

Birmingham

ISSUE 477 OCTOBER 2026

What's On

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birminghamwhatson.co.uk



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Director Carlos Acosta

Sir Peter Wright's
The Nutcracker
20 November – 12 December

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Rosanna Ely. Image © Manvir Rai.

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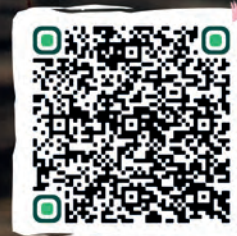


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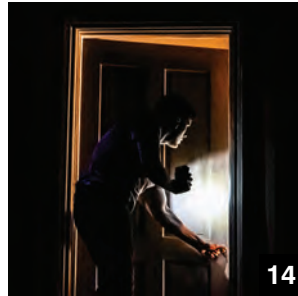
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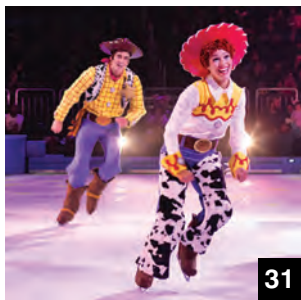
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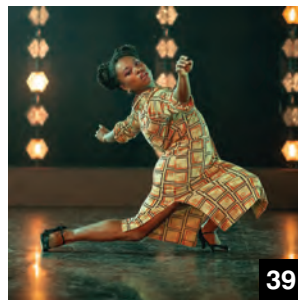
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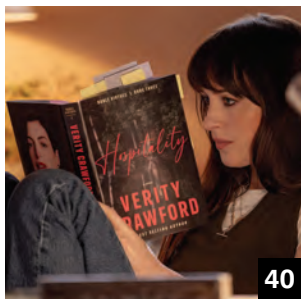
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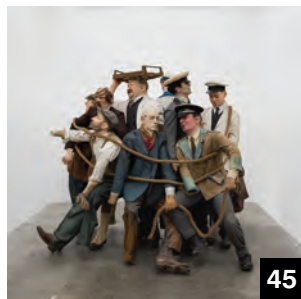
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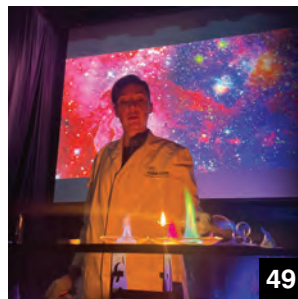
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What's On

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Birmingham What's On



A Neverland Christmas at Birmingham museum

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery's Gas Hall will be transformed into Peter Pan's Neverland towards the end of the month. Visitors to the venue from Friday 23 October to Sunday 3 January will journey through rooms 'adorned with twinkling fairy lights, pirate ships and whimsical forests, along the way encountering beloved characters like Peter, Wendy, Captain Hook and Tinker Bell'. To find out more and purchase tickets, visit the website at birminghammuseums.org.uk

Trombone Festival comes to the Conservatoire

The Royal Birmingham Conservatoire will host the British Trombone Festival 2026 late this month.

Featuring, among other attractions, performances, masterclasses, competition finals, group warm-ups and trade stands, the event takes place on Saturday 24 & Sunday 25 October.

To find out more and purchase your tickets, visit the website: britishtrombonesociety.org



Friday the 9th, Rother Street Arts House, Stratford-upon-Avon (Tuesday the 20th), Wolverhampton's Arena Theatre (Friday the 23rd) and The Albany in Coventry (Saturday the 24th). For more information and to book tickets, visit lumenistheatre.co.uk

Celebrating Brummie poet Benjamin Zephaniah

Birmingham's Midlands Arts Centre (MAC) is this month hosting an event dedicated to late Brummie poet Benjamin Zephaniah.

Featuring music, performance poetry, spoken word, crafts and a free drop-in arts workshop, A Festival Of Rhythm, Unity And Revolution takes place at the venue on Saturday 10 October.

For more information and to purchase your tickets, visit macbirmingham.co.uk

Free Black History Month exhibition at Snow Hill

A free-to-view outdoor exhibition for Black History Month is set to transform Birmingham's Snow Hill Square

from Thursday 1 to Saturday 31 October. Exploring the theme of Black culture, the exhibition showcases a selection of original designs, in a range of formats, created by students from Birmingham City University. For updates, visit colmorelife.co.uk



Good Food Show's festive edition returns next month

The Festive Good Food Show returns to Birmingham next month, with organisers promising an event 'bursting with chef tips, tastings, workshops, dining experiences and the very best foodie finds'.

Running at the NEC from Thursday 26 to Sunday 29 November, the ever-popular get-together will feature contributions from a host of celebrity chefs, including John Torode, Lisa Faulkner, James Martin and the Midlands' very own Glynn Purnell.

For more information and to book tickets, visit the website at goodfoodshow.com



Cadbury's 120-year-old lantern slides discovered

Visually striking lantern slides, used by Cadbury's to promote their vision for better working and living conditions, have been unearthed 120 years after they were made. Bournville Village Trust, which was founded by chocolate-maker and philanthropist George Cadbury, discovered the glass lantern slides after a flood forced some of its archives to be relocated. The stunning colour slides were used by Cadbury employees as they toured Britain and beyond to bring the Cadbury and Bournville story to life and help boost sales of chocolate.

The slides show factory workers taking a morning break in a beautiful garden, and large family houses surrounded by trees and lush scenery.

Two Midlands dates for Operation Mincemeat

Olivier Award-winning musical Operation Mincemeat will make two return visits to the West Midlands region next year.

The Second World War-set musical stops off at Birmingham theatre The Alexandra from Tuesday 24 to Saturday 28 August, and then visits the Coventry Belgrade from Tuesday 12 to Saturday 16 October 2027.

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



Kickstart your creative career behind the scenes

BOA Stage & Screen Production Academy is holding an open day for prospective students on Saturday 17 October.

The Birmingham City Centre-located academy offers free full-time courses for local 16- to 19-year-olds who are passionate about working in film, TV, live events and theatre production. To find out more, head to the website at trainbackstage.co.uk



Queer Futures show at Centrala

A group exhibition of film, photography, sculpture and print by eight LGBTQI+ artists from Central and Eastern Europe - all of whom are now living in the UK - goes on display at Birmingham venue Centrala this month. Queer Futures will be available to view from Friday 2 October to Saturday 12 December.

A Halloween farce at Blue Orange

Birmingham's Blue Orange Theatre will be getting into the Halloween spirit when it presents a brand-new comedy horror farce at the end of the month. Being Frank runs at the venue from Friday 30 October to Saturday 7 November... To find out more and book tickets, visit the venue's website at blueorangetheatre.co.uk



Refurbished UCB eatery to reopen

The University College Birmingham's (UCB) venue, Restaurant At Birmingham College of Food, will reopen on Monday 12 October following a major refurbishment. UCB is also opening a second eatery this autumn, named Beyond. The 80-cover café, restaurant & bar will be located on the College of Food campus.



Four new shows as Birmingham hosts a season of dance

Midlands-based dance-development organisation Fabric has announced four new performances as part of an international season of dance coming to Birmingham.

Forming part of the THIS IS DANCE initiative - a partnership between Birmingham Hippodrome, Birmingham Rep, Birmingham Royal Ballet, Fierce Festival, Midlands Arts Centre and Sampad - the autumn programme will include a UK premiere presented alongside performances by a line-up of international companies and artists.

Faye Driscoll's Weathering - a co-presentation with Fierce Festival, making its debut at Midlands Arts Centre from Wednesday 14 to

Friday 16 October - is a landmark show featuring 10 performers who create a slowly evolving live scene on a moving platform.

This will then be followed in November by three new productions at the Patrick Studio at Birmingham Hippodrome...

Speaking about the season, Paul Russ, CEO & artistic director of Fabric, said: "THIS IS DANCE demonstrates how organisations with distinct identities can work collectively to grow the city's cultural offer, positioning Birmingham as a city where adventurous dance and performance can flourish."

To find out more about the full programme, visit fabric.dance/project/this-is-dance

Alfred Works takes the title

Birmingham-based food hall Alfred Works has been crowned Best Food Hall in the UK at the British Street Food Awards - only a few short months after opening its doors in Digbeth. Part of independent hospitality business Blend Family, Alfred Works brings together, all under one roof, 18 independently owned food partners serving authentic dishes and global cuisines from across the world.

Birmingham's cocktail weekend makes a return with its winter edition

Cocktail lovers, rejoice - Birmingham Cocktail Weekend is making a return from Thursday 22 to Sunday 25 October.

The hugely popular event will see 40-plus participating venues each serving up a £6 signature cocktail for customers who are wearing the festival's official wristband.

The wristband also provides access to 'a series of great events, a fab hotel discount, £5 mocktails and exclusive food offers'.

Exclusively available for the winter edition, a handful of venues will be serving up a £9 signature cocktail & snack pairing.

For further information, visit birminghamcocktailweekend.co.uk



Black girlhood explored in coming-of-age drama

A coming-of-age drama about Black girlhood, ambition and friendship is visiting Birmingham Hippodrome's Patrick Studio at the end of the month.

Set at a Birmingham grammar school, *Off-Key* is presented by award-winning collective Side eYe and shows at the venue on Friday 30 & Saturday 31 October.

For more information and to purchase tickets, visit birminghamhippodrome.com

New sci-fi horror show to make Midlands stop-offs

A 'chilling sci-fi horror with a creeping sense of dread' is touring to the region this month.

Presented by Thunder Road Theatre Company, *The Void* stops off at West Midlands venues including Warwick's Bridge House Theatre, Lichfield Garrick and the Birmingham Repertory Theatre.

For further details and to purchase tickets, visit thunderroadtheatre.org



Last chance to see Andy Warhol exhibition

If you haven't yet checked out Wolverhampton Art Gallery's Andy Warhol exhibition, you have only a handful of October days in which to do so, with the show closing on Sunday the 4th.

Created in partnership with Tate and National Galleries of Scotland, the display 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.



NEC to host four creative shows across one weekend

The Creative Craft Show, Sewing For Pleasure Winter, Simply Christmas and Cake & Bake International return to Birmingham's NEC early next month.

Bringing together hundreds of exhibitors, workshops, demonstrations, celebrities and hands-on creative experiences across a wide range of crafts, the shows offer exceptional value for money, with visitors able to attend all four events for the price of one ticket.

What's more, an additional 30% can be saved off ticket prices by using the code BIRMSAVE30. The offer applies to standard full-price tickets only.

The event runs at the venue for four days, from Thursday 5 to Sunday 8 November. For further information about all four shows and to purchase your tickets, head for the website at creativecraftshow.co.uk

An evening of 'sizzling striptease' at The Old Rep

The Old Rep is hosting an evening of 'sizzling striptease, daring drag and vivacious variety' next month as part of the Birmingham Drag & Burlesque Festival.

The *Follies Grandé* takes place at the venue on Saturday 7 November.

To find out more about both the show and the festival, and to purchase tickets, visit birminghamdragandburlesquefestival.co.uk



Birmingham Literature Festival makes a return

Birmingham Literature Festival makes a return this month, and as usual will be showcasing 'the very best writers, speakers, thinkers, activists and artists from the UK and across the world'. The event takes place at a variety of venues across the city and runs from Thursday 8 to Monday 12 October. To find out more and purchase tickets, visit birminghamliteraturefestival.org

A Christmas catastrophe

The award-winning Mischief, the company behind hit stage shows *The Play That Goes Wrong*, *Peter Pan Goes Wrong* and *The Comedy About Spies*, are heading to the Wolverhampton Grand next month (Tuesday 10 - Saturday 14 November) with their hit festive show *Christmas Carol Goes Wrong*. To find out more and purchase tickets, visit the venue's website at grandtheatre.co.uk



Festive fun with Peter Pan at Solihull's Core Theatre

Award-winning company Little Wolf Entertainment will present a brand-new pantomime version of *Peter Pan* at Solihull theatre The Core this festive season.

The show runs at the venue from Friday 4 December to Sunday 3 January. For further information and to book your tickets, visit the website at thecoretheatresolihull.co.uk



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WORKSHOPS | PERFORMANCE | 4-11YO



Swan Lake Family Fun with Birmingham Royal Ballet
24.10 | JBPS at Symphony Hall

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Halloween The Concert
30.10 | Town Hall

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Casino Royale in Concert
30.10 | Symphony Hall

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Folk Rock Pioneers Steeleye Span In Concert
31.10 | Town Hall

BOOKINGS & FULL LISTINGS:

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New farmers market launches in Bournville

A new farmers market is launching in Bournville.

Taking place for the first time on Saturday 3 October - and then on the first Saturday of November and December - the market will comprise 50 stalls and run from 10am to 3pm on Sycamore Road, which is located next to Bournville Green. For more information, visit the website at bvt.org.uk

RAF display explores stories of displacement

The human cost of war is explored in a recently opened community-led display at the RAF Museum Midlands in Cosford. The Displaced Display features the personal experiences of civilians who endured the Second World War Blitz in West Bromwich and the wider Black Country. These are presented alongside the stories of journeys made to the Midlands by people displaced from Ukraine following the 2014 and 2022 Russian invasions. For more information, visit rafmuseum.org/midlands

More Monster Trucks as new show visits Brum

Hot Wheels Monster Trucks Live will return to Birmingham next spring with brand-new show Colour Bash (Utilita Arena, Saturday 10 & Sunday 11 April). Commenting on the news, Ken Hudgens, the CEO of the company behind the event, Family Entertainment Live, said: "Colour Bash is the most vibrant Hot Wheels Monster Trucks Live experience we've ever created. We took everything fans love about the show - the massive trucks, the jaw-dropping stunts, the can't-look-away energy - and supercharged it with colour. It's a brand-new way to experience the action live, and we can't wait to bring it to families in 2027." To find out more and purchase tickets, visit the website at livenation.co.uk



The L*OVE* Book heads to the Wolverhampton Grand

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre will next spring play host to a Sadler's Wells production of acclaimed choreographer Jade Hackett's *The L*OVE* Book*. Featuring music from soul singer Omar Lyefook (better known as Omar) and told

through hip-hop and lyrical dance, the show focuses on a Windrush love story spanning four decades and visits the Grand on Friday 5 & Saturday 6 March.

To find out more and purchase tickets, visit the venue's website at grandtheatre.co.uk

The Elephant Man comes to Oldbury Rep Theatre

Oldbury Rep Players' next production is *The Elephant Man*, Bernard Pomerance's famous play telling the story of the severely disfigured Joseph Merrick, who lived in London during the late 19th century. The Players will perform the show at the Oldbury Rep Theatre from Saturday 7 to Saturday 14 November... To find out more and purchase tickets, visit oldburyrep.org

Jeffrey conducts Joubert

Ex Cathedra founder Jeffrey Skidmore is picking up the baton to conduct the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire Chamber Choir late this month (Bradshaw Hall, Thursday 29 October).

Jeffrey will lead the choir in a performance of John Joubert's *South Of The Line*, a setting of Thomas Hardy's anti-Boer War poems which was written for the opening of the city's Adrian Boult Hall in 1985. The concert will also include a selection of other music, including four more works by Joubert. For further information and to book tickets, visit bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire



Midlands venues take part in Art History Festival

The Ikon Gallery, the University of Birmingham, Midlands Arts Centre, the Birmingham & Midland Institute and Wolverhampton Art Gallery are among the venues taking part in this year's national Art History Festival. Bringing together hands-on workshops, behind-the-scenes demonstrations, curator-led tours and a variety of creative experiences, the event runs from Monday 5 to Sunday 11 October.

To find out what's happening where and when, visit festival.forarthistory.org.uk

Romeo & Juliet in concert

Fans of Baz Luhrmann's multi-award-winning William Shakespeare's *Romeo + Juliet* can watch the film at Birmingham's Symphony Hall next autumn (Friday 22 October 2027), with its score and music being performed live and in-sync with the screening. To find out more and purchase tickets, visit romeoandjulietinconcert.com



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POP MASTER

By Steve Adams



Musician, songwriter & producer Trevor Horn has often been credited with creating the sound of the 1980s, having worked with an array of stars who dominated the pop charts throughout the decade. His upcoming live shows recreate some of those best-known hits and take him back to where he began (as “a bass player who sang a bit”) - as he explains to What’s On...

Dubbed ‘the man who invented the 80s’, songwriter and super-producer Trevor Horn has had his finger in an awful lot of musical pies. And it’s a finger which most certainly has a magic touch when it comes to creating chart hits. His first band, Buggles, went to number one with their first single, 1979’s *Video Killed The Radio Star*, and the artists and songs he subsequently worked with made him a constant presence in the pop charts for many a year afterwards.

The list of acts for whom he created hits is effectively a roll-call of some of pop music’s biggest stars: ABC, Frankie Goes To Hollywood, Grace Jones, Pet Shop Boys, Robbie Williams, Tina Turner, Lisa Stansfield, Malcolm McLaren, Seal, Cher, t.A.T.u., Dollar and Boyzone...

...And that’s not to mention Marc Almond, Rick Astley, Rumer, All Saints, Tori Amos, Simple Minds, Lol Creme of 10cc and Steve Hogarth of Marillion, who have all appeared on his albums of cover versions in recent years.

At the tender age of 77, he’s now touring and playing some of those iconic songs again, and doing so with an evolving band that includes Creme as well as guest singers such as Seal and Hogarth. The only constant is that every tune they perform was a chart topper and has a Horn connection - whether he wrote, produced or played on the original, or released a cover version of his own.

“All the songs we play were number-one records, so that gives us a pretty formidable repertoire,” he says. “These songs mean a lot to people, and we play them with precision and authenticity.”

Playing with precision is key for notorious perfectionist Trevor. It’s also one of the reasons his backing band extends to “seven, eight musicians”, he says.

“I’ve never really made much money because I have too many people!” he laughs. “I have an old-fashioned view of things - I like to play the tracks... really play them. And to play pop records properly, you need two keyboard players, two guitar players and so on.

“There are very few pop records that don’t have overdubs on them - even The Beatles records that we all loved had keyboard overdubs.”

But if recreating the sound of songs like

Relax, *Slave To The Rhythm*, *All The Things She Said* or *Kiss From A Rose* seems like a relatively serious undertaking, the effect is the opposite, with audiences enjoying the chance to relive their youth - or hear the tunes for the first time - while having a dance.

It’s all part of the joy of performing live, says Trevor: “It’s fun, and there’s something real about it - you get to see people and you’re out there. In the studio, you’re on your own, sat on your backside.”

The tour is also something of a full-circle moment for Trevor, as he spent much of his 20s as a gigging musician. He started out playing double bass as a child, the same instrument as his father.

“The problem was no one ever gave me any lessons, and to be any good at double bass, you really have to have lessons,” he says, adding that he followed his dad by switching to bass guitar “because it’s a bit easier and a lot easier to carry around”.

Having turned pro at the age of 18, he “made quite a good living” playing bass guitar until he was 30, largely because he could sight-read music. But everything changed the first time he set foot in a recording studio.

“The minute I went in I knew that was what I was really interested in,” he says.

It wasn’t long before production became his primary focus. The first major breakthrough came when he formed Buggles with keyboardist Geoff Downes. The two had met while playing in the backing band for Horn’s then girlfriend Tina Charles, best known for *I Love To Love*, yet another UK chart topper.

Video Killed The Radio Star’s instant success made Horn and Downes hot property, and saw them recruited into prog rock band Yes. Despite a well-received album (*Drama*), the move was hardly a successful one and the pair left after only a year. Horn almost instantly transitioned to production work - a move he credits to his manager, Jill Sinclair, who also happened to be his wife.

“She was a terrific manager because she understood what I was good at, and she chose all the things I did. I’d been producing demos and various things for about four years, so by the time I got some success, I knew what I was doing.”

That success kicked off with pop duo Dollar,

Trevor producing their third album as well as co-writing a number of hit singles. Those “first techno pop records” effectively became his calling card and led to him producing ABC’s debut album, *The Lexicon Of Love*, (its hits included *Poison Arrow* and *The Look Of Love*), effectively kicking Trevor’s career into overdrive. He went on to work with Malcolm McLaren (*Buffalo Gals*) and the *Art Of Noise* before returning to the reformed Yes, but this time purely as producer (“what I should have done in the first place”).

“When I heard *Owner Of A Lonely Heart*, I thought, you know what, we might be able to get them a hit single.”

He was right - the tune went to number one in America and the album 90125 became the band’s biggest-selling LP. When pushed, he’ll admit the song is probably the finest he’s worked on (“the best technical record I ever made”), but his favourite artist to work alongside is Seal, who he made six albums with (“we got on and worked together really well”).

Things were a little more awkward with Frankie Goes To Hollywood, the first band to sign to ZTT, the label Trevor co-founded with journalist Paul Morley. The band’s first three singles all topped the charts, but making the records was far from plain sailing for the purist producer.

“The Frankies were really interesting people, but they’d only ever done five shows in their life. They learned fast, and after a year they were pretty good - [but] to be honest, if they hadn’t been signed to my record label, I would probably have walked away because it looked like it was going to be too difficult.”

Performing their songs live is rather easier; Trevor loves playing the pumping bass lines of *Relax* and *Two Tribes* on his five-string guitar - and the producer says he’s revelling in the chance to be a musician again.

“It’s how I started out - I was a bass player and I sang a bit. I just ended up spending 40-odd years in the recording studio. It’s nice to get back out on the road and play to people again.”

Trevor Horn & His Band play The Assembly, Leamington Spa, on Thursday 3 December and O2 Academy, Birmingham, on Wednesday 16 December



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Live music from across the city...

Soul II Soul

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Mon 19 October

Kickstarted by Jazzie B in 1988, Soul II Soul stormed the charts the following year with *Keep On Movin'* and the Grammy Award-winning *Back To Life (However Do You Want Me)*. They picked up a second Grammy in the same year for *African Dance*.

The breakthrough followed in the wake of initial success as a sound system, playing records at house and street parties.

Real game-changers in British black music and youth culture, the group has featured a changing roster of musicians across the years but remains very much in touch with the sound-system mentality that brought such spectacular early-days success.



Fat Freddy's Drop

O2 Academy, Birmingham, Thurs 22 October

New Zealand-originated Fat Freddy's Drop are bringing their euphoric and diaphragm-wrecking music to Birmingham as part of a tour to celebrate the 21st anniversary of their first studio album, *Based On A True Story*. Originally a jam band formed in the late 1990s by musicians from other Wellington-based groups, Freddy's produce a sound which, to a certain degree at least, defies categorisation, being characterised as any combination of dub, reggae, soul, jazz, rhythm & blues and techno.

The autumn tour marks the first shows since their talismanic founding member, Chris Ta'aloga Faiumu (aka DJ MU aka Fitchie), passed away suddenly in July of last year.



Duran Duran

Utilita Arena Birmingham, Tues 20 October

The legendary 'Brummie' boys are back on the road, heading for the city of their origin as part of their first full UK arena tour in three years. It's more than four decades since the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame inductees exploded onto the music scene, racking up record sales in the blink of an eye with hits like *Rio*, *Hungry Like The Wolf*, *Girls On Film* and *Ordinary World*. They've even got a

Bond theme to their name: 1985's *A View To A Kill*.

Still making a massive impact globally after all these years, the boys added to their success story back in the spring with *Free To Love*, a critically acclaimed single featuring Nile Rodgers... Don't miss this comparatively rare opportunity to see one of the greatest-ever live bands in action on home turf.

Ian Prowse & Amsterdam

Hare & Hounds, Birmingham, Sat 10 October

Previously the frontman of indie cult band *Pele*, guitarist and singer-songwriter Ian Prowse formed Liverpool band *Amsterdam* back in 1999, creating a sound that's been described as 'rock & roll with a dash of celtic soul'. The six-piece are visiting Birmingham mid-month as part of their *No Names* tour.

Etana

The Jam House, Birmingham, Wed 14 October

The first obvious sign that Etana was a sparkling new star in the musical firmament came with her breakout anthem *Wrong Address* - after which she shone even more brightly with Grammy-nominated albums *Reggae Forever* (2018) and *Pamoja* (2021). Imaginatively blending soul, dancehall, reggae and R&B, she visits Birmingham as part of her *The Strong One* tour.

The Coral

O2 Institute, Birmingham, Sat 24 October

Influential five-piece *The Coral* came to the fore in the early noughties with a self-titled debut album that brilliantly combined psychedelia with dub, disco groove with pop, and ragtime with Egyptian reggae. Now, almost a quarter of a century later, they're heading out on their first headline UK tour in almost three years, visiting the second city with acclaimed 13th album *388*.



SCARE-RAISING

Paranormal Activity haunts the Alex this Halloween...



A stage show based on Paranormal Activity, one of the world's most successful horror film franchises, brings spooks aplenty to Birmingham theatre The Alexandra this month - with the final performance taking place on Halloween itself! A major hit in the West End - and featuring a new story set in the world of the films - the production stars ex-EastEnders James Bye, who here explains what horror-loving theatre-goers can expect...

Get into the Halloween spirit, in more ways than one, as Paranormal Activity hits the stage at Birmingham theatre The Alexandra. Featuring a new story - one set in the same world as the popular horror film franchise - the theatrical production is now providing chills and thrills at venues around the UK, having previously found success in both the US and the London West End.

James Bye - best known for his decade spent playing Martin Fowler in EastEnders - stars in the production as his namesake, James. He's joined on stage by just three other cast members: Hannah Sinclair Robinson, Jo Castleton and Caroline Faber.

"It's a fresh story about a recently married couple from Chicago, who've only been together a couple of years," James told What's On. "They move to London for a fresh start. As we move through the play, we suddenly start to realise that they're trying to escape something... As much as it's a horror, it's also kind of a love story. It's about a new couple and the trials and tribulations that everyone goes through."

The Paranormal Activity franchise includes seven edge-of-the-seat feature films - and the play promises a similarly spooky experience. "It sneaks up on you," says James. "There are moments where it's relentless, and there are moments where we sit in it. Every night is different. Some audiences are super vocal, some are silent. For us, it's a new show every night. There's four of us in the cast, and the audience is like the fifth character."

"I appreciate the genre. I get why people are obsessed with it, and why there are mega fans. Personally, I'm a scaredy cat! I can't watch [horror] without losing sleep for a week or so. I think the last thing I watched was The Blair Witch Project! It's weird because I love it - I just know that it's gonna hit me that night. It's a bit like when you eat junk food, but you know it's gonna give you indigestion or heartburn."

While James is keen to reassure audiences that any occult action won't stray past the

footlights, the films' 'found footage' style is represented on stage by clever and ambitious design.

"The writer, Levi Holloway, and director, Felix Barrett, are really specific with the way they want the show to look. The set is just amazing. The way I describe it, it looks like a doll's house. There's an upstairs to it; it's an actual house. At any one time, you can see into every room of this couple's home, so even though they might be upstairs in their bedroom chatting away, there might be other things happening elsewhere... We really want to lean into that feeling that the audience are in the house with us. It's not immersive - I think a lot of people are put off by these shows because they think people are going to be grabbing them. There's none of that. You're very, very safe. We want you to have a great time, but at the same time, we want you to feel that tension throughout."

Paranormal Activity is the latest in a tradition of on-stage horror shows which has been steadily growing in popularity. James puts this down to the excitement of a communal live experience: "Maybe it's something to do with the fact that when you normally watch horror, it'd be at home, on your own, or with your partner or your friends. It's a solitary thing. With these successful productions that have happened in the genre, it's like a community - you're all getting scared together."

"I think horror is just a perfect genre to take people on that journey. They're not just watching actors on stage. The way that Paranormal Activity is - with all the illusions and the jump scares and the sounds and the music - it's a real experience. People are really starting to understand that, and they're getting themselves into the theatres, which is amazing."

The stage show might rely on illusions to bring about ghostly occurrences, but James keeps an open mind when it comes to real-life paranormal activity.

"I haven't had any significant ghost

encounters, other than what I've probably now put down to my imagination as a kid. I don't *not* believe, but the thing is, I don't *know*, so in that sense, I guess I do? I know people who are adamant - 'No way, it's nonsense' - but I'm not like that. Take from that what you will."

While he's no stranger to touring stage shows, James hasn't ever performed in Birmingham, so he can't wait to bring Paranormal Activity to the city and the region.

"Every actor I know who's done a play in or around Birmingham has had the best time. Super excited to bring it to the Midlands! It's done so well on Broadway and in the West End. For it to be on tour less than a year after it opened in [London], I feel privileged to bring this to the [rest of the country]. It's such a good play."

