

Coventry & Warwickshire

ISSUE 477 OCTOBER 2026

What's On

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BY **JULIA DONALDSON** AND **AXEL SCHEFFLER**

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The List

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Sun 27 Dec 2026**

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LIVE ON STAGE

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ARTS
CENTRE**

The Gruffalo's Child by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler, 2004. Illustrations by Axel Scheffler.

inside:

BALLET BLACK

celebrate 25th anniversary with a double-bill at the Belgrade



AFRICAN POWER PLAY

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THE SPOOKY SEASON

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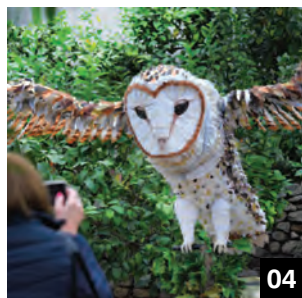


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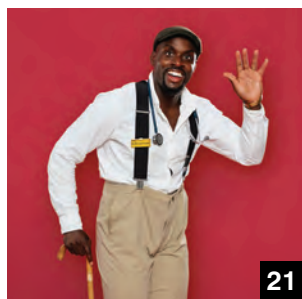
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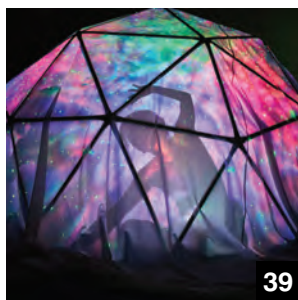
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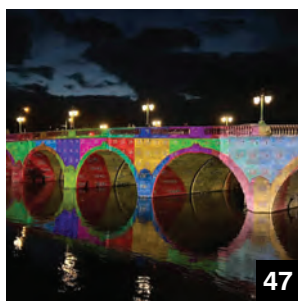
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What's On

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The Magical Owl swoops into Compton Verney

Warwickshire venue Compton Verney is presenting a family-friendly interactive storytelling show this October half term. Available to enjoy from Wednesday 28 October to Sunday 1 November, The Magical Owl will take children on 'an adventure through the wonderful Wild Woods to share stories and spells, and to try and make The Wishing Woodland Owl, the most magical of all woodland creatures, fly'... A Halloween Art Trolley, providing free creative activities for younger visitors, will also be available. For more information and to book tickets, visit comptonverney.org.uk

Proms classics from the Orchestra of the Swan...

The Warwick-based Orchestra of the Swan return to their former home of Stratford-upon-Avon this month to lead members of the Swan Youth Orchestra and amateur musicians from across Warwickshire in a Last Night Of The Proms event. The concert, taking place at Holy Trinity Church on Saturday the 24th, forms part of the Stratford Music Festival. For more information and to book tickets, visit stratfordmusicfestival.com

Free heritage pub trail launches in Bewdley

Midlanders are being invited to discover Bewdley's fascinating past this month by following a digital pub trail. The free and self-guided trail features some of Bewdley's most characterful pubs, taking participants on a journey through the town's rich history. To find out more and sign up, head online to visitworcestershireshire.org/heritage-on-tap

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 the website at thunderroadtheatre.org

Monster Truck magic to make a Midlands return

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



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



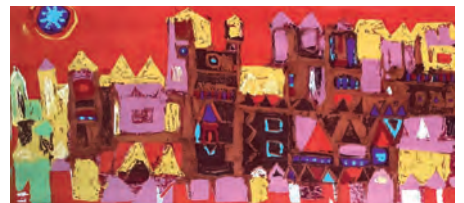
Robin Hood rides into Worcester for Christmas

Worcester Repertory Company will be transforming the city's Swan Theatre into Sherwood Forest this festive season when they present their pantomime production of Robin Hood. The show runs from Saturday 28 November to Sunday 3 January, with more information and tickets available at worcestertheatres.co.uk



Affordable art on display in Malvern this month

A free exhibition offering original paintings and prints at bargain prices - alongside a collection of mid-century fabrics, ceramics and glassware from across Europe - is coming to Malvern late this month. The Affordable Mid-Century Show will take place at Elmslie House, Great Malvern, over two weekends (11am - 5pm each day), from Friday the 23rd to Sunday the 25th, and from Friday the 30th to Sunday 1 November. Refreshments will be available throughout, including cream teas on Sundays. A free glass of wine will be offered to Saturday visitors. To find out more about the event, message Richard Turkington at richard@fiftiesart.com or follow on Instagram @fiftiesart.



The Wonder Stuff back in the region

The Wonder Stuff have added a Birmingham O2 Institute date to their 40th anniversary tour. The Black Country alt-rock stars will perform at the venue on Wednesday 9 December. To find out more and purchase tickets, visit thewonderstuff.co.uk

A Christmas Carol at the cathedral

Acclaimed company This Is My Theatre will bring to life Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol at The Old Palace in Worcester next month. The one-act adaptation of the author's most famous story will be presented at the venue - which is adjacent to Worcester Cathedral - on Wednesday 18 November. To find out more and book your seat, visit worcestercathedral.org.uk



Academy to host October open day

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



Hit musical Operation Mincemeat to return to the Midlands

Olivier Award-winning musical Operation Mincemeat will make two return visits to the West Midlands region next year. The hit show tells the true story of a Second World War initiative, during which British intelligence made use of a corpse carrying false documents to mislead Nazi Germany about the Allied invasion of Sicily.

The show's touring production 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.



After dark at Sudeley Castle

Halloween visitors to Gloucestershire's Sudeley Castle are being invited to step back in time to solve a fully immersive Victorian murder-mystery. The special event, taking place on Halloween itself (Saturday 31 October), includes exclusive after-hours access to the castle and gardens, a themed cocktail and three-course bowl meal, and the chance to engage in a Q&A with the murder suspects. For more information and to book tickets, head to sudeleycastle.co.uk

Grease star Stockard Channing's Beckett play comes to Worcestershire

Award-winning actress Stockard Channing is bringing her production of Samuel Beckett's Krapp's Last Tape to Worcestershire's Bretforton's Theatrebarn on Saturday 3 October. The show marks 82-year-old Stockard's directorial debut and stars David Westhead. Stockard is perhaps best known for having played the part of Betty Rizzo in the film version of Grease (1978), and for starring as First Lady Abbey Bartlet in the hit US television series The West Wing. To find out more about Krapp's Last Tape and purchase tickets, visit bretfortongrange.org



Midlands venues taking part in this year's national 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 the website at festival.forarthistory.org.uk

Daphne du Maurier short story at the Swan Theatre

A theatrical adaptation of a Daphne du Maurier short story, which provided the basis for a famous and same-named Alfred Hitchcock film, is coming to Worcester. Written for the stage by Conor McPherson, The Birds shows at the Swan Theatre from Wednesday 28 to Saturday 31 October. For more information and to book tickets, visit worcestertheatres.co.uk

NEC to host four creative shows in 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



Psycho in concert...

Coventry's Warwick Arts Centre will be hosting a Halloween 'fright night' on Thursday 29 October when it presents Alfred Hitchcock's classic movie Psycho - with the film's soundtrack being played live by the Welsh National Opera. To find out more and purchase tickets, visit the venue's website at warwickartscentre.co.uk



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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

Ghosts, gore and folklore

The Royal Shakespeare Company is offering visitors the chance to learn all about how it achieves gory and ghostly effects in its theatrical performances.

The hour-long Ghost, Gore & Folklore Tour visits either, or both, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and the adjacent Swan Theatre, moving through parts of the buildings where members of the general public usually aren't allowed. The tours are currently booking into early 2027. To find out more, head to the website at rsc.org.uk

Landmark dance show set for Midlands debut

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...

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



A chaotic Christmas at Bridge House Theatre

Highly regarded theatricals Operation Moonlight will be bringing some seasonal chaos to Warwick's Bridge House Theatre on Monday 21 December when they present their 'madcap' festive farce, Twelve Days Of Christmas. To find out more and purchase tickets, visit bridgehousetheatre.co.uk



IMPROV | LAUGHTER | CELEBRITY GUESTS



Kiell Smith Bynoe's Kool Story Bro
07.10 | Town Hall

WORLD | RHYTHM | JOY



African Soul Rebels ft Les Amazones d'Afrique, Gasper Nali & N'famady Kouyaté 08.10 | Town Hall

CONVERSATION | STAR GUESTS | SIGNINGS



Between the Covers Live: Celebrating Agatha Christie
12.10 | Town Hall

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NDR Radiophilharmonic Hannover: Beethoven & Brahms 13.10 | Symphony Hall * SEE WEBSITE

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How to Train Your Dragon 2 in Concert
24.10 | Symphony Hall



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Smashed Avocado & Garlic Mushrooms on Toast | B:Eats at Symphony Hall:
11am-4pm Mon-Sat & pre-show

BALLET | BRUNCH | INTIMATE



Ballet & Brunch with Birmingham Royal Ballet
24.10 | JBPS at Symphony Hall

WORKSHOPS | PERFORMANCE | 4-11YO



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

THRILLING | SMASH HITS | COSTUME COMP



Halloween The Concert
30.10 | Town Hall

FILM | LIVE ORCHESTRA | CBSO



Casino Royale in Concert
30.10 | Symphony Hall

FOLK | FAN FAVES | NEW ALBUM



Folk Rock Pioneers Steeleye Span In Concert
31.10 | Town Hall

BOOKINGS & FULL LISTINGS:

f @bmusicltd i @bmusic_ltd 0121 7803333

bmusic.co.uk

New play about migrant carers tours the region

A new play about migrant carers and the choices they must make during a global crisis is visiting four Midlands venues this month.

Lumenis Theatre's thought-provoking production, which takes the title *Lightstreams*, visits MAC Birmingham on 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

New installation to open at Worcester Cathedral

An installation inspired by the loss of life in Gaza will be available to view at Worcester Cathedral from the middle of the month. Taking the title *Enough?*, the installation invites the viewer to imagine that each of 260 figures represents 250 people, in total adding up to 65,000 - the estimated number of people killed in the conflict in Gaza to date. *Enough?* shows at the cathedral from Friday 16 October to Thursday 5 November. For further information about the exhibition, visit worcestercathedral.org.uk

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



Explore what life was like in wartime Coventry

Weekend visitors to Coventry Cathedral this month can find out all about life in the city during the Second World War. Located in the corner of the Cathedral Ruins, the Blitz Museum comprises a treasure trove of 1940s memorabilia and artefacts, with a special

focus on the Coventry Blitz. The museum is open across four weekends (3rd & 4th, 17th & 18th, 24th & 25th and 31st & 1 November). To find out more about the attraction, visit the website at coventrycathedral.org.uk

The L*OVE* Book bound for 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



Literary festival returns

Stratford Literary Festival returns late month (29 October - 1 November) with an ambitious programme featuring household names, bestselling authors, important conversations and hands-on storytelling fun for families. Taking place at the town's Crowne Plaza hotel, highlights include presenter Greg James (pictured) chatting about his book *All The Best For The Future*, and Countryfile & former One Show favourite Matt Baker celebrating his life with dogs. Also contributing to the star-studded line-up are actor Celia Imrie, comedian Lucy Porter and Queen of Shops, Mary Portas. For further information about who's appearing when, and to purchase tickets, visit stratfordliteraryfestival.co.uk



Charlotte Brontë classic at Worcester theatre

A brand-new stage version of the Charlotte Brontë gothic romance *Jane Eyre* visits Worcester's Swan Theatre next month. Presented by Conn Artists Theatre Company, the production shows at the venue on Saturday 7 November. To find out more and purchase tickets, visit the website at worcestertheatres.co.uk



Love Actually in concert

Richard Curtis' 2003 star-studded festive film *Love Actually* will be screened - alongside a live orchestra playing its score in synchronisation - at Birmingham's Symphony Hall venue on Monday 14 December. To find out more about the event and book tickets, visit the website at loveactuallyinconcert.com



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THE MAGICAL OWL

WED 28 OCT – SUN 1 NOV

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6 – 9pm

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Tickets
£15



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AFTER DARK AT
COMPTON VERNEY

WHEN THE GALLERIES
AND GROUNDS STAY
OPEN LATE FOR AN
EVENING OF ART,
PERFORMANCE,
CREATIVITY AND
SUITABLY STRANGE
GOINGS-ON

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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



Ex Cathedra

Jeffrey Skidmore conductor

In 40 Parts: Spem in alium

Town Hall, Birmingham

Sunday 18 October, 4pm

Soaring, uplifting, remarkable, and truly monumental, Tallis' *Spem in alium* is perhaps the most iconic piece of choral music ever written. This unmissable concert also features the world premiere of Roderick Williams' *The Wilderness*.



Book now at: www.excathedra.co.uk



ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

The Affordable Mid-Century Show

23rd- 25th October and 30th October - 1 November

11am - 5pm Elmslie House, 8 Avenue Road, Great Malvern, WR14 3AG



A free exhibition offering original paintings and prints at bargain prices and a collection of mid-century fabrics, ceramics and glassware from across Europe
Café open throughout - free glass of wine on Saturdays - cream teas on Sundays



For more information, please contact Richard Turkington
at richard@fiftiesart.com or on 07714 106386
Visit our website at fiftiesart.com @fiftiesart

ORCHESTRA OF
The Swan

THE SWAN SESSIONS | WARWICK

O ALBION

Thurs 1 October 2026, 7pm

St Nicholas Church, Warwick

A journey through the landscapes and moods of England, past and present featuring Vaughan Williams's *The Lark Ascending* and Holst's vibrant *Brook Green Suite*.

Elgar, Purcell and Britten sit seamlessly alongside Nick Drake, Sting and traditional folk tunes reimaged.

