham

HARVEST SATURDAY

Meet the garden team and see what's being

harvested, Sat 26 Sept, Packwood House, Warwickshire

GINGER & SPICE FESTIVAL

Explore the town's culinary heritage and social history via an eclectic mix of fringe events, Sat 26 Sept, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

TJ DJ'S CHARITY BIRTHDAY BASH

The biggest hits from the 90s, noughties and now, Sat 26 Sept, RIVA Stafford

CAPTIVATING COSTUME: TALK, TOUR,

AND BEHIND THE SCENES LOOK Enjoy a talk exploring the stories behind the costumes and clothes in the collection, Sat 26 Sept, Hartlebury Castle, Worcester

HIGHLAND COW WEEKEND

Meet the herd and learn all about the breed. Featuring special demonstrations and themed activities, Sat 26 & Sun 27 Sept, Cotswold Farm Park, Cheltenham

ARTISAN, CRAFT AND GIFT MARKET

Featuring talented makers, creators and enterprises from across the region, Sat 26 & Sun 27 Sept, Bantock House, Wolverhampton

THE BIG BARK

Featuring interactive zones, expert advice, shopping and entertainment, Sat 26 & Sun 27 Sept, Uttoxeter Racecourse, Staffordshire



LIVING HISTORY WEEKEND WITH THE

SEALED KNOT Discover the real story of the king's escape and life in the 17th century, Sat 26 & Sun 27 Sept, Moseley Old Hall, Wolverhampton

PILATES AT THE MUSEUM WITH GRAFT

PILATES A pilates session in the Pre-Raphaelite Galleries, Sun 27 Sept, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

PIECE(S) OF WORK - WRITERS GROUP

Brand-new space for poets to come together and share what they've been working on, Sun 27 Sept, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

TOY COLLECTORS FAIR

Explore more than 500 stalls selling thousands of old and new collectable toys and models, Sun 27 Sept, NEC, Birmingham

ANTIQUES AND COLLECTORS FAIR

Featuring traders from across the UK selling a wide range of items from yesteryear, Sun 27 Sept, Himley Hall, Dudley

REACHING NEW HEIGHTS TOURS

Look beyond the stone with expert-led architecture, archaeology and graffiti tours, Mon 28 Sept, Worcester Cathedral



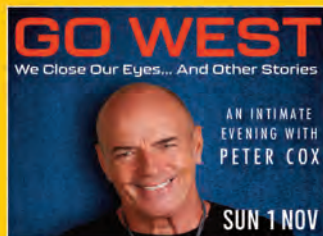
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A brand new stage show landing in Birmingham

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Based on the book by
Raymond Briggs



Directed & Choreographed by
Will Tuckett

Production Design by
Anna Fleischle

The stage show based upon the book by Raymond Briggs and the film directed by Dianne Jackson and produced by John Coates.

By Arrangement with Snowman Enterprises Limited and Chester Music Limited.

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