Paranormal Activity opens at The Alexandra on Tuesday the 27th of October, with the final performance taking place on Halloween itself. James is thrilled to be bringing the production to Birmingham at the spookiest time of the year: "Arguably, they're going to be the best shows of the whole tour! If you've got no plans for Halloween, I promise you now, you will not get a better experience. If you want to lean into that world, this is the show to come and see..."

"The rest of the cast in the show, they are the best of the best. They're so, so talented. It's a real joy - audiences in the West Midlands are in for a treat."

.....

Paranormal Activity shows at The Alexandra, Birmingham, from Tuesday 27 to Saturday 31 October.

The production returns to the region in 2027, visiting the Wolverhampton Grand from Tuesday 9 to Saturday 13 February, and Shrewsbury's Theatre Severn from Monday 15 to Saturday 20 March



Ex Cathedra

Jeffrey Skidmore conductor

In 40 Parts: Spem in alium

Town Hall, Birmingham
Sunday 18 October, 4pm

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NDR Radiophilharmonic Hannover

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Tues 13 October

NDR Radiophilharmonic Hannover last year celebrated their 75th anniversary and are performing in Birmingham for the first time in almost a decade. They are using the occasion to pay tribute to Ludwig van Beethoven, just a matter of months shy of the 200th anniversary of his death. As usual, the Hannover musicians will be guided through this mid-month concert by

their charismatic chief conductor, Stanislav Kochanovsky (pictured). The programme features two works by Beethoven - the Egmont Overture and Fourth Piano Concerto - and Brahms' Second Symphony, a composition well known for its impressively boisterous finale. The orchestra are joined for the concert by celebrated Argentinian pianist Ingrid Fliter.



CBSO: Symphonie Fantastique

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Wed 21 October

This François Leleux-conducted CBSO concert climaxes with a performance of Symphonie fantastique, a piece which Hector Berlioz wrote as a reaction to a deeply affecting romantic failure. Accompanying the acclaimed work are two compositions by Claude Debussy - Prelude To The Afternoon Of A Faun and Rhapsody For Cor Anglais And Orchestra. A lush and lyrical wind sinfonietta from Ruth Gipps completes the programme.

The Gonzaga Band

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, Tues 27 October

Cornettist Jamie Savan formed the Gonzaga Band back in 1997, meaning that their 30th-anniversary year lies just a couple of months away.

Jamie is joined by soprano Faye Newton and Steven Devine (harpichord and organ) for this 55-minute lunchtime concert, performing a selection of songs and duets from the age of Monteverdi...

The winning compositions from the 2026 NCEM/BBC Radio Three Young Composers Award also feature in the programme.



Ex Cathedra: In 40 Parts - Spem in alium

Birmingham Town Hall, Sun 18 October

Ex Cathedra founder Jeffrey Skidmore opens what will be his final season as the ensemble's conductor with a concert that takes as its focal point Thomas Tallis' Spem in alium, a composition considered by many to be the most iconic work of choral music ever written.

Sitting alongside the piece in the evening's programme is The Wilderness - a world premiere from internationally acclaimed composer & baritone Roderick Williams - and Alec Roth's 'spine-tingling' Earthrise, a work commissioned by Ex Cathedra way back in 2010.



Serenades with François Leleux

CBSO Centre, Birmingham, Thurs 22 October

City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra's (CBSO) ever-popular Centre Stage season continues this month, giving audiences the chance to experience the artistry of the musicians in an intimate setting.

The latest entry in the series sees acclaimed oboist François Leleux team up with the orchestra's woodwind section to perform mini masterpieces by Dvořák, Gounod and Richard Strauss. The lunchtime concert comes the day after Leleux conducts the full CBSO in a performance of Berlioz' Symphonie fantastique (see elsewhere on this page).

Fibonacci Quartet

Elgar Concert Hall, The Bramall, University of Birmingham, Fri 9 October

Since forming at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama seven years ago, Fibonacci have been making a name for themselves as one of Europe's finest young string quartets.

They visit Birmingham to perform a lunchtime concert that features Mozart's String Quartet No21 and their own arrangements of Moravian folksongs as a prologue to Janáček's Intimate Letters.

COOKING UP A LAUGH

Birmingham comic James Cook has been at the heart of the region's comedy scene for over 20 years. In that time, he's performed alongside the likes of Gary Delaney and Paul Sinha, presented radio shows on major networks, penned a couple of books, played board games at an international level, and done plenty more besides. He currently hosts the monthly Jackpot Comedy Club in Bearwood, produces a deep-dive music podcast with fellow comic Andy Robinson, and also trains the next generation of Midlands comedy talent via his popular stand-up courses. For 2026's Birmingham Comedy Festival, James unveils his latest live game/comedy show, *The Saboteur*, and comperes the festival's annual Breaking Talent Award. What's On recently caught up with him to find out more...

You took part in the very first Birmingham Comedy Festival back in 2001, James. Any memories of that festival?

Despite being only two years old in 2001, I remember running a New Act Competition - despite being a new act myself - with the final at the old Bier Keller in Birmingham. There was huge controversy over the final vote tally. Let's just say that a comedian who has since become a regular presence on our television screens was not happy that they came second to an act who has since given up comedy and now drives a taxi in Washington DC.

This year you're bringing your new live game show, *The Saboteur*, to the stage, as part of the festival's Free Half-Dayer. What can people expect?

It's a cross between Taskmaster and The Traitors, but legally distinct enough from both so that we don't get into trouble. A bunch of comedians will play some games in order to build up a prize fund... but one of them will secretly be 'The Saboteur', who is incentivised to play badly. 'The Saboteur' can only win if they remain hidden - and no-one else in the room will know who they are; not me, not the audience. The show ultimately boils down to the question 'Who is being rubbish on purpose, and who can't help it?' We've done some trial runs at other, lesser festivals, and they've all gone really well, so I'm excited.

You and Andy Robinson also dissect past pop singles charts for your podcast, *Shooby Dooby Doo Wop*. With over 150 episodes, you must know plenty of obscure pop facts by now ...

I've learned what superstar rapper Drake and Boycie from *Only Fools And Horses* have in common, that there's only been one UK number-one single with the same name as a Hitchcock movie, and that the smallest whale is smaller than the smallest Chrysler [car] - so technically every Chrysler is as big as a whale, whether you're headed to the Love Shack or not.

You've been MC at the Birmingham Comedy Festival Breaking Talent Award for many years now - how important is the competition to the region's comedy scene?

Every year, five new-ish - but not brand new - acts are nominated by a panel of industry insiders, and they each do 10 minutes of their best stuff in a big show at The Glee Club. There is a competition element to it, but that's secondary to the real purpose of the show, which is to highlight some of the brilliant talent that's knocking around the West Midlands comedy scene. Also, the first prize is a mug. Past winners include Josh Pugh, Celya AB and Hasan Al-Habib, and past finalists include Lindsey Santoro, Eric Rushton and Gary Pownland. Tom Towelling, who won the award a couple of years ago, was just nominated for Best Newcomer at the Edinburgh Fringe. The local scene is stronger than ever right now, and I don't think there's another scene in the country that comes close to us for exciting and diverse talent. By the way, 'diverse' doesn't just mean what background the acts are from; it also means the different styles of comedy.

Who's in the line-up this year?

This year we have sardonic one-liners from Naph, character comedy from Tarik Badwan performing as 'Rik Goodman', nerdy Dave-Gorman-style pedantry from Andy Bucks, silly whimsical joy from Nina Semple and no-holds-barred confessional stand-up from Eden Voss. It's another brilliant line-up. I genuinely have no idea who'll 'win' on the night, because they're all really funny.

When did you start running stand-up courses?

It's been 20 years. The course is designed to get you from zero to five minutes of stand-up over a couple of months. We cover working out what kind of comedy you want to do and how you generate your own material, then give you the confidence and performance skills to actually do a stand-up gig - there's an optional showcase at the end of the



course. Ultimately, it's a bunch of comedy fans talking about jokes and mucking about. No-one is made to do anything they don't want to do. The atmosphere is really friendly, relaxed and supportive. I really enjoy teaching the course - and seeing people who are convinced they'd never be able to get up in front of an audience and tell a joke, actually surpass their own expectations and have a great time is a proper thrill.

Have any of your former students gone on to successful comedy careers?

There have been a few. Lindsey Santoro has appeared on *Mock The Week* as well as lots of other TV shows. Jay Handley is a professional comedian who runs the Fat Penguin Comedy Club in Moseley and is a regular performer at the Edinburgh Fringe. Danny Clives has performed at the London Palladium. Tal Davies and Hannah Weetman, who met on the course, have just won an award for a sitcom script that they've written. But most of the people who do the course don't want to be full-time comedians; they want to tick something off their bucket list, or they're comedy fans and are interested in how it works.

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Birmingham Comedy Festival runs from Friday 2 to Sunday 11 October. Full details can be found at bhamcomfest.co.uk

Comedy previews from across the region...

Jonathan Pie

The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton, Sat 10 October; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Wed 21 October; Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Thurs 22 October; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 27 November

The media's decision to pounce on Jeremy Corbyn in the wake of his first Labour leadership victory lit the torchpaper for actor Tom Walker to create the larger-than-life character of Jonathan Pie.

YouTube sensation Pie is supposedly a British political correspondent - but one who likes to rant at the camera.

With the climate collapsing, AI about to rule and ruin people's lives, and World War Three feeling distinctly possible, Tom's latest outing as the UK's angriest news reporter sees him providing a helpful guide to surviving the impending apocalypse.



Harry Enfield And No Chums

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Wed 28 October; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Fri 13 November

Think Harry Enfield and it's almost impossible not to follow up with a thought about Paul Whitehouse, a fellow laughter merchant with whom Harry has a long and impressive comedy history. Having first teamed up in the late 1980s, the pair went on to create such memorable characters as the Old Gits, the Self-Righteous Brothers and the Radio One DJ-parodying Smashie & Nicey.

But while Paul has, in more recent times, Gone Fishing with another much-loved purveyor of mirth, Bob Mortimer, Harry is going it alone with this brand-new live-on-stage endeavour. A lighthearted reflection on 40 years spent making people laugh, the show revisits much-loved characters like Thatcherite visionary Loadsamoney and Kevin the Teenager. A Q&A session also features, so get your questions ready...



Nish Kumar

Birmingham Town Hall, Thurs 15 October; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 21 November

"Once you get established as a comedian," says Nish Kumar, "you have to start taking comedy seriously, which is obviously an oxymoron. When you're a nobody, you can just go up to the Edinburgh Fringe to get drunk and have fun."

Nish's days of anonymity - inebriated or otherwise - are a long way behind him. The

London-born comedian has hit the big time, and done so simply by being his usual affable self. "For years, I thought comedians had to be confrontational or awkward," he told the Guardian. "But then I realised, if people basically like you and think you're an okay guy, they'll listen to you talk about absolutely anything."

Richard Ayoade

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Mon 19 October

Richard Ayoade's latest stand-up offering sees him sharing more than 500 'humorous observations and colossal notions' from his bestselling book *Afterthoughts*, Or Some Pistachios Won't Open: Wisdom For The Unreflective.

Richard's new tour comes on the back of plenty of film and television credits, but the Cambridge-educated Londoner probably remains best known for playing the socially awkward Maurice Moss in Channel Four's long-running sitcom *The IT Crowd*.



reaching the semi-finals of Britain's Got Talent - she's been making significant headway on the Australian circuit for quite some time now. Indeed, her previous stand-up offering, *Sista Flo 2.0*, won the Best Comedy Award at the Adelaide Fringe.

A versatile and dynamic performer, Georgie is visiting the West Midlands this month with her latest show, *Infectious*.



Ivo Graham

Lichfield Garrick, Fri 23 October

Seriously posh and admirably self-deprecating, Ivo Graham won plenty of new fans in 2019 when one of his gags was

nominated for the coveted 'best joke of the Edinburgh Fringe' award...

"I've got an Eton-themed advent calendar," explained Ivo, "where all the doors are opened for me by my dad's contacts." The Tokyo-born Oxford alumnus visits the Midlands with latest show *Orange Crush*.





LAUGHTER LINES

Tamworth's Jules O'Brian talks to What's On about her transition from English teacher to stand-up comedian...

From opening for such established acts as Luisa Omelian and Hal Cruttenden, to playing Bearded Theory and Altitude Comedy Festival in Austria, Tamworth comic Jules O'Brian has been making steady progress since swapping teaching for stand-up. This month sees Jules return to Birmingham Comedy Festival with *Avoid Excessive Cleavage (And Other Advice To Ignore)* - a show she first performed at the festival in 2022.

Moving into stand-up, do you think teaching was a good career to come from? Did it provide you with transferable skills?

Oh, absolutely. I taught secondary English for 16 years, so standing in front of a roomful of people who may or may not want to listen to me was already very familiar territory.

The main difference is that in comedy, if somebody talks while I'm talking, I'm allowed to answer back without having to log it on a behaviour system afterwards, or face questions about what I was doing that made them react that way!

Teaching definitely gave me confidence in front of a room, and you learn very quickly how to read one. And you become pretty good at thinking on your feet because, like drunk adults, teenagers are spectacularly unpredictable. All of that transfers brilliantly to stand-up.

How did your solo show, *Avoid Excessive Cleavage (And Other Advice To Ignore)*, come about?

I turned 40 and suddenly started being bombarded with advice I'd never asked for about how I should be ageing. Mostly, it seemed to boil down to 'do not age, but if you absolutely must, could you at least have the decency to pop a paper bag over your head?' The title came from a genuine article aimed at women over 40, which advised us to 'avoid excessive cleavage; just wear a nice blouse'. So patronising! And once I started noticing this stuff, I saw it everywhere: laughter lines need hiding (God forbid anyone knows you've been enjoying yourself), banish your knees (what?!), tape up your face (seriously, that's a thing - I've tried it, and I talk about the disastrous consequences in the show). Basically I was being harassed with 'Everything's sagging, and absolutely all of it can be solved if you're prepared to spend enough money.' Ugh! The annoying thing is, for all my strong principles about how ridiculous the anti-ageing industry is, I buy into it. I'm not standing on stage claiming I've risen above any of it. I absolutely haven't. So the show really came from that contradiction - being furious that we're made

to feel bad about something completely inevitable, while simultaneously Googling whatever miracle potion I've just seen advertised. I decided the best way to deal with the whole absurd mess was to write about it and laugh at it.

What's been the response to the show from audiences? Are you getting other women sharing their experiences?

Oh God, yes. And sometimes considerably more of their experiences than I was expecting! I've had women hitch up their skirts after shows to demonstrate the industrial-strength tape they're using to hold up their 'droopy knee skin'. I don't think there are many boundaries left at this point, but I love that. There's often this lovely moment of recognition where somebody goes: "Oh thank God, it's not just me." I've even had a couple of women become quite emotional because they'd never really felt they could say some of these things out loud before.

That was never something I consciously set out to achieve. I wrote a comedy show; I wasn't trying to start a support group! But I love that people laugh, then come and tell me their own ridiculous, funny, infuriating experiences afterwards.

Any plans for a follow-up yet?

Yes, absolutely. I accidentally tried one [new idea] out in July. I'd been on a particularly diabolical date which has almost tipped the balance on whether I can actually be bothered dating anymore. These aren't your standard bad-date stories. There are things in there you genuinely couldn't make up. I mean... you just wouldn't.

It does still connect with ageing, though, because dating as you get older is a completely different proposition. By this point, we've all accumulated children, marriages, exes, decades of life experience and, shall we say, some interesting backstories. There are complications that simply haven't had time to exist when you're 25.

Any advice for people who might fancy trying their hand at stand-up later in their life?

Do it. I genuinely think coming to comedy later in life can be an advantage because you've got so much more to talk about. You've had jobs, relationships, children, break-ups, disasters, triumphs. So you've accumulated a lot of life and therefore a lot of material.

I think one of the hardest things is accepting that you're a beginner again. I'd been a teacher for 16 years. I knew what I was doing. Then, suddenly, I was walking into tiny rooms above pubs, putting my name down for five-minute comedy spots and knowing absolutely nothing. That can be, shall we say, humbling, but it's also incredibly exciting. All my kids are in their 20s now, and I actually think it's a fantastic time to be young because there isn't the same expectation that you make one big decision about what you're going to do with your life and then stick to it for the next 40 years. God knows the world we live in has plenty of flaws, but one of the great things about it is that you can have three or four, or more, completely different careers over the course of your life. I'm trying very hard to apply that philosophy to myself too.

But you do have to work at it. There isn't a short cut. You have to gig, write, watch other comedians, try things, fail, change them, drive ridiculous distances to perform for seven minutes and occasionally wonder what on earth you're doing. But I started in my late 40s, and I now earn my living doing something I absolutely love. So, to use exactly the sort of inspirational quote I claim to hate in my show: you're never too old, and it's never too late.

.....

Catch Jules O'Brian at Craft & Culture, Birmingham, on Saturday 3 October. For further information about this year's Birmingham Comedy Festival, visit its website at bhamcomfest.co.uk

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Comedy previews from across the region...

Lenny Henry

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Mon 19 October

Lenny Henry's career has taken many a twist and turn since he shot to stardom half a century ago, winning the television talent contest New Faces with a set that included impersonations of, among others, Frank Spencer and Stevie Wonder.

From taking custard pies in the face on legendary Saturday-morning kids' show Tiswas, to garnering critical acclaim on stage as Othello, the Dudley born & bred funnyman has constantly sought new projects with which to challenge himself. His visit to his native West Midlands this month sees him taking a look back at his stellar career, returning to the experiences that shaped him while also exploring the ideas and creative sparks that continue to keep him inspired and motivated.

Paul Foot

Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham, Sat 10 October

Not so much a teller of gags, Paul Foot's routines involve him sharing with his audience the seemingly random and intriguingly surreal thoughts that make their way through his ever-busy mind. "I'd like to do a TV show," he told comedy.co.uk, by way of example, "in which I enter an unsuspecting family's house at dinner time, violently upturn tables, hurl all the crockery and food at the walls and scream 'Oh how the tables have turned!'"

On the subject of television shows, Paul admits he doesn't appear on anywhere near as many as some other comedians. "People know when a TV show needs me and the phone will ring. Quite often I'm in the bath, though, or smashing specially purchased greenhouses with a golf club in the garden."

Henning Wehn

Walsall Arena, Fri 9 October

Presenting a style of humour that's been described as 'Teutonic jolliness at its best', self-appointed German comedy ambassador Henning Wehn tours to the Midlands this month with new show Acid Wehn.

Samples of his comedy include: "With stand-up in Britain, what you have to do is bloody swearing. In Germany, we don't have to swear. Reason being, things work."

And also: "World War Two was a painful time for my family. My grandfather died in a concentration camp. He got drunk one night and fell out of his guard tower..."



Chris Ramsey

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 30 October; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Fri 27 November

As well as being a highly rated stand-up, Geordie boy Chris Ramsey has developed an impressive telly career, appearing on shows including 8 Out Of 10 Cats and Strictly Come Dancing (reaching the semi-finals in 2019). He's scored a big hit in the podcast world, too, with Sh*ggged. Married. Annoyed, which he co-hosts with his wife, singer & actress Rosie Winter.

He's visiting the Midlands with Here, Man!, a show he toured in the spring to great critical acclaim - so much so, in fact, that he decided to add these autumn dates.

Chris' gags include: "My venue for the Edinburgh Festival is a portacabin; it's literally a portacabin! I'm a Geordie, in a portacabin. I was going to call the show Auf Wiedersehen Pet Live."

Hannah East

Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Sat 3 October; Glee Club, Birmingham, Thurs 15 October; Huntingdon Hall, Worcester, Fri 16 October; Kings Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Sun 15 November

Brand-new skits, more wigs, celebrity send-ups and laugh-out-loud moments are promised by Hannah East when she visits the

Midlands this month with her latest comedy offering, in which she takes a deep-dive into the highs and lows of parenting.

Hannah splits her professional life between stand-up and presenting.

"After graduating, I competed on the TV show Gladiators," she explains. "During the semi-final stage, I was waiting for a scene to be filmed with [ex-footballer] Ian Wright when he told me to read Caroline Flack's autocue. After doing this, he gave me some advice - I should go into presenting. The rest, as they say, is history!"



Ignacio Lopez

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sun 11 October; Stafford Gatehouse, Sat 17 October; The Glee Club, Birmingham, Wed 21 October

Cardiff-based Spanish/Welsh comedian Ignacio Lopez is a man with a rapidly growing fanbase. Not only have his videos been watched by well in excess of 20 million people, he's even had to tell a Live At The Apollo audience to quit laughing so that he

could finish his act before his time ran out. "Telling more than 3,000 people to shut up was a definite career high!" says Ignacio.

He's visiting the West Midlands region this month with Nada, a show described by its publicity as 'an intricate story of mystery and suspense packed with sarcasm, silliness and huge laughs'.



Michael Akadiri

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 30 October; Glee Club, Birmingham, Fri 27 November

A contemplation of the difference between perception and reality lies at the heart of this new show from resident doctor and award-winning comedian Michael Akadiri.

Although still working in the NHS, Michael is nowadays more a comedian who heals folks than a doctor who tells jokes... His stop-offs in the region this month and next provide Midlanders with the perfect opportunity to find out why he's widely considered to be one of the UK's fastest-rising comedy stars.



WELCOME TO BURLESQUE!

**Faye Brookes is the boss of a club like no other
when Burlesque The Musical comes to Birmingham...**



Packed with sultry dance routines, positively glittering with showbiz glamour, and fresh from making its West End debut last year, *Burlesque The Musical* has now embarked on its first-ever UK tour. The hit stage show is based on the 2010 film of the same name starring Christina Aguilera and Cher, the latter of whom played the part of Tess, the owner of a struggling burlesque club. Musical theatre aficionado and one-time Corrie actress Faye Brookes has stepped into Tess' bedazzled heels for the touring show and is really relishing the challenge of playing such a formidable character - as she explains to What's On...

Based on the hit 2010 movie starring Cher and Christina Aguilera, and set in the dazzlingly sequined confines of a glamorous New York nightclub, *Burlesque* has now found its natural home on stage.

For Faye Brookes, who plays nightclub owner Tess in the production's first UK tour, the film represented a new way to appreciate the magic of musical theatre.

"When the film came out, it was ahead of its time - I felt like it was already a cult classic," Faye told What's On. "As a musical theatre girl, I was just mesmerised by these characters - I fell in love with musical theatre all over again when I watched *Burlesque*."

The hit show follows small-town singer Ali Rose as she searches for her biological mother and makes a splash on stage at the *Burlesque Lounge*, a financially struggling nightclub owned by Tess.

"Tess has a real emotional arc, and I go on a rollercoaster throughout the entire musical," says Faye. "There's something in Tess that's in all of us. Whether that's trying to make a business work, whether that's trying to survive being a human - trying to do well at her job, and trying to make sure that everybody around her is good. That's basically what a mother does, putting everyone else's needs before her own. Also, knowing that she has this legacy on her shoulders - that this was her mother's club, this was her grandmother's club, this was her great grandmother's club... That pressure on Tess is definitely a burden but also a blessing, and you start to see the cracks throughout the show."

"I'm embracing Tess in a way that I've never done with a character before. She's older, she's wiser, she's a boss - she walks into a room and owns it! There's no messing with her. I'm really enjoying that element of the character, because in my previous roles, I've probably played the likes of Ali, where I'm a doe-eyed, princess-like [character] who's discovering myself. Tess isn't that. So for the first time ever, I'm really stepping into a new era - really embracing the stronger female role."

Faye has also found that the on-stage family spirit of *Burlesque* has transferred to the rehearsal room - as has the protective and supportive nature of her character.

"Hands down, I've never worked with such a beautiful company before. I was really proud, from the moment that I met them, to see their talent, to watch their confidence grow and blossom as individuals, and then to take on whatever we have faced, keep rising, and to keep showing up for one another. We've finally got to a place where our show is being praised - five-star reviews. Everybody's come together daily, to be this family and to look at one another and to truly love and respect one another. There's no cattiness, there's no divide. We are one, and I think it's so beautiful. I'm getting emotional just talking about it. I'm just really proud of them. I'm in a different place in my life, where I'm not only taking on the role of 'mother hen', I'm [actually] being mother hen to them."

The production has now embarked on a national tour, which continues until next May. It stops off at Birmingham theatre The Alexandra this month, then returns to the Midlands in 2027 with a visit to the Wolverhampton Grand. Faye has a well-practised routine as she travels between cities - although she's pleased to be accompanied by a furry friend...

"It helps that I've got my dog touring with me. Even though I have four dogs, Bao has been my shadow from day one. He toured with me in Chicago, and my other dogs are happy to be at home with my husband. So Bao is like a bit of an emotional support for me. He gets me up as well - wherever we're staying, he gets me out. That routine is good, because then I get fresh air and I get to exercise other than dancing and working out in a gym. I have my little routine of supplements and skincare, and whatever I use on tour, that's usually what I use at home - I swear by it. I'm just sat in my LED mask with my dog and a matcha - if I can do all the things that I love to do, then I show up a happier human at the theatre, and then I can

just be Tess, the baddest bitch ever!"

Faye has long been a fan of musical theatre, but she still has one role which she would love to add to her CV - and her love of the part goes right back to her theatrical roots.

"I would love to be Audrey in *Little Shop Of Horrors*. It's been a dream role of mine since I was at high school and one of the backing dancers. My best friend played the dentist, and we both sat there like, 'God, it would be amazing to do this professionally.' We were 14... I'm trying not to put too much pressure on myself to play that role, because with a dream comes pressure, and then it becomes unreachable. If I get to play the part, it will be a chapter of my life that will be pure joy, because it's one of my favourite musicals. I'm just going to put that out to the universe and see what happens!"

Back to *Burlesque*. The soundtrack boasts hits written by the likes of Christina Aguilera, Sia, and Todrick Hall, but even with a selection of audio treats throughout the show, Faye can't help but choose Tess' big number, *You Haven't Seen The Last Of Me*, as her favourite musical moment in the production.

"Diane Warren, thank you so much for that ballad!" she says. "There are too many good songs in this show. Too many. *I Got It All From You*, which Ali sings, is another beautiful ballad. And I love when the boys sing *Natalie* - I feel like I'm back to being a teenage girl, and I've got *NSYNC posters on my wall! I get transported to that era. There's something for everybody."

.....

Burlesque shows at The Alexandra, Birmingham, from Tuesday 6 to Saturday 17 October. It then returns to the region in 2027, showing at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Tuesday 6 to Saturday 10 April



Cats Birmingham Hippodrome, Tues 27 October - Sat 7 November

A spectacular and captivating adaptation of TS Eliot's Old Possum's Book Of Practical Cats, this Andrew Lloyd Webber extravaganza premiered 45 years ago. The show is widely considered to be the production that redefined the modern musical, paving the way for a seemingly relentless stream of blockbuster hits and giving starring roles to Elaine Page and Sarah Brightman in the process.

Even an execrable film version a handful of years back failed to make a dent in the stage production's longstanding global popularity, a fact supported by this brand-new and extensive tour.

Featured songs include Old Deuteronomy, Macavity: The Mystery Cat, Jellicle Ball - and, of course, the show's famous anthem, Memory.

Burlesque The Musical

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Tues 6 - Sat 17 October

Christina Aguilera not only provides powerhouse songs for this acclaimed and relatively new musical but also executive-produces it. The story focuses on the character of small-town dreamer Ali Rose, whose New York-located search for her biological mother sees her stumbling into the surprisingly cut-throat world of burlesque. Based on the hit 2010 movie of the same name, which co-starred Aguilera and Cher, the show has made a significant splash in the West End and stops off in Birmingham as part of its first UK tour.



Mamma Mia!

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 27 October - Sat 7 November

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

Set in a Greek-island paradise, Mamma Mia! tells the story of single mum Donna and her 20-year-old daughter, Sophie, who's soon to get married. Formerly the lead singer of a girl group, Donna led a crazy, carefree existence when she was younger. As a result, Sophie's never known who her father is... and if truth be told, Donna's not entirely sure either! After stealing a sly glimpse at her mum's old diary, sneaky Sophie identifies three possible candidates. Masquerading as Donna, she then sends messages inviting each of the men to attend her wedding. Hijinks, chaos and confusion inevitably ensue, all of which are best experienced to a pulsating Abba soundtrack, of course...





