Your FREE essential entertainment guide for the Midlands

PATRICK MONAHAN AT THE ANSTICE

Shropshire

ISSUE 478 NOVEMBER 2026

What's On

FILM I COMEDY I THEATRE I GIGS I VISUAL ARTS I EVENTS

shropshirewhatson.co.uk

inside:

FESTIVE FAVOURITE
BRB's The Nutcracker makes a welcome return to the stage

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What's On

November 2026

CONTENTS

06

13

15

16

19

20

33

35

36

39

43

49

INSIDE:

First Word 4
Gigs 13
Comedy 19
Theatre 20
Dance 35
Film 39
Visual Arts 42
Events 45

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January return for Strictly Come Dancing Live tour

The Strictly Come Dancing Live arena tour is once again hitting the road in the new year - and as usual will be launching with three nights in Birmingham.
Judges Shirley Ballas, Anton Du Beke and Craig Revel Horwood will join presenter Janette Manrara and a new line-up of celebrities and professionals when the show kicks off its tour at the city's Utilita Arena from Friday 22 to Sunday 24 January.
For further information and to book tickets, visit StrictlyComeDancingLive.com

Grand announces new in-house production

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre's next in-house production will be Jonathan Harvey's coming-of-age comedy-drama Beautiful Thing. The production will show at the venue from Thursday 9 to Saturday 18 September 2027. To find out more and purchase tickets, visit the website at grandtheatre.co.uk

Ideal Home Show coming to the NEC next year

The first-ever Ideal Home Show Birmingham will bring 'more than 100 years of home inspiration, innovation and shopping' to the West Midlands next summer.
Running at the NEC from Thursday 10 to Sunday 13 June, the event will include talks, demonstrations, hands-on creative workshops and a line-up of independent retailers. For more information and tickets, visit idealhomeshowbirmingham.co.uk

Emmerdale actor to star in Singin' In The Rain

Emmerdale actor Natalie Anderson will play the role of Lina Lamont in a new touring production of hit musical Singin' In The Rain when it visits Birmingham Hippodrome next spring (Tuesday 11 - Saturday 15 May). To find out more about the show and purchase tickets, head to birminghamhippodrome.com

Popular Telford events set to make a return in 2027

Telford & Wrekin Council has confirmed that a number of the Borough's most popular attractions will make a return next year.

Commenting on the news, Councillor Angela McClements, Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure & Tourism, said: "We have been delighted by the response to this year's events programme. We look forward to welcoming residents and visitors to our remaining events this year and sharing more details about next year's programme in due course."
Information about forthcoming events, including Christmas attractions in Telford, will be published on visittelford.co.uk

Festive spending with Eric

Actor David Graham's popular fictional character Eric is once again taking to the New Vic stage this month to star in Spend, Spend, Spend Eric! (Monday 30 November - Saturday 12 December). To find out more and purchase tickets, visit the Newcastle-under-Lyme venue's website at newvictheatre.org.uk

Design a dragon for Wolverhampton art trail

Artists from across the region are being invited to submit designs for a major public art trail.
Trail Of The Dragons will see 30 large-scale sculptures displayed across Wolverhampton from Monday 5 July to Sunday 5 September. Further information is available by visiting the website at trailofthedragons.co.uk

Two world premieres in RSC's summer season

A stage adaptation of the Virginia Woolf novel Mrs Dalloway is one of two world premieres being presented by the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) in the spring and summer next year.
Joining the production in the RSC's Stratford-upon-Avon line-up of shows are four Shakespeare plays (Coriolanus, Richard II, Romeo And Juliet and The Comedy Of Errors) and a second world premiere, Piranesi, based on Susanna Clarke's 2020 novel of the same name. The programme also features Born With Teeth, a two-hander reimagining the relationship between Shakespeare and fellow Elizabethan playwright Christopher Marlowe.
To find out more about the line-up of shows, visit the Company's website at rsc.org.uk

The magic of Christmas at Shrewsbury museum...

Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery is showcasing Shropshire's creative talent this festive season through a special collaboration with local author, illustrator and artist Sarah Corkill.
The Museum & Art Gallery's Christmas theme will feature Sarah's acclaimed book, The Shrewsbury Fox's Great Adventure. The whimsical tale and its beautiful illustrations have inspired the venue's Father Christmas events and festive gift shop collection.

Erasure on tour...

Synth-pop duo Erasure will head to Birmingham with their Radio!! Radio!! tour next spring, playing the city's Utilita Arena on Friday 30 April.
For further information and to book tickets, visit the website at utilitaarenabham.co.uk

Julian Clary at Theatre Severn

Julian Clary is heading to the Midlands next year with brand-new show Fully Dilated. Commenting on the news, the veteran comedian said: "Are you ready for some filth? I'm going to be talking about things on this tour that would get me flogged in Dubai. And pointed at in Peckham. In this show, I will reveal intimate secrets of my life and share the traumas that have led me to lead the life of a camp comic and renowned homosexual."
Julian stops off at Shrewsbury's Theatre Severn on Thursday 6 May. Tickets can be purchased via the venue's website.

Peter Pan panto... on horseback!

A pantomime with a difference is showing at Much Wenlock's Cavalier Centre next month (Friday 11 - Sunday 13 December), with Peter Pan and Captain Hook battling it out - on horses!
Presented by Leominster-located stunt team Outlaw Entertainments, Robin Hood On Horseback is raising money for the Cavalier Centre's various accessible and inclusive programmes, 'from RDA riding and vaulting to quiet time with a pony'. To book your tickets for the show, visit the website at cavaliercentre.org

Mrs Doubtfire to make another Midlands stop-off in 2027

The hit stage-musical version of much-loved Robin Williams film Mrs Doubtfire will return to the region next autumn, showing at the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Friday 1 to Sunday 17 October. To find out more and book your tickets, visit grandtheatre.co.uk

Alex date for Bianca Del Rio

Drag comedy icon Bianca Del Rio will make a stop-off at Birmingham theatre The Alexandra on Thursday 1 April with her brand-new stand-up show, It Gets Bitter.
For more information and to book tickets, visit the website at myticket.co.uk

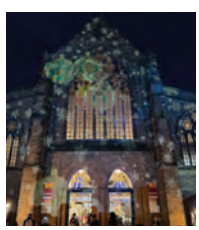
The Fellowship Of The Ring in concert

A concert celebrating the 25th anniversary of Academy Award-winning film The Lord Of The Rings: The Fellowship Of The Ring is coming to the Midlands next month.
The sure-to-be-popular event, which will see Howard Shore's original score performed live to a screening of the epic movie, shows twice at Birmingham's bp pulse LIVE venue on Saturday 19 December - once at 11.30am and then again at 5.30pm. For more information and tickets, visit myticket.gigantic.com

It's A Wonderful Life at Stoke Rep

Amateur theatre company the Stoke Rep Players will be getting into the Christmas spirit early next month when they present a production of It's A Wonderful Life. The show runs at Stoke Repertory Theatre from Tuesday 1 to Saturday 5 December.
For further information and to book tickets, visit stokerep.co.uk

Light, creativity and entertainment at mid-month Walsall Winter MakerFest



Walsall Winter MakerFest, a free-to-attend event 'celebrating the town's creativity, communities and festive spirit in the run-up to Christmas', will take place on Saturday 21 November. The town-centre get-together features a lantern parade, live music, singing, dance, creative performances and hands-on makers' workshops.

The Rep wins big with record-breaking musical

Birmingham Rep's record-breaking and critically acclaimed production of Stephen Sondheim's Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber Of Fleet Street has been named Best Musical Production at this year's UK Theatre Awards. The hit show - which was helmed by the Rep's artistic director, Joe Murphy, and starred musical-theatre favourites Ramin Karimloo, Meow Meow and David Bedella - ran at the venue back in the summer and took nearly £1.4million at the box office. Congratulations to all concerned on a truly magnificent achievement!