Tickets: £15-£25

orchestraoftheswan.org

Live music from across the region...

A Different Thread

Marrs Bar, Worcester, Thurs 15 October

A winning blend of British folk-rock and North Carolina alt-country is the mouthwatering dish being served up by A Different Thread when they pay a mid-month visit to the Midlands.

Core members Robert Jackson, from Lichfield, and North Carolina native Alicia Best met while busking on the same street in Galway 10 years ago. They decided to collaborate - and the rest, as they say, is history.

The duo are promising a gig built around hair-raising vocal harmonies, intricate guitar, soulful fiddle and playful harmonica, not to mention Alicia's distinctive suitcase drum-kit. Support on the night comes from folk-singing, guitar-shredding clog dancers Nastee Chapel.



Elvana

hmv Empire, Coventry, Sat 17 October

A tribute act like no other, Elvana sees Elvis Presley fronting 1990s rock royalty Nirvana, presenting a concert in which the magnificently talented performers tear through the latter's catalogue of hits 'whilst splicing-in grunged-up sections of the King of Rock & Roll's finest moments'.

So... if you're searching for a somewhat bizarre, engagingly colourful and altogether splendidly ridiculous experience with which to brighten up the dark autumn nights, we respectfully suggest that this mindbending evening of fun and frivolity might be the very gig you're looking for.



Les Amazones d'Afrique

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Tues 6 October

Powerhouse West African collective Les Amazones d'Afrique visit Warwick Arts Centre as part of the venue's African Soul Rebels series. The initiative is described by its producers, Music Beyond Mainstream, as a celebration of fearless artists who reshape tradition, challenge borders, and put rhythm at the centre of resistance and joy.

And Les Amazones d'Afrique certainly do all of that. Creating music which fuses ancient roots with urgent, future-facing sounds, they deliver a message of strength, unity and change... The five-piece group (three singers and two musicians) are joined for their Coventry gig by babatoni player Gasper Nali and balafon virtuoso N'Famad Kouyaté.

Craig Charles

Coventry Cathedral, Fri 2 October

Coronation Street, Red Dwarf and Robot Wars - not to mention successful DJing and writing careers - have ensured Craig Charles is pretty well known to the great British public. His music career started in 1980, playing keyboards and bass, and providing vocals, for the rock band Watt 4. In more recent times he's toured far and wide with his hugely popular Funk & Soul Club, playing a mixture of tracks which have usually been covered and remixed by current leading bands and DJs. This month's Coventry Cathedral event includes a 90-minute set from Craig himself.

Creedence Clearwater Review

Huntingdon Hall, Worcester, Fri 23 October

For anyone not in the know, during the 1960s and early 70s, Creedence Clearwater Revival were widely considered to be one of America's greatest rock bands, headlining the legendary Woodstock Festival in 1969. Although they split up more than half a century ago, their music has emphatically stood the test of time, and is here brilliantly recreated by these talented tribute artists.

Aziz Ibrahim

The Tin at The Coal Vaults, Coventry, Sat 10 October

Virtuoso guitarist, session musician and one-time Stone Roses member Aziz Ibrahim is finally releasing his long-lost debut album, some 25 years after it was first recorded. Lahore To Longsight - named to reflect his father's journey from Pakistan to the Manchester suburb of Aziz's birth - is a musical melting pot he describes as 'Asian blues'. Now restored and remastered, the album, which features star contributors including the Roses' Reni and Mani, Paul Weller, Talvin Singh, and Andy Rourke and Mike Joyce of The Smiths, will get its first public airing at a limited number of showcase dates, making this gig in Coventry a real must-see event.



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Opus13 String Quartet

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Holy Trinity Church, Leamington

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Ravel • Martinů • Smetana

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Toby Carr lute

Hugo Hymas tenor

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Unitarian Chapel, Warwick

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Caroline Shaw • Haydn • Elgar

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Orchestra Of The Swan: A Little Night Music

Stratford Town Hall, Stratford-upon-Avon, Thurs 22 October

The Warwick-based Orchestra of the Swan (OOTS) return to their previous home of Stratford-upon-Avon this month to take part in the town's week-long music festival - an event which is this year celebrating its 30th anniversary.

OOTS' concert sees them presenting a

programme featuring compositions from three centuries. These include Dido's Lament (Purcell), Gabriel's Oboe (Morricone), Adagio (Barber) and Air (Bach)... Mozart, Vivaldi, Handel and Elgar, meanwhile, are represented by some of their most enduring music.

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.



Rautio Piano Trio

Huntingdon Hall, Worcester, Sun 4 October

Bringing a distinctive perspective to core 18th- and 19th-century repertoire, London-based chamber ensemble the Rautio Piano Trio stop off in the West Midlands early this month to perform a programme featuring works by Joseph Haydn, Ludwig van Beethoven and Franz Schubert.

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.

Warwickshire Symphony Orchestra

Warwick Hall, Sat 17 October

Now in its 86th year, Warwickshire Symphony Orchestra here present a concert celebrating the brilliance of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky. The programme features the composer's *Capriccio Italien*, *Piano Concerto No1* and *Symphony No6 'Pathétique'*. Roger Coull is the conductor. The pianist is James Willshire.

Opus 13

Holy Trinity Church, Leamington Spa, Fri 9 October

Oslo-based BBC Radio Three New Generation Artists Opus 13 boast a fast-growing reputation on the international chamber-music scene. They have been ably assisted in their inexorable rise to stardom by first-prize wins at international string quartet competitions in Wigmore Hall and Bordeaux...

This mid-month Leamington Music concert sees them performing works by Beethoven, Brahms and Thomas Adès.



TRADING PLACES

**Award-winning play Once Upon A Time In Sokoto
visits Coventry's Warwick Arts Centre next month...**



An award-winning new play about the unlikely friendship between a slave and her former master in pre-colonial Nigeria visits the region this month. Once Upon A Time In Sokoto is a powerful family drama set against the backdrop of traumatic real events - as its writer, Inua Ellams, tells What's On...

"It's just a period drama from another world - and the British public love period dramas, right?"

Poet, playwright & artist Inua Ellams is delighted to have found a simple way to describe his new play, *Once Upon A Time In Sokoto*, the epic nature of which could otherwise have made it a potentially trickier sell. The family drama, which won the 2024 Alfred Fagon Award and tells the tale of an unlikely friendship forged between two women - a slave and her former master - is set against the backdrop of events that led to the creation of Nigeria. The women come from totally different backgrounds but overcome their differences to develop a strong bond in the face of new, bigger enemies.

"[It's] a relationship which is forged just as personal and political worlds tragically collide," he says, noting that the play "explores power, faith, heritage and culture".

"It's a period drama set in mid-late 1800s pre-colonial Nigeria, and I've always been fascinated by how the legacy of this time still influences and resonates with global perceptions and politics today."

Money and power also play a major role in the saga, which spans a period of 65 years.

"It's mostly about business actually," he admits, almost apologetically. "It's about trying to trade, trying to make money. And the backdrop is religious differences, cultural differences, class, commerce, love, relationships. It's an epic story but told through the lives of four people who lived through those incredible times."

Ensuring those times are accurately reflected meant Inua, who was born in Nigeria, spent three years researching the play. He instantly faced problems, as many historical records from the time no longer exist.

"A lot of them were systematically destroyed by British colonial forces, and a lot haven't been translated into English. What exists I found in library books which you aren't even allowed to take out. I read between 30 and 40 books, academic research, novels, papers and dissertations, and also spent time interviewing historians and lecturers in Northern Nigeria."

The idea for the play actually came about while the writer was working on an entirely different project.

"Six or seven years ago, I was researching another play and I discovered [the origins of] extremist forces in Northern Nigeria that have been plaguing the country since I was a kid. They're popularly known as Boko Haram, but

that's not what they called themselves; it's the name the CIA gave them."

The jihadist militant group's name literally translates as 'Western education is forbidden', but the phrase was initially used to describe a way to defend or protect native Northern Nigerian culture. This was partly in response to having a new alphabet imposed on the people when the region started to become incorporated into the British Empire.

"In order to successfully impose a new alphabetical system, they had to destroy the system that existed beforehand, and that's what was used to write down court records, religious teachings, mathematical equations, business records and so on. It was the language of government, and it was essentially Arabic script.

"When the British came over and destroyed everything, they said 'You are going to use Boko to write everything,' and a lot of leaders thought 'Using Boko [fake/Western script] is haram [forbidden]'. That's the first time the phrase was used.

"The CIA misconstrued its meaning, and that fed back to the country and became what it is now. But that was what sparked off the whole play."

But as much as societal and political upheaval provides the backdrop for the play, there's a universal, human story at its core. Inua says he worked hard to strike a balance between factual accuracy and dramatic entertainment: "That was one of the tensions, one of the challenges as a writer. I don't want people to come and watch it as [pure] fiction, or to think of it as fantasy. A lot of the things that happen [in the story] actually happened."

That said, he's happy to acknowledge there's plenty of entertainment to be had along the way too: "There are sword fights, battles, a love triangle... an older woman versus a younger woman, a younger man versus an older man... all the sorts of tropes we'd recognise from contemporary culture, cinema, television and stories."

The unlikely relationship between the two main characters - another key element - was partly prompted by Inua wanting to acknowledge the different way slaves were treated in Africa.

"A lot of far-right voices in British media and academia justify the transatlantic slave trade by saying 'Oh yeah, well you guys enslaved each other in Africa.' They're right, we did, but slavery within the African continent was very different. Slaves could marry into the

family that enslaved them, sue their masters for maltreatment, demand time off work, work off the debt of slavery. They could even go on to own the businesses and become leaders of the family.

"So it was a status that was protected by law and human rights, and slaves weren't enslaved for the entirety of their lives and generations after, which is what happened in the West. I was trying to explain that, and it's another of the things that led me to create this story."

The play is also very personal to Inua, who drew on his own family and experience for inspiration.

"I was born in Northern Nigeria, so some of the places in the story are places I grew up in. I also grew up in a feminist household - I have three incredible sisters, which is why I wrote three sisters.

"One of the things that drove me to write the play was trying to look at Islam and pre-colonial Nigerian life with a very keen feminist eye, but also to understand [all of] that in the context of masculinity and power, which worsens pretty much everything." Even though the play is set in Nigeria over 200 years ago, Inua sees plenty of parallels with contemporary western society.

"Oh so many... one of the things I discovered was women were still arguing for the right to decide when they were going to have children - or refusing to do so - and the societal repercussions of that. We're seeing this right now right across the West, with birth rates falling in the UK, across Europe, America. But any time a woman does that, it can create a huge backlash within a community or family. So there are direct parallels between what happened 200 to 300 years ago and what's happening right now.

"One of the tragedies of the play is that not much has changed. Sometimes, humanity [makes me] despair - I just think we should have evolved past so many of these things already. We should have fought harder and done better, but we're still here.

"That's just some of the frustrations, but I think the play engages with them in a very new, interesting, dynamic way."

.....

Once Upon A Time In Sokoto shows at Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, from Thursday 5 to Saturday 7 November.

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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*ggered. 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 Midlandsers 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.

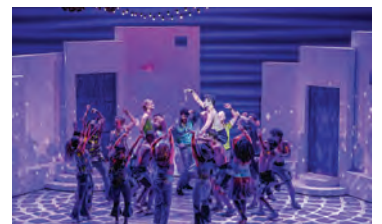


Mamma Mia!

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 27 October - Sat 7 November

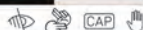
This legendary show is of course a nicely contrived vehicle for the chart-topping music of 1970s super troupers Abba.

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...

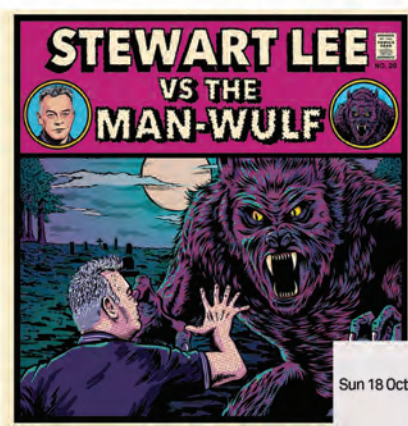




Tue 6 -
Sat 10 Oct



Tue 13 -
Sat 17 Oct



Sun 18 Oct



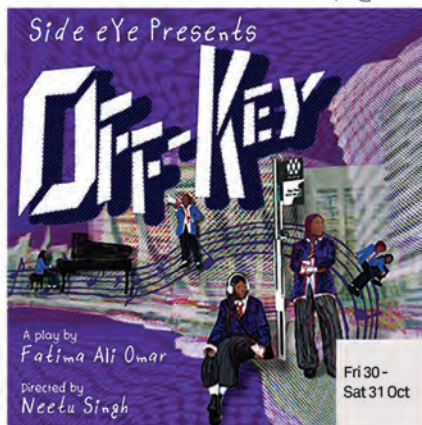
Tue 20 -
Sat 24 Oct



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*.



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.

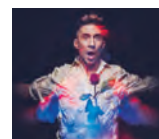
Jersey Boys

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)*.



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'.



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



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

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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.

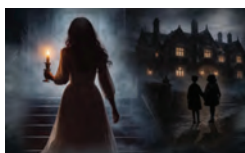
A heart-warming rags-to-riches story of a little girl who finds herself transported from a New York orphanage to the luxurious world of a millionaire, the show features plenty of memorable songs, including *It's A Hard Knock Life*, *I Don't Need Anything But You*, *Easy Street*, and of course, the legendary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

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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 2026. 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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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...



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'.