Tue 6 -
Sat 10 Oct



Tue 13 -
Sat 17 Oct



Sun 18 Oct



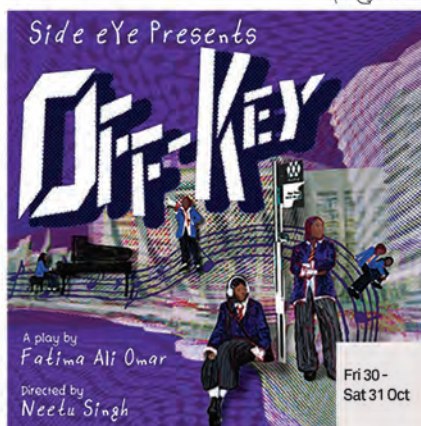
Tue 20 -
Sat 24 Oct



Wed 21 -
Sat 24 Oct



Tue 27 Oct -
Sat 7 Nov



Fri 30 -
Sat 31 Oct



Fri 20 Nov -
Sat 12 Dec



Sat 5 Dec -
Sun 3 Jan



Sat 19 Dec -
Sun 31 Jan



Fri 5 &
Sat 6 Feb



Tue 9 -
Sat 13 Feb





Sylvia

Birmingham Hippodrome,
Tues 6 - Sat 10 October

A musical bursting with dance, soul and hip-hop, Sylvia retells an essential 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. "The cruelty of what happens to these women and how they are ridiculed - we see the echoes of that today," says Beverley Knight, who's playing Emmeline. "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."

Blood Brothers

Birmingham Hippodrome, Tues 20 - Sat 24 October; Malvern Theatres, Tues 17 - Sat 21 November; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Tues 18 - Sat 22 May

Although it's effectively a class-driven 'scouse melodrama', to describe Blood Brothers as such is to greatly underestimate the emotional response it produces within its audience. The show features adult actors playing children, a narrator who wanders through the scenes with warnings of impending doom, a good helping of sharp social awareness to counteract the sticky sentimentality, and a raft of much-loved musical numbers, including Bright New Day, Marilyn Monroe and the emotionally charged Tell Me It's Not True.



Legally Blonde The Musical

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 13 - Sat 17 October; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Tues 17 - Sat 21 November

Based on the hit movie starring Reese Witherspoon, this critically acclaimed musical follows the story of college sweetheart and homecoming queen Elle Woods, a girl who just doesn't take no for an answer. So when her boyfriend, Warner, announces that he's dumping her for



someone more serious, Elle puts down the credit card, hits the books and heads for Harvard Law School... One-time Strictly Come Dancing finalist Amber Davies top-bills as Elle.

Jersey Boys

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Mon 26 - Sat 31 October; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Mon 2 - Sat 21 November; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Mon 15 - Sat 27 March

Rockin' and rollin' New Jersey boys Frankie Valli And The Four Seasons scored some truly massive hits during the mid-1960s - and this award-winning jukebox musical tells their story. Presented in a documentary-style format, the show is structured as four 'seasons', each being narrated by a different member of the band. Featured hits include Walk Like A Man, Bye Bye Baby, Big Girls Don't Cry, Sherry, Can't Take My Eyes Off You, Working My Way Back To You and December 1963 (Oh, What A Night).



Romeo & Juliet

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, until Sat 10 October

Widely considered to be Shakespeare's fifth tragedy, Romeo & Juliet tells a tale of forbidden and secret love. This brand-new adaptation of the story comes with a twist and a surprise. The twist is that the star-crossed lovers are both in their 40s when they meet. The surprise is

that the part of Romeo is being played by stand-up comedian Russell Kane... Expect an interesting evening.



Middlemarch Parts 1 & 2

Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Thurs 1 October - Sat 16 January

George Eliot's classic 1871 novel - a study of provincial life set in her Warwickshire homeland - is here condensed into one play presented in two parts. "Middlemarch is an entertaining story full of great humanity, wisdom and wit," says the play's director, Jeremy Herrin. "I can't wait to explore its many pertinent themes: family, marriage, love, purpose, religion, morality and more. Theatre is a great form for a story that luxuriates in how we are all essentially connected."

Made You Look

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Sat 17 October; The Rep, Birmingham, Wed 21 - Thurs 22 October

Ty'rone Haughton's one-man production fuses performance poetry, movement and visual art. With a running time of 40 minutes - and an optional 20-minute discussion afterwards - the show not only interrogates the subject of masculinity but also explores what it means to be an immigrant in a country 'growing increasingly hostile towards minorities and women'.



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Annie

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Tues 13 - Sun 18 October; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 16 - Sun 21 February

Claire Sweeney is the latest high-profile performer to take on the coveted role of Miss Hannigan in *Annie*, the oft-touring Broadway musical that's once again visiting the region this month.

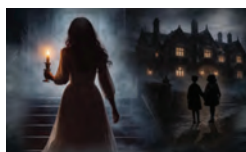
A heart-warming rags-to-riches story of a little girl who finds herself transported from a New York orphanage to the luxurious world of a millionaire, the show features plenty of memorable songs, including *It's A Hard Knock Life*, *I Don't Need Anything But You*, *Easy Street*, and of course, the legendary *Tomorrow*.

The Turn Of The Screw

The Rep, Birmingham, Thurs 29 - Sat 31 October

Blackeyed Theatre and Arcola Theatre combine their impressive talents to crank up the atmosphere in this new stage adaptation of Henry James' gothic classic.

A young governess, hired to care for two children at a remote country estate, starts to believe that there are malevolent spirits wandering around the property. Before too long, she becomes convinced that the youngsters in her charge are aware of the ghostly apparitions too...



As You Like It

Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, until Sat 7 November

Royal Shakespeare Company Co-Artistic Director Daniel Evans takes the helm for this brand-new, *all-male* version of the bard's hugely 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, while veteran musical theatre star Gary Wilmot plays both Duke Frederick and Duke Senior.



Punk Days

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, Fri 2 & Sat 3 October

Dervish Productions' *Punk Days* takes its audience on a journey back to 1970s London and into the life of a mixed race, working-class kid who, plagued by racism, finds hope in the power of punk rock. The show is written & performed by Dervish's artistic director, Hassan Mahamdallie. The Friday performance is followed by a DJ set celebrating the best of punk, ska and two tone.



The Little Shop Of Horrors

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Tues 27 - Sat 31 October

One of the longest-running off-Broadway shows of all time, *The Little Shop Of Horrors* is an affectionate spoof of 1950s sci-fi movies. Despite various productions turning up at theatres across the country over the last few decades, it remains best known from its 1986 film version, which featured a hilarious turn from Steve Martin as the splendidly sadistic dentist.

The Trial Of Romeo Oscar

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Wed 21 - Sat 31 October

Mention Alan Ayckbourn and a long list of brilliant observational comedies springs readily to mind, the most famous among which date back to the 1960s and 70s. Now 87 years of age, the prolific Ayckbourn continues to delight his audiences with brand-new plays. The latest of these - his

92nd - is this future-located courtroom drama that sees a military-issue android going on trial for murder...

Ayckbourn himself takes the directorial reins.



Another Goodbye

Wolverhampton Arts Centre, Tues 13 October

An exploration of love, loss and the difficult conversations surrounding the end of life lies at the heart of *Another Goodbye*. The 55-minute show contemplates its thought-provoking subject matter by taking a look at one particular family's experience. The performance is followed by a conversation facilitated by local palliative & bereavement-support charity Compton Care.

The Nag's Head

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Wed 14 October; Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Tues 27 October; Belmont Hall, Wellington, Shropshire, Wed 28 October; Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Fri 30 October

After inheriting a failing pub from their father, three estranged siblings discover an unnerving painting which he'd kept hidden from them - and not without good reason...

A play set in the county's spookiest pub, comedy-horror offering *The Nag's Head* is described by its performers, the London-based Make It Beautiful theatre company, as 'an ode to the great British pub culture, to things that go bump in the night, and to Shropshire...'

The play features original music from folk band Good Habits and 'real paranormal accounts'.



OH WHAT A NIGHT

The Jersey Boys return with special anniversary tour

Charting the rise to fame of The Four Seasons and their frontman, Frankie Valli, Jersey Boys proved a major hit when it premiered on Broadway in 2005 - and 21 years later, the jukebox musical is still going strong. A special anniversary tour visits the Midlands this autumn, with Luke Baker taking the role of Frankie. Carlo Boumoughbay, Lewis Kennedy and Toby Miles round out the Seasons' quartet. Luke, Carlo, Lewis and Toby here talk about bringing this rags-to-riches story to the stage...

With the awards-laden Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons musical Jersey Boys reaching 21 years of age in 2026, the show is returning to the West Midlands with a tour that reunites the original creative team of director Des McAnuff, choreographer Sergio Trujillo and musical supervisor Ron Melrose.

"They're the dream team - and this is my dream role," beams Luke Baker, who heads the cast as Frankie. "It's been on my wish list for longer than I can remember. When the show was on at the Prince Edward Theatre in London, I worked front-of-house, so I saw it maybe 100 times. Now I finally get to play Frankie, and it's my biggest, most challenging role to date.

"It's such a fast-paced show. When we first did a run-through of act one, it was like the first time you drive on the motorway; you put your foot down and go 'God, this is fast!' Then you settle into it. For me, being in this show is everything I hoped it would be and more."

When it premiered on Broadway in 2005, Jersey Boys was praised for its clever use of the Four Seasons' music to tell their rags-to-riches story. As dramatised by book writers Marshall Brickman and Rick Elice, the musical charts the group's incredible journey, from the days when the four of them were just hanging out on the streets of New Jersey, to their inauguration into the Rock & Rock Hall of Fame. Along the way, they enjoyed spectacular chart-storming success with 1960s and 70s hits including Sherry, Big Girls Don't Cry, Walk Like A Man, December, 1963 (Oh, What A Night) and Frankie's solo smash Can't Take My Eyes Off You.

"The music is incredible, and they were one of the few groups to have falsetto vocals as the lead parts," Luke says. "They had such a unique sound, and Frankie could sing anything from R&B and doo-wop to jazz and disco. His vocal ability is crazy. Nailing his famous falsetto takes a lot of work, but once you get there, it becomes like second nature - as do the band's very specific dance moves.

"There are so many layers to [Valli]. He's loyal and determined, and he faces adversity head-on. Like the rest of the band, Frankie

suffers setbacks and tragedy - the show is just as full of drama as it is of fun and fantastic songs. As jukebox musicals go, it's the gold standard."

Too right. Since its US premiere, Jersey Boys has been seen by more than 30 million people worldwide and won 65 major awards. These include the Helpmann Award for Best Musical in the Australian homeland of Carlo Boumoughbay. Having moved to the UK a year ago, the actor is currently playing Tommy DeVito in the show.

"Tommy's got a lot of courage and he doesn't mind getting his hands dirty," says Carlo. "He's maybe not the nicest of guys at times and he rattles a few cages, but he's full of passion."

The biggest challenge Carlo has faced is learning to play an electric guitar: "We have incredible musicians doing the real playing, so the finger-picking needs to look realistic. Then there's the accent. I have to sound like I'm from New Jersey, not Queensland - but again, we have an incredible dialect coach." Carlo is looking forward to taking the show on tour. "It's going to be a voyage of discovery for me because we're going to places I've never been to before. I've seen some of the towns and cities on TV and in films back in Australia, but now I get to experience them for real."

Newcastle-born Lewis Kennedy, meanwhile, landed the part of bassist & arranger Nick Massi after auditioning for various Jersey Boys roles over the years.

"Nick is the quietest of the bunch, but he's often described as being really smart and with a genius for harmonies," says Lewis. "Jersey Boys is the best of all the so-called jukebox musicals because the script is so strong and it takes audiences, as well as we actors, on a big journey. It's full of emotion - having each character narrate different bits of the story gives it a unique twist.

"Getting to be in the anniversary tour is a real honour, especially as we're working with the original team. I think the show has lasted this long because the book and the story are as strong as the songs. It takes us on a

rollercoaster ride that mirrors what the band went through to achieve success."

Completing the core cast is Toby Miles as the baby of the Four Seasons bunch, Bob Gaudio. "Bob is the musical brains of the group," Toby explains. "He writes a lot of the music, and he's very clued-up, articulate and business-oriented. He's an interesting character because, unlike the others, he's not largely driven by emotion.

"I've always loved the music, and the show has a lot of heart. It appeals to all demographics, I think, and there's so much happening in terms of the relationships between the characters. It's deep and charged and quite brilliant in its storytelling."

The Newcastle-born actor has piano-playing in his skill set, so the musical numbers are in his wheelhouse: "I'm lucky in that respect because it's an instrument that I'm comfortable with. But the show is challenging in other ways because the script is packed full of dialogue and it moves at an incredibly fast pace. Each of us gets to narrate a 'season' in the story, and that means directly addressing the audience, which is fun."

Toby also has a theory to suggest why the musical has had a staying power to match that of Frankie and the band themselves.

"People grew up with this music, either the first time around or because their parents continue to play it or because they've heard it on the radio. Songs like Oh, What A Night and Beggin' have had second lives - and on top of that, there's this riveting story."

.....

Jersey Boys shows at the Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, from Monday 26 to Saturday 31 October, and The Alexandra, Birmingham, from Monday 2 to Saturday 21 November.

The production then returns to the region in 2027, showing at the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Monday 15 to Saturday 27 March.

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Disney On Ice: Discover The Magic

bp pulse LIVE, Birmingham, Wed 28 October - Sun 8 November

Disney On Ice makes a welcome return with another fast-paced family-friendly adventure. Cutting-edge figure-skating, eye-catching costumes, impressive set designs, innovative lighting, attention-grabbing special effects and high-flying jumps all feature in Discover The Magic, a show which brings together a cast of beloved Mouse House characters. Families are invited to explore the colourful spirit realm of Coco with Miguel, brave the ocean with Moana, marvel at Belle's enchanted chandelier, and sing along with Elsa. Memorable moments from Aladdin, Toy Story and The Little Mermaid also feature.

Ice Age Adventure Live

Lichfield Garrick, Sat 24 October

Ice Age Adventure Live is being advertised by its producers not only as the, er, 'coolest' show on Earth but also one which will more than likely 'knock your snow boots off'.

The production invites little explorers to join in with a mission to save the woolly mammoth, an endeavour that will see them coming face-to-face with 'dodos, silly cavemen, and sabre-toothed surprises'. A post-show chance to meet & greet a polar bear also features.



Toto The Ninja Cat And The Great Snake Escape

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 31 October & Sun 1 November

Little Angel Theatre return to the region with a stage show based on Dermot O'Leary's bestselling children's book about an almost completely blind cat who has incredible ninja skills. Accompanied by her cheeky brother, Silver, Toto needs to use every ounce of her courage and cunning to save the day when a deadly King Cobra escapes onto the streets of London...



There's A Monster In Your Show

Festival Drayton, Market Drayton, North Shropshire, Fri 23 October; Halesowen Town Hall, Sat 31 October - Sunday 1 November; Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Thurs 12 November

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

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



Dance In The Dark

Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham, Sat 24 & Sun 25 October; Albany Theatre, Coventry, Tues 2 & Wed 3 March

Dreamy, multi-sensory, and providing youngsters (and their grown-ups) with the chance to pull on their PJs for a slumber party in a giant sleepover den, this brand-new show features contemporary dance, live music, audience interaction, and immersive scents and sounds. The production is presented by Kenilworth-located company Sonrisa Arts and is ideal for children aged three and older.



Dinosaurs Live!

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sun 11 October

Dinosaurs are once again roaming the county of Warwickshire this autumn, thanks to this lively interactive show for all the family to enjoy.

Presented by the Natural History Museum, in association with Mark Thompson Productions, Dinosaurs Live! provides youngsters with the chance to meet a host of prehistoric creatures from the Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous periods. The one-hour show is suitable for children aged three-plus.



Spot's Birthday Party

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Sat 24 October; Brierley Civic Hall, Mon 26 & Tues 27 October

Steve the Monkey, Tom the Crocodile and Helen the Hippo are poised to party with birthday boy Spot the Dog in this theatrical adaptation of Eric Hill's classic book, Happy Birthday Spot. Coming complete with singing, dancing and lots of interactive party games, the show is suitable for children aged two-plus.



SNOW BUSINESS

**A sparkling new production of festive favourite
The Snowman launches at Birmingham Rep...**



Illustration by Raymond Briggs © Snowman Enterprises Limited 2006. THE SNOWMAN™ Snowman Enterprises Limited

First a picture book by Raymond Briggs, and a beloved TV film, The Snowman was then brought to life on stage at Birmingham Repertory Theatre in 1993. Now, more than three decades later, a refreshed version of the adaptation is this month taking flight at The Rep, with Will Tuckett both directing and choreographing it. The production might be polished and updated in places, but it still features Howard Blake's iconic score - and, of course, a certain floppy-hatted Snowman, who will be 'walking in the air'! Will chatted to What's On about the show's eagerly anticipated return...

The timeless story of a young boy whose Snowman comes to life on Christmas Eve has been a hit since 1978, when Raymond Briggs' wordless picture book was first published. In 1982, the charming story was adapted into an animated television film, then found new life in 1993 as a theatrical adaptation. The show has been a firm family favourite ever since. This year sees the Birmingham Repertory Theatre producing a brand-new version of the play, directed and choreographed by Will Tuckett. The production will be updated in places but honour the legacy of the previous stage show, retaining Howard Blake's iconic music and taking inspiration from Raymond Briggs' original illustrations.

"Howard's music is built into the DNA of the country," Will told What's On. "It's international, and part of our heritage. Growing up, the Raymond Briggs book was given to me for Christmas. It was in my stocking when I was little, when it had just come out. I then remember us all gathering around the telly to watch Channel Four when it was first screened - it was a real event."

"I was lucky to be able to go into Random House with the team and look at the original artwork - it's heartbreakingly beautiful. The structure of the show is pretty much exactly the same. I've made a couple of little changes in act two, but they're small. There was a Jack Frost character - who was added in quite late, actually - and I've turned that into a pair of little naughty siblings. I've put a little bit more flying into that second act - because you've got to! If you've got the chance, you've got to get people up in the air."

The new production is of course a team effort. Designer Anna Fleischle has been exploring those original illustrations, to bring the play's design as close as possible to Briggs' drawings. The Snowman costume, meanwhile, will be made by Tahra Zahar, who recently designed the bears in hit *West End Paddington: The Musical*.

"Theatre has changed hugely in 33 years," says Will. "It's a very different landscape in terms of audience expectations now, so we've also got a lot of projection in the show. I'm very excited about that. Nina Dunn is the projection designer, and we've been looking particularly at the *Walking In The Air*

sequence - we're actually able to make a three-dimensionally projected world. When I say that, it means that if perspectives are shifting, it's all happening in a three-dimensional way, so whilst the projection itself isn't 3D, it gives you a sense of depth and movement. You couldn't really use projection [like this] 30-odd years ago, and that's a very exciting thing. Nina has been working with her brilliant animator, Simran, who's from Birmingham. They've been really breaking down how we make that sequence work."

While elements of the design are being updated - thanks to decades of technical advancement since the first staging - Snowman fans will be pleased to hear the return of Howard Blake's lyrical music, which underscored both the animated film and the previous play.

"The music isn't going to change, but there were a lot of samples that were used last time. Thirty years ago, if you had a little Casio organ, you were feeling quite chuffed... My big hope is that it will sound even more like what Howard had in his head when he wrote it."

The plan to stage a refreshed version of *The Snowman* was in discussion for a while, but it's only now that Will feels it's the right time for The Rep to present a new production at such a scale.

"I don't think it will *look* complicated, but if you check under the bonnet of the show, it's actually *really* complicated! With Joe [Murphy] being the new artistic director - he's just had such a huge hit with *Sweeney Todd* - it feels like it's a different foot forward for The Rep."

It's not the first time that Will has choreographed work for The Rep's expansive stage - he previously created a piece for Birmingham Royal Ballet, which was the first show to open at the theatre after the Covid lockdowns.

"The greatest thing about The Rep is that there's no seat with a bad view; everybody gets a perfect view of the stage. You know when you put a piece of clothing on, and it doesn't look big on you, but it doesn't feel restricting? I think the stage feels like that. You've got room to move, but it really holds

you, and it holds a production, and that's lovely."

The stage is spacious enough to make room for the spectacular flying sequences which have endured in the memories of audiences of all ages for decades. In aiming to retain those magic moments, Will is keen to create a production which is not solely aimed at young children.

"The version that I want to make is determinately a family show. You could go as an adult and have just as good a time if you haven't got kids with you. You can hit that cross-generational bracket - there's a collective feeling which the show really captures... There's a belief that [a play] has to be bright and fast in order to get kids' attention, but I don't entirely subscribe to that. If you can suspend disbelief and create emotional situations which have honesty in them, I think young people will go with you. "You do need to try and make things funny, though. When you're younger, nostalgia doesn't mean anything, because you're living it all for the first time. You have to be really open and really honest - and really brutal. So if something's not working, you cut it!"

With the excitement of a new Snowman on the horizon, Will has not lost sight of the main aim of the production: to bring to life Raymond Briggs' beloved characters, and to maintain a theatrical tradition which has brought Christmas cheer to audiences for over 30 years.

"I've got a specific task to do. I've got to tell this story, and it has to be emotional, funny and engaging. It has to work if I'm six, and it has to work if I'm 76, and all the way through. I want it to be something that people feel they could go back and see again, because of how it made them feel. There's lots to see; you never get bored of a scene - it's an advent calendar of a show. You're opening little doors and going 'Ooh, look what I've got now!'"

The Snowman runs at Birmingham Rep from Tuesday 20 October to Sunday 1 November

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Light entertainment from around the region...



Buffy Revamped

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry,
Thurs 15 October

Calling to mind the quickfire work of ensembles such as the Reduced Shakespeare Company, *Buffy Revamped* is a fast-paced production that wings its way through all 144 episodes of hit 1990s television series *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* - and does so in an admirably concise 70 minutes.

The one-man production is presented by Brendan Murphy, whose central character of Spike is a fella who, as you might imagine, knows a thing or several about the now-cult US TV show...

Buffy Revamped scored a big hit in Edinburgh (and on its previous visits to the Midlands), so if you're a fan of the series, a fun evening out is pretty much a guarantee.

Queenz: Battle Of The Divas!

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Tues 20 October; Malvern Festival Theatre, Sun 1 November; Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Thurs 5 November; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 6 November; Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Fri 29 & Sat 30 January; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sun 7 February; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Wed 3 March

Loved and adored by celebrities including Gary Barlow and Dawn French, Queenz is described as 'a trailblazing, life-affirming drag extravaganza that's currently taking the UK by storm'. The show sees death-dropping divas slaying the biggest hits of all time - and there won't be a lip-sync in sight!

Get ready to sing along to reimagined classics from The Spice Girls, Lady Gaga, Britney, Whitney and everything in between...



Robert White

Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham,
Fri 23 October

Songs, stories, stand-up comedy, props, improvisation and interaction. There are many elements of a Robert White show that ensure a couple of hours in his company is time well spent. A 2018 contestant on Britain's Got Talent - he finished second - Robert describes himself as "the only autistic, gay, dyslexic, cross-lateral, quarter-Welsh, webbed-toed, hyper-sensitive, gluten-intolerant, pseudo-genius, musical



comedian that there is... probably!" He's visiting Birmingham with his brand-new touring show, memorably entitled *That Gay Autistic Keyboard Tanktop Comedy Guy*.

The Legends Of Vegas: After Hours

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Sun 18 October

Viva Las Vegas! Think bright lights, swanky casinos, wild parties and sexy showgirls as Strictly legends Brendan Cole, James Jordan, Pasha Kovalev, Vincent Simone and Ian Waite head on down to Sin City.

This high-energy dance extravaganza comes complete with a soundtrack of songs from some of Vegas' most famous entertainers.



My Life With Kenneth Williams

Walsall Arena, Fri 30 October

Thirty years after its Fringe First-winning debut at the Edinburgh Festival in 1996, David Benson is now touring this new version of his one-man homage to the hugely talented but highly complex Kenneth Williams. A great piece of theatre - whether you're a fan of the legendary Carry On star or not - the show is being resurrected to mark what would have been Williams' 100th birthday.



Illusion Impossible

Stourbridge Town Hall, Tues 27 October

Award-winning illusionist Kayden Black here joins forces with magician Michael Carr and escapologist Andy Storm to present a family-friendly show.

The trio are promising a production that will be positively awash with 'grand-scale stage illusions, mind-reading miracles, death-defying escapes and big musical numbers'.



Gorilla Circus: RPM

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry,
Thurs 29 October

If you're an enthusiastic theatre-goer in search of a novelty show, what about this one - a production that's being presented on a giant treadmill!

Gorilla Circus' RPM (Revolutions Per Minute) brings together historic news clips, street dance, acrobatics and circus to explore the question of whether the UK 'has ever seriously confronted its colonial past'.



BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET



Rosinda Evans image © Manvir Rai.

Director Carlos Acosta

Sir Peter Wright's

The Nutcracker

20 November – 12 December

“Still the best *Nutcracker*
on offer in the UK”

The Guardian



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ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

Dance showing in the region...



Matthew Bourne's *The Car Man* Birmingham Hippodrome, Tues 13 - Sat 17 October

Having scored a hit with an all-male version of *Swan Lake* more than three decades ago - and in so doing earning a reputation as one of the modern dance era's most innovative choreographers - Sir Matthew Bourne has since produced a variety of other highly acclaimed and innovative work, not least among which is *The Car Man*.

Loosely based on Bizet's popular opera *Carmen*, the show sees the familiar 19th-century Spanish cigarette factory of the original being transformed into a greasy garage-diner in 1950s America, where the dreams and passions of a small town are shattered by the arrival of a handsome and enigmatic stranger...

Ballet Black

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Wed 7 October

Ballet Black have notched up 25 glorious years of performance, taking to stages across the world under the guidance of their highly rated artistic director, Cassa Pancho. Comprising British and international dancers of Black and Asian descent, the company are visiting Coventry this month with a double bill to mark their special birthday. The featured works are the Olivier Award-winning *Ingoma* (2019) - bringing the rarely told stories of Black miners and their communities to the stage - and a new offering from Hope Boykin, created especially for Ballet Black's anniversary and paying 'vibrant tribute' to the company's journey.



Kathakali

Lichfield Garrick, Sun 25 October

A traditional classical dance-drama from Kerala in India, Kathakali blends vibrant makeup, elaborate costumes and expressive storytelling. And there are surely no finer exponents of the artform than the Kala Chethana Kathakali Company, the only Kathakali specialists in the country and veterans of more than 5,000 shows and 3,000 workshops.

The ensemble's late-month visit to Lichfield includes not only a two-hour performance but also an informal pre-show make-up demonstration and short film, for anybody wishing to find out more about Kathakali.

BRB: *Swan Lake*

Birmingham Hippodrome, until Sat 3 October

Birmingham Royal Ballet (BRB) return to the Birmingham Hippodrome stage this month with one of their most popular works: Sir Peter Wright's *Swan Lake*.

"It's a classic which has stood the test of time," says BRB principal Céline Gittens, who is playing Odette/Odile. "I think what makes it stand out is the fact that it's so technically demanding; it has every classical step, all thrown into one ballet. And then there's the music. Tchaikovsky's score elevates *Swan Lake* to another level entirely."



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Dance showing in the region...



The Brown Suite

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Mon 5 - Wed 7 October; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Sat 24 October

Brand-new dance-theatre work *The Brown Suite* brings together ballet, contemporary, jazz and Horton technique to tell the tale of seven characters whose lives intertwine across the course of a single

night in 1970s New York. The show boasts a soul and funk-fuelled soundtrack spanning the 1960s and 70s and features the music of James Brown, Sam Cooke and Etta James.

English Youth Ballet: Swan Lake

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,
Fri 9 & Sat 10 October

Founded in 1998, the award-winning English Youth Ballet offers young people interested in dance the opportunity to perform classical ballet alongside professional dancers...



This month sees the company returning to the region to present their acclaimed version of *Swan Lake*, a production that features 100 local young performers, all of whom have been carefully selected for their skill and potential.

Ascension Dance: Amaris & Rae

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry,
Sun 11 October

Blending movement, light, storytelling and a participatory element, Ascension Dance's latest production follows a brother and sister on an adventure that sees them travelling

through galaxies and encountering aliens.

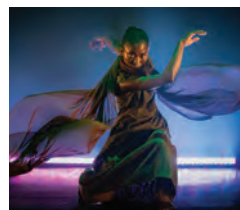
The 45-minute show, which will be followed by a 15-minute stay & play session, has been designed for children aged three to seven. The production is also suitable for SEND young people with learning disabilities, aged nine to 13.



Ace Dance: Twawsi

Walsall Arena, Tues 6 October; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Tues 17 November; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Tues 2 March

Committed to the presentation of contemporary dance inspired by the African Diaspora, ACE Dance & Music here present a double bill of work which they describe as 'powerful contrasting visions of our world today'. *Echoes Of Dust* - taking place against the backdrop of war, disaster and the invisible collapse of human connection - asks the



question: when all seems lost, what hope can we still hold on to?

Letlalo, meanwhile, draws from African, Indigenous and contemporary dance languages to explore the deep connection between humanity and the earth.

The Nutcracker

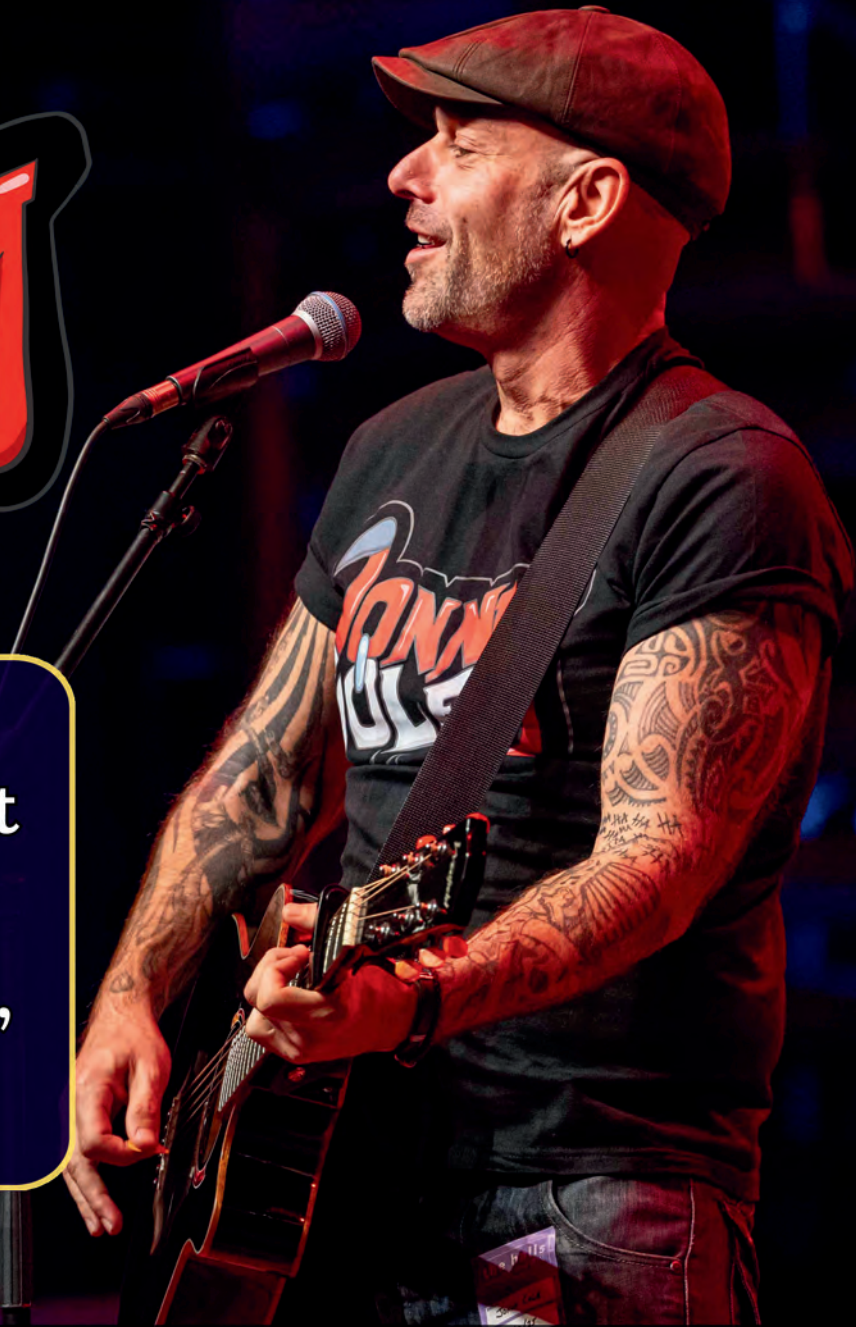
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Thurs 8 October; Malvern Theatres, Sun 22 November

The Nutcracker tells the story of a young girl named Clara as she's swept up in a fantasy of soldiers, giant rats, snow fairies, magic and mystery, before finally being transformed into a beautiful ballerina. The production is presented by Imperial Classical Ballet, who are this year celebrating two decades of touring in the UK.





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THE SUITE SPOT

A new dance show is this month set to transport Wolverhampton Grand Theatre audiences back in time to 1970s New York. Featuring a soul-infused soundtrack, **The Brown Suite** has been created by choreographers Darius Drooh, from San Francisco, and Nahum McLean, originally from Manchester, who met in New York in 2013. Here, Darius and Nahum explain the way in which their experiences in **The Big Apple** have helped inform their creative process...

Darius and Nahum, how did your partnership begin?

Darius: Me and Nahum started working together in 2013. We met at [New York's] The Ailey School, as friends, and we started creating at The Ailey School, too. We've always dreamed of putting on shows together.

Nahum: We formed BlacBrik in 2023. It started from a duet that we choreographed that year, and we started to tour that. It premiered in London, and we then toured it to various places around the UK. Then, in 2025, we pitched **The Brown Suite** to Fundamentally Dance when we first did their flagship show, **Ballet Nights**. BlacBrik is the company that we formed to house our work. We really love dance-theatre. We love creating stories on stage and creating worlds that people can dive into.

What was the spark of inspiration that led to the creation of **The Brown Suite?**

Nahum: James Brown was kind of the catalyst. In **Death Of The Bachelors** - the first work that we made together as BlacBrik - we had three James Brown songs and one Sam Cooke song. And that piece was the catalyst for **The Brown Suite** - it's a suite of James Brown music.

Darius: **Death Of The Bachelors** is about two men who have realised their bachelor days are coming to an end. You're out partying, and then - 'Whoa, I don't have any children, I don't have a wife, I don't have a partner, I'm getting older. Where is that gonna lead me?'

The Brown Suite takes place in New York in the 1970s - who are the characters we're following during the piece?

Nahum: It's about six lives and how they intersect during a night out in New York. Some of them are friends, some of them are in relationships, some people are new to the group. We go on a very human journey, looking at romance, friendships, conflicts, entanglements - all those things that happen in everyday life, for anyone, wherever you are, whatever era it is.

With such iconic music framing **The Brown Suite, do you have a favourite moment where the music, dance and narrative really inspire you?**

Darius: I think it would have to be **I Feel Good**. There's something about that bass and the drum that's bringing all the communities together. Music does something to people's souls and sometimes they don't even realise why that is. My dad is a pastor, so growing up with that soul music - and people getting filled with the Holy Ghost and things like that - some of those basslines are in those James Brown songs. And people who don't go to church feel it, but they don't know there's history behind it - there's something spiritual behind all of it.

Nahum: For me, probably **At Last**, by Etta James. In the show, that's our dream ballet, and I think it's a very dreamy song... From the very first chord, it's so dreamy.

As a duo, what does collaboration in your working relationship look like?

Nahum: We bounce off each other a lot. So even if one of us has an idea, we'll go to the other, and that might then grow into something else or it might completely go. I don't think there's any such thing as a bad idea, because it will always spark something, or at least take you closer to where you need to be, which is kind of how we work.

Darius: ...and sometimes we'll come back to an idea that we both hated. Sometimes, it takes me a hundred years to do one eight-count, and then [Nahum will] see it, and we take it and we morph it into something. I guess that's one of the best things about it being two of us - you kind of feed off each other and you pick each other up.

When creating **The Brown Suite, were you drawing on your own experiences living in New York City?**

Nahum: Definitely. We're speaking about living in New York City or living in London; any big city. People are struggling, but they're all singing and dancing on the subway. We lean into that. Sometimes you're having a great day and sometimes you're 'Down And Out In New York City' - that's a song we're using.

Darius: I think about the times when we were kids in New York. Sometimes all we could afford as students was dollar pizza, but we'd be twirling in the subway.

Nahum: **The Brown Suite** also represents those social spaces where we don't have phones. Like in the theatre, we don't have phones and all these other distractions. We have human connection and human interaction. So I think we're also letting people know that you can go out and have a good time.

.....

The Brown Suite shows at the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Monday 5 to Wednesday 7 October





Digger CERT 15 (128 mins)

Starring **Tom Cruise, Riz Ahmed, John Goodman, Sandra Hüller, Michael Stuhlbarg, Jesse Plemons**
Directed by **Alejandro G Iñárritu**

Best known, of course, for his action movies - think the Mission: Impossible and Top Gun franchises - superstar Tom Cruise here turns his attention to dark satire, taking on the role of the titular character, Digger Rockwell.

When the billionaire oil tycoon's deep-drilling and fracking operations trigger an explosion on his rig, a massive environmental disaster ensues, leading to Digger being tasked by the US president with a high-stakes mission: to undo the damage he's caused and show himself to be humanity's saviour rather than the reason for its doom...

Mexican filmmaker Alejandro G Iñárritu is the man at the helm of this eagerly awaited and overtly comedic movie. "We both knew that throughout our journeys we had never done anything even close to this," he says of himself and Cruise... "Digger is charming. He's funny. He's impossible not to watch. [And] like all the most dangerous people, he makes you want to agree with him." **Released Fri 2 October**



Verity CERT 15 (114 mins)

Starring **Anne Hathaway, Dakota Johnson, Josh Hartnett, Ismael Cruz Cordova, Brady Wagner, Asel Swango**
Directed by **Michael Showalter**

A writer in need of a job, Lowen Ashleigh (Dakota Johnson) is approached by Jeremy Crawford (Josh Hartnett), the husband of bestselling but incapacitated author Verity (Anne Hathaway), who needs somebody to complete the remaining volumes of her successful book series.

Relocating to the remote Crawford estate to sort through Verity's notes and get to work, Lowen discovers an unpublished autobiographical manuscript - written by Verity - which reveals deeply disturbing and violent secrets about the novelist's marriage and family, as well as dark events preceding her near-fatal accident.

As Lowen investigates further, she finds herself increasingly unable to separate fiction from reality - and increasingly drawn towards Verity's husband...

Released Fri 2 October

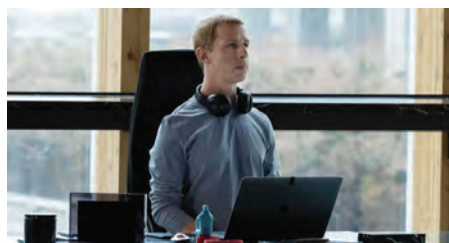
The Social Reckoning

CERT tbc (112 mins)

Starring **Billy Magnussen, Mikey Madison, Betty Gilpin, Jeremy Allen White, Jeremy Strong, Patrick Fischler**
Directed by **Aaron Sorkin**

A companion piece to 2010 movie The Social Network, The Social Reckoning explores the story of The Facebook Files. An investigative series of sensational whistle-blowing articles published in the Wall Street Journal in 2021, the Files lifted the lid on the world's largest social network, exposing not only its inner workings but also claiming that the platform was choosing growth and profit over the need to protect the wellbeing of its users. The film is one of four soon-to-be-released movies which take as their subject matter the goings-on in Silicon Valley. Two of the films - documentaries about Elon Musk and currently imprisoned Theranos founder Elizabeth Holmes - are eagerly awaited; the other two - The Social Reckoning and Luca Guadagnino's Artificial - not so much.

Released Fri 9 October



The Uprising CERT 15 (127 mins)

Starring **Andrew Garfield, Jamie Bell, Stephen Dillane, Tom Hollander, Woody Norman, Cosmo Jarvis, Katherine Waterston, Mark Redhead** Directed by **Paul Greengrass**

If you've always wanted to know more - or maybe even know just *something* - about the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, then The Uprising is the film you've been waiting for.

Sitting at the heart of its story is the fictional character of Ploughman, played by one-time Spider-Man star Andrew Garfield.

A farmer facing poverty, he heads for London for a high-stakes encounter with the young King Richard II and his corrupt councillors, the latter of whom have imposed oppressive poll taxes and strict wage controls in the wake of the Black Death.

Ploughman is accompanied on his journey by an army of impoverished people driven to the very brink of starvation...

Meeting with mixed reviews, The Uprising was briefly marketed in the US as a Robin Hood adventure. The strategy was inspired by the film's epilogue, in which Ploughman appears in green attire as the leader of a band of outlaws living in a forest...

Released Fri 9 October

Wicker CERT tbc (105 mins)

Starring **Alexander Skarsgård, Olivia Colman, Elizabeth Debicki, Peter Dinklage, Ella Bruccoleri, Richard E Grant** Directed by **Alex Huston Fischer and Eleanor Wilson**

Academy Award-winning Olivia Colman stars as a lonely fisherwoman in this highly engaging romantic fantasy fable. Ridiculed for her spinster status and ostracised from the conservative medieval farming village in which she lives (the fact that she constantly smells of fish does little for her social standing), she decides to show a feisty middle finger to the villagers by commissioning a local basket maker to fashion her a husband made out of wicker. But when her new spouse comes to life and the fisherwoman finds herself unexpectedly falling in love, the unconventional romance causes some serious sparks to fly among the closed-minded villagers...

Released Fri 30 October



Other Mommy CERT 15 (93 mins)

Starring **Jessica Chastain, Jay Duplass, Arabella Olivia Clark, Dichen Lachman, Arian Moayed, Karen Allen** Directed by **Rob Savage**

With movies including *Saw*, *Insidious* and *The Conjuring* featuring on his CV, it's fair to say that Malaysian-Australian filmmaker James Wan knows a thing or two about the modern-horror genre. So having him serve as producer on *Other Mommy* should give filmgoers real confidence that a memorable cinematic experience awaits them. To make matters better still, the movie's Shropshire-born director, Rob Savage, also has some impressive form when it comes to supernatural spintenglers, having helmed the widely acclaimed *Host* (2020), *Dashcam* (2021) and *The Boogeyman* (2023)... Based on the Josh Malerman novel *Incidents Around The House*, *Other Mommy* focuses on an eight-year-old girl named Bela, who is targeted by a malicious paranormal entity resembling her mother. Both the entity and Mommy are played by Jessica Chastain.

Released Fri 9 October



Klara And The Sun

CERT 12a (116 mins)

Starring **Jenna Ortega, Amy Adams, Mia Tharia, Aran Murphy, Steve Buscemi, Natasha Lyonne** Directed by **Taika Waititi**

With a struggling family to heal and a sick teenager to save, obsolete solar-powered android companion Klara certainly has her work cut out... Based on Kazuo Ishiguro's 2021 novel of the same name, *Klara And The Sun* is set in a dystopian future in which technological advances in genetic engineering have divided humans into strict, isolated social classes. The story sees Amy Adams, as worried mother Chrissie, purchase Klara to be a companion for her daughter Josie, an isolated teenager who has been struck down by a mysterious illness. But Klara's arrival on the scene prompts tough questions about artificial intelligence, sacrifice, and what it means to truly love someone...

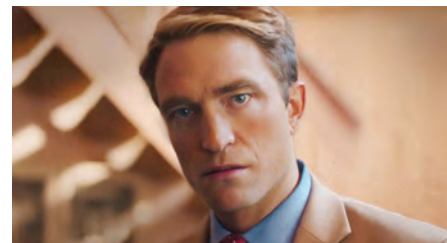
Released Fri 23 October

Primetime CERT 15 (110 mins)

Starring **Robert Pattinson, Merritt Wever, Anna Faris, Skyler Gisondo, Bokeem Woodbine, Matthew Maher** Directed by **Lance Oppenheim**

Lance Oppenheim's narrative-feature-film debut sees Robert Pattinson playing a fictionalised and fame-hungry version of Chris Hansen, the host of real-life US TV news segment *To Catch A Predator*. Set in 2006 and described as a psychological crime thriller, the film tracks the chaotic behind-the-scenes world of the hit television show. Pattinson's Hansen works alongside ruthless TV producer Andie Bender to coordinate sting operations in which adult men who are intent on having sex with minors get caught and publicly shamed. But with Hansen and Bender's primary goal being to secure high ratings, it soon becomes apparent that the predators they ensnare aren't the only ones whose moral compasses have gone seriously awry... The film debuted at the Venice International Film Festival, garnering widespread acclaim.

Released Fri 30 October





DREAD NAUGHT

Leading sculptor Permindar Kaur is showcasing her biggest-ever exhibition of new work at Wolverhampton Art Gallery

Image credit: Richard Davies

Visitors to Wolverhampton Art Gallery have the opportunity to see a new exhibition by leading British sculptor & installation artist Perminder Kaur this month.

Taking the title Dread Naught, the show provides a first chance to check out Perminder's new commissions while also reflecting on some of the pieces she's created during a career spanning more than 30 years. "Visitors can expect to see a lot of new work that has been made in the last year," says Perminder. "For me, it's a new form and a new way, and when my work moves forward a step, it's quite exciting.

"I'm also showing some work from before, which I don't normally show; some very early works from the early 1990s. I think something that is interesting about my work is that when you see an older work, you wouldn't know it was an older work; you can't tell the age.

"It's interesting to show them because it helps the dialogue with the newer work, and it gives another level of what the work is about. You see the same themes but being approached in different ways. I'm not showing the works chronologically; it's mixed in."

Born in Nottingham to Sikh parents, Perminder has exhibited across the UK and abroad, including at Birmingham's Ikona Gallery, Coventry's Mead Gallery, The New Art Gallery in Walsall and Compton Verney in Warwickshire. Her work was recently included in the major Arts Council Collection touring exhibition *Breaking The Mould: Sculpture By Women Since 1945*, which opened at Yorkshire Sculpture Park. Using a blend of metals and materials, Perminder often takes familiar shapes and re-interprets them through her sculpture and installation.

"Throughout my works, I've looked at different ways of defence and protection. So in some of my early works, I used chainmail and knives, which are quite symbolic to Sikhism, and swords and boots and helmets. So basic armour to represent personal defence.

"Then, later on, that moved to more animal hybrid protection - so antlers, claws and beaks. So my figures became hybrid creations of animals and humans. When I look back through my career, I can see that defence and protection is a theme that is consistent, although it might go in different directions."

Perminder often infuses her art with ambiguity. An example of this is *Copper Giants*. Exhibited for the first time in Wolverhampton, it features outline figures

wearing only boots, thereby blending the familiar and the strange.

"The figures are made out of copper rod and are quite skeletal and quite big. Originally, they were dressed. They were the inside structures of some of my fabric figures, but now the fabric has come off and the only clothing they have is their metal black boots. So they are more naked, and it's just revealing the skeletal, what's left after a life.

"The figures are quite strange, because they have broad shoulders and small heads, so they look like monsters in some ways. But they are also quite comical. And so people are left thinking, are they threatening or are they humorous? People will have very different responses to them."

Dread Naught is Perminder's largest exhibition of new work to date and is also her first at Wolverhampton Art Gallery. She is suitably excited by the opportunities the building provides: "Wolverhampton is such a fascinating space because it has a triangular gallery. I've never worked with a triangular gallery before, and as a sculptor, I like to respond to the space if I can. I wanted the four figures of *Copper Giants* in the centre, so it's like a square inside the triangle. And when you enter the space, you see all the walls, so it's a different feeling."

Also in the exhibition, Perminder has returned to one of her first works - *Innocence* - which features a child's dress and a kirpan, the Sikh ceremonial knife. The original work is in the Arts Council Collection.

"I asked the Arts Council, who own the work, but because they have been moving their collection and this is the critical stage, they're not loaning out at the moment. But I wanted *Innocence* in the exhibition. It's a key work that I made in 1993 which has lots of levels and layers [illustrating] what my work is about. It has Sikh reference, it has childhood, it has defence, it has the female aspect. It talks about so much, and it would help as a start work into the show, which is then in dialogue with it.

"So I re-made it, which is something I don't tend to do. It's a new version: *Innocence II*, for 2026. It's very similar in lots of ways, but the materials are slightly different.

"It's raised lots of questions in my mind, even making it. I thought I would make a different version of it, but I kept going back to the original because I liked the original. So I realised that all those decisions I made all those years ago, I didn't want to change them, as it works as it is."

The final room of the exhibition features *Market Stall*, bringing together pieces by

three local artists: Kanj Nicholas, India Birtwistle and Roo Dhisso. The artists have been working with Wolverhampton community groups the Sikh & Punjabi Women's Group, Wolverhampton Girl Guides and Wolverhampton City of Sanctuary.

Perminder has been in frequent contact with all of the artists and groups.

"The theme is about market stalls and the way we connect, so in the final gallery there will be four market stalls - my market stall and the three from the local artists and different communities.

"I think it's important to work with younger artists, to have this dialogue and to open up the exhibition. I'm a very studio-based artist. I'm on my own, and it's good to have these dialogues, to talk to people and learn about what they do. I loved hearing the stories of the artists working with the communities."

Within this final space, Perminder has created *Teddy Bear Wallpaper*, featuring outline teddies which visitors are invited to colour in.

"This final gallery is going to be more of an interactive, fun and joyful space. It will be quite an experience going through my show and then going to the market stalls and coming to something completely different.

"If someone colours it in, then they are a part of it. I'm really excited to see what they do with the teddies and how they colour them in or write words. That engagement is interesting because the wallpaper is the outline of these black teddies that I make, and it's seeing how people see these forms and respond to them."

Visitor reaction is an important element of Perminder's practice.

"I always want people to have some sort of emotional response to my work. I use such basic and generic forms, and because I do that, it's quite open for people to have a response to, or for them to imagine what they think the figures are and what they represent.

"I don't want the work to be closed off and didactic and say it's about this or that. But also the work has complexity, so it can be read in different ways. I'm always trying to create this balance in my work, where you don't know how to feel. There are boundaries and you don't know which side to be on."

.....

Perminder Kaur Dread Naught shows at Wolverhampton Art Gallery from Saturday 24 October to Sunday 11 April 2027



Credit: Emmy Bridgwater, Brave Morning, c.1942, oil on canvas. The Jeffrey Sherwin & Family Collection

Emmy Bridgwater And Birmingham Surrealists

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham,
Sat 24 October - Sun 10 January

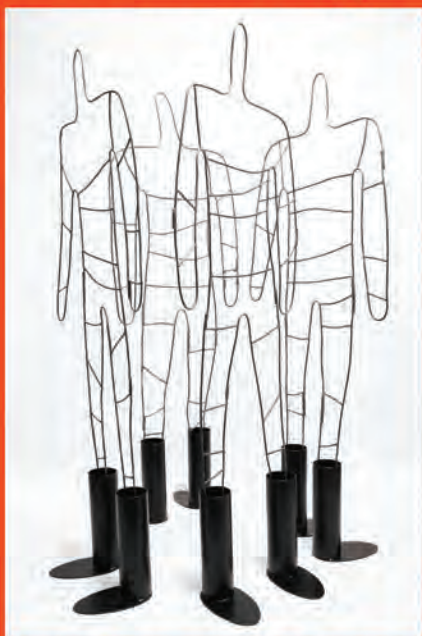
“Emmy Bridgwater brought a new purity of outlook to British Surrealism,” said French writer & poet André Breton, a principal theorist and co-founder of surrealism, “returning to the early days of the movement, to its ‘automatic’ beginnings in France. The swirling lines, plant forms and vaguely suggestive forms seem to have been exorcised from the deep recesses of the mind.”

Breton made his assessment in the 1940s, and he was by no means a lone voice in the wilderness when it came to enthusing about Emmy Bridgwater’s talent and influence. Born in Birmingham - and living her final years in Solihull - she was a pivotal figure in both the British Surrealism movement and the Birmingham Surrealist Group...

This brand-new exhibition brings together paintings, drawings, collages and poetry spanning more than six decades of her life, with her artworks being presented alongside work by contemporary creatives Laura Footes and Paloma Proudfoot. Their inclusion in the show offers fresh perspectives on Emmy’s pioneering legacy and the distinct role of women’s voices within surrealist expression.

Perminder Kaur

Dread Naught



Wolverhampton Art Gallery
24 October 2026 - 11 April 2027
Free entry

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Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum



Reflections

12th September - 3rd January

Monet • Boudin • Corot

For information on opening times, admission
prices and to book tickets please visit

www.museumsworcestershire.org.uk

Image: Bateaux en Hollande pres de Zaandam, Claude Monet, 1871.
courtesy of Swansea Council: Glynn Vivian Art Gallery

MUSEUMS
WORCESTERSHIRE

Threads Through The Cross - Jacqui Parkinson

Lichfield Cathedral,
Sat 10 October - Mon 23 November

Acclaimed artist Jacqui Parkinson here uses textile art to tell the story of Jesus's life, death, resurrection and ascension. The exhibition comprises 18 monumental panels, each nearly three metres in height and combining powerful imagery with exceptional craftsmanship.

Reflections

Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum,
until 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 thought-provoking 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.



Credit: The Entrance to Tonsville Harbour, Eugene Boudlin, 1888 © The National Gallery, London, presented by the Art Fund, 1996

Charmaine Watkiss: The Things We Hold Sacred

New Art Gallery, Walsall,
Sat 3 October - Sun 11 April

Charmaine Watkiss uses her artwork to investigate the botanical legacy of the Caribbean, tracing the lineage to Africa through the transatlantic slave trade. This brand-new exhibition of her work features major loans from private and museum collections, as well as newly commissioned sculptures. The display includes Charmaine's most significant sculptural installation to date.



Alex Margo Arden, Accounts, 2005 © the artist, Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre London

British Art Show 10: A Chorus Of Strangers

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry & Coventry University, Fri 2 October - Sun 10 January

Painting, sculpture, photography, film and installation all feature in British Art Show 10, a Southbank Centre Hayward Gallery touring exhibition comprising works by more than 30 artists and launching across three Coventry venues at the start of this month.

Providing an overview of the most exciting art produced in the UK across the past five years, the landmark exhibition explores ways in which people relate to one another - and to the planet - during a period of 'profound social, cultural and environmental change'.



Nancy Cadogan: The Lost Trees

Compton Verney, Warwickshire,
Fri 2 October - Sun 22 November

The emotional and environmental significance of trees is the subject matter of this new exhibition by Nancy Cadogan, whose poetic and precise landscape paintings have been described as both serene and deeply stirring. Bringing together personal and shared stories, the exhibition celebrates trees not only as enduring links between people and the natural world, but also as witnesses to history and anchors of community.

Shroud Of Turin Exhibition

St Leonard's Church, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire, Mon 26 October - Thurs 12 November

This full-size linen replica of the Shroud of Turin - the original is believed by many to be the burial cloth of Jesus Christ - is available to view at St Leonard's Church on a daily basis, from 11am to 4pm.

The Shroud is accompanied by a series of information panels which draw on historical, forensic and theological research to explore what's known, what remains uncertain, and why the image continues to hold such enormous significance for so many people.



MOTOR RUNNING

Sir Matthew Bourne's The Car Man gets hot under the bonnet



Sir Matthew Bourne's acclaimed dance company, New Adventures, returns to Birmingham Hippodrome this month with *The Car Man* - a sizzling reimagining of Bizet's *Carmen*, transplanted from a 17th-century tobacco factory to a 1950s garage in small-town America. The award-winning production doesn't fight shy of sex and violence, ingeniously blending Bizet's familiar music with lust, longing, and denim-clad mechanics. What's On spoke to two of the New Adventures company, Ashley Shaw and Serena McCall, to find out more...

New Adventures' popular production *The Car Man* returns to Birmingham Hippodrome this month. Steamy and evocative, it tells the story of a beguiling drifter, Luca, whose arrival in a small town causes discord among the residents. As the town's young men work in the garage and pursue the local women in the diner, Luca makes an impression - particularly on the lives of garage-owner Dino's wife Lana, outcast Angelo and lovelorn Rita.

"*The Car Man* is based on *The Postman Always Rings Twice*," explains Ashley Shaw, who plays Lana in the production. "Of course, with all Matthew Bourne productions, he takes it in his own direction, adds some twists and turns. But essentially, it's about a small town where there's a diner and a garage and not much else going on. A drifter comes into the town, changes all the relationships and causes chaos."

As well as taking inspiration from classic noir thriller *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, *The Car Man* is also loosely based on Bizet's opera *Carmen*. In contrast with the grungy realities of life in 1950s small-town America, the musical score is adapted from *The Carmen Suite*, a ballet by Alberto Alonso (after Bizet), with further rearrangements by Terry Davis.

"There's some really well-known bits, which are just fun to dance to," says Ashley. "For me, it makes so much sense with the music. I know some people come who are big fans of the opera, and it's all in different order, and a little bit jarring... It just informs the story so much, and people love it. It's one of the best scores - it's so powerful."