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



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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



Film highlights in 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

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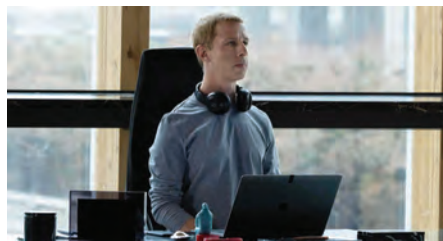
The Social Reckoning

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 spintinglers, 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 Weaver, 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 Ikon 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 Shewin & Family Collection

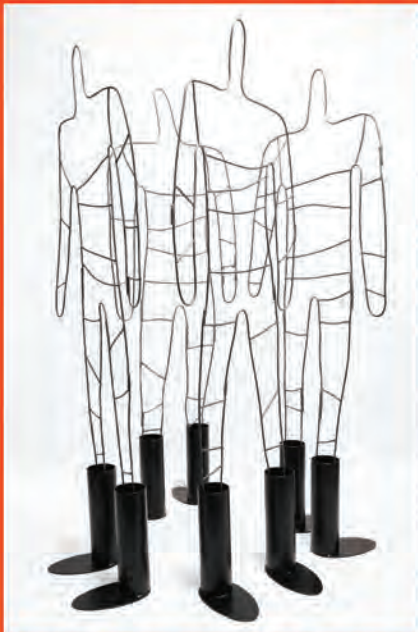
Emmy Bridgwater And Birmingham Surrealists

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.

Dread Naught

Perminder Kaur



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

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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 Trouville Harbour, Eugène Boudin, 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 Mingo Arden, Accounts, 2025 © 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.



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.

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.



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

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

thelist



Private Peaceful at The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry - Tues 13 - Thurs 15 October

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

What's On

Thurs 1 - Sun 11 October



Middlemarch Parts 1 & 2 - Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

**Thurs 1 October -
Sat 16 January**

Mon 12 - Sun 18 October



Jazz Emu - Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

Wed 14 October

Mon 19 - Sun 25 October



The Creedence Clearwater Review - Huntingdon Hall, Worcs

Fri 23 October

Mon 26 - Sat 31 October



Stratford Literary Festival at Crowne Plaza, Stratford-upon-Avon

**Thurs 29 October -
Sun 1 November**

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.

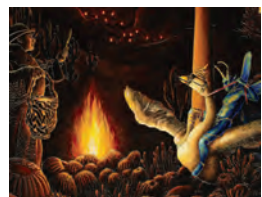
EVERY THING MUST GO BY JOE LYCETT First major solo art exhibition by Birmingham comedian Joe Lycett, exploring the theme of 'things that are no longer with us' and inspired by objects from the city of Birmingham's collection, until Sun 21 Feb

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, 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

Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum

SUSTAIN: FROM THE PAST, FOR THE FUTURE Exhibition exploring how people in the past lived more sustainably, and how these examples from history can inspire people in the present to make positive changes, until Sun 10 Jan

Mead 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

Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham

MADE AT MAC: CAPTURING THE HUMAN FORM From life drawing to dance and sculpture to photography, artists across the full breadth of MAC's courses are constantly looking to the human form for inspiration. This mixed-media exhibition showcases work by tutors and participants inspired by our bodies, until Sun 7 Feb

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

New Art Gallery, Walsall

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

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

Nuneaton Museum & Art Gallery

BULKINGTON ART GROUP: REFLECTIONS ON A DECADE Showcase of work created

by the group over the last 10 years, with subjects including landscapes, portraits, animals and transport, until Sat 7 Nov

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

Rugby Art Gallery

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

PAULA REGO: VISIONS OF ENGLISH LITERATURE Explore the extraordinary imagination of one of the great artists, printmakers and storytellers of modern times, until Sat 21 Nov

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

MARIE CRAIG: BEFORE IT WAS NOW Installation featuring photographic negatives capturing a room-sized camera obscura at Wolverhampton School of Art, presented alongside a live feed from a cardboard-box camera obscura capturing the same view, Wed 28 Oct - Sun 17 Jan

RACHEL MAGDEBURG: PALINGENESIS Solo exhibition by the Wolverhampton-based artist, exploring the unexpected connections between non-human life, everyday objects and the materials of painting itself, Sat 10 Oct - Sun 21 Feb

PERMINDAR KAUR: DREAD NAUGHT Featuring newly commissioned sculptures by one of Britain's most innovative sculptors, Sat 24 Oct - Sun 11 Apr

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

REFLECTIONS Exploration of the fluid beauty and immense power of water. Featuring works from Worcester City's own collection and high-profile pieces from around the country, until Sun 3 Jan

Elsewhere:

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

VISTA: MIDLANDS LANDSCAPE PAINTING TODAY Group exhibition by 10 Midlands-based painters, who reinterpret the conventions of landscape painting as contemporary, radical and unexpected, until Sat 10 Oct, The Courtyard Gallery, The Core Theatre, Solihull

A CACOPHONY OF COLOUR IN SILVER AND GLASS A showcase of vibrant and eye-catching wearable art and beautiful, unique pieces of homeware created by Carly and Eifion of Glassy Silver, until Thurs 15 Oct, Number 8, Pershore

AN ACCOMPLISHED WOMAN: THE CREATIVE LIFE OF LADY CHATTERTON EXHIBITION Through words, sound and images - and a special art exhibition curated by visitors - this celebration of Lady Chatterton highlights the Baddesley Clinton resident's remarkable achievements and her lasting legacy, until Fri 20 Nov, Baddesley Clinton, Warwickshire

CHRISTOPHER HUGHES: PAINTING WORCESTERSHIRE Exhibition featuring watercolour, oil and porcelain works inspired by Worcestershire's countryside, the Malvern Hills and the traditions of renowned Royal Worcester artists, Thurs 15 Oct - Wed 4 Nov, Number 8, Pershore



Karan Aujla - Utilita Arena Birmingham

Gigs

CORY HANSON Thurs 1 Oct, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

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

ANDY IRVINE WITH QUILTY Thurs 1 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

HANNAH WICKLUND Thurs 1 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

ARKAYLA + CHERRYHOLT Thurs 1 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

KHAN + SKIN THIEF + SEVENTH SYNDICATE Thurs 1 Oct, The Asylum, B'ham

WINTER GARDENS + OPAL MAG Thurs 1 Oct, The Victoria, Birmingham

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

LUKE CONCANNON Thurs 1 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

THE BEAT + THE SELECTER Thurs 1 Oct, hmv Empire, Coventry

MIGUEL GIRÃO Thurs 1 Oct, The Fleece Inn, Bretforton, Nr Evesham

THE BONESHAKERS + ADAM GILES LEVY Thurs 1 Oct, Marris Bar, Worcester

THE ROCKET MAN - A CELEBRATION OF SIR ELTON JOHN Thurs 1 Oct, Malvern Theatres

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

DECLAN WELSH & THE DECADENT WEST Fri 2 Oct, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

ESORE ALLE Fri 2 Oct, The Night Owl, Birmingham

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

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

THE AMY WINEHOUSE EXPERIENCE Fri 2 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

GLACK + JOHNNY VENUS Fri 2 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

XHOSA COLE Fri 2 Oct, 1000 Trades, Birmingham

FIAT LUX + PROMENADE CINEMA + HAHN HATS Fri 2 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

WREX Fri 2 Oct, The Flapper, Birmingham

FOREVER CLAPTON Fri 2 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

GUNS 2 ROSES + AC/DC REBORN Fri 2 Oct, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

LEAMINGTON BLUES MAFIA Fri 2 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

ADAM ROSS + THE SUNBATHERS + TIM O'CONNOR Fri 2 Oct, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

MONEY! MONEY! MONEY! - ABBA TRIBUTE Fri 2 Oct, hmv Empire, Coventry

THUNDER HORSE + TELLEMAHOOKA + MASSASAUGA Fri 2 Oct, Arches Venue, Coventry

ST LUCIFER + THE MEDEA PROJECT + CRYSLID HOMO Fri 2 Oct, Arches Venue, Coventry

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

A COUNTRY NIGHT IN NASHVILLE Fri 2 Oct, Bedworth Civic Hall

REZISTANCE Fri 2 Oct, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

TOTAL CLASH + BUZZKOCKS Fri 2 Oct, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

MAN OF THE WORLD: THE MUSIC OF PETER GREEN Fri 2 Oct, Regal, Tenbury Wells

ULTIMATE COLDPLAY Fri 2 Oct, Marris Bar, Worcester

LEGENDS OF MOTOWN Fri 2 Oct, Swan Theatre, Worcester

WAYNE DILKS - THE GEORGE MICHAEL LEGACY Fri 2 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

EUROPE Fri 2 Oct, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

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

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

ANTARCTIC MONKEYS + LITTLE JUKE Sat 3 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE DOORS ALIVE Sat 3 Oct, O2 Academy, B'ham

SPACE Sat 3 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

ZION TRAIN + TRANSGLOBAL UNDERGROUND Sat 3 Oct, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

JHARIAH Sat 3 Oct, The Asylum, Birmingham

RED BY NIGHT Sat 3 Oct, The Asylum, B'ham

HORROR PUNK FESTIVAL Sat 3 Oct, The Flapper, Birmingham

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

THE CALIFORNIA DREAMING SHOW Sat 3 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

RAISE YOUR HORNS FESTIVAL Sat 3 Oct, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

BLOOD ON BLOOD Sat 3 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

GARY CAIN Sat 3 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

RNB ORCHESTRA Sat 3 Oct, hmv Empire, Coventry

TALON - THE BEST OF EAGLES Sat 3 Oct, Bedworth Civic Hall

FAUX FIGHTERS UK Sat 3 Oct, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

DEVOTED TO ROCK Sat 3 Oct, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

AC/DSHE Sat 3 Oct, Marris Bar, Worcester

ABBAMANIA Sat 3 Oct, Swan Theatre, Worcester

WILD BOYS - BACK TO THE 80S Sat 3 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

ROVING CROWS Sat 3 Oct, West Malvern Social Club

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

CHRISTIE REEVES Sun 4 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

THE HEELS Sun 4 Oct, Actress & Bishop, B'ham

OTIS KANE Sun 4 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE GARRY ALLCOCK TRIO Sun 4 Oct, Tower of Song, Birmingham

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

EMILIE CULSHAW Sun 4 Oct, The Rainbow, B'ham

AIN'T NO STOPPIN' - THE FUNKY DISCO SHOW Sun 4 Oct, The Dovehouse, Solihull

SMASH 80S Sun 4 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

TIM EDEY Sun 4 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

BROOKE LAW Sun 4 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

ANNABELLE CHAIRLEGS + FREYA ROSE + PERMANENT DAYLIGHT Sun 4 Oct, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

FANFARE CIOCARLIA Sun 4 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry



BRING BACK SUMMER Sun 4 Oct, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

TALON - THE BEST OF EAGLES Sun 4 Oct, Swan Theatre, Worcs

SIMPLY ED Sun 4 Oct, The Civic, Stourport

Classical

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

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

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



AUTUMN IN MALVERN: VIVALDI'S GLORIA Featuring Alison Hunka (conductor), Carl Roewer (bassoon), Daniel Roughly (trumpet), Andrew Caskie (organ), Brittany King, Lara Johnson and Charlotte Moore (soloists). Programme includes works by Mendelssohn & Vivaldi, Sat 3 Oct, Christ Church, Malvern

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

THE RAUTIO TRIO Featuring Jane Gordon (violin), Victoria Simonsen (cello) & Jan Rautio (piano). Programme includes works by Haydn, Beethoven & Schubert, Sun 4 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

Comedy

RICHARD BLACKWOOD, SHAZIA MIRZA, MICHAEL AKADIRI, KYRA GRAY & SHABBA KARIEM Thurs 1 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

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

TROY HAWKE Thurs 1 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

ED PATRICK Thurs 1 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

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

GARY DELANEY Fri 2 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

LAURA SMYTH Fri 2 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

JASON BYRNE Fri 2 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

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

BEN VAN DER VELDE, NICK ELLERAY, JOSEPH EMSLIE & CHRIS BROOKER Fri 2 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

SINDHU VEE Fri 2 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

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

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

HANNAH EAST Sat 3 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

OLGA KOCH Sat 3 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

PAULINE EYRE Sat 3 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

JONATHAN HIPKISS Sat 3 Oct, Crescent Theatre, 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, Birmingham

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

RACHEL BAKER Sat 3 Oct, Cherry Reds, 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

CAITRIONA DOWDEN Sat 3 Oct, Cherry Reds, 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

Theatre

MIDDLE Amateur version of David Eldridge's moving and funny portrait of a fortysomething couple whose marriage hangs in the balance, until Sat 3 Oct, The Loft Theatre, Leamington Spa

UNDERDOG: THE OTHER BRONTË Amateur version of Sarah Gordon's play, telling the story of the Brontë sisters and the sibling power dynamics that shaped their uneven

rise to fame, until Sat 3 Oct, Criterion Theatre, Coventry

THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME Amateur stage version of Mark Haddon's bestselling novel, until Sat 3 Oct, Talisman Theatre & Arts Centre, Kenilworth

THE HOLEY MATRIMONY Amateur version of a new play showcasing 'the highs and lows of grieving', until Sat 3 Oct, The Bear Pitt 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

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

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

THE HAUNTING OF GIBSIDE FOLLY The Clockwork Donkey Theatre Company present Alan Birch's two-act ghost story, Thurs 1 Oct, The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster

GUYS AND DOLLS Five Star Theatre present an amateur version of the classic Broadway musical, Thurs 1 - Sat 3 Oct, The Benn Hall, Rugby