"The music really helps push the narrative," says Serena McCall, who plays multiple ensemble characters in the show. "Dancing to it feels amazing every night. Really powerful - lots of great musicality moments, and especially funny storytelling moments that just work with the music. Matt [Matthew Bourne] has done an amazing job."

"We add in a lot of stamps and slaps and vocals - we're not silent!" Ashley adds.

The story transports audiences to Harmony, a fictional small town in the American Midwest, manifested in the show in Sir Matthew Bourne's signature cinematic and sumptuous style. The setting and costumes, designed by New Adventures Associate Artist Lez Brotherston, help to conjure up the claustrophobic and sizzling atmosphere of the town.

"Lez really nailed it," says Serena. "Watching it for the first time at the Albert Hall and then wearing the same costumes now, he's really nailed the design of what it was like back in the 1950s. Especially the women - the pointy bras and the cinched waist and the layers of the skirts and the materials and all the floral patterns. The costumes are great and the set is incredible - the way it can transport you into different places. We're in the diner, then we're in the garage, then we're in a cabaret bar... You really feel like you're in those places."

Ashley and Serena are looking forward to returning to Birmingham; both started their dance training in the city - at the prestigious Elmhurst Ballet School.

"I actually moved from Australia to Birmingham," says Ashley. "It was the first city I lived in away from home, to go to Elmhurst, which has such an amazing reputation and has produced such amazing dancers. We went on a lot of trips to the Hippodrome; they took us once a week. So we really saw everything: musicals, contemporary, ballet, a lot of Birmingham Royal Ballet obviously. It was amazing because they really gave us a taste of what was out there. Some things I liked, some things I didn't - and then, when I saw Matthew's work, I was like, 'Oh, that's incredible. I want to do that!' It really was [Elmhurst] taking us to the Hippodrome that laid out the rest of my life."

"I'm originally from Scotland," says Serena. "My Royal Associate teacher was like 'You should try out for Elmhurst.' I gave it a go, got in, and moved there when I was 14. So whenever I think of Birmingham, I always associate it with my time at Elmhurst with my friends, my training and my teachers. It really was so surreal, because we didn't really have anything like that back home in Falkirk. Going to the Hippodrome - and being introduced to so many different productions, and seeing what was achievable and what we could look forward to being a part of - was really amazing."

Ashley has been performing with New Adventures since 2009. Her character in *The Car Man* - Lana - is a femme fatale.

"She's originally based on Cora from *The Postman Always Rings Twice*," explains Ashley. "She's a bored housewife who dreams of a lot more. She's very flirtatious and seductive - she's a sexy woman - and when this drifter comes into town, he

instantly takes her fancy. But as things unfold, you realise that she will do anything to keep him. Morals go out the window, you know? It's a really nice character to delve into, because you get both sides - she's fun and playful, and then she's really quite dark and manipulative..."

Serena, meanwhile, has made her professional debut with New Adventures this year, taking on several characters in the integral ensemble cast.

"I'm very lucky in the show," she says. "I play Mercedes, Dolores, and I actually just went on for the track called *Monica* the other day, which is wild. Being a part of the community that is Harmony, my different characters interact with different guys. Mercedes gets married during the show, so there's a whole engagement party. It's really fun being a part of the community and the ensemble. Lana, Luca, Rita, Angelo and Dino have their whole storyline going on - and then we're going along with our own thing in the background, but also still involved in bringing that story to life. It's really fun."

Ashley shares the role of Lana with Cordelia Braithwaite [alternate performances]. Similarly, the other lead characters - who each feature in intense and complex scenes - are played by different dancers across different performances.

"Most roles have two, sometimes three people playing them," says Ashley. "The Lucas are Harrison Dowzell and Will Bozier, and they're both incredible partners who I've done many shows with in the past. We're really comfortable, which - if you've seen the show - you kind of need to be. It's very intimate with very complicated lifts, and you've got to seem really together. You can't be fighting each other. They *both* are really, really incredible, which is rare - sometimes you can have a favourite, or you're better with one than the other. Everyone in the principal cast in particular are so professional that no matter who we dance with, it feels amazing. From my perspective anyway - hopefully they agree!"

.....
The Car Man shows at Birmingham Hippodrome from Tuesday 13 to Saturday 17 October



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Events previews from around the region



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Grand Designs Live NEC, Birmingham, Fri 2 - Sun 4 October

Grand Designs Live returns to Birmingham's NEC early this month, bringing together industry experts, more than 150 brands, and the latest innovations in home renovation, self-build and sustainable living.

With renewables now the event's fastest-growing sector, this year's get-together features the biggest sustainability showcase yet, with Daikin joining as headline sponsor for the first time.

Visitors can explore everything from renewable energy technology and smart

home solutions to interiors, kitchens and garden design.

Popular features including the Grand House, Build & Renovation Hub and Home & Garden Hub all return, while a new Kitchen & Bedroom Hub makes its Birmingham debut. The event also features live talks from well-known experts - including Grand Designs' very own presenter, Kevin McCloud - alongside practical advice, demonstrations, and exclusive show offers for homeowners and renovators alike.

Miniatura

NAEC Stoneleigh, Coventry,
Sat 10 & Sun 11 October

A world of tiny treasures takes centre stage at NAEC Stoneleigh mid-month, thanks to the welcome return of Miniatura.

One of the UK's leading miniature modelling and dolls' house exhibitions, the event brings together more than 100 exhibitors and thousands of enthusiasts.

Visitors can browse handcrafted displays, meet talented makers, and discover everything from intricate room settings to finely detailed accessories.

Workshops, demonstrations and special exhibits also feature across the weekend.

Harvest Hoedown

Weston Park, Nr Shifnal, Shropshire,
Sat 10 & Sun 11 October

Weston Park is embracing the colours, flavours and traditions of autumn with the launch of this brand-new event.

The Hoedown will bring a harvest-festival atmosphere to the historic estate, complete with artisan makers, independent food producers, street food and live bluegrass music.

Visitors can also enjoy line-dancing demonstrations, seasonal treats, and Apple Days activities in the heritage orchards, while Weston's chefs will be showcasing produce harvested from the estate's walled kitchen garden.

The FIM World Supercross British GP Birmingham

Alexander Stadium, Birmingham,
Sat 10 October

The FIM World Supercross Championship returns to the UK this month, with Birmingham's Alexander Stadium being transformed into a spectacular supercross arena for one night only.

Thousands of tonnes of dirt will be used to create a purpose-built track packed with huge jumps, rhythm sections and technical obstacles, all designed to seriously challenge some of the world's best riders as they battle it out under the lights.



Bridges Of Light Worcester City Centre, Wed 28 & Thurs 29 October

Bridges Of Light makes an end-of-month return in Worcester, complete with a brand-new programme of spectacular light installations, interactive artworks and immersive experiences celebrating the city's culture, communities and creativity. Presented by Severn Arts, the two-day festival will once again transform the city centre after dark.

In the lead-up to the event, professional

artists have collaborated with local people and community groups to create original works for the festival. Among them are returning artists Matt and Rob Vale of Illuminos, who have engaged local singers to help create a one-day choral soundscape... The soundscape will form part of a major new light projection on Worcester's bridge, giving residents the chance to play a direct role in this year's celebrations.



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Events previews from around the region



Half-term at Thinktank

Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum, Sat 24 October - Sun 1 November

Thinktank has packed its October half-term programme with a mix of science, creativity and spooky family fun.

Young visitors can explore the world of technology at the Lego Coding & AI Workshop, enjoy hands-on activities including Wizard Bubble Shields and camera-less photography sessions with artist Tom Godwin, and meet the Science Magician for a magical blend of tricks and scientific

discovery.

The museum's Magic Mayhem Science Show also returns, featuring Halloween-themed demonstrations, interactive experiments, and plenty of audience participation. For film fans, Thinktank's popular Spooky Cinema season includes screenings of favourites such as Hocus Pocus and E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial, alongside sci-fi classics Blade Runner: The Final Cut and Alien.



Ghosts, Pumpkins & Tudor Tales

Sudeley Castle, Winchcombe, Mon 26 October - Sun 1 November

History and Halloween combine in this family-friendly autumn adventure at Sudeley Castle. Visitors can follow a pumpkin trail through the castle grounds and historic rooms while searching for hidden ghost statues inspired by the castle's spooky legends. Those who spot every ghost will be rewarded with a sweet treat. The event also features ghostly talks exploring Sudeley's mysterious past, while

special Tudor-themed encounters bring historic characters and folklore to life. Families can meet Tudor ghosts, hear tales from a Wise Woman and discover strange remedies and superstitions from bygone centuries. Additional owl experiences are also available, offering the chance to get up close to these magnificent birds in the atmospheric surroundings of the Castle Coach House.

Ghost & Scream Trains

Severn Valley Railway, Kidderminster, Thurs 29 - Sat 31 October

Halloween returns to Severn Valley Railway with two spine-tingling experiences to delight visitors looking for thrills on the tracks. Families can climb aboard the popular Ghost Train, where haunted stations, spooky characters and jump scares await on an atmospheric journey through the night. Young passengers will also receive a Halloween goodie bag as part of the experience.

For those seeking something more terrifying, the adults-only Scream Train promises an even darker adventure. Brave souls aged 18 and over should brace themselves for immersive scares and frightening encounters. And just to get visitors in the mood for the journeys ahead, there's some eerie entertainment to experience at Kidderminster Station prior to departure.

Halloween Nights

Black Country Living Museum, Dudley, Sat 24 & Thurs 29 - Sat 31 October

Black Country Living Museum is promising a frightfully fun October as its popular Halloween Nights return across four evenings. The after-dark events will see the museum's historic streets transformed with spooky entertainment, trick-or-treating and ghostly encounters for families to enjoy. Visitors can meet mischievous characters, explore haunted corners of the site, and soak up the atmospheric after-hours setting. New attractions include supernatural-themed experiences inspired by the museum's 1940s to 1960s high street, and eerie tales from the region's industrial past.

Halloween at Lunt Roman Fort

Lunt Roman Fort, Baginton, Warwickshire, Mon 26 - Wed 28 October

Lunt Roman Fort this month plays host to two Halloween events exploring the darker side of Roman Britain. Younger visitors can join the Roman Ghost Adventure, a family-friendly experience featuring ghostly legends, interactive storytelling and hands-on activities inspired by life in Roman times. Meanwhile, older children, teenagers and adults can check out Ghosts, Blood & Battle, a twilight tour combining tales of reported hauntings, Roman history and a guided walk through historic Baginton, including a visit to Baginton Castle.

KING OF THE CASTLE

Jon Ronson explores another extraordinary and darkly comic story in his latest live tour...



Jon Ronson, bestselling author of *The Psychopath Test* and *The Men Who Stare At Goats*, is no stranger to weird and wonderful stories which dip into the darker side of humanity. Jon is visiting the Midlands this autumn with a new live show in support of his latest book, *The Castle*, in which he investigates what happens behind the moat of a mysterious modern castle in suburban Connecticut. It's a story which begins a bit too close to home, as he tells *What's On...*

Journalist, author & broadcaster Jon Ronson has spent his career bringing strange stories into the light - whether exploring the behaviour and diagnosis of psychopaths in his bestselling book *The Psychopath Test*, or uncovering the US military's foray into paranormal techniques in *The Men Who Stare At Goats*, a book adapted into a satirical feature film in 2009.

This autumn, Jon returns to the UK, from his adopted home in New York, to embark on a live tour. The tour coincides with the release of his latest book, *The Castle*, a darkly comic true story of masculinity and money...

"This is a story that crashed, unannounced into my life," Jon told *What's On*. "I wake up, there's a series of texts from my son, and the last text said 'We left. That was completely f*cked. Everything's okay now.' I read the other texts, and it turned out that he and three friends had been invited to a party being held by a stranger that one of them had met earlier that week on Tinder - which is not a great start. They turn up at this guy's house, a three-hour drive into the forest of Connecticut. This guy's house is a huge castle, ostentatious even by gothic-castle standards... They cross the drawbridge and enter the grand banqueting hall to discover that there's no party. It's a trick - they've been lured there for different reasons."

It transpires that the owner of the castle is ostensibly creating a reality TV series called 101 Princesses, in which he plays a King, hoping to invite 101 young women to his castle, providing them with extravagant gowns and tiaras.

"The whole thing is surprising. Hugh Hefner kept coming up - he was a big fan of Hugh Hefner, and he wanted his own Hugh Hefner-style harem of women in his castle. That really made me laugh - obviously in a dark way. He's trying to be Hugh Hefner at the worst moment in human history to be Hugh Hefner. It's very out of vogue.

"He talked a lot about *purpose* - his children had grown up and left home, and he had no purpose... I really empathised with that, because I think purpose is a really important thing. Thematically, the thing that I found most interesting was that so many of the old

structures and institutions are collapsing, people are becoming 'institutions of one' - content creators. Everybody is desperately chasing a new kind of purpose, and I think that's playing havoc with a lot of people's inner lives. That's the thing that I explore in the book most of all."

Jon's journalism sends him straight to the heart of extraordinary stories. It's a signature style which has proved extremely popular with audiences.

"I always jump into these things with such curiosity and enthusiasm. I think that rubs off on people; people are swept along by it. Also, those of us who do this kind of thing - those of us who do it well - it's because the stories that we find have a greater resonance. Within themselves, they're interesting, funny, jaw-dropping and bizarre, but they're always about something bigger than themselves as well, like a small door opening to a big world."

The Castle, which is subtitled *Adventures In A World Of Unravelling Men*, hits closely at Jon's own life - and not only because he was introduced to the story by his son's unsettling experience.

"Even when I'm barely in them, I always think of my books as being memoirs, or moments in my life. In my first book, *Them*, I'm 28 years old, I'm getting into scrapes, I'm a young man on an adventure... Then, cut to a few years later when *The Psychopath Test* comes out; that's a book where the topics weigh a bit more heavily on you. I've got a kid at that stage, so the world is weighing a bit more heavily on me, too - that comes out in *The Psychopath Test*. This book, the personal element of it was *really* relevant. I'd just come out of hospital - I was feeling a little purposeless, like life was passing me by, and a bit fragile, wanting to clutch onto things. That felt so thematically similar to the men that I was writing about. I thought, 'I'm going to put myself in this book more than I usually do...' This style falls down if you put yourself in the middle of a story for no good reason, but there was a very good reason for me to do it in this book."

Having made his name as a Time Out columnist, then a writer and filmmaker, Jon

has subsequently stepped into the spotlight himself, touring successful live shows which expand upon his books.

"I always try and do elaborate stage shows when I'm doing a speaking tour. Last time, for my show *Psychopath Night*, I had mystery guests. This time I'm doing something I've never done before. I hope it's going to be immersive - I'm going to be playing a lot of video and audio clips and showing a lot of photographs. The idea is to try and bring the book alive, as a live, unfolding documentary on stage.

"Some of [the footage] doesn't exist online anywhere. One of the stories I tell - it's got nothing to do with *The Castle* - is a guy whose life spiralled in the most dramatic way you can imagine - on YouTube. All of his YouTube videos are offline; they don't exist anymore, but I've got them."

With plenty of radio and podcasting credits under his belt - the third series of his BBC Radio Four podcast *Things Fell Apart* will be aired soon - Jon's success as a presenter is evident. But his skill at live performance came as something of a surprise to the man himself: "When my first book, *Them*, came out, I did my very first talk - it was at a bookshop in Muswell Hill, North London. I've got such a clear memory of it. I'm walking towards the stage, there's probably 50 to 75 people there, and I'm thinking, 'I wonder if I'm going to do this well or not?...'"

"There was nothing in my life that necessarily suggested I was going to do it well; put me in the middle of a party and I'm *awkward*. But I got up on the stage at this bookshop and I did it well - I felt a surge of confidence. It was fun, and it was so unexpected. Ever since then, the reason I do these big shows is because I *can*! For some magical reason, I do them well, and people want to come and see them."

.....

Jon Ronson brings *Enter The Castle* to Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, on Thursday 8 October

COVENTRY

THE HERBERT ART
GALLERY & MUSEUM
COVENTRY UNIVERSITY
MEAD GALLERY

02.10.26
10.01.27

A CHORUS
OF STRANGERS
**BRITISH
ART SHOW**
10



A SOUTHBANK CENTRE
HAYWARD GALLERY TOURING
EXHIBITION

**SOUTHBANK
CENTRE** **HAYWARD
GALLERY**
TOURING



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Art Fund

**Coventry
University**



Image: Nengi Omuku, *Pillars By Night*, 2026

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

thelist



Matthew Bourne's The Car Man at Birmingham Hippodrome - Tues 13 - Sat 17 October

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

What's On

Thurs 1 - Sun 11 October



Olga Koch at The Glee Club,
Birmingham

Sat 3 October

Mon 12 - Sun 18 October



Biita Houdei at Hare & Hounds,
Kings Heath

Tues 13 October

Mon 19 - Sun 25 October



Birmingham Cocktail Weekend
across city centre venues

Thurs 22 - Sun 25 October

Mon 26 - Sat 31 October



Deadly Live! at Utilita Arena
Birmingham

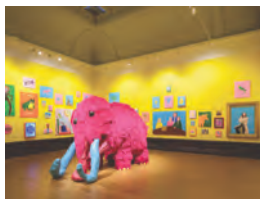
Monday 26 October

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.

EVERY THING MUST GO BY JOE LYCETT First major solo art exhibition by Birmingham 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, until Sun 21 Feb



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 1 Nov

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

RAQIB SHAW: NIGHT SONNETS The artist's first UK exhibition of new work since 2015, bringing together a cycle of nocturnal paintings and tapestry informed by Raqib's lifelong interest in moonlight and the conditions of the night, until Sun 21 Feb

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

BRITISH ART SHOW 10: A CHORUS OF STRANGERS Featuring the work of more than 30 contemporary artists - displayed in spaces around Coventry - the landmark 10th edition of British Art Show explores human connection and the figure of 'the other' during divided times, Fri 2 Oct - Sun 10 Jan

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, until Wed 2 Feb

Midlands Arts Centre, Edgbaston, B'ham

MICHAEL PINSKY: THE FINAL

BID MAC's First Floor Gallery is transformed into an interactive bidding platform, as visitors are invited to bid on second-hand chairs. Each bid alters a chair's position as it hangs from the gallery ceiling - the higher the bid, the higher the chair rises, until Sun 4 Oct

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

SURREAL SOLIHULL Exhibition honouring the legacy of Emmy Bridgwater, whose bold, uncanny visions shaped British surrealism, until Sun 22 Nov



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 Mahub Turjo and Zillah Bowes, until 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, until Sun 21 Feb

Mead Art Gallery, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

BRITISH ART SHOW 10: A CHORUS OF STRANGERS Featuring the work of more than 30 contemporary artists - displayed in spaces around Coventry - the landmark 10th edition of British Art Show explores human connection

and the figure of 'the other' during divided times, Fri 2 Oct - Sun 10 Jan

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

RBSA Gallery, Birmingham

RBSA PRIZE 2026 Collection of works shortlisted for exhibition prior to the awarding of the prize, which promotes work at the cutting edge of contemporary art, Thurs 1 - Sat 31 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

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:

MARIAN EDWARDS: MUCH IS LOST, MUCH REMAINS Brand new collection of woodcut prints, collage, drawing and photography, building on a long history of artists reimagining Winterbourne's

beautiful architecture and landscape, until Sun 4 Oct, Winterbourne House and Garden, Birmingham

VISTA: MIDLANDS LANDSCAPE PAINTING TODAY Group exhibition by 10 Midlands-based painters, until Sat 10 Oct, The Courtyard Gallery, The Core Theatre, Solihull

DISCOVERING LISEL HAAS Exhibition showcasing photographs, archive material and new artwork by contemporary artists, all of which have been inspired by the life and work of photographer Lisel Haas, whose archive is housed in the library, until Sat 12 Dec, Library of Birmingham

QUEER FUTURES Group exhibition of film, photography, sculpture and print by seven LGBTQI+ artists from Central and Eastern Europe, all of whom are now living in the UK, Fri 2 Oct - Sat 12 Dec, Centrala, Digbeth

VICKI GORMAN ART EXHIBITION Exhibition of work created by artists who attend Vicki Gorman's art classes, showcasing the different themes and mediums covered in the lessons, Wed 14 - Sat 31 Oct, The Courtyard Gallery, The Core Theatre, Solihull

SCSA AUTUMN EXHIBITION 2026 The Sutton Coldfield Society of Artists invites visitors to see what its artists were working on during the spring and summer months, Sat 31 Oct - Wed 4 Nov, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

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

LARGELY IN YOUR HANDS: MAKING AND SHAPING A UNIVERSITY Through film, art and objects, the exhibition focuses on the stories of the people behind the institution, exploring the 'worthy traditions' that have been passed on and reinvented, until Wed 21 June 2028, Aston Webb Building, University of Birmingham

Gigs

CORY HANSON Thurs 1 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

JO CARLEY & THE OLD DRY SKULLS Thurs 1 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

ANDY IRVINE WITH QUILTY Thurs 1 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Kings Heath

HANNAH WICKLUND Thurs 1 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

ARKAYLA + CHERRYHOLT Thurs 1 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Balsall Heath

KHAN + SKIN THIEF + SEVENTH SYNDICATE Thurs 1 Oct, The Asylum, Hampton St

WINTER GARDENS + OPAL MAG Thurs 1 Oct, The Victoria, John Bright Street

KARAN AUJLA Thurs 1 Oct, Utilita Arena Birmingham

ABBAMANIA Thurs 1 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

THE STEVIE AND LUTHER SHOW Thurs 1 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE ORB VS BANCO DE GAIA Fri 2 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

DECLAN WELSH & THE DECADENT WEST Fri 2 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

THE JAM'D Fri 2 Oct, Actress & Bishop, Ludgate Hill

ESORE ALLE Fri 2 Oct, The Night Owl, Digbeth

NATEWANTSTOBATTLE + CAM STEADY + GENWUNNER Fri 2 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

DODGY + THE ICICLE WORKS Fri 2 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

THE AMY WINEHOUSE EXPERIENCE Fri 2 Oct, O2 Academy

6LACK + JOHNNY VENUS Fri 2 Oct, O2 Academy

TAXI FOR JESUS Fri 2 Oct, Jo Jo Jims, Cofton Hackett

THE RETRO SET Fri 2 Oct, Tower of Song, Pershore Road

XHOSA COLE Fri 2 Oct, 1000 Trades, Jewellery Quarter



FIAT LUX + PROMENADE CINEMA + HAH HATS Fri 2 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Balsall Heath

WREX Fri 2 Oct, The Flapper, Cambrian Wharf

FOREVER CLAPTON Fri 2 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

GARY CROSBY AND DENYS BAPTISTE Fri 2 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

GO YOUR OWN WAY - THE FLEETWOOD MAC LEGACY Fri 2 Oct, Dudley Town Hall

PETE KENT Fri 2 Oct, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

EUROPE Fri 2 Oct, The Civic at The Halls W'hampton

BARRY STEELE'S ROY ORBISON STORY Fri 2 - Sat 3 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

BIG FEAR Sat 3 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Smallbrook Queensway

THE STRANGE DOORS Sat 3 Oct, The Night Owl, Digbeth

ANTARCTIC MONKEYS + LITTLE JUKE Sat 3 Oct, O2 Academy

THE DOORS ALIVE Sat 3 Oct, O2 Academy

SPACE Sat 3 Oct, O2 Academy

THE ROOTERS Sat 3 Oct, Jo Jo Jims, Cofton Hackett

ACOUSTIC WHO Sat 3 Oct, Tower of Song, Pershore Road

DEIRDRE CARTWRIGHT'S PICNIC Sat 3 Oct, 1000 Trades, Jewellery Quarter

ZION TRAIN +

TRANSGLOBAL UNDERGROUND Sat 3 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Balsall Heath

JHARIAH Sat 3 Oct, The Asylum, Ludgate Hill

RED BY NIGHT Sat 3 Oct, The Asylum, Ludgate Hill

HORROR PUNK FESTIVAL Sat 3 Oct, The Flapper, Cambrian Wharf

FRANKIE ARCHER Sat 3 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Canon Hill Park, Edgbaston

THE GARAGE BAND Sat 3 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

THE CALIFORNIA DREAMING SHOW Sat 3 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE FATHER TEDS Sat 3 Oct, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

LET ME ENTERTAIN YOU - ROBBIE WILLIAMS TRIBUTE Sat 3 Oct, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

BRIDGE 55 Sat 3 Oct, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

REELIN' IN THE DAN - THE MUSIC OF STEELY DAN Sun 4 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

TIRED + HEY ALAMO + DEAD ELVIS Sun 4 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

CHRISTIE REEVES Sun 4 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Kings Heath

THE HEELS Sun 4 Oct, Actress & Bishop, Ludgate Hill

OTIS KANE Sun 4 Oct, O2 Academy

THE GARRY ALLCOCK TRIO Sun 4 Oct, Tower of Song, Pershore Road

TEST DEPT + BRUISE BLOOD Sun 4 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Balsall Heath

EMILIE CULSHAW Sun 4 Oct, The Rainbow, Digbeth

FANFARE CIOCARLIA Sun 4 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

Classical

LICHFIELD FESTIVAL: CHAMBER MUSIC WEEKEND
Eight concerts over the long weekend, featuring music for piano, string quartet, piano trio, trumpet, guitar, accordion, voice & viol, Thurs 1 - Sun 4 Oct, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

SWAN SESSIONS: O ALBION
Featuring Orchestra of the Swan & Mark Ashford (guitar). Programme includes works by Holst, Britten, Elgar & more..., Thurs 1 Oct, St Nicholas Church, Warwick

CIARA THOMPSON PIANO RECITAL Fri 2 Oct, The Alexandra, Birmingham

MARK PADMORE (TENOR) & JONATHAN BISS (PIANO)
Programme includes works by Schubert & R Schumann, Fri 2 Oct, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

IDRISI ENSEMBLE
Programme includes a selection of medieval trios and quartets, Fri 2 Oct, St Paul's Church, B'ham

MIDLAND SINFONIA: MUSICAL FAMILIES
Programme includes works by Suk, R Schumann, C Schumann & more..., Sat 3 Oct, St Laurence Church, Alvechurch

LIVE AT THE CBSO CENTRE: STEVE REICH AT 90
Featuring Toby Kearney (director). Programme includes works by Eastman, Reich & Takada, Sat 3 Oct, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

LAST NIGHT OF THE PROMS
Featuring Roderick Williams OBE (baritone). Programme includes works by Parry, Handel, Stanford & more..., Sat 3 Oct, St Mary's Church, Warwick

BPO: JACK LOVELL-HUCKLE'S INAUGURAL CONCERT
Featuring the Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra & Rozalia Barbara Bryla (violin). Programme includes works by Wagner, Mendelssohn & Elgar, Sun 4 Oct, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

Comedy

BARRY FROM WATFORD & CLINTON BAPTISTE Thurs 1 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, STUART MCPHERSON & SPENCER JONES Thurs 1 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

PROJECT MAYHEM Thurs 1 Oct, Scruffy Murphy's, Birmingham

AMY MATTHEWS Thurs 1 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

LAURA SMYTH Fri 2 Oct, Symphony Hall, B'ham

JASON BYRNE Fri 2 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

BIRMINGHAM COMEDY FESTIVAL BREAKING TALENT AWARD Fri 2 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SISTER CONSTANTINE: SHAME! Fri 2 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

SINDHU VEE Fri 2 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

LOUISE ATKINSON, JOE SUTHERLAND, STUART MCPHERSON & SPENCER JONES Fri 2 - Sat 3 Oct, The Glee Club, B'ham

DARIUS DAVIES, FAB GOUALIN, RUSSELL ARATHOON & FAIZAN SHAH Sat 3 Oct, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham

ELAINE ROBERTSON Sat 3 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

OLGA KOCH Sat 3 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham



NEIL DELAMERE Sat 3 Oct, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

RAHUL BATRA Sat 3 Oct, 1000 Trades, Birmingham

PHIL KIMBERLEY Sat 3 Oct, The Wellington, B'ham

HASAN AL-HABIB Sat 3 Oct, The Victoria, Birmingham

RACHEL BAKER Sat 3 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

LOVDEV BARPAGA Sat 3 Oct, 1000 Trades, B'ham

DANNY STRACHAN Sat 3

Oct, The Wellington, Birmingham

2 MUSLIM 2 FURIOUS 3: SHARIA? I HARDLY KNOW HER! Sat 3 Oct, The Victoria, Birmingham

ENRICO TOUCHÉ Sat 3 Oct, The Victoria, Birmingham

CHLOE REYNOLDS Sat 3 Oct, 1000 Trades, Birmingham

CAITRIONA DOWDEN Sat 3 Oct, Cherry Reds, B'ham

SHAM ZAMAN Sat 3 Oct, The Wellington, B'ham

NATE KITCH Sat 3 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham



JULES O'BRIAN Sat 3 Oct, Craft & Culture, B'ham

ZAIN IQBAL Sat 3 Oct, The Wellington, Birmingham

GIFTED & TALENTED: THE MADELEINE JIMP EXPERIENCE Sat 3 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