THE BIRDS Swan Theatre Amateur Company present a dark and intense exploration of three characters from different backgrounds who are brought together in exceptional circumstances, Thurs 1 - Sat 3 Oct, The Coach House, Malvern Theatres

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

KRAPP'S LAST TAPE David Westhead stars in Samuel Beckett's classic play, directed by Hollywood actor Stockard Channing, Sat 3 Oct, Bretforton's Theatrebarn, Worcestershire

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

STORM OVER OUR TOWN - MALVERN'S REBEL DAME Rachel Tobin's play brings to life the story of popular 20th-century artist Dame Laura

Knight, Sat 3 - Sun 4 Oct, Malvern Theatres

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

BRIAN BILSTON: HOW TO LAY AN EGG WITH A HORSE INSIDE This 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

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S SCREAM Darkly glamorous celebration of burlesque & cabaret, Fri 2 Oct, Rother Street Arts, Stratford-upon-Avon

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

ONE ENCHANTED EVENING: THE LEGENDS OF BROADWAY Featuring much-loved songs from the 1930s & 40s, Sun 4 Oct, The Loft Theatre, Leamington Spa

BUDDY HOLLY AND THE CRICKETERS Brand-new rock & roll legends show celebrating Buddy's best-loved songs, Sun 4 Oct, Malvern Theatres

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, Fri 2 Oct, Malvern Theatres

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, Sat 3 Oct, Malvern Theatres

SHAUN RIDER: HAPPY MONDAYS & FRIDAYS, & SATURDAYS, & SUNDAYS Sun 4 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

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

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, Bewdley, nr Kidderminster

THE MALVERN CARAVAN & MOTORHOME SHOW Featuring 130 exhibitors, 28 local and national dealers, and 250-plus on-display vehicles, Fri 2 - Sun 4 Oct, Three Counties Showground, Malvern

APPLE HARVEST Learn about the 47 varieties of apple that grow at Hanbury, Fri 2 - Sun 4 Oct, Hanbury Hall, Droitwich

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

PUMPKIN PICKING Fri 2 - Sun 4 Oct, Cotswold Farm Park, Cheltenham

1940S WAR TIME DANCE Join in, dance and soak up the atmosphere from a bygone era, Sat 3 Oct, Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove

AUTUMN WREATH MAKING Make yourself an autumnal wreath to adorn your front door, Sat 3 Oct, The Commandery, Worcester

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

ON THE HOME FRONT 1940S WEEKEND Immerse yourself in wartime Britain across the 19-acre site, Sat 3 - Sun 4 Oct, Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove

OCTOBER AT THE BLITZ MUSEUM Explore what life was like in wartime Coventry, Sat 3 - Sun 4 Oct, Blitz Museum, Coventry Cathedral

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

Gigs

LOTUSBLISS Mon 5 Oct, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

JUSTIN HAYWARD Mon 5 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

CROW BLACK CHICKEN Mon 5 - Tues 6 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

ELANOR MOSS Tues 6 Oct, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

CHRIS WHILE AND JULIE MATTHEWS Tues 6 Oct, Kitchen Garden, B'ham

GALLUS Tues 6 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, B'ham

PARTY101 Tues 6 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

NAILS + ROTTEN SOUND + INVUNCHE Tues 6 Oct, The Asylum, Birmingham

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

MASTER PEACE Tues 6 Oct, Just Dropped In, Coventry

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

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

STOLEN FROM GOD: REG MEUROSS Wed 7 Oct, Kitchen Garden, B'ham

PIXIE MCCANN Wed 7 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

WE ARE SCIENTISTS Wed 7 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

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

A CERTAIN RATIO Wed 7 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

BAEST Wed 7 Oct, The Flapper, Birmingham

JOE & THE SHITBOYS Wed 7 Oct, The Victoria, B'ham

THE TRUFFLE VALLEY BOYS Wed 7 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

WISHBONE ASH Wed 7 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

JUSTIN SULLIVAN + DEAN WHITE Wed 7 Oct, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

EMMA HARNER Thurs 8 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

OSLO TWINS Thurs 8 Oct, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

HANNAH SCOTT Thurs 8 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

SAM TOMPKINS Thurs 8 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

THE HU + SKÁLD Thurs 8 Oct, O2 Academy, B'ham

TABA CHAKE Thurs 8 Oct, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

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

AFRICAN SOUL REBELS Thurs 8 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

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

SILVINGTON Thurs 8 Oct, Catshill Club, Bromsgrove

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

RADIO GAGA Thurs 8 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

SAM BROOKES Thurs 8 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

RAY QUINN Thurs 8 Oct, Albany Theatre, Coventry

WILLIE J HEALEY Thurs 8 Oct, Just Dropped In, Coventry

KLARA DEVLIN QUARTET Thurs 8 Oct, Marris Bar, Worcester

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

BEN ELLIS Fri 9 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

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

ARIES SPEARS Fri 9 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE LAST PIONEERS Fri 9 Oct, O2 Academy, B'ham

JARED BENJAMIN Fri 9 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

IVO NEAME Fri 9 Oct, 1000 Trades, Birmingham

BRIDGE CITY SINNERS Fri 9 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

GARAGE FLOWER Fri 9 Oct, Dead Wax, Birmingham

HUMANITY'S LAST BREATH Fri 9 Oct, The Asylum, Birmingham

MC DEVVO Fri 9 Oct, The Flapper, Birmingham

THE BLOCKHEADS + EXTC Fri 9 Oct, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

THE ACHIEVERS Fri 9 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

CHARLIE WARD + THE MAGPIE + FRANKIE NELSON Fri 9 Oct, hmv Empire, Coventry

THE SMASHED IN PUMPKINS + WEEZER Fri 9 Oct, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

RATTLER Fri 9 Oct, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

MANIAC STREET PREACHERS + STEREOIRONICS Fri 9 Oct, Marris Bar, Worcester

SETH LAKEMAN Fri 9 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester



UK PINK FLOYD EXPERIENCE Fri 9 Oct, Swan Theatre, Worcester

THE COLE PORTER SONGBOOK Fri 9 Oct, Malvern Theatres

INERTIA Fri 9 Oct, The Red Lion, Evesham

SIMPLY RED TRIBUTE EXPERIENCE Sat 10 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

IAN PROWSE Sat 10 Oct, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

OLIVER PINDER Sat 10 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

DAMIAN LEWIS Sat 10 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE LEMONHEADS Sat 10 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

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

ULTIMATE OZZY UK Sat 10 Oct, O2 Academy, B'ham

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

THE UK ROCK SHOW Sat 10 Oct, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

THE MANGOES Sat 10 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

ED BLUNT Sat 10 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

AZIZ IBRAHIM Sat 10 Oct, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

THE SPECIALS LTD Sat 10 Oct, hmv Empire, Coventry

MERYL STREEK Sat 10 Oct, Just Dropped In, Coventry

MORETALLICA Sat 10 Oct, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

PITCH INVASION Sat 10 Oct, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

DARK SIDE OF THE WALL Sat 10 Oct, The Benn Hall, Rugby

NEIL MAYA QUARTET PLAY THE CHARLIE PARKER STORY Sat 10 Oct, The Market Theatre, Ledbury

DOWNLOADED Sat 10 Oct, Marris Bar, Worcester

THE CARPENTERS EXPERIENCE Sat 10 Oct, Swan Theatre, Worcester

THE QUO - AKA - THE 4 ROSSIS Sat 10 Oct, The Valkyrie Bar, Evesham

UB40 - LABOUR OF LOVE Sat 10 Oct, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

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

PJ MORTON Sun 11 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

LEO SAYER Sun 11 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

FAIRPORT CONVENTION Sun 11 Oct, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

MCCARTNEY ALL THE BEST Sun 11 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

EASY 3 JAZZ QUARTET Sun 11 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

ZOE CURE Sun 11 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

THE ASTEROID NO.4 + SUNS OF REST Sun 11 Oct, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

FEROCIOUS DOG + VOODOO RADIO Sun 11 Oct, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

THE BOATMAN Sun 11 Oct, Marris Bar, Worcester

STEELY JAZZ Sun 11 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

THE JONETTES & JUST DUST Sun 11 Oct, The Red Lion, Evesham

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

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

ARMONICO CONSORT Featuring Christopher Monks (director) & The English Cornett and Sackbut Ensemble, Tues 6 Oct, Great Malvern Priory

ROYAL BALLET SINFONIA Featuring Ed Lyon (tenor), Alexei Watkins (horn) & John Andrews (conductor). Programme includes works by Holst, Vaughan-Williams & Britten, Thurs 8 Oct, Malvern Theatres

COLIN LAPUS ORGAN RECITAL Fri 9 Oct, St Mary's Church, Warwick

OPUS13 Featuring Sonoko Miriam Wilde & Edvard Erdal (violins), Albin Uusijärvi (viola) & Daniel Thorell (cello). Programme includes works by Beethoven, Adès & Brahms, Fri 9 Oct, Holy Trinity Church, Leamington Spa

SINFONIA OF BIRMINGHAM Featuring Michael Seal (conductor) & Oliver Janes (soloist). Programme includes works by J Strauss II, Mozart, Tchaikovsky, Sat 10 Oct, St Mary's Church, Warwick

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

IAIN SIMCOCK ORGAN RECITAL Programme includes works by Messiaen & Vierne, Sat 10 Oct, Great Malvern Priory

CHELtenham SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: NORTHERN LIGHTS & RUSSIAN SIGHTS Programme includes works by Shostakovich, Grieg & Rachmaninov, Sat 10 Oct, Pittville Pump Room, Cheltenham

DAME EVELYN GLENNIE IN CONCERT Featuring the New London Chamber Ensemble Wind Quintet. Programme includes works by Farkas, Barber, Tabakova & more..., Sat 10 Oct, Malvern Theatres



Comedy

MARTIN DAVIS, JOE WASSAL, LEE CHARLISH, MARY MOHAN & ASHLEY FRIEZE Mon 5 Oct, The Royal Pug, Leamington Spa

MILO EDWARDS Tues 6 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

EDEN VOSS Tues 6 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

STEWART LEE Tues 6 Oct, Malvern Theatres

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

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

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

LUCY BEAUMONT Thurs 8 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

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

WANTED IMMIGRANTS Fri 9 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

DHARMANDER SINGH Fri 9 Oct, Craft & Culture, Birmingham

KANE BROWN Fri 9 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

MAISIE 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

AISHA AMANDURI Sat 10 Oct, The Victoria, Birmingham

ERIC RUSHTON Sat 10 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

JONATHAN PIE Sat 10 Oct, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

RHYS JAMES Sat 10 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

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

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

CELYA AB Sun 11 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham

NINA SEMPLE Sun 11 Oct, Cherry Reds, Birmingham

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

Theatre

ACROSS THE SQUARE Drama and humour collide in this 1917 period two-hander which imagines a conversation between two sharply contrasting women, Tues 6 & Wed 7 Oct, The Bear Pitt Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

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

THE LADY IN THE VAN All & Sundry present Alan Bennett's true story of an eccentric homeless woman who parked her broken-down van on his London driveway... Tues 6 - Sat 10 Oct, Norbury Theatre, Droitwich

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

BLAZE FM Political theatre featuring grime, garage, drill and jungle tracks, Wed 7 & Thurs 8 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

CALENDAR GIRLS Alcester Musical Theatre Company present an amateur version of the Tim Firth & Gary Barlow musical, Wed 7 - Sat 10 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG Phoenix Theatre Group present an amateur version of the timeless classic, Wed 7

- Sat 10 Oct, The Henrician, Evesham

BLACKOUT Immersive theatre experience, pulling audiences into a world where fear and imagination collide, Fri 9 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

THE INVISIBLE MAN Jonathan Goodwin plays a host of characters in a new version of the famous science-fiction story, Fri 9 Oct, The Civic, Stourport

CHOPPED LIVER & ONIONS Acclaimed play telling the story of Sara Wesker, a woman who led the singing strikers of 1928, stood against fascists, and devoted herself to the Trade Union cause, Fri 9 Oct, The Bear Pitt Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

LEGALLY BLONDE THE MUSICAL Amateur version performed by Starmaker Theatre Company, Fri 9 & Sat 10 Oct, Bedworth Civic Hall

MURDER, SHE DIDN'T WRITE Improvised comedy where the audience become the author and the cast act out a unique Agatha Christie-inspired production live on stage, Sat 10 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

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

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 Mthuthuzeli 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

BALLET THEATRE UK: THE SNOW QUEEN Choreographed retelling of Hans Christian Andersen's classic fairytale, Thurs 8 Oct, Swan Theatre, Worcester

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

BALLET THEATRE UK: THE SNOW QUEEN Choreographed retelling of Hans Christian Andersen's classic fairytale, Sun 11 Oct, The Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

Light Entertainment

WEST END DIVAS: THE LEADING LADIES OF MUSICAL THEATRE Show featuring powerhouse vocals, iconic showstoppers and backstage secrets, Tues 6 Oct, Swan Theatre, Worcester

THE PHANTOMS A journey through iconic musicals, including Les Mis, Jesus Christ Superstar, West Side Story, Miss Saigon and more... Lee Mead stars, Wed 7 Oct, Swan Theatre, Worcester

THE OPERA BOYS - THE FAREWELL TOUR STARRING PAUL POTTS Fri 9 Oct, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

THE BBC BIG BAND: THE COLE PORTER SONGBOOK Featuring special guest vocalist Matt Ford, Fri 9 Oct, Malvern Theatres

RAVE ON 2026 Nostalgic musical experience inviting audiences to step back in time to the 1950s and 60s, Sat 10 Oct, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

LIPSTICK ON YOUR COLLAR Show featuring hits from the 1950s & 60s, Sat 10 Oct, Number 8, Pershore

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

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

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

TRACY BORMAN: THE TUDORS ON TOUR The acclaimed historian hosts a show packed with drama, scandal and stories, using visuals, props and film, Sat 10 Oct, Rother Street Arts, Stratford-upon-Avon

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

DR RICHARD SHEPHERD - TIME OF DEATH - MORE UNNATURAL CAUSES Join the UK's leading forensic pathologist for a dive into the world of forensic investigation, Sun 11 Oct, Swan Theatre, Worcester

Events

WARWICK WORDS HISTORY FESTIVAL Programme of events celebrating 10 years of the festival, Mon 5 - Sun 11 Oct, venues across Warwick

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

THE BIG DRAW: DRAWING SESSIONS Take part in a volunteer-led drawing session, Wed 7 Oct, Croome, Worcester

REACHING NEW HEIGHTS: WORCESTER CATHEDRAL AUTUMN TOURS Discover the rich history of Worcester Cathedral through a programme of architecture, archaeology and graffiti

tours, Wed 7 Oct, Worcester Cathedral

HORSE OF THE YEAR SHOW 2026 Five-day annual event featuring 'thrilling competitions, family favourites and unmissable displays', Wed 7 - Sun 11 Oct, NEC, Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM LITERATURE FESTIVAL 2026 Event bringing 'world-class writers' to the city, Thurs 8 - Mon 12 Oct, The Rep, Birmingham

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

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

PUMPKIN PICKING Enjoy a fun-filled family day out, including PYO pumpkin, pumpkin carving, face painting and lots of selfie moments, Fri 9 - Sun 11 Oct, Cotswold Farm Park, Cheltenham

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

AUTUMN MAKERS' FAIR 2026 Browse a range of stalls offering a broad selection of unique gifts, Sat 10 Oct, Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

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

HARVEST HOEDOWN The estate comes alive with delicious food, artisan crafts, harvest celebrations and a touch of Americana, Sat 10 - Sun 11 Oct, Weston Park, Shropshire / Staffordshire border

HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACULAR Step into a world of glowing trails, mischievous witches and live entertainment, Sat 10 - Sun 11 Oct, Hatton Adventure World, Warwick

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



Ghost, Gore & Folklore Tours - Stratford-upon-Avon

MONSTER MASHUP Featuring a mix of 'thrilling adventures, spooky shows, and monstrously good fun for the whole family', Sat 10 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, West Midlands Safari Park, Bewdley

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

PAUL HOLMAN ASSOCIATES PRESENT

As seen on
Cbeebies
GYASI SHEPPY

OLIVER GRAY

DEAN HORNER

IAN WEICHARDT
aka Mr Ruffles

CHARLOTTE CASTLE

JANINE PARDO

He's back!
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Director JEREMY TUSTIN Choreographer JESSIE ELAN Musical Director ASHLEY POWELL

Gigs

KATHERINE JENKINS Mon 12 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE BLOW MONKEYS Mon 12 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

BIITA HOUDEI Tues 13 Oct, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

DEEP FOREST Tues 13 Oct, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

LEMONCELLO Tues 13 Oct, Kitchen Garden, B'ham

ARRDEE Tues 13 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

JUDE YORK Tues 13 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

CHRIS WILLIAMSON Tues 13 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

KHEMMIS Tues 13 Oct, The Flapper, Birmingham

HUBRIS. + SOLARS Tues 13 Oct, The Rainbow, B'ham

DEAF KIDS + KOMBI Tues 13 Oct, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

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

KAVUS TORABI Tues 13 Oct, Rother Street Arts, Stratford-upon-Avon

BREABACH Tues 13 Oct, The Fleece Inn, Bretchford, Nr Evesham

CHRIS WHILE & JULIE MATTHEWS Tues 13 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

JAMIE MCINTYRE Wed 14 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

MATILDA MANN Wed 14 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

CASPER WALSH Wed 14 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

THE SKINTS + CARSIK Wed 14 Oct, The Asylum, Birmingham

STEVE HACKETT Wed 14 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

YNDLING Wed 14 Oct, The Rainbow, Birmingham

THE SWAPS + EMILIA QUINN + TWO-PIECE BLUES Wed 14 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

MAZ MITRENKO Wed 14 Oct, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

NORTHERN SOUL CLASSIC ORCHESTRA Wed 14 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

BROTHER STRUT Thurs 15 Oct, Hare & Hounds,

Birmingham

PANICBABY Thurs 15 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SHED SEVEN Thurs 15 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE HOOSIERS + HUNNY BUZZ Thurs 15 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

LSD AND THE SEARCH FOR GOD Thurs 15 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

AVICIDE + AZALEAS + BORN HOSTILE Thurs 15 Oct, The Victoria, B'ham

NASHVILLE SOUNDS IN THE ROUND Thurs 15 Oct, Symphony Hall, B'ham

MUSIC OF PETER GREEN Thurs 15 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE BILLY WALTON BAND Thurs 15 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

DAYTIME TV Thurs 15 Oct, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

EVERYONE SAYS HI Thurs 15 Oct, Just Dropped In, Coventry

A DIFFERENT THREAD + NASTEE CHAPEL Thurs 15 Oct, Marris Bar, Worcester

RED RUM CLUB + KEYSIDE + CHERRYHOLT Fri 16 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

DC/UK Fri 16 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

WARREN ZEIDERS Fri 16 Oct, O2 Academy, B'ham

CERI JUSTICE & THE JURY Fri 16 Oct, Tower of Song, Birmingham

LAID Fri 16 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

DARLAH Fri 16 Oct, The Flapper, Birmingham

HUE & CRY + ROACHFORD Fri 16 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

TINA LIVE - THE TINA TURNER EXPERIENCE Fri 16 Oct, The Dovehouse, Solihull

AND FINALLY... PHIL COLLINS Fri 16 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

SAMUEL MOORE Fri 16 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

THE SLEEPOVER SOUNDTRACK + HULA GIRLS + STEREOTYPICAL Fri 16 Oct, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

REEF Fri 16 Oct, hmv Empire, Coventry

THE DE RELAS + ARMY OF SKANKS + THE DREGS Fri 16 Oct, Arches Venue, Coventry

LINDISFARNE Fri 16 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

MICHAEL MANIA Fri 16 Oct, Bedworth Civic Hall

ROBERT VINCENT Fri 16 Oct, The Henrician, Evesham

STRANGERS Fri 16 Oct, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

THE TAKE THAT EXPERIENCE Fri 16 Oct, The Benn Hall, Rugby

GAZ BROOKFIELD Fri 16 Oct, Marris Bar, Worcester

SIGNING OFF UB40 Fri 16 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

THE BEAT Fri 16 - Sat 17 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

WESTLIFE Fri 16 - Sun 18 Oct, Utilita Arena Birmingham

UTAH SAINTS Sat 17 Oct, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

TWIN ATLANTIC + THE XCERTS Sat 17 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE UNDERTONES + THE BEAT FEAT. RANKING JNR Sat 17 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

FELL OUT BOY + BLACK CHARADE + METEORA Sat 17 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

GRUBSON Sat 17 Oct, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

THE SHAMROCKS Sat 17 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CALLING PLANET EARTH Sat 17 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

KATEY BROOKS Sat 17 Oct, Bromsgrove Arts @ Fairfield Village Hall

THE KING'S VOICE - GORDON HENDRICKS Sat 17 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

MISSISSIPPI MCDONALD BAND Sat 17 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

TVAM + PLASTIC ESTATE Sat 17 Oct, Just Dropped In, Coventry

ELVANA - ELVIS FRONTED NIRVANA Sat 17 Oct, hmv Empire, Coventry

CHAPLAIN + CRXSSED OUT + ANIYA FALLS + BRAZEN Sat 17 Oct, Arches Venue,

Coventry

RUBY TURNER Sat 17 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

AN EVENING OF KATE BUSH Sat 17 Oct, hmv Coventry Cathedral

THE SANDY DENNY PROJECT Sat 17 Oct, Rother Street Arts, Stratford-upon-Avon

LUTHER LIVE & VELVET VOICES Sat 17 Oct, Bedworth Civic Hall

XL Sat 17 Oct, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

BORN TO SWING Sat 17 Oct, The Benn Hall, Rugby

GBH + THE SAMPLES + GESTALT Sat 17 Oct, Marris Bar, Worcester

VONDA SHEPARD Sat 17 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

THE ROY ORBISON STORY Sat 17 Oct, Swan Theatre, Worcester

CLOUDBUSTING - THE MUSIC OF KATE BUSH Sat 17 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

P.P. ARNOLD Sat 17 Oct, Kidderminster Town Hall

FALLEN IDOLS Sat 17 Oct, The Valkyrie Bar, Evesham

ART GARFUNKEL Sat 17 Oct, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

JOHN BRAMWELL Sat 17 - Sun 18 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

ELEINE Sun 18 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

BONFIRE RADICALS Sun 18 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

DIRE STREETS Sun 18 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

TOMAS DONCKER Sun 18 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

10CC'S GRAHAM GOULDMAN Sun 18 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

WATERMELON CHRONICLES Sun 18 Oct, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

ELIZA MARSHALL Sun 18 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

MC DEVVO Sun 18 Oct, Marris Bar, Worcester

JOHN KIRKPATRICK & COHEN BRAITHWAITE-KILCOYNE Sun 18 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

DAVE ONIONS Sun 18 Oct, The Red Lion, Evesham

Classical Music

LUNCHTIME ORGAN CONCERT:

TINGSHUO YANG Featuring a performance from the IAO-RCO Organ Competition 2026 winner, Mon 12 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

NDR RADIOPHILHARMONIC HANNOVER: BEETHOVEN & BRAHMS Featuring Stanislav Kochanovsky (conductor) & Ingrid Fliter (piano), Tues 13 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE MUSICAL MENAGERIE: CHELYS CONSORT OF VIOLS & FAIR ORIANA Featuring Penelope Appleyard and Angela Hicks (soprano). Programme includes works by Gibbons, Farmer, Byrd & more..., Tues 13 Oct, St Mary's Church, Warwick

SOPRANO VOICE AND PIANO DUO Featuring Yuanyu Chen (soprano) & Yun-Tzu Tsao (piano), Wed 14 Oct, Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon

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

ORCHESTRA OF THE SWAN: ROMANTIC HORIZONS Featuring Bruce O'Neil (conductor) & Viv McLean (piano). Programme includes works by Strauss, Chopin & Sibelius, Thurs 15 Oct, Warwick Hall

PETER DONOHUE PIANO RECITAL Programme includes works by Bach/Busoni, Schubert, Chopin & Rachmaninoff, Fri 16 Oct, Big School, Malvern College

WARWICKSHIRE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AUTUMN CONCERT Featuring Roger Coull (conductor) & James Willshire (soloist). Programme includes works by Tchaikovsky, Sat 17 Oct, Warwick Hall

I MUSICANTI Featuring Martyn Jackson (violin), Robert Smissen (viola), Ursula Smith (cello), Leon Bosch (double bass) & Peter Donohoe (piano). Programme includes works by Schubert & Hummel, Sat 17 Oct, Big School, Malvern College

THE SPIRIT OF ENGLAND Featuring Piers Maxim (conductor), John Upperton (tenor), Christopher Allsop (organ), Nia Evans (harp) & The Elgar Chorale. Programme includes works by Coleridge-Taylor, Brahms,

Janacek & Elgar, Sat 17 Oct, Great Malvern Priory

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

MALVERN CONCERT CLUB: JESS GILLAM WITH FAR FLUNG TRIO Featuring Katherine Hunka (violin), Dermot Dunne (accordion) & Malachy Robinson (double bass). Programme includes works by Rossini, Marcello, Saint-Saëns & more..., Sun 18 Oct, Malvern Theatres

Comedy

MICK MILLER, MATT PRICE, IAN CRAWFORD & WAYNE BEESE Mon 12 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

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

HANNAH EAST Fri 16 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

NURSE GEORGIE CARROLL Sat 17 Oct, The Wulfrun at The Halls, Wolverhampton

DANIEL FOXX Sat 17 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

SUSAN CALMAN Sat 17 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

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

THE ANASTASIA FILE Drama inspired by one of the most popular historical mysteries of the 20th century. Jenny Seagrove stars, Tues 13 - Sat 17 Oct, Malvern Theatres

PRIVATE PEACEFUL Stage adaptation of Michael Morpurgo's much-loved book, Tues 13 - Sat 17 Oct, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

PYGMALION Worcester Rep present an

amateur version of George Bernard Shaw's famous comic drama, Wed 14 - Fri 16 Oct, Swan Theatre, Worcester

UNDERDOG: THE OTHER BRONTË Malvern Theatre Players present an amateur version of Sarah Gordon's play, telling the story of the Brontë sisters and the sibling power dynamics that shaped their uneven rise to fame, Wed 14 - Sat 17 Oct, The Coach House, Malvern Theatres

LOCOMOTIVE FOR MURDER: THE IMPROVISED WHODUNNIT Totally improvised murder-mystery during which killing the cast and cracking the case is in the hands of the audience, Thurs 15 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

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

THE LUXURIOUS TIME True story recounting the author's life as his partner, the man he loves, succumbs to Alzheimer's disease, Fri 16 Oct, Swan Theatre, Worcester

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 (pictured) stars, Fri 16 - Sat 17 Oct, The Bear Pitt Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon



SWEENEY TODD & THE STRING OF PEARLS Experience the Victorian horror that started the legend of the demon barber of Fleet Street - a tale full of suspense, intrigue and dark humour, Fri 16 Oct - Sat 7 Nov, The Attic 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