SUSIE GRUMBALL AND JAMES JARVIS Sat 3 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

ROUGH WORKS: NEW MATERIAL NIGHT Sun 4 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

DESI CENTRAL COMEDY SHOW Sun 4 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM COMEDY FESTIVAL FREE HALF-DAYER FT JAMES COOK, ROB KEMP, ANDY BUCKS & TAL DAVIES Sun 4 Oct, The Victoria, Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM COMEDY FESTIVAL FREE HALF-DAYER FT TIM BIGLOWE, DANNY CLIVES, SALLYANN FELLOWES & JACKIE AND NAPH Sun 4 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

ARCTIC NUMPTIES: THE FOUR HORSEMEN OF MEH Sun 4 Oct, Rose Villa Taverns, Birmingham

GARETH WILLIAMS Sun 4 Oct, Spoilers, B'ham

LOW EFFORT SKETCHES: WE HAVE A PROBLEM Sun 4 Oct, The Victoria, B'ham

HAPPY MONDAYS AT THE Highbury Inn Sun 4 Oct, The Highbury Inn, B'ham

Theatre

WE WILL ROCK YOU Bilston Operatic present an amateur version of the Ben Elton musical, set to Queen's greatest hits, until 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, until Sat 3 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

AS YOU LIKE IT Jonathan Groff makes his RSC debut as Rosalind in an all-male version of Shakespeare's comedy, until Sat 7 Nov, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon



FIRST ENCOUNTERS: JULIUS CAESAR Harriet Walter reprises her role as Brutus in Phyllida Lloyd's groundbreaking Donmar Warehouse production, until Fri 23 Oct, The Other Place, Stratford-upon-Avon

THE VOID Sci-fi horror combining 'powerful illusions, atmospheric projections and a creeping sense of dread', Thurs 1 Oct, The Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

MIDDLEMARCH PART 1 New stage adaptation of George Eliot's 'study of provincial life' in a fictional 19th-century Midlands town on the verge of change. The play is presented in two parts, with part two showing from 10 October, Thurs 1 Oct - Sat 16 Jan, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

BRIGHT PLACES Rae Mainwaring's three-women, one-woman show about multiple sclerosis, Fri 2 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

THE (ALMOST) COMPLETE HISTORY OF BRITAIN The Pantaloons Theatre Company present an innovative show telling the entire story of Britain in under two hours, Fri 2 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

PUNK DAYS Dervish Productions present the true story of a mixed race, working-class kid, growing up in 1970s London, who finds hope and liberation in the power of punk and the fight against fascism, Fri 2 - Sat 3 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

AY KASH / IF ONLY Thought-provoking show in which 11 young women in Afghanistan bravely share their stories of life under Taliban rule, Sat 3

Oct, The Albany Theatre, Coventry
A PANDEMONIUM OF POE Full-blooded gothic melodrama brought to life by Jonathan Goodwin, Sun 4 Oct, Fairfield Village Hall, Bromsgrove

Kids Theatre

THE ANIMAL GUYZ Show celebrating all creatures great and small, packed with music, comedy and animal effects, Sat 3 Oct, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

Dance

LORD OF THE DANCE: 30TH ANNIVERSARY UK tour of Michael Flatley's global phenomenon, until Sun 4 Oct, The Alexandra, B'ham

Light Entertainment

PAULUS THE CABARET GEEK: WHAT WOULD VICTORIA WOOD DO? Featuring a fresh batch of tunes from the Victoria Wood songbook, Thurs 1 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

BRIAN BILSTON: HOW TO LAY AN EGG WITH A HORSE INSIDE An evening of comedy sees the acclaimed poet taking audiences through the hows, whys and whats of reading, writing and enjoying poetry every day, Thurs 1 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

THE MUSIC OF LUTHER VANDROSS BY CANDLELIGHT Thurs 1 Oct, Lichfield Cathedral

ROCKET FAN One-woman Elton John singalong romcom, presented by musical comedy star Alice Keys, Fri 2 Oct, Old Joint Stock Theatre, B'ham

ATTENTION ALL SHIPPING: A CELEBRATION OF THE SHIPPING FORECAST Charlie Connelly's informative show, bringing the 'quirky' broadcast vividly to life, Fri 2 Oct, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

JAY RAYNER: NIGHTS OUT OF THE KITCHEN Join the raconteur and 'occasional pastry-wrangler' for a couple of hours of intense foodie insight and dinner ideas, Sat 3 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

THE POCKET CHORAL SOCIETY New a cappella touring show 'combining close harmony singing, quirky songwriting and laughter', Sat 3 Oct, Fairfield Village Hall, Bromsgrove



Home Of Industry - Black Country Living Museum

PAULUS THE CABARET GEEK: WHAT WOULD VICTORIA WOOD DO? Featuring a fresh batch of tunes from the Victoria Wood songbook, Sat 3 Oct, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, B'ham

Talks & Spoken Word

AN EVENING WITH ASTON VILLA LEGENDS Featuring John Gregory, Ian Taylor and Lee Hendrie, Thurs 1 Oct, Stourbridge Town Hall

TRACY BORMAN: THE TUDORS ON TOUR The acclaimed historian hosts a show packed with drama, scandal and stories, using visuals, props and film, Sat 3 Oct, Stourbridge Town Hall

TRACY BORMAN: THE TUDORS ON TOUR The acclaimed historian hosts a show packed with drama, scandal and stories, using visuals, props and film, Sun 4 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

Events

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

AUTUMN DIESEL BASH A four-day diesel festival featuring locomotives operating a busy timetable between Kidderminster and Bridgnorth, Thurs 1 - Sun 4 Oct, Severn Valley Railway, nr Kidderminster

OKTOBERFEST Featuring plenty of beer, independent food trader specials and live performances from the Bavarian Trumps, Fri 2 Oct, Society Birmingham

CINEMA UNDER THE STARS Step into the Thinktank Planetarium to enjoy a cinema-style screening, Fri 2 Oct, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

GRAND DESIGNS LIVE Event bringing together the latest innovations in

home designing, self-building, renovation, interiors and garden design, Fri 2 - Sun 4 Oct, NEC, Birmingham

TATTY TOURS OF EVERY THING MUST GO WITH TAT VISION A special tour of Joe Lycett's first solo exhibition. Featuring local artist Tat Vision, Sat 3 Oct, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

DAYTIME PARTY - SILENT DISCO FOR GROWN UPS An afternoon of silent disco dancing to four decades of hits, Sat 3 Oct, Birmingham Council House

ONE WALK BIRMINGHAM A family-friendly 5K fundraising walk for Breakthrough T1D, Sat 3 Oct, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham

MATCHROOM BOXING - WHITTAKER VS WALLACE Two of Britain's top light heavyweights go head-to-head on a huge night of boxing, Sat 3 Oct, Utilita Arena Birmingham

ARTISAN MARKET - AUTUMN EDITION Discover unique handmade treasures from independent makers and enjoy tasty street food, Sat 3 Oct, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

HOME OF INDUSTRY Steam, sparks and the stories of the Black Country come to life at Black Country Living Museum as it celebrates the region's rich industrial heritage, Sat 3 - Sun 4 Oct, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

GHOST, GORE & FOLKLORE TOURS Discover how gory and ghostly effects are achieved for the Royal Shakespeare Company's theatrical productions, Sun 4 Oct, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

ARTS MARKET Event showcasing work by designers, makers and artists from across Birmingham and beyond, Sun 4 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

COLOUR BOX: THE RED TURTLE Drop-in workshop followed by a film screening, Sun 4 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham



Justin Hayward - Birmingham Town Hall

Gigs

LOTUSBLISS Mon 5 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

JUSTIN HAYWARD Mon 5 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

ELANOR MOSS Tues 6 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

MAN/WOMAN/CHAINS + **BATHING SUITS** Tues 6 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

CHRIS WHILE AND JULIE MATTHEWS Tues 6 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Kings Heath

GALLUS Tues 6 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Smallbrook Queensway

DIGBETH JAZZ Tues 6 Oct, The Night Owl, Digbeth

PARTY101 Tues 6 Oct, O2 Academy

NAILS + ROTTEN SOUND + INVUNCHE Tues 6 Oct, The Asylum, Hampton Street

JAZZ SABBATH Tues 6 Oct, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

LES AMAZONES D'AFRIQUE + GASPER NALI + N'FAMADY KOUYATÉ Tues 6 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

COLTRANE 100: ALEX ASTBURY SEXTET Wed 7 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

IBIBIO SOUND MACHINE + ZIYAD AL-SAMMAN Wed 7 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

STOLEN FROM GOD: REG MEUROSS Wed 7 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Kings Heath

PIXIE MCCANN Wed 7 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Smallbrook Queensway

WE ARE SCIENTISTS Wed 7 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

DON BROCO + UNPEOPLE + ANDO SAN Wed 7 Oct, O2 Academy

A CERTAIN RATIO Wed 7 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Balsall Heath

BAEST Wed 7 Oct, The Flapper, Cambrian Wharf

JOE & THE SHITBOYS Wed 7 Oct, The Victoria, John Bright Street

SEB STONE Wed 7 Oct, Red Lion Folk Club

SAUCE CITY JAZZ BAND Wed 7 Oct, Boldmere Sports and Social Club, Sutton Coldfield

WISHBONE ASH Wed 7 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

EMMA HARNER Thurs 8 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

OSLO TWINS Thurs 8 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

HANNAH SCOTT Thurs 8 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Kings Heath

SAM TOMPKINS Thurs 8 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

THE HU + SKÁLD Thurs 8 Oct, O2 Academy

KATE GEE Thurs 8 Oct, Tower of Song, Pershore Road

TABA CHAKE Thurs 8 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Balsall Heath

WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS NOW: THE BURT BACHARACH SONGBOOK Thurs 8 Oct, Symphony Hall, Centenary Square

AFRICAN SOUL REBELS Thurs 8 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

BIRMINGHAM JAZZ ORCHESTRA Thurs 8 Oct, Royal Birmingham

Conservatoire

DILL PICKLE + RUMOUR + CROSSFIRE + MANTIS Thurs 8 Oct, The Rainbow, Digbeth

SILVINGTON Thurs 8 Oct, Catshill Club, Bromsgrove

THE SEARCHERS & HOLLIES EXPERIENCE Thurs 8 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

HEAVEN 17 Thurs 8 Oct, The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

LDYLIKE Fri 9 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Smallbrook Queensway

DAVID STEVENSON Fri 9 Oct, Actress & Bishop, Ludgate Hill

BEN ELLIS Fri 9 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

MIDNIGHT TIL MORNING + RYAN MACK Fri 9 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

ARIES SPEARS Fri 9 Oct, O2 Academy

THE LAST PIONEERS Fri 9 Oct, O2 Academy

JARED BENJAMIN Fri 9 Oct, O2 Academy

THE STARVING RASCALS Fri 9 Oct, Jo Jo Jims, Cofton Hackett

THE MELVIN HANCOX BAND Fri 9 Oct, Tower of Song, Pershore Road

IVO NEAME Fri 9 Oct, 1000 Trades, Jewellery Quarter

DAVID AUSTIN - GREY Fri 9 Oct, 1000 Trades, Jewellery Quarter

BRIDGE CITY SINNERS Fri 9 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Balsall Heath

GARAGE FLOWER Fri 9 Oct, Dead Wax, Digbeth

HUMANITYS LAST BREATH Fri 9 Oct, The Asylum, Hampton St

MC DEVVO Fri 9 Oct, The Flapper, Cambrian Wharf

THE CHRIS STAPLETON EXPERIENCE Fri 9 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

FRONT ROW Fri 9 Oct, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

BEN PORTSMOUTH - THIS IS ELVIS Fri 9 Oct, Dudley Town Hall

DESPERADO Fri 9 Oct, Stourbridge Town Hall

SIMPLY RED TRIBUTE EXPERIENCE Sat 10 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

IAN PROWSE Sat 10 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

THE JAM'D Sat 10 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

OLIVER PINDER Sat 10 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Smallbrook Queensway

DAMIAN LEWIS Sat 10 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

THE LEMONHEADS Sat 10 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

ULTIMATE RNB EXPERIENCE Sat 10 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

THE CLONE ROSES + DEFINITELY MIGHTBE + THE JAMES EXPERIENCE Sat 10 Oct, O2 Academy

ULTIMATE OZZY UK Sat 10 Oct, O2 Academy

ROXY MAGIC Sat 10 Oct, Jo Jo Jims, Cofton Hackett

FLY RINK Sat 10 Oct, Tower of Song, Pershore Road

GOOD FRIEND RIK Sat 10 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Balsall Heath

CASHTASTIC VS CASH Sat 10 Oct, Dead Wax, Digbeth

CABARET VOLTAIRE + GAZELLE TWIN Sat 10 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

THE CLOCKWORKS Sat 10 Oct, Mama Roux's, Digbeth

PAAHTO & THE BULL + JOHN FRANCIS FLYNN Sun 11 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

SO FAR SO GOOD + PAIN PROGRAM + VICTIMS OF LIFE + RATED Sun 11 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Smallbrook Queensway

MIDNIGHT CITY SOUL Sun 11 Oct, Actress & Bishop, Ludgate Hill

SKATING POLLY + LORD FRIDAY THE 13TH Sun 11 Oct, The Dark Horse, Moseley

PJ MORTON Sun 11 Oct, O2 Academy

DAMIAN SKORA Sun 11 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Balsall Heath

LEO SAYER Sun 11 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

FAIRPORT CONVENTION Sun 11 Oct, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

AMON AMARTH Sun 11 Oct, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

CHET: THE TOBY BRAZIER QUARTET Sun 11 Oct, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

Classical Music

LUNCHTIME STRINGS RECITAL Featuring Lichen Cai, Zinnia Smart & Kalu Ramirez (violin), Mark Braithwaite & Sian Cobb (viola), Tyler Wood & Aidan Hopkins (cello). Programme includes works by Beethoven & Mendelssohn, Mon 5 Oct, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

JOANNA SACHRYN CELLO RECITAL Also featuring Charles Matthews (piano). Programme includes works by Boulanger, Hindemith, Beethoven & more..., Tues 6 Oct, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

CIARA THOMPSON PIANO RECITAL Fri 9 Oct, St Hilda's Parish Church, Smethwick

AVATAR THE LAST AIRBENDER IN CONCERT: THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR Live orchestral performance taking audiences on a two-hour visual journey through fan-favourite moments from the animated series, Sat 10 Oct, Symphony Hall, B'ham

ECHO RISING STARS: CAMILA MANDILLO (SOPRANO) Also featuring João Casimiro Almeida on piano. Programme includes works by Monteverdi, Rossini, Berio & more..., Sun 11 Oct, Jennifer Blackwell Performance Space, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

EROICA ORCHESTRA: UNFINISHED BUSINESS Featuring Peter Marks (conductor), Claire Burnell, Claire Poole, Helen Rudeforth, Sarah Gee (horns). Programme includes works by Schubert, R Schumann & Brahms, Sat 11 Oct, St Nicolas Church, Kings Norton

Comedy

MILO EDWARDS Tues 6 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham



EDEN VOSS Tues 6 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

THE GLITTER SISTERS COMEDY AND MUSIC SHOW Tues 6 Oct, The Spotted Dog, Birmingham

LOU CHAWNER Tues 6 Oct, The Spotted Dog, Birmingham

KIELL SMITH Wed 7 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

SERENA TERRY Wed 7 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

STEVIE MARTIN Wed 7 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

DARREN HARRIOTT, TOM TAYLOR, MATT KIRSHEN & FREDDY QUINN Wed 7 Oct, Herberts Yard, Birmingham

ERIC RUSHTON Wed 7 Oct, One Colmore Square, Birmingham

CHICKIE, GARETH WILLIAMS, DYNAMO DAN, GRACE MILLER, VICTORIA FROST & SABBI BENTLEY Wed 7 Oct, The Old Joint Stock, Birmingham

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, IAN SMITH & BLANK PENG Thurs 8 Oct, The Glee Club, B'ham

SHAZIA MIRZA Thurs 8 Oct, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery



LINDSEY SANTORO, RYAN S LEWIS, HANNAH WEETMAN & COMICS TBC Thurs 8 Oct, Attic Brew Co, B'ham

MATT RICHARDSON & HARRY JENKINS Thurs 8 Oct, Stir Brum, Birmingham

STEPHEN CATLING Thurs 8 Oct, Stir Brum, Birmingham

LUCY BEAUMONT Thurs 8 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

THE LATE NIGHT SWEET SHOP Thurs 8 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

ELOISE DALE, JEANIE VOWLES, CHRISTINA G, MOLLY KINSEY & ANDY BOVEY Thurs 8 Oct, 1000 Trades, Birmingham

HASAN AL-HABIB Thurs 8 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

STEWART LEE VS THE MAN-WULF Thurs 8 - Sat 10 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

DANIEL SLOSS Fri 9 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham



SHREEJA CHATURVEDI Fri 9 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

RAY BRADSHAW, JAVIER JARQUIN, IAN SMITH, BLANK PENG & JAMES BARR Fri 9 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ARIES SPEARS Fri 9 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

WANTED IMMIGRANTS Fri 9 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

NIK COPPIN Fri 9 Oct, Craft & Culture, Birmingham

DHARMANDER SINGH Fri 9 Oct, Craft & Culture, Birmingham

KANE BROWN Fri 9 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

MAISE ADAM Fri 9 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

REGINALD D HUNTER, ALFIE DUNDAS, AARON SIMMONDS & KAREN BAYLEY Sat 10 Oct, Rosies Nightclub, B'ham

RAY BRADSHAW, JAVIER JARQUIN, IAN SMITH & BLANK PENG Sat 10 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

DAVE DURKAN Sat 10 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

PAUL FOOT Sat 10 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

HANNAH WEETMAN Sat 10 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

EMMA DAVIES Sat 10 Oct, 1000 Trades, Birmingham

ERIC RUSHTON Sat 10 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

JACK HARRIS & JIM MCAULIFFE Sat 10 Oct, 1000 Trades, Birmingham

SUTTI SYNNOTT AND MARY MOHAN Sat 10 Oct, The Good Intent, Birmingham

RICHARD DADD Sat 10 Oct, The Good Intent, Birmingham

AISHA AMANDURI Sat 10 Oct, The Victoria, Birmingham



BEN COLEMAN Sat 10 Oct, The Victoria, Birmingham

DAVE FLYNN Sat 10 Oct, 1000 Trades, Birmingham

JIM JUDGES Sat 10 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

MAT TAYLOR'S HISTORY OF HORROR FILMS Sat 10 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

CALEB JAMES Sat 10 Oct, 1000 Trades, Birmingham

IT'S YOUR ROLE: THE INTERACTIVE D&D ADVENTURE Sat 10 Oct, The Old Joint Stock, Birmingham

MARY FLANIGAN Sat 10 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

KATIE SLATER AND RACHEL PAGE Sat 10 Oct, 1000 Trades, Birmingham

DAMON CONLAN Sat 10 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

LUNCHTIME FAMILY COMEDY SHOW Sun 11 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

COBO: COMEDY SHUTDOWN | BLACK HISTORY MONTH SPECIAL Sun 11 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

CELYA AB Sun 11 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JAMIE DOUGLAS Sun 11 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

TOM TOWELLING TEACHES YOU TO KNIT

Sun 11 Oct, Cherry Reds, B'ham

NINA SEMPLE Sun 11 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham



SUNDAY EXPRESS TAKEOVER Sun 11 Oct, The Spotted Dog, Birmingham

HEATHER FOX Sun 11 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

CRAIG DEELEY Sun 11 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

ART OF COMEDY STAND-UP SHOWCASE Sun 11 Oct, Craft & Culture, B'ham

STEPHEN & PHALANGE'S GUIDE TO BIRDING Sun 11 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

Theatre

A BRIEF CASE OF CRAZY Physical comedy inspired by the genius of Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton. Told via choreography, mime, clowning and puppetry, Tues 6 Oct, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

DEAR EVAN HANSEN Creators Theatre Company 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, Tues 6 - Sat 10 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

SYLVIA Beverley Knight and Naomi Katiyo star in a hip-hop, funk and soul musical that tells the untold story of the rebellious middle child of Emmeline Pankhurst, Tues 6 - Sat 10 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome

BURLESQUE THE MUSICAL Faye Brookes and Ryan Carter star, with songs by Christina Aguilera, Sia, and Diane Warren, Tues 6 - Sat 17 Oct, The Alexandra, Birmingham

SHITFACED SHAKESPEARE - ROMEO & JULIET Unconventional, no-holds-barred version of Shakespeare's famous play, featuring a 'rat-arsed Romeo, a juiced-up Juliet, a trolied Tybalt and a mashed-up Mercutio', not to mention 'enough booze to sterilise a brewery floor', Wed 7 Oct, Lichfield Garrick



BLAZE FM Political theatre featuring

grime, garage, drill and jungle tracks, Wed 7 & Thurs 8 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

WINDRUSH SECRET / BLACK DANCER V HITLER Double-bill of works, Fri 9 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

LIGHTSTREAMS: A NEW PLAY ABOUT MIGRANT CARERS Passionate play about a family and their choices during a global crisis. Inspired by real-life testimonies, Fri 9 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham



SHAKESPEARE'S FIRST DRAFTS - HENRY V Based on an imaginary first draft, this is the play before it was famous. Presented as part of Birmingham Comedy Festival, Sat 10 Oct, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

MIDDLEMARCH PART 2 New stage adaptation of George Eliot's 'study of provincial life' in a fictional 19th-century Midlands town on the verge of change. The play is presented in two parts, with part one already showing, Sat 10 Oct - Sat 16 Jan, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

STEWART LEE: PEA GREEN BOAT Stewart Lee performs a darkly comic tale based on Edward Lear's The Owl & The Pussy-cat, Sun 11 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

Kids Theatre

DINOSAURS LIVE! Fun and education combine in this family-friendly show, during which audiences are taken on a prehistoric journey that sees dinosaurs 'come to life', Sun 11 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

MAKEBETH (CARDBOARD ADVENTURES) A brand-new, interactive, craft-a-long retelling of Shakespeare's Macbeth, suitable for children aged seven-plus, Sun 11 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

Dance

THE BROWN SUITE Funk-fuelled production, set in 1970s New York, in which a cast of seven untamable characters collide - from playful flirtation and intoxicating romance to heartbreak, conflict and redemption, Mon 5 - Wed 7 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

BALLET THEATRE UK: THE SNOW QUEEN Choreographed retelling of Hans Christian Andersen's classic fairytale, Tues 6 Oct, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

BALLET BLACK AT 25 Landmark

double-bill of works featuring Mthuzeli November's *Ingoma* (2019) and the choreographic debut of Hope Boykin, created to celebrate the company's 25th year, Wed 7 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

ENGLISH YOUTH BALLET: SWAN LAKE Set to Tchaikovsky's exquisite score and featuring international principal dancers and a cast of 100 local young performers, Fri 9 - Sat 10 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

ASCENSION DANCE: AMARIS & RAE Family-friendly dance-theatre adventure celebrating imagination, bravery and the beauty of the unknown, Sun 11 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

Light Entertainment

CULT FIGURE: KENNETH WILLIAMS Colin Elmer tells Kenneth Williams' story in his own words, using anecdotes, writings and some of the material for which the comedy legend was best known, Wed 7 Oct, The Old Rep, Birmingham

THE MATRILAUGHY: GIGGLES FOR THE GIRLS, GAYS, AND THEYS 'A fun, feminist, queer night of stand-up comedy', featuring a women-focused line-up, Wed 7 Oct, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

DREAMCOAT STARS Star-studded musical concert featuring brand-new songs and arrangements, Thurs 8 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

THE MYSTERY OF LICHFIELD GARRICK Award-winning board-game-style theatre show, during which the audience is needed to solve a murder-mystery, Sat 10 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

CARRIE HOPE FLETCHER: THE GHOST LIGHT TOUR The musical theatre star performs songs from her expansive repertoire alongside brand-new renditions, Sat 10 Oct, Coventry Cathedral

Talks & Spoken Word

TRACY BORMAN: THE TUDORS ON TOUR The acclaimed historian hosts a show packed with drama, scandal and stories, using visuals, props and film, Mon 5 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

JEREMY BOWEN: TRUTH UNDER FIRE An evening with the BBC's international editor, including an audience Q&A in the second half, Mon 5 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

TIM PEAKE'S ASTRONAUTS: THE QUEST TO EXPLORE SPACE TOUR Hear about Tim's personal journey via storytelling and archive footage, and learn about

the awe-inspiring endeavours of astronauts across the ages, Tues 6 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

AN EVENING WITH DANNY MCNAMARA FROM EMBRACE A must-attend event for fans of one of Britain's 'best-loved bands'. Meet & greet also available, Thurs 8 Oct, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

ENTER THE CASTLE WITH JON RONSON Brand-new show in which Jon brings to life stories from his darkly comic book, Thurs 8 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

CAN YOU CATCH A SERIAL KILLER? Step inside real-life cases via dramatised crime-scene mock-ups, criminal profiling, investigative techniques, forensic evidence and simulated autopsies. Hosted by serial-killer expert Cheish Merryweather, Fri 9 Oct, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

TRACY BORMAN: THE TUDORS ON TOUR The acclaimed historian hosts a show packed with drama, scandal and stories, using visuals, props and film, Fri 9 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

A LEGACY FORGED - AUTHOR'S TALK AND Q&A WITH SARA FOX Join the author for an insight into blending real family history with rich, imaginative storytelling, Fri 9 Oct, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

MY ROYAL LIFE: AN AUDIENCE WITH LUCY WORSLEY Join the historian & bestselling author as she reveals the secrets, stories and splendours of Britain's royal past, Sun 11 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

Events

CELEBRATE SANDWELL Bringing communities together for a day of workshops and entertainment, Tues 6 Oct, West Bromwich Town Hall

GLOBAL MAKERS MARKET Showcasing artists, makers and creative entrepreneurs from Coventry & Warwickshire's diverse international communities, Tues 6 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

BIRMINGHAM LITERATURE FESTIVAL 2026 Thurs 8 - Mon 12 Oct, various locations (including The Rep) Birmingham

ART HISTORY FESTIVAL STORES TOUR Explore items from the collection with the Collections Officer in this behind-the-scenes tour, Fri 9 Oct, Wolverhampton Art Gallery

SCAREFEST Immerse yourself in a fright-filled world of spine-tingling Halloween entertainment, Fri 9 - Sun 11 Oct, Alton Towers Resort, Staffs

DELETED BOY - THE 21 PIRATES Three-day audio-visual experience inspired by the Nintendo Game Boy, Fri 9 - Sun 11 Oct, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery



Burlesque The Musical - The Alexandra

BUILD A GAME CONTROLLER WITH THE 21 PIRATES Turn everyday objects into touch-sensitive computer keys, Sat 10 Oct, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

SATURDAY EXPLORE THE MUSEUM COLLECTION CENTRE Explore the Museum Collection Centre, a 1.5-hectare site that holds 80% of Birmingham Museums' stored collections, Sat 10 Oct, Museum Collection Centre, Birmingham

ART, CULTURE & HERITAGE WITH KULCHALEE ARTS Join multidisciplinary artist Kulchalee for a family-friendly and interactive visual art workshop celebrating Black history and African and Caribbean culture and heritage, Sat 10 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

BENJAMIN ZEPHANIAH DAY: A FESTIVAL OF RHYTHM, UNITY AND REVOLUTION Featuring local poets Casey Bailey and Zakariye, and welcoming new voices to the stage through a 'vibrant' open-mic session, Sat 10 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

COCO'S ART HISTORY COMEDY GALLERY TOUR Join award-winning Coco the Time-Travelling Tart for a deliciously mischievous romp through Birmingham's collection, Sat 10 Oct, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery



FUNGI FORAY AT THE JEWELLERY QUARTER Celebrate UK Fungus Day with a guided fungi walk through Birmingham's historic cemeteries,