MACREADY! DICKENS' THEATRE FRIEND The story of the great Victorian actor-manager William Charles Macready - the man to whom Charles Dickens dedicated Nicholas Nickleby, Sat 17 Oct, The Henrician, Evesham

A COVERT AFFAIR Romantic thriller set

in the Cold War era, Sat 17 - Sun 18 Oct, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

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 jūtaimai 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

BLOCKBUSTERS - THE MUSIC THAT MADE THE MOVIES Soundtracks from some of the greatest films ever made, performed by a West End cast, Tues 13 Oct, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

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

MAGIC & MARVELS Michael Jordan's one-man extravaganza, featuring mind-boggling illusions and heart-stopping circus acts, Sun 18 Oct, The Henrician, Evesham

SUSIE DENT: WORD PERFECT Suzy presents a collection of facts and stories from the wonderful world of words, Sun 18 Oct, Regal, Tenbury Wells

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

AFTER-DARK TOURS Explore by torchlight one of the oldest buildings in Worcester, Tues 13 & Thurs 15 Oct, The Commandery, Worcester

THE RSC SCENIC WORKSHOP TOURS Discover how skilled carpenters, engineers and artists build the world of a performance, Wed 14 Oct, Timothy Bridge Road, Stratford-upon-Avon

REACHING NEW HEIGHTS: WORCESTER CATHEDRAL AUTUMN TOURS Discover the rich history of Worcester Cathedral through a programme of architecture, archaeology and graffiti tours, Wed 14 Oct, Worcester Cathedral

THE BIG DRAW: DRAWING SESSIONS Take part in a volunteer-led drawing session, Wed 14 Oct, Croome, Worcester

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

PUMPKIN PICKING Enjoy a fun-filled family day out, including PYO pumpkin, pumpkin carving, face painting and lots of selfie moments, Fri 16 - Sun 18 Oct, Cotswold Farm Park, Cheltenham

AUTUMN QUILTS FESTIVAL Featuring quilt displays from well-known quilters and textile artists, Fri 16 - Sun 18 Oct, Three Counties Showground, Malvern

TREE FUSION Fused-glass Christmas tree decoration workshop with Suzanne Bunce, Sat 17 Oct, Worcester City Art Gallery & 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

HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACULAR Step into a world of glowing trails, mischievous witches and live entertainment, Sat 17 - Sun 18 Oct, Hatton Adventure World, Warwick

EDITION DOG LIVE A perfect day out for dogs and everyone who loves them, Sat 17 - Sun 18 Oct, NAEC Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

GHOST, GORE & FOLKLORE TOURS Discover how gory and ghostly effects are achieved for the RSC's theatrical productions, Sun 18 Oct, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

MILITARIA FAIR Browse stalls selling the widest range of militaria available in the UK, Sun 18 Oct, Three Counties Showground, Malvern

Gigs

JAKE VAADELAND Mon 19 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

CLANN AN DRUMMA Mon 19 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

SOUL II SOUL Mon 19 Oct, Symphony Hall, B'ham

EZHEL Mon 19 Oct, XOYO, Digbeth, Birmingham

BLUE ROSE CODE Mon 19 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

CINE TOKYO Mon 19 Oct, Marrs Bar, Worcester

GIRL IN THE YEAR ABOVE + RAGEFLOWER Tues 20 Oct, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

FLORENTENES Tues 20 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

FAYE Tues 20 Oct, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

GOLDFORD Tues 20 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

LIME GARDEN Tues 20 Oct, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

FOY VANCE Tues 20 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

DURAN DURAN + PIGEON Tues 20 Oct, Utilita Arena Birmingham

SAMAVAYO + SON OF BOAR + TBA Tues 20 Oct, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

MONDE UFO Tues 20 Oct, Just Dropped In, Coventry

CHRIS WHILE & JULIE MATTHEWS Tues 20 Oct, The Fleece Inn, Bretforton, Nr Evesham

ALICE COOPER Tues 20 Oct, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

FATHER OF PEACE Wed 21 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham

AMIT DATTANI Wed 21 Oct, Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

STEVE PILGRIM Wed 21 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

SEAMUS FOGARTY Wed 21 Oct, West Malvern Social Club

BEL COBAIN Thurs 22 Oct, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

MARGARET GLASPY Thurs 22 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

FAT FREDDY'S DROP + DJ NIGHTMARES ON WAX Thurs 22 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

I PROMISED THE WORLD Thurs 22 Oct, The Flapper, Birmingham

BRYDE Thurs 22 Oct, The Victoria, Birmingham

ALISON MOYET Thurs 22 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

COLDPLACE Thurs 22 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

DAUDI MATSIKO Thurs 22 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

LUKE COMBS UK Thurs 22 Oct, hmv Empire, Coventry

GURRIERS + TRAMHAUS Fri 23 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

NOAHFINNCE Fri 23 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

CATCHING CAIRO Fri 23 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

AIRBAG + LESOIR Fri 23 Oct, O2 Academy, B'ham

BOYS Fri 23 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

LUCY MAY WALKER Fri 23 Oct, Dead Wax, B'ham

STARSAILOR Fri 23 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

GOLDIE LOOKIN CHAIN Fri 23 Oct, XOYO, B'ham

THE ROD STEWART SONGBOOK Fri 23 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

SKY FULL OF STARS Fri 23 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

TRIBUTE TO PHIL COLLINS Fri 23 Oct, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

THE BONESHAKERS Fri 23

Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

THE SOUTH Fri 23 Oct, hmv Empire, Coventry

COUNTRY HITS LIVE Fri 23 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

BLAZE BAILEY Fri 23 Oct, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

METAL FATIGUE Fri 23 Oct, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

ULTIMATE COLDPLAY Fri 23 Oct, The Benn Hall, Rugby

MATT OWENS + RADIOKING Fri 23 Oct, Marrs Bar, Worcester

CREEDENCE CLEARWATER REVIEW Fri 23 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcs



STRONG ENOUGH - CHER TRIBUTE Fri 23 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

JON GOMM Fri 23 Oct, West Malvern Social Club

DEXYS MIDNIGHT RUNNERS Fri 23 Oct, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

TOM ROBINSON WITH ADAM PHILLIPS Sat 24 Oct, Kitchen Garden, B'ham

MOULD Sat 24 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, B'ham

DEBASE INVADERS Sat 24 Oct, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

THE REAL PEOPLE Sat 24 Oct, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

TAFTERDRIVE Sat 24 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

MELANIE C Sat 24 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE CORAL Sat 24 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

BRANDON FLOWERS Sat 24 Oct, O2 Academy, B'ham

UK FOO FIGHTERS Sat 24 Oct, O2 Academy, B'ham

CUD + SANDKINGS Sat 24 Oct, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

CANCER BATS Sat 24 Oct, The Asylum, Birmingham

THE MOUSE OUTFIT Sat 24 Oct, Mama Roux's, B'ham

THE STADIUM ROCK

EXPERIENCE Sat 24 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

INCOGNITO Sat 24 Oct, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

BROWN HORSE Sat 24 Oct, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

ESYA + ANNIE-CLAUDE DESCHÊNES Sat 24 Oct, Just Dropped In, Coventry

NORTHERN LIVE - DO I LOVE YOU Sat 24 Oct, Bedworth Civic Hall

8 FOOT UNDER Sat 24 Oct, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

STRAIGHTEN UP Sat 24 Oct, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

AND FINALLY... PHIL COLLINS Sat 24 Oct, Regal, Tenbury Wells

BLONDISH Sat 24 Oct, Marrs Bar, Worcester

FOREVER SPRINGSTEEN Sat 24 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

THE SHIRLEY BASSEY STORY Sat 24 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

STONE MEADOW Sat 24 Oct, The Valkyrie Bar, Evesham

JON GOMM Sat 24 - Sun 25 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

MARTHA TILSTON Sun 25 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

HOWLIN MATT Sun 25 Oct, Actress & Bishop, B'ham

THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA + NOVELISTS + 156/SILENCE Sun 25 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham

CONWAY THE MACHINE + DARINGER Sun 25 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham

J. COLE Sun 25 Oct, Utilita Arena Birmingham

DAN BUDD AS ROBBIE WILLIAMS Sun 25 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

ANNA MCLUCKIE TRIO Sun 25 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa

FRANKIE VALLI & THE FOUR SEASONS EXP Sun 25 Oct, hmv Empire, Coventry

BIG UP THE 90S Sun 25 Oct, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

LIGHTNING GLASS Sun 25 Oct, Marrs Bar, Worcester

911 Sun 25 Oct, Kidderminster Town Hall

THE BATH INVASION Sun 25 Oct, The Red Lion, Evesham

Classical Music

DOWLAND LUTE SONGS Featuring Toby Carr (lute) & Hugo Hymas (tenor), Tues 20 Oct, Unitarian Chapel, Warwick

CBSO: SYMPHONIE FANTASTIQUE Featuring François Leleux (conductor/cor anglais). Programme includes works by Debussy, Gipsy & Berlioz, Wed 21 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

ZASKA STRING QUARTET Featuring Zinnia Smart & Kalu Ramirez (violins), Sian Cobb (viola) & Aidan Hopkins (cello), Wed 21 Oct, Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon

SERENADES WITH FRANÇOIS LELEUX Featuring François Leleux (oboe) & CBSO Woodwind Section. Programme include 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

RBC OUT AND ABOUT: CIARA THOMPSON (PIANO) Fri 23 Oct, Holy Trinity Church, Leamington Spa

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 film sequel presented in HD, with its thrilling score by John Powell performed live by the CBSO, Sat 24 Oct, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

TARANTARA: A CONCERT IN AID OF GUIDE DOGS A 'choir for all tastes', performing a variety of music from pop to classical and everything in between, Sat 24 Oct, Number 8, Pershore

ORCHESTRA OF THE SWAN: LAST NIGHT OF THE PROMS Featuring Vaughan Williams, Elgar, Parry & more..., Sat 24 Oct, Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon

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

SCOTT BENNETT Mon 19 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

SCOTT BENNETT Tues 20 Oct, Abbey



The Boneshakers - Temperance, Leamington Spa

Theatre, Nuneaton

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

ANGELA BARNES, KATE MARTIN, KAZEEM JAMAL & MATT RICHARDSON Thurs 22 Oct, Evesham Town Hall

CLOSE UP COMEDY Thurs 22 Oct, Rother Street Arts, Stratford-upon-Avon

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



KEVIN BLOODY WILSON Sat 24 Oct, The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

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

TOM STADE Sun 25 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester



Theatre

REWIND: BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA Live music, puppetry and projection combine in a show exploring the life of a young man facing

authoritarianism, Mon 19 Oct, The Rep, Birmingham

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

LIGHTSTREAMS: A NEW PLAY ABOUT MIGRANT CARERS Passionate play about a family and their choices during a global crisis. Inspired by real-life testimonies, Tues 20 Oct, Rother Street Arts, Stratford-upon-Avon

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 Worcester Operatic Dramatic Society (WODS) present an amateur version of the Ben Elton musical, Tues 20 - Sat 24 Oct, Swan Theatre, Worcester

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

LADIES DOWN UNDER Amateur version of Amanda Whittington's tale of friendship, fortune, and the road less travelled, Wed 21 - Sat 24 Oct, The Bear Pitt Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

PRIVATE PEACEFUL Stage adaptation of Michael Morpurgo's much-loved book, Wed 21 - Sun 25 Oct, Malvern Theatres

PIECES OF MY LIFE BY KIRRI RIVIERE Autobiographical story of love, loss and resilience, Thurs 22 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

WHEN DARKNESS FALLS A spine-chilling ghost story inspired by real events, Thurs 22 - Sat 31 Oct, Priory Theatre, Kenilworth

OUR HOUSE Norbury Players present an amateur version of Tim Firth's

award-winning musical - set to the music of Madness, Thurs 22 - Sat 31 Oct, Norbury Theatre, Droitwich

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

BLACK STREET WALL: THE DREAMLAND Powerful new play by visionary playwright and cultural restorer Khareem Jamal, Sat 24 Oct, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

ANNIE MOMO Academy of Drama present an amateur version of the much-loved rags-to-riches musical, Sat 24 - Sun 25 Oct, Rugeley Rose Theatre

CALENDAR GIRLS THE MUSICAL Amateur version of the Gary Barlow & Tim Firth musical, Sat 24 - Sat 31 Oct, Rugby Theatre

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

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

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, Sun 25 Oct, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

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

THE NUTCRACKER Crown Ballet present the much-loved festive favourite to celebrate 20 years of performing, Tues 20 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

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

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 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

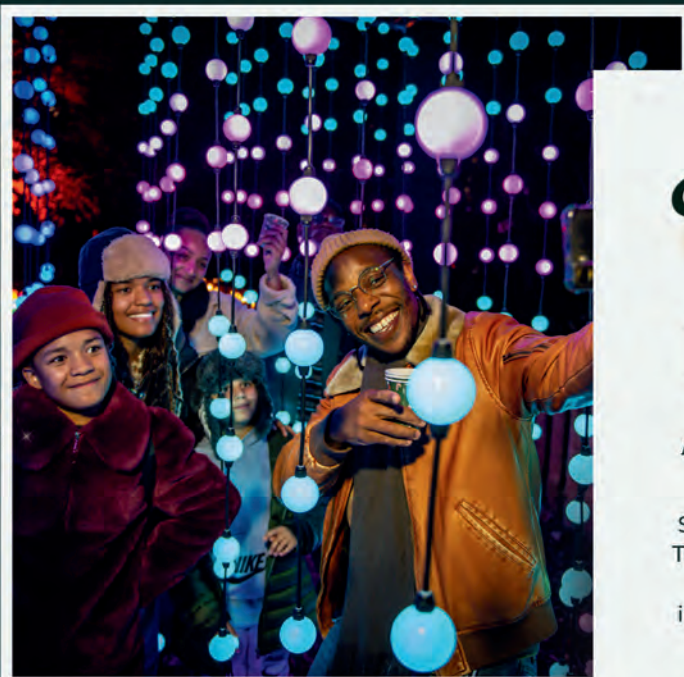


HALLOWEEN IN CONCERT A 'frightening good night of graveyard smash hits', Wed 21 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

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, Civic Hall, Wolverhampton

HALLOWEEN IN CONCERT A 'frightening good night of graveyard smash hits', Thurs 22 Oct, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

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



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.

SING THE MUSICALS Featuring a live band and character singers, performing alongside a huge screen featuring lyrics to help audiences sing along, Thurs 22 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

VOICES OF VALJEAN West End star John Owen-Jones presents an evening of powerhouse vocals and iconic musical theatre, Thurs 22 Oct, Worcester Cathedral

AN EVENING WITH DAVID BRADBURY Expect 'fun, music, magic and shameless name-dropping' from the Harry Potter and Game Of Thrones star, Fri 23 Oct, The Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton

ANGRY BOATER (AKA JOEL SANDERS) DEEP COMEDY FROM SHALLOW WATERS Show featuring a blend of sharp wit, heartfelt storytelling and brutally honest insights about what it is to be human, Fri 23 Oct, The Civic, Stourport

A SWINGING AFFAIR Iconic tunes from Sinatra and the big band legends, Fri 23 Oct, The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster

CARRIE HOPE FLETCHER: THE GHOST LIGHT TOUR The musical theatre star performs songs from her expansive repertoire alongside brand-new renditions, Fri 23 Oct, Worcester Cathedral

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

THE BRAIN BENDING SCIENCE ILLUSION SHOW Join The Magical Mr West and his corvid companion Crowbert on a journey into the brain-bending world of science illusions! Sat 24 Oct, Number 8, Pershore

THE SHIRLEY BASSEY STORY: THE PERFORMANCE OF MY LIFE Barni Scott recreates the power, passion, glitz and glamour of a true British legend, Sat 24 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

Talks & SpokenWord

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

DR JOHN COOPER CLARKE An evening with the Godfather of Punk Poetry, Sat 24 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall

MICHAEL ROSEN: NICE! 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

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

AFTER-DARK TOURS Explore by torchlight one of the oldest buildings in Worcester, Tues 20 & Thurs 22 Oct, The Commandery, Worcester

REACHING NEW HEIGHTS: WORCESTER CATHEDRAL AUTUMN TOURS Discover the rich history of Worcester Cathedral through an engaging programme of architecture, archaeology and graffiti tours, Tues 20 Oct, Worcester Cathedral

WEST MIDLANDS HERITAGE CAREERS EVENT 2026 Bringing together organisations, professionals and students from across the region, Wed 21 Oct, Worcester Cathedral

STATUES OF CROOME WALKING TOUR Discover the iconic features of Croome's parkland on a volunteer-led walking tour, Wed 21 Oct, Croome, Worcester

PUMPKIN PICKING Enjoy a fun-filled family day out, including PYO pumpkin, pumpkin carving, face painting and lots of selfie moments, Wed 21 - Sat 31 Oct, Cotswold Farm Park, Cheltenham



THE MURDER OF OSCAR SPENCE Halloween-inspired murder-mystery night, Fri 23 Oct, West Midlands Police Museum, Birmingham

JACK SKELTON TAP WORKSHOP Learn dynamic choreography in this high-energy tap class, Sat 24 Oct, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

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

SPOOKY SAUCE A night of queer artistry and gruesome fun, Sat 24 Oct, Swan Studio, Worcester

DOGWEEN Celebrate four-legged friends in 'spooky-season style', Sat 24 Oct, FarGo Village, Coventry

CASTLE AFTER DARK Enjoy three 'thrilling' scare attractions within the castle and grounds, Sat 24 Oct, Warwick Castle

MURDER ON THE AIRWAVES - MURDER MYSTERY DINNER Enjoy a three-



Halloween Half-Term - Kenilworth Castle

course meal and use your detective skills to figure out whodunnit, Sat 24 Oct, Hartlebury Castle, Worcester

BRITISH POLE INSTRUCTOR CHAMPIONSHIPS 2026 LIVE FINALS The only UK competition created exclusively for paid pole instructors, Sat 24 Oct, The Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton

LET'S WATCH AND MAKE: MATILDA (1996) Featuring crafts and a classic kids' film, Sat 24 Oct, Coventry Cathedral

OCTOBER AT THE BLITZ MUSEUM Explore what life was like in wartime Coventry, Sat 24 - Sun 25 Oct, Blitz Museum, Coventry Cathedral

HALLOWEEN MAKERS MARKET Shop, eat, explore, and sample some family-friendly Halloween experiences, Sat 24 - Sun 25 Oct, FarGo Village, Coventry

GREAT BRITISH MODEL RAILWAY SHOW Climb aboard for a family-friendly weekend dedicated to model trains and layouts, Sat 24 - Sun 25 Oct, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

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

THE CURSED GUILDHALL Gertie the Witch and her friends have taken over some of the Guildhall, making potions and having wicked fun! Sat 24 - Sat 31 Oct, St Mary's Guildhall, Coventry

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

THE HAUNTED CASTLE With over 15 live shows and attractions, explore over

1,100 years of spooktacular history, Sat 24 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, Warwick Castle

HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACULAR Step into a world of glowing trails, mischievous witches and live entertainment, Sat 24 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, Hatton Adventure World, Warwick

FAMILY TRAIL: FRIGHTFUL FAIRYTALES Hunt for hidden storybooks, collect potion ingredients, and help break spells, Sat 24 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, Worcester City Art Gallery & 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

HALLOWEEN HALF-TERM Join the Great Pumpkin Party, complete with family activities and entertainment, Sat 24 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, Kenilworth Castle

BLAZING HALLOWEEN A 'frightfully fun' family event packed with spooky surprises, Sat 24 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, Drayton Manor Resort, Tamworth

LAND ROVER, 4x4 AND VINTAGE AUTOJUMBLE Buy new, used, old and obsolete parts and accessories from all eras, Sun 25 Oct, Three Counties Showground,

GHOST, GORE & FOLKLORE TOURS Discover how gory and ghostly effects are achieved for the Royal Shakespeare Company's theatrical productions, Sun 25 Oct, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

CALIPSO'S CIRCUS Featuring 'world-class stunts, side-splitting comedy, live vocals and your favourite cartoon characters', Sun 25 Oct, The Civic, Stourport-on-Severn

NATIONAL RESTORATION SHOW Event featuring a massive indoor autojumble, classic cars on display and plenty of expert help, Sun 25 Oct, NAEC Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

YOUNG DRIVER EVENT Under-17 driving school, Sun 25 - Fri 30 Oct, Three Counties Showground, Malvern



Peatbog Fairies - Malvern Cube

Gigs

MATTHEW C. WHITAKER Mon 26 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
MADDIE MORRIS Mon 26 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham
ALEXANDROS TSOUVELAS Mon 26 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham
K-TRAP Mon 26 Oct, XOYO, Birmingham
BEAUX Mon 26 Oct, Mama Roux's, Birmingham
PS HITSQUAD Tues 27 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham
TIGERCUB Tues 27 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham
MOLIY Tues 27 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham
THE KID LAROI + NATE SIB Tues 27 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham
DEARALICE Tues 27 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham
SJ MORTIMER + SAVANNAH GARDENER Tues 27 Oct, The Asylum, Birmingham
NASHVILLE LIVE Tues 27 Oct, Swan Theatre, Worcester
THINK FLOYD Tues 27 - Wed 28 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull
DEAF HAVANA + THE DANGEROUS SUMMER Wed 28 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham
YAELOKRE Wed 28 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham
ALLIE X Wed 28 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham
JEZ LOWE Wed 28 Oct, Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham
KORN + ARCHITECTS + YOUTH CODE Wed 28 Oct, Utilita Arena Birmingham
THE LEGEND OF BARRY WHITE Wed 28 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa
ANNA MASSIE Wed 28 Oct, Temperance, Leamington

Spa
BOB FOX Wed 28 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester
CHINA CRISIS Thurs 29 Oct, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham
A DIFFERENT THREAD Thurs 29 Oct, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham
GOOSEBERRY Thurs 29 Oct, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham
MAX & HARVEY Thurs 29 Oct, O2 Institute, B'ham
THE MARY WALLOPERS Thurs 29 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham
BURNER & BEYOND EXTINCTION Thurs 29 Oct, The Flapper, Birmingham
LADY LESHURR Thurs 29 Oct, XOYO, Birmingham
FAIRFIELD REVISITED Thurs 29 Oct, Catshill Club, Bromsgrove
THE SIMON & GARFUNKEL STORY Thurs 29 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove
THE DUNWELLS Thurs 29 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa
THE GIGSPANNER BIG BAND Thurs 29 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester
A HEAD FULL OF COLDPLAY Thurs 29 Oct, Swan Theatre, Worcester
STVWI Fri 30 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham
ARCHSPIRE + CROWN MAGNETAR + THE ZENITH PASSAGE + ANALEPSY Fri 30 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham
SKINDRED + ALIEN ANT FARM + SPINESHANK, ORGY Fri 30 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham
MARK CHERRIE Fri 30 Oct, 1000 Trades, Birmingham
HIGH FADE Fri 30 Oct, Castle & Falcon, B'ham
MILLIE MANDERS & THE SHUTUP Fri 30 Oct, The Flapper, Birmingham

HALLOWEEN THE CONCERT Fri 30 Oct, Birmingham Town Hall
QUILL FEATURING BEV BEVAN Fri 30 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove
THE BON JOVI EXPERIENCE Fri 30 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa
STEVIE WATTS AND THE WHIRLYBIRDS (FT SHANADE) Fri 30 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa
SHANGHAI TREASON + ROSETTA FIRE + BRIAN STONE & THE MASTERS OF NONE Fri 30 Oct, Queens Hall, Nuneaton
FRANKIE LEE AND THE CASUALS Fri 30 Oct, Macready Theatre, Rugby
ION MAIDEN Fri 30 Oct, Marrs Bar, Worcester
CALLING PLANET EARTH Fri 30 Oct, Swan Theatre, Worcester
PEATBOG FAERIES Fri 30 Oct, Malvern Cube
THE O.B. BAND Fri 30 Oct, The Red Lion, Evesham
THE WONDER STUFF + INSPIRAL CARPETS Fri 30 Oct, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton
JASON DUFFILL Sat 31 Oct, Actress & Bishop, B'ham
RUNAWAY CLUB Sat 31 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham
SLAYYYTER + PEARLY DROPS Sat 31 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham
BLACK PARADE Sat 31 Oct, O2 Institute, Birmingham
NOW I'M HERE - QUEEN TRIBUTE Sat 31 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove
SHOWADDYWADDY Sat 31 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa
BURNING ROPE Sat 31 Oct, Temperance, Leamington Spa
BEATLES COMPLETE Sat 31 Oct, The Bridge House Theatre, Warwick
PLAY/DEAD + THE EXCEPTIONAL MR. HYDE Sat 31 Oct, Arches Venue, Coventry
ELO AGAIN Sat 31 Oct, Bedworth Civic Hall
SKINNY LISTER + GREENMAN RISING + THE HARR + RUMAC Sat 31 Oct, Queens Hall, Nuneaton
GREAT STONE REVIVAL Sat 31 Oct, The Valkyrie Bar, Evesham

Classical Music

SAXOPHONE AND PIANO DUO Featuring Amy Hunt (saxophone) & Gigi Kuo (piano), Tues 27 Oct, St Andrew's Church, Rugby
THE GONZAGA BAND: LOVE'S LABYRINTH Featuring Faye Newton (soprano), Jamie Savan (cornetto), Steven Devine (harpichord & organ). Programme includes works by Monteverdi alongside winning compositions from the 2026 NCEM/BBC Radio 3 Young Composers Award, Tues 27 Oct, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire
BRAHMS' CLARINET QUINTET Featuring Oliver Janes (clarinet), 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
LET'S DANCE! MY FIRST CONCERT Featuring Sophia Kannathasan (violin) & Benny Semp (artist). This relaxed and interactive concert is designed especially for babies, children, and their adults, Thurs 29 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry
CBSO LIVE IN CONCERT: CASINO ROYALE Featuring Caleb Young (conductor), 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
THE ORDERING OF MOSES: NATHANIEL DETT Featuring Coventry Cathedral Chorus, Jim Bate & Michael Karcher-Young (conductors). Also featuring works by Undine Smith-Moore & Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, Sat 31 Oct, Coventry Cathedral
PHILOMUSICA Featuring Linda Parsons (conductor) & Christopher Horner (leader). Programme includes works by Elgar, Parry, Vaughan Williams & Stanford, Sat 31 Oct, Tewkesbury Abbey

Comedy

ALEXANDROS TSOUVELAS Mon 26 Oct, O2 Academy, Birmingham
ABISHEK KUMAR Tues 27 Oct, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham
GASLIGHT COMEDY Tues 27 Oct, The Dovehouse, Solihull
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
MICHAEL AKADIRI Fri 30 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry
JOE PASQUALE, TONY LAW, EDDY BRIMSON (PICTURED) & WAYNE BEESE Fri 30 Oct, Civic, Stourport