Sat 10 Oct, Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

WORLD SUPERCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP BRITISH GP An evening of supercross racing action, Sat 10 Oct, Alexander Stadium, Birmingham

HARVEST HOEDOWN Brand new event featuring live music, delicious food, artisan crafts, harvest celebrations and a touch of Americana, Sat 10 - Sun 11 Oct, Weston Park, Shropshire

BLAZING HALLOWEEN Fun family event packed with spooky surprises, Sat 10 - Sun 11 Oct, Drayton Manor Resort, Tamworth

MINIATURA AUTUMN Featuring thousands of handcrafted miniature marvels, Sat 10 - Sun 11 Oct, NAEC Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

MONSTER MASHUP Featuring a mix of 'thrilling adventures, spooky shows, and monstrously good fun for the whole family', Sat 10 Oct - Sun 11 Nov, West Midlands Safari Park, Bewdley, Worcestershire

YOGA IN EVERY THING MUST GO WITH THE MANOJ COLLECTIVE Enjoy an exclusive yoga session surrounded by artwork produced by comedian Joe Lycett, Sun 11 Oct, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

POETRY ON DEMAND WITH BRADLEY TAYLOR Bradley will be crafting bespoke, one-of-a-kind poems for visitors, Sun 11 Oct, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

ART OF COMEDY STAND-UP SHOWCASE WITH NIK COPPIN Event showcasing a fresh crop of budding comedians, Sun 11 Oct, Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

GHOST, GORE & FOLKLORE TOURS Discover how gory and ghostly effects are achieved for the Royal Shakespeare Company's theatrical productions, Sun 11 Oct, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon



Biita Houdei - Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

Gigs

THEATRE Mon 12 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

SPARTA + HAMMOK Mon 12 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Balsall Heath

KATHERINE JENKINS Mon 12 Oct, Symphony Hall, Centenary Square

BIITA HOUDEI Tues 13 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

DEEP FOREST Tues 13 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

LEMONCELLO Tues 13 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Kings Heath

SARAH YEO Tues 13 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Kings Heath

DIGBETH JAZZ Tues 13 Oct, The Night Owl, Digbeth

ARRDEE Tues 13 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

JUDE YORK Tues 13 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

CHRIS WILLIAMSON Tues 13 Oct, O2 Academy

KHEMMIS Tues 13 Oct, The Flapper, Digbeth

HUBRIS. + SOLARS Tues 13 Oct, The Rainbow, Digbeth

THE KING OF POP STARRING NAVI Tues 13 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

MT JONES Wed 14 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

TWENTY ONE CHILDREN Wed 14 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

AN AUDIENCE WITHOUT JAKE THACKRAY Wed 14 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Kings Heath

JAMIE MCINTYRE Wed 14

Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Smallbrook Queensway

MATILDA MANN Wed 14 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

CASPER WALSH Wed 14 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

THE SKINTS + CARSIK Wed 14 Oct, The Asylum, Hampton Street

GUILT TRIP Wed 14 Oct, XOYO, Digbeth

FLOOR SPOTS NIGHT Wed 14 Oct, Red Lion Folk Club

STEVE HACKETT Wed 14 Oct, Symphony Hall, Centenary Square

YNDLING Wed 14 Oct, The Rainbow, Digbeth

SAN JANTACITA Wed 14 Oct, Boldmere Sports and Social Club, Sutton Coldfield

THE BOOTLEG BEATLES Wed 14 Oct, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

QUIET HOUSES Thurs 15 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

BROTHER STRUT Thurs 15 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

PANICBABY Thurs 15 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

SHED SEVEN Thurs 15 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

THE HOOSIERS + HUNNY BUZZ Thurs 15 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

LSD AND THE SEARCH FOR GOD Thurs 15 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Balsall Heath

KEEP FLYING + BEACH FRONT + HOMECOMING Thurs 15 Oct, Centrala, Digbeth

SHAMELESS Thurs 15 Oct, Subside Bar, Digbeth

AVICIDE + AZALEAS +

BORN HOSTILE Thurs 15 Oct, The Victoria, John Bright Street

NASHVILLE SOUNDS IN THE ROUND Thurs 15 Oct, Symphony Hall, Centenary Square

PAUL DUNMALL QUARTET Thurs 15 Oct, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

MUSIC OF PETER GREEN Thurs 15 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

TALON Thurs 15 - Fri 16 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

MAD DOG MCREA Fri 16 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

SAINT CLAIR Fri 16 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Smallbrook Queensway

SEAN REEVES Fri 16 Oct, Actress & Bishop, Ludgate Hill

RED RUM CLUB + KEYSIDE + CHERRYHOLT Fri 16 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

BEN QUAD + RILEY! Fri 16 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

DC/UK Fri 16 Oct, O2 Academy

WARREN ZEIDERS Fri 16 Oct, O2 Academy

THE CONSORTIUM Fri 16 Oct, Jo Jo Jims, Cofton Hackett

CERI JUSTICE & THE JURY Fri 16 Oct, Tower of Song, Pershore Road

KATE WILLIAMS Fri 16 Oct, 1000 Trades, Jewellery Quarter

LAID Fri 16 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Balsall Heath

STEP OUT Fri 16 Oct, Dead Wax, Digbeth

DARLAH Fri 16 Oct, The Flapper, Cambrian Wharf

HUE & CRY + ROACHFORD Fri 16 Oct, Symphony Hall, Centenary Square

POPPY JAM Fri 16 Oct, The Rhodhouse, Sutton Coldfield

LINDISFARNE Fri 16 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

B*WITCHED Fri 16 Oct, Lichfield Cathedral

PEASHOOTER Fri 16 Oct, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

THE BEAT Fri 16 - Sat 17 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

WESTLIFE Fri 16 - Sun 18 Oct, Utilita Arena B'ham

UTAH SAINTS Sat 17 Oct,

Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

FLINT MOORE Sat 17 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Smallbrook Queensway

THE CADENZAS Sat 17 Oct, Actress & Bishop, Ludgate Hill

NECTAR WOODE Sat 17 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

TWIN ATLANTIC + THE XCERTS Sat 17 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

THE UNDERTONES + THE BEAT FEAT. RANKING JNR Sat 17 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

FELL OUT BOY + BLACK CHARADE + METEORA Sat 17 Oct, O2 Academy

MAJOR TOMS Sat 17 Oct, Jo Jo Jims, Cofton Hackett

GRUBSON Sat 17 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Balsall Heath

SECOND CITY SONIC ATTACK 3 Sat 17 Oct, Centrala, Digbeth

OASIS FOREVER Sat 17 Oct, The Flapper, Cambrian Wharf

REVIVALRY Sat 17 Oct, The Victoria, John Bright St

THE SHAMROCKS Sat 17 Oct, Symphony Hall, Centenary Square

KATEY BROOKS Sat 17 Oct, Bromsgrove Arts @ Fairfield Village Hall

ART GARFUNKEL Sat 17 Oct, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

JOHN BRAMWELL Sat 17 - Sun 18 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Kings Heath

IGUANA DEATH CULT Sun 18 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

JOS RIVERS Sun 18 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Smallbrook Queensway

THE MIKE DAVIDS BAND Sun 18 Oct, Actress & Bishop, Ludgate Hill

ELEINE Sun 18 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

GREYSIGHT Sun 18 Oct, The Flapper, Cambrian Wharf

BONFIRE RADICALS Sun 18 Oct, Symphony Hall, Centenary Square

LAZULI + JUMP Sun 18 Oct, Mama Roux's, Digbeth

10CC'S GRAHAM GOULDMAN Sun 18 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

Classical Music

TINGSHUO YANG LUNCHTIME ORGAN CONCERT Mon 12 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

LUNCHTIME MUSIC RECITAL Featuring Zhijun Liu (violin) & Robert Markham (piano). Programme includes works by Beethoven, Wieniawski & more..., Mon 12 Oct, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

NDR RADIOPHILHARMONIC HANNOVER: BEETHOVEN & BRAHMS Featuring Stanislav Kochanovsky (conductor) & Ingrid Fliter (piano), Tues 13 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CBSO: SIBELIUS' 5TH SYMPHONY Featuring Thomas Dausgaard (conductor) & Benjamin Grosvenor (piano). Programme also includes Brahms' Piano Concerto No.1, Thurs 15 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE MODERN MUSE: ELEANOR MINNEY (MEZZO-SOPRANO) Featuring Gregory Drott (piano). Programme includes works by Herbert Howells, Ivor Gurney, Judith Weir, and Richard Rodney Bennett, Thurs 15 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

EX CATHEDRA: IN 40 PARTS - SPEM IN ALIUM Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor). Programme includes works by Tallis, Roth and a world premier from Roderick Williams, Sun 18 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

Comedy

CHRIS WILLIAMSON Tues 13 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

BBC NEW COMEDY AWARDS Wed 14 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

MATT PARKER Wed 14 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

JAZZ EMU Wed 14 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

NISH KUMAR Thurs 15 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

HANNAH EAST Thurs 15 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, HAYLEY ELLIS & FRED COOKE Thurs 15 Oct, The Glee Club, B'ham

BUFFY REVAMPED Thurs 15 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

DAN SCHREIBER Fri 16 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SAM LAKE, FRED COOKE, HAYLEY ELLIS & ALISTAIR BARRIE Fri 16 - Sat 17 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

RAJ POOJARA, NEIL MCFARLANE, QUINCY & MERYL O'ROURKE Sat 17 Oct, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham

SANDRO FORD Sat 17 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JUDITH JACOBS, CURTIS WALKER, RICHARD BLACKWOOD & TOJU Sat 17 Oct, The Rep, Birmingham

TEJ DHUTIA, NOREEN KHAN, SHAZIA

MIRZA, STELLA GRAHAM & NAPH ESA Sat 17 Oct, The Rep, Birmingham

DANIEL FOXX Sat 17 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

SUSAN CALMAN Sat 17 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

TOM STADE Sun 18 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

HASSAN PHILLS Sun 18 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

STEWART LEE Sun 18 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome



Theatre

BLACK IS THE COLOR OF MY VOICE Apphia Campbell's acclaimed play follows a successful singer & civil rights activist as she seeks redemption after the untimely death of her father, Tues 13 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

LEGALLY BLONDE THE MUSICAL Amber Davies plays Elle Woods in the smash-hit rom-com musical, based on the award-winning film, Tues 13 - Sat 17 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

PRIVATE PEACEFUL Stage adaptation of Michael Morpurgo's much-loved book, Tues 13 - Sat 17 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

THE VOID Sci-fi horror combining 'powerful illusions, atmospheric projections and a creeping sense of dread', Wed 14 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

THE WITCHFINDER A 'spinechilling' theatrical experience, live on stage, Wed 14 - Sun 25 Oct, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

OH ZEUS! Le Navet Bete present a 'riotous, all-out-hilarious ride through Greek mythology', Thurs 15 - Sat 17 Oct, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

FIRE FIRE Moving drama about people taking big risks to protest, people who love to hate them, and how some people discover they have a deeper purpose in common, Fri 16 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

MIST OVER AVALON New play that follows King Arthur's sister, Morgan Le Fay, as she seeks to destroy Camelot and find victory in the Last Battle. Susannah Foy stars, Fri 16 - Sat 17 Oct, The Bear Pitt Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

MADE YOU LOOK Ty'rone Haughton's one-man poetry show explores masculinity and what it means to be

an immigrant 'in a Britain growing increasingly hostile towards minorities and women', Sat 17 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

WAIT UNTIL DARK The Crescent Theatre Company present an amateur version of Frederick Knott's classic thriller, Sat 17 - Sat 24 Oct, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

A TALE OF US Brand-new play for parents and their babies, blending drama and multi-sensory playtime in a relaxed environment, Sun 18 Oct, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

Dance

MATTHEW BOURNE'S THE CAR MAN New Adventures' award-winning dance thriller, loosely based on Bizet's Carmen, Tues 13 - Sat 17 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome

RAPEFLOWER Hana Umeda draws on classic Japanese jiumai dance to explore how sexual violence lives on in the body, and to reflect on whether dance can become a space for emancipation and healing, Sat 17 - Sun 18 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

Light Entertainment

MIDDAY VARIETY - SIXTIES SPECIAL Featuring The Upbeat Beatles, vocalist Annika Rands, comedian Phil Hoyles and crooner Scott Dee. Andy Eastwood comperes, Mon 12 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

THE DRIFTERS BY CANDELIGHT Thurs 15 Oct, Lichfield Cathedral

80S MANIA A multi-tribute show featuring a live band, dancers, and some of the 1980s' greatest hits, Sat 17 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

PAULUS THE CABARET GEEK: WHAT WOULD VICTORIA WOOD DO? Featuring a fresh batch of tunes from the Victoria Wood songbook, Sat 17 Oct, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

RUSSELL WATSON: AN INTIMATE EVENING WITH 'THE VOICE' Expect beloved classics, spine-tingling tales and personal stories from behind the spotlight, Sun 18 Oct, Lichfield Garrick



Legally Blonde The Musical - Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

Talks & SpokenWord

STEPHANIE PHILLIPS AND PAULINE BLACK - WE WERE HERE An in-conversation event exploring Black artists and influential figures who have steered the history of rock & roll and alternative music, from the 1930s to present day, Thurs 15 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

MICHAEL PALIN: IN THE PHILIPPINES Join the Monty Python star, author and renowned traveller as he shares stories from one of his most ambitious journeys yet, Fri 16 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

Events

THE MOTORHOME AND CARAVAN SHOW The UK's national showcase for the leisure-vehicle industry, Tues 13 - Sun 18 Oct, NEC, Birmingham

ALGORAVE - EXPERIMENTAL MUSIC NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM Algorave returns to Birmingham for a special evening of live-coded music and visuals, Thurs 15 Oct, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

MIDLANDS MODEL ENGINEERING EXHIBITION Over 30 clubs & societies present hundreds of exhibits covering a wide range of modelling skills, Thurs 15 - Sun 18 Oct, Warwickshire Event Centre, Leamington Spa

SCAREFEST Immerse yourself in a fright-filled world of spine-tingling Halloween attractions and live entertainment, Fri 16 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, Alton Towers Resort, Staffordshire

STAINED GLASS CREATIONS WITH CHRISTOPHER SAMUEL Free, family-friendly drop-in workshop, Sat 17 Oct, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

SEASONAL FLORISTRY WORKSHOP Craft a unique seasonal display to take home, Sat 17 Oct, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

AUTUMN LEAVES & HALLOWEEN

JEWELLERY MAKING WORKSHOP WITH WORKING CLASP Create your own handcrafted jewellery, inspired by the rich colours of autumn and the cosy nostalgia of Halloween, Sat 17 Oct, Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

CHEMIGRAMS AND LUMEN PRINTING AT CRAFT & CULTURE Camera-less photography with artist Tom Godwin, Sat 17 Oct, Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

LINOCUT PRINTMAKING WORKSHOP Be inspired by the museum's collection to create your own lino print artworks, Sat 17 Oct, Stourbridge Glass Museum

O GAUGE GET TOGETHER A celebration of railway modelling in 1:43.5 scale, Sat 17 - Sun 18 Oct, Severn Valley Railway, nr Kidderminster

OCTOBER AT THE BLITZ MUSEUM Explore what life was like in wartime Coventry, Sat 17 - Sun 18 Oct, Blitz Museum, Coventry Cathedral

EDITION DOG LIVE A perfect day out for dogs and everyone who loves them, Sat 17 - Sun 18 Oct, NAEC Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

BLAZING HALLOWEEN Fun family event packed with spooky surprises, Sat 17 - Sun 18 Oct, Drayton Manor Resort, Tamworth

FAMILY HEALTH & WELLBEING FESTIVAL A full day of connection, healing and growth, Sun 18 Oct, Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

GHOST, GORE & FOLKLORE TOURS Discover how gory and ghostly effects are achieved for the Royal Shakespeare Company's theatrical productions, Sun 18 Oct, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon



Gigs

JAKE VAADELAND Mon 19 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

REALLY GOOD TIME Mon 19 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

CLANN AN DRUMMA Mon 19 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Balsall Heath

SOUL II SOUL Mon 19 Oct, Symphony Hall, Centenary Square

EZHEL Mon 19 Oct, XOYO, Digbeth

GIRL IN THE YEAR ABOVE + RAGEFLOWER Tues 20 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

MY FIRST TIME Tues 20 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

FLORENTENES Tues 20 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Smallbrook Queensway

FAYE Tues 20 Oct, Actress & Bishop, Ludgate Hill

DIGBETH JAZZ Tues 20 Oct, The Night Owl, Digbeth

GOLDFORD Tues 20 Oct, O2 Academy

LIME GARDEN Tues 20 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Balsall Heath

FOY VANCE Tues 20 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

DURAN DURAN + PIGEON Tues 20 Oct, Utilita Arena Birmingham

ALICE COOPER Tues 20 Oct, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

ADMIRAL FALLOW Wed 21 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

GRACE GACHOT Wed 21 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Smallbrook Queensway

FATHER OF PEACE Wed 21 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

AMIT DATTANI Wed 21 Oct, Red Lion Folk Club

WABASH Wed 21 Oct, Boldmere Sports and Social Club, Sutton Coldfield

BEL COBAIN Thurs 22 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

MARGARET GLASPY Thurs 22 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Kings Heath

V.I.C Thurs 22 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Smallbrook Queensway

FAT FREDDY'S DROP + DJ

NIGHTMARES ON WAX

Thurs 22 Oct, O2 Academy

I PROMISED THE WORLD

Thurs 22 Oct, The Flapper, Cambrian Wharf

BRYDE Thurs 22 Oct, The Victoria, John Bright St

ALISON MOYET Thurs 22 Oct, Symphony Hall, Centenary Square

JOSEPHINE DAVIES Thurs 22 Oct, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

CAMILA NEBBIA WITH JOHN EDWARDS AND MARK SANDERS Thurs 22 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Canon Hill Park

CATCH Thurs 22 Oct, Mama Roux's, Digbeth

CREEDENCE CLEARWATER REVIEW Thurs 22 Oct, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

EDDI READER Thurs 22 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

GURRIERS + TRAMHAUS Fri 23 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

NOAHFINNCE Fri 23 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

AIRBAG + LESOIR Fri 23 Oct, O2 Academy

THE MELVIN HANCOX BAND Fri 23 Oct, Jo Jo Jims, Cofton Hackett

ALMOST FREE Fri 23 Oct, Tower of Song, Pershore Road

INEZA Fri 23 Oct, 1000 Trades, Birmingham

BOYS Fri 23 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Balsall Heath

LUCY MAY WALKER Fri 23 Oct, Dead Wax, Digbeth

STARSAILOR Fri 23 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

GOLDIE LOOKIN CHAIN Fri 23 Oct, XOYO, Digbeth

FEVER DREAM KILLS Fri 23 Oct, Mama Roux's, Digbeth

ROBERT SCHMUCK PLAYS BILLY JOEL Fri 23 Oct, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

ENJOY THE SILENCE - TRIBUTE TO DEPECHE MODE Fri 23 Oct, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

COUNTRY HITS LIVE Fri 23 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

ARRIVAL - THE HITS OF ABBA Fri 23 Oct, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

MIKE LINDUP TRIO Fri 23



Brandon Flowers - O2 Academy

Oct, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

DEXYS MIDNIGHT RUNNERS Fri 23 Oct, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

FLUOXETINE Fri 23 Oct, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

GAMBLER Fri 23 Oct, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

ALL4INDIE VS BRITPOP UNITED Sat 24 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

TOM ROBINSON WITH ADAM PHILLIPS Sat 24 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Kings Heath

MOULD Sat 24 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Smallbrook Queensway

DEBASE INVADERS Sat 24 Oct, Actress & Bishop, Ludgate Hill

THE REAL PEOPLE Sat 24 Oct, Actress & Bishop, Ludgate Hill

THEE SCARECROWS AKA + THE MCCURDY BROTHERS + KINGS OF HONG KONG Sat 24 Oct, The Night Owl, Digbeth

MELANIE C Sat 24 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

THE CORAL Sat 24 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

BRANDON FLOWERS Sat 24 Oct, O2 Academy

UK FOO FIGHTERS Sat 24 Oct, O2 Academy

SMALL FAKERS Sat 24 Oct, Jo Jo Jims, Cofton Hackett

TOM MARTIN'S CELTIC SOUL BAND Sat 24 Oct, Tower of Song, Pershore Road

LANGSTON HUGHES TRIBUTE Sat 24 Oct, 1000 Trades, Jewellery Quarter

CUD + SANDKINGS Sat 24 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Balsall Heath

CANCER BATS Sat 24 Oct, The Asylum, Hampton Street

THE MOUSE OUTFIT Sat 24 Oct, Mama Roux's, Digbeth

ALWAYS JOVI Sat 24 Oct, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

BOOTLEG ABBA Sat 24 Oct, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

URKAGE DAVE Sun 25 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

ANDY JAMES AS ELVIS Sun 25 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Kings Heath

MARTHA TILSTON Sun 25 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Kings Heath

SLAG Sun 25 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Smallbrook Queensway

HOWLIN MATT Sun 25 Oct, Actress & Bishop, Ludgate Hill

THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA + NOVELISTS + 156/SILENCE + OVERSIZE Sun 25 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

CONWAY THE MACHINE + DARINGER Sun 25 Oct, O2 Academy

SCREAMING DEAD + THE SAMPLES Sun 25 Oct, Tower of Song, Pershore Road

ELECTRON Sun 25 Oct, The Flapper, Cambrian Wharf

J. COLE Sun 25 Oct, Utilita Arena Birmingham

THE BON JOVI EXPERIENCE Sun 25 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

Classical Music

LUNCHTIME MUSIC RECITAL Featuring Rachel Cocks (trombone), Joanne Sealey (piano) & Anastasiia Vasyliuk (soprano). Programme includes works by Handel, Fauré, Wolf & more..., Mon 19 Oct, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

CBSO: SYMPHONIE FANTASTIQUE

Featuring François Leleux (conductor/cor anglais). Programme includes works by Debussy, Gipsy & Berlioz, Wed 21 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CBSO CENTRE STAGE: SERENADES WITH FRANÇOIS LELEUX

Featuring François Leleux (oboe) & the CBSO Woodwind Section. Programme includes works by Gounod, Strauss & Dvořák, Thurs 22 Oct, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

ORCHESTRA OF THE SWAN: A LITTLE

NIGHT MUSIC Programme includes works by Mozart, Elgar, Vivaldi & more..., Thurs 22 Oct, Stratford Town Hall

TIM BURTON'S UNIVERSE BY MYSTERY

ENSEMBLE Music from the films of Tim Burton, including Alice in Wonderland, The Nightmare Before Christmas, Edward Scissorhands & more..., Fri 23 Oct, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

CBSO LIVE IN CONCERT: HOW TO TRAIN

YOUR DRAGON 2 Featuring Anthony Gabriele (conductor). Experience the spectacular film sequel presented in HD, with its thrilling score by John Powell performed live by the CBSO, Sat 24 Oct, Symphony Hall, B'ham

CBSO FAMILY CONCERT: HALLOWEEN

SPOOKTACULAR Featuring Ellie Slorach (conductor), Jane Wright (presenter) & CBSO Children's Chorus. Programme includes iconic movie themes and works by Saint-Saëns, Mussorgsky, A Clyne & more..., Sun 25 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Comedy

LENNY HENRY Mon 19 Oct, The Alexandra, Birmingham



IGNACIO LOPEZ Wed 21 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JONATHAN PIE Wed 21 Oct, The Alexandra, Birmingham

MORGAN REES Thurs 22 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, DAVE FULTON & DAISY EARL Thurs 22 Oct, The Glee Club, B'ham

MICHAEL SPICER Thurs 22 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

RUSSELL HOWARD Thurs 22 - Sun 25 Oct, The Alexandra, Birmingham

CHRISTOPHER HALL Fri 23 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ROBERT WHITE Fri 23 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

JACK GLEADOW, JOE MCERNAN, DAVE FULTON & DAISY EARL Fri 23 - Sat 24 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

LEROY BRITO, GILL GEE, ANT DEWSON & JON PEARSON Sat 24 Oct, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham

RACHEL FAIRBURN Sat 24 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

PHIL WANG Sat 24 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

JIMEOIN Sun 25 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

JOE WELLS Sun 25 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JAMAICA VS NIGERIA COMEDY CLASH Sun 25 Oct, The Glee Club, B'ham

Theatre

FIRE FIRE Moving drama about people taking big risks to protest, people who love to hate them, and how some people discover they have a deeper purpose in common, Tues 20 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham



THE HAUNTING OF WIDOW'S LEAP FARM Stand-alone sequel to the award-winning *The Haunting Of Blaine Manor*, Tues 20 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

BLOOD BROTHERS Willy Russell's award-winning musical tells the moving story of twins who, separated at birth, grow up on opposite sides of the track, only to meet again with fateful consequences, Tues 20 - Sat 24 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome

THE CHOIR OF MAN An evening of foot-stomping entertainment set in 'the best pub in the world', where everyone is welcome..., Tues 20 - Sat 24 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

EVERYBODY'S TALKING ABOUT JAMIE Amateur version presented by St Alphege Musical Production Society (STAMPS), Tues 20 - Sat 24 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

WE WILL ROCK YOU Stourbridge Operatic Society present an amateur version of the Ben Elton musical, Tues 20 - Sat 24 Oct, Stourbridge

Town Hall

MURDER ON THE NILE Amateur version of Agatha Christie's tale of love, mystery and betrayal, Tues 20 - Sat 31 Oct, Highbury Theatre Centre, Sutton Coldfield

MADE YOU LOOK Ty'rone Haughton's one-man poetry show, interrogating masculinity and what it means to be an immigrant 'in a Britain growing increasingly hostile towards minorities and women', Wed 21 - Thurs 22 Oct, The Rep, Birmingham

JEEZUS! Catholic guilt collides with unrepentant queerness in this 'sinful, heart-pounding mix of live music, dark humour and Latin heat', Wed 21 - Sat 24 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome



DRACULA Lichfield Players present an amateur version of Bram Stoker's classic horror story, Wed 21 - Sat 24 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

PIECES OF MY LIFE BY KIRRI RIVIERE Autobiographical story of love, loss and resilience, Thurs 22 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

IT WALKS AROUND THE HOUSE AT NIGHT 'Chilling' new play which promises to draw audiences into a world of 'creeping dread, unexpected twists and dark humour', Fri 23 - Sat 24 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

LIGHTSTREAMS: A NEW PLAY ABOUT MIGRANT CARERS Passionate play about a family and their choices during a global crisis. Inspired by real-life testimonies, Sat 24 Oct, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

CARTWRIGHT & COY'S GHOST STORIES 'Chilling' theatrical experience for audiences aged 12-plus, Sat 24 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

Kids Theatre

THE SNOWMAN World premiere of a brand-new stage version of Raymond Briggs' much-loved children's story, Tues 20 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, The Rep, Birmingham

THE WITCH WHO COULDN'T SLEEP Enchanting singalong musical for younger audiences, Sat 24 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

ICE AGE ADVENTURE LIVE Fun-filled family adventure packed with prehistoric animals, snow-packed valleys and sabre-toothed surprises, Sat 24 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

DANCE IN THE DARK Friendly nocturnal

creatures, slithering slugs, magical moths and fantastical fireflies feature in an interactive dance & music show for younger audiences and their families, Sat 24 - Sun 25 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

THE BUBBLE SHOW Interactive adventure in which magic, storytelling and science converge in 'a breathtaking display of bubble artistry', Sun 25 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

Dance

SRISHTI: PLAY BALL Triple bill of classical Indian dance from leading choreographer Nina Rajarani, Tues 20 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

ADAM GARCIA'S EMERALD STORM Fusion of Irish dance with urban tap. Britain's Got Talent finalist Tom Ball stars, Fri 23 Oct, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

KATHAKALI Highly visual classical dance drama exploring society's successes and failures, Sun 25 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

Light Entertainment

QUEENZ: BATTLE OF THE DIVAS! Drag and musical theatre combine in a show featuring hit songs from Whitney, Beyonce, Britney, Tina, Cher, The Spice Girls, Celine and others..., Tues 20 Oct, The Alexandra, Birmingham

THE MUSIC OF TIM BURTON, DANNY ELFMAN & BEYOND Featuring The Great British Film Orchestra, Wed 21 Oct, Dudley Town Hall

RAT PACK LIVE A tribute show showcasing all-time favourite songs from Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and Sammy Davis Jr, Wed 21 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

THE BLINDBOY PODCAST LIVE An award-winning storytelling podcast featuring the Irish tradition of Seanchai - a fusion of history, fiction, cultural critique and politics. Expect a surprise special guest at each show, Wed 21 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

JEFF WAYNE'S MUSICAL VERSION OF THE WAR OF THE WORLDS Live concert experience of the original double album, accompanied by on-screen animation, Thurs 22 Oct, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

ANYTHING FOR LOVE Steve Steinman's smash-hit production, featuring some of Meat Loaf and Jim Steinman's greatest hits, Thurs 22 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

RAINER HERSCH: ALL CLASSICAL MUSIC EXPLAINED - LIVE! Hit comedy show

from the acclaimed pianist, conductor & stand-up comedian, Fri 23 Oct, Dudley Town Hall

TOMMY COOPER: HAVE I GOT TIME FOR MORE? 'An evening of tomfoolery, jokes, songs, laughter, magic - and failed magic'..., Fri 23 Oct, Halesowen Town Hall

HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON 2 IN CONCERT Experience the spectacular film sequel presented in HD, with its score performed live by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Sat 24 Oct, Symphony Hall, B'ham

GARETH GATES: BOYBAND IN THE BUFF 'A high-energy celebration of pop, passion and perfectly sculpted physiques', Sat 24 Oct, Dudley Town Hall

Talks & Spoken Word

JEREMY BOWEN: TRUTH UNDER FIRE An evening with the BBC's international editor, including an audience Q&A in the second half, Mon 19 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

AN EVENING WITH ROBIN INCE Stories and poetry from the multi-award-winning comedian, author & broadcaster, Wed 21 Oct, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

DR JOHN COOPER CLARKE An evening with the Godfather of Punk Poetry, Sat 24 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

MICHAEL ROSEN: NICEL Brand-new live show in which the poetry legend looks back at a lifetime of stories and rhymes, Sun 25 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

PHILLIPA ASHLEY IN CONVERSATION WITH MILLY JOHNSON The bestselling author talks about her upcoming book, *Stay Another Christmas*, Sun 25 Oct, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

JAMES HASKELL - HASK UNFILTERED Join the former rugby player for an evening of stories, laughter and no-holds-barred honesty, Sun 25 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

Events

BIRMINGHAM COCKTAIL WEEKEND Enjoy £6 signature cocktails across all participating venues, Thurs 22 - Sun 25 Oct, venues across Birmingham City Centre





THE WINTER LIGHT EXPERIENCE

A spectacular world of light, colour & winter wonder

Step into the Winter Light Experience at The Belfry Hotel and Resort and discover an illuminated trail filled with bold installations, live actors and unexpected moments.