CHRIS RAMSEY Fri 30 Oct, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry
FUNHOUSE COMEDY CLUB Fri 30 Oct, Bedworth Civic Hall
CALLY BEATON Fri 30 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester
THOR STENHAUG, TOM HOUGHTON, DAVE LONGLEY & BETHANY BLACK Fri 30 - Sat 31 Oct, The Glee Club, Birmingham
PATRICK MONAHAN, MADELEINE BRETTINGHAM, 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

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

MARJORIE PRIME The Nonentities present an amateur version of Jordan Harrison's story about the age of artificial intelligence, Mon 26 - Sat 31 Oct, The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster

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

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

BARNUM: THE CIRCUS MUSICAL Matt Rawle stars as the legendary 19th-century showman PT Barnum, Tues 27 - Sat 31 Oct, Malvern Theatres

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

OF MICE AND MEN John Steinbeck's classic portrait of two migrant workers during the Great Depression, Wed 28 Oct, Swan Theatre, Worcs

TITS UP - COMEDY PLAY WITH A SERIOUS MESSAGE! Alison Stanley, Crissy Rock and Leah Bell star in 'a powerfully funny and deeply moving play about life, choices, and the bonds that get us through'... Wed 28 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

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

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS Box Tale Soup present a new version of Kenneth Grahame's riverbank tale, featuring puppetry and an original score, Wed 28 Oct, The Collingwood Centre Hall, Rugby

THE BIRDS Swan Theatre Amateur Company present a 'dark, intense exploration' of three characters from

different backgrounds who are brought together in exceptional circumstances, Wed 28 - Sat 31 Oct, Swan Theatre, Worcester

THE SNOW QUEEN Amateur version presented by Stratford Youth Theatre, Wed 28 - Sat 31 Oct, Rother Street Arts, Stratford-upon-Avon

WOMEN OF TROY Amateur production, based on Euripides' Greek tragedy, Wed 28 Oct - Sat 7 Nov, The Loft Theatre, Leamington Spa

AN EVENING WITH JACK THE RIPPER One-man show about the world's most famous serial killer and his horrific crimes, Thurs 29 Oct, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

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

WELL BEHAVED WOMEN - TEEN EDITION Contemporary musical celebrating the many historical women who have fought to have their voices heard and bravely made their mark on the world, Thurs 29 - Sat 31 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

OUR HOUSE ACT present a community-based version of Tim Firth's award-winning musical - set to the music of Madness, Thurs 29 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

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

THE LISTENER Algernon Blackwood's chilling tale draws on the author's own experiences of loneliness and poverty, Fri 30 Oct, Greyfriar's House & Garden, Worcester

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

THE THREE MUSKETEERS Our Star Theatre Company present a swashbuckling tale 'packed with laughter and audience participation', Fri 30 - Sat 31 Oct, Malvern Theatres

DARKLING Titas Halder's epic story of a life ravaged by ecological disaster, Fri 30 - Sat 31 Oct, The Rep, B'ham

GRACIE - THE GRACIE FIELDS STORY A moving portrait of one of the UK's most successful female variety artists, Sat 31 Oct, The Core Theatre, Solihull

Kids Theatre

TRICK & TREAT CIRCUS Scare-free Halloween family show, Mon 26 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE THREE LITTLE PIGS Lost The Plot Theatrical present a brand-new musical adventure for younger audiences, Mon 26 Oct, Regal, Tenbury Wells

TRICK & TREAT CIRCUS Scare-free Halloween family show, Tues 27 Oct, The Benn Hall, Rugby

THE GIANT BUBBLE SHOW Starring the Bubble Wizard in his magical world of bubbles, Tues 27 Oct, Artrix, Bromsgrove

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 - Fri 30 Oct, bp pulse LIVE, Birmingham

UNICORN LIVE! Show for younger audiences featuring pop and musical theatre favourites, dazzling costumes and a real unicorn named Sparkle, Fri 30 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

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

Light Entertainment

JOE MARLER WILL SEE YOU LIVE The England rugby player and Celebrity Traitors contestant is joined by comedian Jake Bhardwaj for 'something far beyond a typical interview', Mon 26 Oct, Birmingham 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, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

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

ELVIS BY CANDLELIGHT Fri 30 Oct, Worcester Cathedral

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

THE GLAM ROCK SHOW - GET IT ON Step back to the golden age of glitter, guitars and big hits from the likes of T.Rex, Slade, Bowie, Sweet, Mud and others... Sat 31 Oct, Palace Theatre, Redditch

LET'S ROCK THE 70'S Big-budget tribute show celebrating the iconic songs and groundbreaking artists of a legendary decade, Sat 31 Oct, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

Talks & SpokenWord

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

DR RICHARD SHEPHERD - TIME OF DEATH - MORE UNNATURAL CAUSES Join the UK's leading forensic pathologist for a dive into the world of forensic investigation, Thurs 29 Oct, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

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

TRACY BORMAN: THE TUDORS ON TOUR The acclaimed historian hosts a show packed with drama, scandal and stories, using visuals, props and film, Sat 31 Oct, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

Events

HARTLEBURY HALLOWEEN HUNT Help find all the miniature pumpkins around the castle grounds, Mon 26 Oct, Hartlebury Castle, Worcester

TAXIDERMY IN ACTION Join a professional bird taxidermist for a unique live demonstration, Mon 26 Oct, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

ROMAN GHOST ADVENTURE Discover

the spooky side of Roman Britain in an event created for children aged between six and 10, Mon 26 - Wed 28 Oct, Lunt Roman Fort, Coventry

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

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

HALLOWEEN PUMPKIN CARVING Choose a pumpkin, scoop it out and carve a spooky design, Mon 26 - Sat 31 Oct, Webbs, West Hagley, Worcestershire

HALLOWEEN PUMPKIN CARVING Children will choose their own pumpkin, scoop it out and carve their own spooky design, Mon 26 - Sat 31 Oct, Webbs, Wychbold, Worcs

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

AFTER-DARK TOURS Explore by torchlight one of the oldest buildings in Worcester, Tues 27 & Thurs 29 Oct, The Commandery, Worcester

GET ARTY: FRIGHTFUL FAIRYTALES Family-focused event. Design and build a pop-up storybook inspired by scenes from favourite tales, Tues 27 - Wed 28 Oct, Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

MY FIRST MUSEUM TOUR: HALLOWEEN EDITION Relaxed and child-friendly tour of the museum, Tues 27 - Thurs 29 Oct, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

COUNT PUMPKINSTEIN'S HALLOWEEN TRAIL Tues 27 - Fri 30 Oct, Hartlebury Castle, Worcester

HALLOWEEN CRAFTS: VAMPIRES & WEREWOLVES Try your hand at vampire and werewolf-themed crafts, Tues 27 - Fri 30 Oct, Hartlebury Castle, Worcester

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

THE BIG DRAW: DRAWING SESSIONS Take part in a volunteer-led drawing session, Wed 28 Oct, Croome, Worcs

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

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



OCTOBER HALF TERM: HORRID HISTORIES Discover 700 years of history, Wed 28 - Thurs 29 Oct, Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove

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 8 Oct, 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

LET'S PLAY! OCTOBER HALF TERM Autumn-themed games and crafts, Thurs 29 Oct, Coventry Cathedral

GET MUCKY GET MAKING HALLOWEEN SPECIAL All the fun of Forest School with a special Halloween twist, Thurs 29 Oct, Compton Verney, Warwickshire

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

CASTLE AFTER DARK Experience three 'thrilling' scare attractions within the castle and grounds, Thurs 29 - Sat 31 Oct, Warwick Castle

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, Crown Plaza, Stratford-upon-Avon

CARPE NOCTEM - THE MUSEUM AWAKENS Featuring dark melodies from DJ Bite Me as he plays Hex and Bass, Fri 30 Oct, Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

MEET THE SCIENCE MAGICIAN Featuring 'spectacular illusions, exciting experiments and interactive demonstrations', Fri 30 Oct, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

FAMILY FRIENDLY TRICK OR TREAT EVENINGS Find and knock on spooky doors to get a trick or treat, Fri 30 - Sat 31 Oct, Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove

THE BABY AND TODDLER SHOW Discover everything you need for the journey ahead, Fri 30 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, NAEC Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

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

MURDER MYSTERY MUSEUM GALLERY TOUR WITH TAT VISION Take a spinetling journey through the museum's galleries, Sat 31 Oct, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

JAGUAR BREAKFAST CLUB Event open to all Jaguar owners and enthusiasts, Sat 31 Oct, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

THE BIERKELLER SCHUNKLERS' BAVARIAN NIGHT 'Fun night of singing, dancing, drinking and more', Sat 31 Oct, The Civic, Stourport-on-Severn

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

SAFARI SKIES DRONE SHOW A display of light, movement and music, showcasing images of the animal kingdom, Sat 31 Oct, West Midland Safari Park, Bewdley, Worcestershire

OCTOBER AT THE BLITZ MUSEUM Explore what life was like in wartime Coventry, Sat 31 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, Blitz Museum, Coventry Cathedral

Lanternfish Theatre Presents...

MIST OVER AVALON

A new play by Tony Peters

Performed by
Susannah Foy

The story of the sorceress
MORGAN LE FAY,
sister of
KING ARTHUR

With original
music
performed live

BEAR PIT THEATRE, Stratford upon Avon
Friday 16 and Saturday 17 October 7.30pm
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40
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"I URGE ANYONE
TO GO AND SEE
THE DEVOUT LIVE"
ALAN WILLIAMS (DEPECHE MODE)

FRI 16 OCT

70s
DISCO

80s
POP

Disco Bliss
DAY PARTY
SAT 17 OCT - THE CELLARS

CELEBRATING 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF
SIMPLY RED
STARRING RED MICK
SUN 18 OCTOBER

The Endings

Celtic folk/punk/rock with an Irish flavour

FRI 23 OCT

GREATEST HITS OF
AC/DC

DIRTY DC

FRI 23 OCT

**THE BIG SATURDAY
PARTY NIGHT OUT!**

SAT 24 OCT

Dan Budd as
Robbie Williams
Live 2026
with his band The Eleventh Hour

TAKE THAT
RULE THE WORLD

**TRIGGER
HAPPY TV**
LIVE

25TH ANNIVERSARY
TOUR

THURS 29 OCT

THE
EMINEM
SHOW

THE ULTIMATE TRIBUTE TO THE WORLD'S
GREATEST HIP-HOP ARTIST

FRI 30 OCT

GO WEST
We Close Our Eyes... And Other Stories

AN INTIMATE
EVENING WITH
PETER COX

SUN 1 NOV

I COULD BE WRONG,
I COULD BE RIGHT.

**JOHN
LYDON**

UNTAMED,
UNSCRIPTED,
& UNCENSORED.

WED 4 NOV

**DON'T YOU
WANT ME?**

THE ULTIMATE HUMAN LEAGUE EXPERIENCE

A TRIBUTE TO
**THE HUMAN
LEAGUE**
LOVE distraction

PLUS SPECIAL GUEST
JIMMY SOMERVILLE

FRI 6 NOV

BACK BY DEMAND

Dart Live
in Concert

PERFORMING THEIR
GREATEST HITS

SAT 7 NOV

INCLUDING THREE TOP 10 HITS
DADDY COOL / THE GIRL CAN'T HELP IT / DRINK OF FEAR
IT'S RAINING / ONE FROM NEW YORK CITY
COME BACK MY LOVE (all from their 1980s
50th Anniversary Box Set)

**K-POP
SUPERSTARS**

SUN 8 NOV

**ERIC
TENETES**

WED 11 NOV

**STUART
MICHAEL**

THE PSYCHIC MEDIUM

THURS 12 NOV

**Definitely
oasis**

**FRI 13
NOV**

SAT 27 JUNE

CELEBRATING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THEIR TRIPLE PLATINUM SELLING ALBUM
20 years **TWELVE STOPS** AND HOME PT.2

THE FEELING

THURS 19 NOV

**FLEETING
RUMOURS**

FRI 20 NOV

GREATEST HITS TOUR

**FAULTY
TOWERS**
Original
the Dining Experience

SUN 22 NOV

THE WORLD'S BEST
P!NK
TRIBUTE SHOW

Vicky Jackson
& HER FULL LIVE BAND!

FRI 27 NOV

**LUKE
GOMBS**
UK

SUN 29 NOV

OFFICIALLY
ENDORSED BY
LUKE GOMBS

The RAT PACK **WED 2 DEC**
Christmas in
VEGAS

David Abney
John Whitley
James "Big" Argent
Ruth Jacobary

AUDIO
THIEVES

FRI 4 DEC

ABBA
GOLD PARTY

GREATEST HITS
FEATURING ABBA REVIVAL LIVE

FRI 4 DEC

erased

ERASURE TRIBUTE

BANANARAMA

SAT 5 DEC

**FROZEN
PARTY**

WITH ELSA & ANNA
FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY

SUN 6 DEC

SUN 6 DEC

Teddy Swims
Ragin' Bone Man

THE ULTIMATE LIVE TRIBUTE PERFORMED BY
SAM MURRAY

**THE
WEDDING
PRESENT**

35TH
ANNIVERSARY OF SEAMONSTERS

WED 9 DEC

The RSC logo is in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font. The background of the poster features a woman in a blue and purple dress standing in a gallery, with two large classical paintings on the wall behind her. The floor is made of light-colored wooden parquet.

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON
1 OCTOBER – 16 JANUARY

A CO-PRODUCTION WITH SECOND HALF PRODUCTIONS

MIDDLEMARCH

PARTS 1&2

BY NINA RAINE
FROM THE NOVEL BY GEORGE ELIOT

BOOK NOW

New Work at the RSC is generously supported by
Hawthornden Foundation and The Drue and H.J. Heinz II Charitable Trust



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