But there's a mystery to solve... Santa has made an unexpected landing, and his presents, reindeer and Christmas magic are scattered along the trail. Will you follow the lights and help put everything back where it belongs?

What to expect:

- ◆ 60–90 minute illuminated journey, over a mile long
- ◆ 30+ brand-new light installations & interactive games
- ◆ Festive food & a fully licensed Après Bar
- ◆ Live actors throughout the experience
- ◆ Dedicated dog-friendly & sensory nights
- ◆ Free-to-access Christmas Courtyard

First 1,000 kid's tickets are free! Book early to secure your desired dates.



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book your
tickets!



Although hosted at The Belfry Hotel & Resort, Winter Light Experience is an independently operated event.

GUIDED TOUR OF WEOLEY CASTLE

Explore Weoley Castle with experienced guides and check out real finds from the site, on display in the Visitor Centre, Fri 23 Oct, Weoley Castle, Birmingham

THE MURDER OF OSCAR SPENCE

Halloween-inspired murder-mystery night, Fri 23 Oct, West Midlands Police Museum, Birmingham

AUTUMN EXHIBITIONS OPENING PARTY

Celebrate the opening of the new exhibitions, Fri 23 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

JACK SKELTON TAP WORKSHOP

Learn dynamic choreography in this high-energy tap class, Sat 24 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

WOODLAND PETTING ZOO AT MAC

Meet furry, feathery and prickly friends, Sat 24 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

SOUNDBATHS WITH THE MANOJ

COLLECTIVE Local sound practitioner Manoj of Manoj Collective takes visitors on an immersive sound journey, Sat 24 Oct, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

SWAN LAKE FAMILY FUN WITH

BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET Featuring dance workshops, a performance by

some of Birmingham Royal Ballet's dancers, and a Swan Lake-themed story session, Sat 24 Oct, Jennifer Blackwell Performance Space, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

BALLET & BRUNCH WITH BIRMINGHAM

ROYAL BALLET Enjoy a brunch before finding out more about Birmingham Royal Ballet and watching at close-quarters a performance of excerpts from Swan Lake, Sat 24 Oct, Jennifer Blackwell Performance Space, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

HALLOWEEN NIGHTS A spooktacular night of family fun and tricks & treats, Sat 24 Oct, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

WOODLAND PETTING ZOO AT MAC Meet furry, feathery and prickly friends, Sat 24 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

DRINK & PRINT WITH STIRCHLEY

PRINTWORKS Use Lego bricks as a tool for artistic expression to create bold, contemporary print designs, Sat 24 Oct, Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

INTRODUCTION TO NATURAL INKS Learn how to make inks from kitchen waste, wild plants and other natural materials, Sat 24 Oct, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

CHRISTMAS GIFT FAYRE The ideal place in which to find an unusual gift or stocking filler, Sat 24 - Sun 25 Oct, Severn Valley Railway, nr Kidderminster

HALLOWEEN LEGO

Create creepy characters, ghosts and ghouls, pumpkins, a black cat or some spooky scenery, Sat 24 - Sun 25 Oct, Compton Verney, Warwickshire

OCTOBER HALF TERM: HORRID

HISTORIES Discover 700 years of history, Sat 24 - Sun 25 Oct, Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove

THE MISSING MAGIC - A HALLOWEEN

EVENT A 'bewitching family adventure' through Dudley's underground caverns, Sat 24 - Sat 31 Oct, Dudley Canal & Caverns

OCTOBER HALF TERM: JET AND SPACE

WEEK A week of aviation and space-themed family activities, Sat 24 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, RAF Museum Midlands, Cosford

OCTOBER HALF TERM FUN - MYTHS AND

SUPERSTITIONS Ghostly apparitions, curious cures and mysterious goings-on await at the museum, Sat 24 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

MYSTICAL AND MAGICAL WOODLAND

TRAIL Search high and low to see how many autumn treasures and spooky surprises you can find, Sat 24 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, Packwood House, Lapworth, Warwickshire

LEGO CODING & AI WORKSHOP

Discover the magic of coding with Lego Education's brand-new computer science and AI kits, Sat 24 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

AUTUMN HALF TERM

Climb aboard a heritage diesel or steam-hauled train and see what you can spot as you travel along the line, Sat 24 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, Severn Valley Railway, nr Kidderminster



NATIONAL RESTORATION SHOW

Event featuring a massive indoor autojumble, classic cars on display and plenty of expert help, Sun 25 Oct, NAEC Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

The Snowman™ WITH LIVE ORCHESTRA

Make this Christmas unforgettable!

The beloved Christmas classic on the big screen, with its iconic soundtrack performed live by an award-winning orchestra.

..... **PLUS**



Shaun the Sheep
in Fleece Navidad



A visit from The
Snowman himself



The chance to sing
Walking in the Air
with the orchestra



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2026 TOUR



**"TOP
FAMILY
THINGS
TO DO AT
CHRISTMAS"**
The Guardian, The
Telegraph & The
Sunday Times

Birmingham Town Hall

SUNDAY 20 DECEMBER 1.30pm | 4pm

carrotproductions.com

Gigs

MATTHEW C. WHITAKER

Mon 26 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

MADDIE MORRIS Mon 26 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Kings Heath

ALEXANDROS TSOUELAS Mon 26 Oct, O2 Academy

K-TRAP Mon 26 Oct, XOYO, Digbeth

BEAUX Mon 26 Oct, Mama Roux's, Digbeth

PS HITSQUAD Tues 27 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Smallbrook Queensway

DIGBETH JAZZ Tues 27 Oct, The Night Owl, Digbeth

TIGERCUB Tues 27 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

MOLLY Tues 27 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

THE KID LAROI + NATE SIB Tues 27 Oct, O2 Academy

DEARALICE Tues 27 Oct, O2 Academy

SJ MORTIMER + SAVANNAH GARDENER Tues 27 Oct, The Asylum, Hampton Street

THINK FLOYD Tues 27 - Wed 28 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

RIKAS Wed 28 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

SHY FACE TROUBADOUR Wed 28 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Kings Heath

DEAF HAVANA + THE DANGEROUS SUMMER Wed 28 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

YAELOKRE Wed 28 Oct, O2 Academy

ALLIE X Wed 28 Oct, O2 Academy

JEZ LOWE Wed 28 Oct, Red Lion Folk Club



KORN + ARCHITECTS + YOUTH CODE Wed 28 Oct, Utilita Arena Birmingham

CYGNET JAZZ BAND Wed 28 Oct, Boldmere Sports and Social Club, Sutton Coldfield

THE LEGENDS OF AMERICAN COUNTRY Wed 28 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

CHINA CRISIS Thurs 29 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

A DIFFERENT THREAD Thurs 29 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Kings Heath

GOOSEBERRY Thurs 29 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Smallbrook Queensway

MAX & HARVEY Thurs 29 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

TRANSVISION VAMP + YEE LOI Thurs 29 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

THE MARY WALLOPERS Thurs 29 Oct, O2 Academy

BURNER & BEYOND EXTINCTION Thurs 29 Oct, The Flapper, Cambrian Wharf

LADY LESHURR Thurs 29 Oct, XOYO, Digbeth

EVERY HELL + AS LIVING ARROWS + TORONTO BLESSINGS Thurs 29 Oct, The Rainbow, Digbeth

FAIRFIELD REVISITED Thurs 29 Oct, Catshill Club, Bromsgrove

THE SIMON & GARFUNKEL STORY Thurs 29 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

KLARA DEVLIN QUARTET + JOSH BAILEY TRIO Thurs 29 Oct, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

AZIZ IBRAHIM Thurs 29 Oct, The Feathers Inn,

Lichfield

REPUBLICA Fri 30 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath

RUSTY SHACKLE Fri 30 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Smallbrook Queensway

SEAN REEVES Fri 30 Oct, Actress & Bishop, Ludgate Hill

BELTANE MOON + NOTIONS OF FORTUNE + MADDOX Fri 30 Oct, The Night Owl, Digbeth

STVWI Fri 30 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

ARCHSPIRE + CROWN MAGNETAR + THE ZENITH PASSAGE + ANALEPSY Fri 30 Oct, O2 Academy

SKINDRED + ALIEN ANT FARM + SPINESHANK, ORGY Fri 30 Oct, O2 Academy

MARK CHERRIE Fri 30 Oct, 1000 Trades, Jewellery Quarter

HIGH FADE Fri 30 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Balsall Heath

MILLIE MANDERS & THE SHUTUP Fri 30 Oct, The Flapper, Cambrian Wharf

HALLOWEEN THE CONCERT Fri 30 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

QUILL FEATURING BEV BEVAN Fri 30 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE WONDER STUFF + INSPIRAL CARPETS Fri 30 Oct, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

JOHN LYDON Fri 30 Oct, The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

LINDISFARNE Fri 30 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

JASON DUFFILL Sat 31 Oct, Actress & Bishop, Ludgate Hill

RUNAWAY CLUB Sat 31 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

SLAYYYTER + PEARLY DROPS Sat 31 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

BLACK PARADE Sat 31 Oct, O2 Institute, Digbeth

GLAM45 Sat 31 Oct, Jo Jo Jims, Cofton Hackett

THE EXPLOITED + FACE UP! Sat 31 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Balsall Heath

DAVIES IMAN CHAKRABORTY Sat 31 Oct, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

WOODEN DOG Sat 31 Oct, Mama Roux's, Digbeth

Classical Music

LUNCHTIME MUSIC RECITAL

Featuring RBC Musicians. Programme includes works by Lutoslawski, Eick, Barber & Martinu, Mon 26 Oct, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

THE GONZAGA BAND: LOVE'S LABYRINTH Featuring Faye Newton (soprano), Jamie Savan (cornetto), Steven Devine (harpsichord & organ). Programme includes works by Monteverdi, and the winning compositions from the 2026 NCEM/BBC Radio 3 Young Composers Award, Tues 27 Oct, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

CBSO CENTRE STAGE: BRAHMS' CLARINET QUINTET Featuring Oliver Jones (clarinet - pictured), Charlotte Skinner & Victoria Farrell-Reed (violins), David BaMaung (viola) & Miguel Fernandes (cello), Wed 28 Oct, CBSO Centre, Birmingham



JOUBERT CENTENARY CELEBRATION Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor) & RBC Chamber Choir. Programme includes works by Joubert, Byrd, Parry & more..., Thurs 29 Oct, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

RBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: FIREBIRD SUITE Featuring Michael Seal (conductor - pictured). Programme also includes Beethoven's Egmont Overture, Fri 30 Oct, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire



CBSO LIVE IN CONCERT: CASINO ROYALE Featuring Caleb Young (conductor). Betrayal, high-stakes poker and explosive

action - this is Bond's origin story as you've never seen (or heard) it before..., Fri 30 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CBSO LIVE IN CONCERT: WORLD OF WARCRAFT Immerse yourself in the epic legacy of World of Warcraft, one of the world's most iconic video game franchises, through an unforgettable symphonic experience, Sat 31 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

MIDLAND INDIAN ASSOCIATION PRESENTS IMAN CHAKRABORTY As part of Biyoya Utsav celebration, the national and Filmfare award winner performs live in concert, Sat 31 Oct, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

Comedy

ALEXANDROS TSOUELAS Mon 26 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

ABISHEK KUMAR Tues 27 Oct, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

AKAASH SINGH Tues 27 - Wed 28 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

HARRY ENFIELD AND NO CHUMS Wed 28 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

MARK THOMAS Wed 28 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ANDREW RYAN Wed 28 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

CATHERINE BOHART Thurs 29 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham



COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, BETHANY BLACK & DAVE LONGLEY Thurs 29 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

PROJECT MAYHAM Thurs 29 Oct, The Wellington, Birmingham

MICHAEL AKADIRI Fri 30 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

CHRIS RAMSEY Fri 30 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

THOR STENHAUG, TOM HOUGHTON, DAVE LONGLEY & BETHANY BLACK Fri 30 - Sat 31 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

PATRICK MONAHAN, MADELEINE BRETTHAMPTON, ALEX MITCHELL & DAVID WARD Sat 31 Oct, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham

STANDUPOVKA Sat 31 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

TOMMY SANDHU Sat 31 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

Theatre

THE LIBRARIANS 'Magical' story for family audiences following the misadventures of librarians Mr Page and Miss Book, Mon 26 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

DEADLY LIVE! HOSTED BY STEVE BACKSHALL Show promising an action-packed, edge-of-your-seat experience based on the hugely popular CBBC show, Mon 26 Oct, Utilita Arena Birmingham



OF MICE AND MEN John Steinbeck's classic portrait of two migrant workers during the Great Depression, Tues 27 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

THE VOID Sci-fi horror combining 'powerful illusions, atmospheric projections and a creeping sense of dread', Tues 27 - Wed 28 Oct, The Rep, Birmingham

PARANORMAL ACTIVITY Spine-chilling production that promises to keep you on the edge of your seat. James Bye, Hannah Sinclair, Jo Castleton & Caroline Faber star, Tues 27 - Sat 31 Oct, The Alexandra, Birmingham

LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS New version of the quirky musical, featuring iconic songs, larger-than-life characters and a carnivorous plant with a mind of its own, Tues 27 - Sat 31 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

CATS New production of Andrew Lloyd Webber's award-winning musical, based on TS Eliot's Old Possum's Book Of Practical Cats, Tues 27 Oct - Sat 7 Nov, Birmingham Hippodrome

MAMMA MIA! Smash-hit musical telling a story of love, friendship and identity, played out against a backdrop of ABBA hits, Tues 27 Oct - Sat 7 Nov, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

THE MASTER GHOST HUNTER Join Adam Woods as he delves into Elliot O'Donnell's casebook of ghost stories from the Victoria era and beyond, Wed 28 Oct, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

THREE MEN IN A BOAT Stratford Theatre Company condense Jerome K Jerome's comic masterpiece into just 95 minutes, Wed 28 Oct, Fairfield Village Hall, Bromsgrove

ONE MAN POE: THE BUSINESS MAN AND THE CASE OF M VALDEMAR Double bill featuring some of the finest examples of gothic literature, Thurs 29 Oct, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

THE TURN OF THE SCREW Blackeyed Theatre and Arcola Theatre come together to present Henry James' masterwork of psychological suspense, Thurs 29 - Sat 31 Oct, The Rep, Birmingham

FOLK HORROR Don't Go Into The Cellar present an eerie and unsettling anthology of tales, Fri 30 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

OFF-KEY Coming-of-age drama about Black girlhood, ambition, friendship, and what happens when the person who knows you best becomes someone you no longer recognise, Fri 30 - Sat 31 Oct, Birmingham Hippodrome

DARKLING Titas Halder's epic story of a life ravaged by ecological disaster, Fri 30 - Sat 31 Oct, The Rep, B'ham

BEING FRANK Brand-new comedy-horror farce concerning a down-on-his-luck research assistant and a boss who's demanding results, Fri 30 Oct - Sat 7 Nov, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

THE LISTENER Algernon Blackwood's chilling tale draws on the author's own experiences of loneliness and poverty, Sat 31 Oct, Stourbridge Town Hall



Kids Theatre

TRICK & TREAT CIRCUS Scare-free Halloween family show, Mon 26 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

FLOTSAM OperaUpClose fuse music, movement and storytelling in a show for younger audiences, Mon 26 Oct, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

MINISTRY OF SCIENCE LIVE Entertainment and education collide in a show featuring 20ft liquid nitrogen clouds, exploding oxygen & hydrogen balloons, fire tornadoes, hydrogen bottle rockets and a self-built hovercraft, Mon 26 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

THE AMAZING BUBBLE MAN Comedy and artistry combine in a show featuring square bubbles, bubbles inside bubbles, fog-filled bubbles, bubble volcanoes, tornados and more..., Tues 27 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

THE GIANT BUBBLE SHOW Starring the Bubble Wizard in his magical world of bubbles, Tues 27 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

A MESSAGE FOR THE FUTURE Inclusive, multi-sensory art installation and gig theatre experience designed for early

years (ages nought to three) and family audiences, Tues 27 - Wed 28 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

DISNEY ON ICE PRESENTS DISCOVER THE MAGIC Fast-paced and family-friendly production that follows the search for Tinker Bell through various Disney worlds, Wed 28 Oct - Sun 1 Nov & Fri 6 - Sun 8 Nov, bp pulse LIVE, B'ham



THERE'S A MONSTER IN YOUR SHOW Tom Fletcher's interactive adventures for big imaginations leap from page to stage in a long-touring musical show for younger audiences, Sat 31 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, Halesowen Town Hall

TOTO THE NINJA CAT AND THE GREAT SNAKE ESCAPE Family show based on Dermot O'Leary's bestselling children's book. Expect original music, puppetry and plenty of laugh-out-loud fun, Sat 31 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

Dance

ADAM GARCIA'S EMERALD STORM Fusion of Irish dance with urban tap. Britain's Got Talent finalist Tom Ball stars, Thurs 29 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

Light Entertainment

JOE MARLER WILL SEE YOU LIVE The England rugby player and Celebrity Traitors contestant is joined by comedian Jake Bhardwaj in a show that delivers 'something far beyond a typical interview', Mon 26 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

WI-FI WARS HALLOWEEN SPECIAL Interactive show in which audience members compete both in teams and as individuals, with games and quizzes being beamed into their smartphones and tablets, Tues 27 Oct, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

ILLUSION: IMPOSSIBLE 'A night of magic, illusion, music, death-defying escapes and the thrill of the circus'. International illusionist Kayden Black stars, Tues 27 Oct, Stourbridge Town Hall

THE WITCHER IN CONCERT Concert celebrating 10 years of The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt and bringing to life the game's timeless score with cutting-

edge visuals and music, Wed 28 Oct, Civic Hall, Wolverhampton

WI-FI WARS HALLOWEEN SPECIAL Interactive show in which audience members compete both in teams and as individuals, with games and quizzes being beamed into their smartphones and tablets, Thurs 29 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

GORILLA CIRCUS: RPM Energetic show which combines theatre, circus, dance and roller-skating to explore links between current issues and the UK's 'troubled' history, Thurs 29 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

THE MYSTERY OF THE BELGRADE THEATRE Award-winning board-game-style theatre show during which the audience is needed to solve a murder-mystery, Thurs 29 - Sat 31 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

DANIEL BYE & ONE TENTH HUMAN: SO UNFAIR Interactive science demo with a twist..., Fri 30 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

PROFESSOR BRIAN COX: EMERGENCE WORLD TOUR Fri 30 Oct, Utilita Arena Birmingham

MY LIFE WITH KENNETH WILLIAMS One-man show in which Dave Benson brings the legendary Carry On star back to life, Fri 30 Oct, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

AN EVENING WITH JOHN LYDON Join the Sex Pistols frontman & lyricist as he talks about how he sees life and shares stories from his career. An audience Q&A also features, Fri 30 Oct, The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

BOLLYWOOD TIME MACHINE Featuring laughter, dance and timeless melodies, Sat 31 Oct, The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

HALLOWEEN IN CONCERT A 'frightening good night of graveyard smash hits', Sat 31 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

Talks & SpokenWord

MICHAEL ROSEN: NICE! Brand-new live show in which the poetry legend looks back at a lifetime of stories and rhymes, Tues 27 Oct, Lichfield Garrick

CHRIS PACKHAM'S WORLD OF WONDER: A PLANET ON THE EDGE The Springwatch host opens an encyclopaedia of stories from a lifetime of curiosity and conviction, Wed 28 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

JOHN CRACE: WHAT THE HELL JUST HAPPENED? The Guardian's political sketch writer tries to make sense of some of the country's 'main events', Sat 31 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

GODDESSES OF THE UNDERWORLD WITH NIKITA GILL The Sunday Times bestselling author, playwright & illustrator takes to the stage for an in-conversation event with poet Len Pennie, Sat 31 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

Events

TAXIDERMISTRY IN ACTION Join a professional bird taxidermist for a unique live demonstration, Mon 26 Oct, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

LDN WRESTLING - HALF TERM SPECTACULAR Watch the UK's top wrestling stars go head-to-head with international challengers, Mon 26 Oct, Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

GHOSTS, BLOOD & BATTLE As darkness falls, uncover the chilling stories and dramatic history connected to one of Britain's most fascinating Roman sites, Mon 26 - Wed 28 Oct, Lunt Roman Fort, Coventry

ART CLUB - OCTOBER HALF TERM Event celebrating the changing of the seasons and giving little ones the chance to make their own clay leaves, Mon 26 - Fri 30 Oct,

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

MAGIC MAYHEM SCIENCE SHOW Join the resident Thinktank science witches as they take you through some enchanting experiments, Mon 26 - Fri 30 Oct, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

OWL EXPERIENCES Unique opportunity to get up close and fly owls in a stunning historic setting, Mon 26 - Fri 30 Oct, Sudeley Castle, Cheltenham

OCTOBER HALF TERM: GHOSTS, PUMPKINS & TUDOR TALES Follow a trail of pumpkins through the grounds and historic rooms of Sudeley Castle, and uncover the castle's spooky secrets, Mon 26 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, Sudeley Castle, Cheltenham

AFTER-DARK TOURS Explore by torchlight one of the oldest buildings in Worcester, Tues 27 Oct, The Commandery, Worcester

SURREAL SHADOW CREATURES Join professional puppeteer Lori Hopkins and make your own surreal shadow puppet creature, Tues 27 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

'THE BIG DRAW' WITH MOLLY CLEAVER IN EVERY THING MUST GO Grab a pencil and help fill a gigantic roll of

paper with bold shapes, bright colours and imaginative ideas, Tues 27 Oct, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

A MESSAGE FOR THE FUTURE Inclusive, multi-sensory art installation and gig-theatre experience designed for early years, Tues 27 - Wed 28 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

MY FIRST MUSEUM TOUR: HALLOWEEN EDITION Relaxed and child-friendly tour of the museum, Tues 27 - Thurs 29 Oct, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

HYROX BIRMINGHAM Six days of elite fitness racing, Tues 27 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, NEC, Birmingham

WIZARD BUBBLE SHIELDS WITH YOUTH EVOLUTION Meet the team of STEM experts from Youth Evolution as they reveal the science behind things that seem like magic, Wed 28 Oct, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

ZOO LAB AT BLAKESLEY HALL: WITCHCRAFT AND WIZARDRY! Get up close and hands-on with exotic animals, exploring some of the spooky superstitions and gruesome remedies used back in Tudor times, Wed 28 Oct, Blakesley Hall, B'ham

CALIPSO'S CIRCUS Featuring 'world-class stunts, side-splitting comedy, live vocals and your favourite cartoon characters', Wed 28 Oct, Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

BRIDGES OF LIGHT 2026 See the city centre come to life with light installations, interactive artworks, visual spectacles and street performances, Wed 28 - Thurs 29 Oct, Worcester City Centre

SCARY TALES: WITCHES ON TRIAL Bring the grown-ups to trial and discover 'the witches living amongst us', Wed 28 - Fri 30 Oct, West Midlands Police Museum, Birmingham

THE MAGICAL OWL An interactive storytelling show, Wed 28 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, Compton Verney, Warwickshire

DISNEY ON ICE PRESENTS DISCOVER THE MAGIC Fast-paced, family-friendly production that follows the search for Tinker Bell through various stunning worlds, Wed 28 Oct - Sun 1 Nov & Fri 6 - Sun 8 Nov, bp pulse LIVE, Birmingham

CHEMIGRAMS - CAMERA-LESS PHOTOGRAPHY WITH ARTIST TOM GODWIN Get creative and discover the fascinating world of camera-less photography in this hands-on workshop for children aged eight and older, Thurs 29 Oct, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

LEGENDS OF BRUM - EVERY THING MUST GO SPECIAL Take inspiration from Birmingham and imagine your own mythical creatures, Thurs 29 Oct, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

GET MUCKY GET MAKING HALLOWEEN SPECIAL All the fun of Forest School

with a special Halloween twist, Thurs 29 Oct, Compton Verney, Warwickshire

HALLOWEEN NIGHTS A spooktacular night of family fun and tricks & treats, Thurs 29 - Sat 31 Oct, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

SCREAM TRAIN Take a ride in the dark through haunted stations! Thurs 29 - Sat 31 Oct, Severn Valley Railway, nr Kidderminster

GHOST TRAINS Spooky family-friendly train ride, Thurs 29 - Sat 31 Oct, Severn Valley Railway, nr Kidderminster

STRATFORD LITERARY FESTIVAL Annual event featuring an array of authors and experts in their fields, covering topics as diverse as the rise of the right, a world post America, and the power of hormones. Presenters Greg James & Matt Baker are amongst this year's impressive line-up, Thurs 29 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, Crowne Plaza, Stratford-upon-Avon

DRAW THE GREEN FUTURE Free drop-in drawing workshop in the heart of the Wild City exhibition, Fri 30 Oct, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

ALL STAR SUPERSLAM WRESTLING Featuring some of the very best wrestlers from around the world, showcasing their skills in the ring, Fri 30 Oct, Dudley Town Hall

MEET THE SCIENCE MAGICIAN Featuring 'spectacular illusions, exciting experiments and interactive demonstrations', Fri 30 Oct, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

SPOOKY CINEMA Check out a series of spooky films, Fri 30 - Sat 31 Oct, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

PANDORICA Celebrate 63 years of Doctor Who with an action-packed weekend of stage entertainment, Fri 30 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

AFTER HOURS HALLOWEEN Explore the galleries after hours, join free guided tours and experience Raqib Shaw: Night Sonnets, before creating your very own surreal and fantastical creatures and scenes with artist Niall Singh, Sat 31 Oct, Compton Verney, Warwickshire

SURREAL COLLAGE MONSTERS Join collage artist Hazel Pitt to make your own surreal creatures, Sat 31 Oct, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

MURDER MYSTERY MUSEUM GALLERY TOUR WITH TAT VISION Take a spine-tingling journey through the museum's galleries, Sat 31 Oct, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

SEASON FINALE FIREWORKS & LAKE SHOW Featuring soaring water jets, dazzling lights, fire, Halloween-themed entertainment & fireworks display, Sat 31 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, Drayton Manor Resort, Tamworth

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PAUL HOLMAN ASSOCIATES PRESENT

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