Andrea Bocelli to bring new show to the region

Andrea Bocelli will next autumn perform at Birmingham's Utilita Arena in celebration of the 30th anniversary of his breakthrough album, Romanza. Further information about his Wednesday 29 September concert is available at utilitaarenabham.co.uk, where you can also purchase your tickets.

Solstice sin and spirit at Wolverhampton venue...

A 'winter solstice masquerade of sin and spirit' is coming to Wolverhampton Arts Centre on Saturday 21 November.
Taking the title The Frosthorn Krampus Ball, the event 'blends dark fantasy, festive elegance and unforgettable entertainment'. Participants are being encouraged to dress in their 'finest winter finery, devilish horns, elaborate masks or celestial gowns'.
For further information and to book tickets, visit wolverhamptonartscentre.co.uk

Theatre company to take marriage show on tour

Tickets are now on sale for Shropshire Drama Company's latest production, Mixed Doubles: An Entertainment On Marriage, which is this month touring to venues in Wem, Shrewsbury and Church Stretton.
For further information and to purchase tickets, visit shropshiredramacompany.co.uk

Jill Halfpenny stars in The Rise And Fall Of Little Voice

Familiar television face Jill Halfpenny will star alongside Silent Witness actor Francesca Mills when the National Theatre's brand-new production of Jim Cartwright's The Rise And Fall Of Little Voice stops off at the Grand Theatre in Wolverhampton next spring.
The show runs at the venue from Tuesday 9 to Saturday 13 March.
To find out more about the production and book your tickets, visit grandtheatre.co.uk.

Music and comedy in Newcastle-under-Lyme

Newcastle-under-Lyme's New Vic Theatre will play host to two much-loved comedians - Kane Brown and Jack Dee - as part of its programme of entertainment next year. Other 2027 highlights include appearances by musicians PP Arnold, Steeleye Span and The Blockheads... To check out the complete programme and purchase tickets, visit the venue's website at newvictheatre.org.uk

Severn Hospice's Lights Of Love event returns

The annual Lights Of Love remembrance event makes a return at Severn Hospice in Shrewsbury's Bicton Heath next month (Sunday 6 December). The service sees the local community come together for a special evening of music, carols, readings and reflection.
To find out more about the event, head to the website at severnhospice.org.uk/lights

Celebrate Christmas at Wolves' Molineux ground

Wolverhampton Wanderers Football Club's Molineux Stadium has unveiled its Christmas events programme for 2026, with a series of festive celebrations planned throughout November and December.

The venue's Glitterball 2026 programme will feature a range of party options, including Black & Gold shared party nights, private Christmas parties and festive dining experiences.
For more information and booking details, visit events.wolves.co.uk

Forest Live announces Cannock Chase artists

Next summer's Cannock Chase Forest line-up of performers for major music series Forest Live includes Ronan Keating, Blue, Madness, Rudimental, and Pete Tong with his Ibiza Classics show. To find out more and purchase tickets, visit forestlive.com

Comic Tom on tour in '28

Comedian Tom Allen is bringing his new show Totally to the Midlands in 2028.
Tom will visit Stoke-on-Trent's Regent Theatre on Thursday 6 January, Birmingham Hippodrome on Saturday 5 February, the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre on Sunday 6 February and Coventry's Warwick Arts Centre on Saturday 20 May. For further information and to book tickets, visit the website of the relevant theatre.

B:Music
Town Hall & Symphony Hall

NOVEMBER

FILM | UNSEEN FOOTAGE | LIVE MUSIC

Sholay in Concert
01.11 | Symphony Hall

MOZART | WILLIAMS | DVOŘÁK

Flanders Symphony Orchestra: from England to Bohemia
05.11 | Symphony Hall

STAR LINEUP | TRIBUTE | CELEBRATION

Coltrane 100
06.11 | Town Hall

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The Dinosaur That Pooped A Rock Show
08.11 | Town Hall

STORIES | Q&A | BEHIND THE SCENES

A Shameless Night: An Evening with the Cast of Shameless
08.11 | Town Hall

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

SWING | CHARM | FESTIVE

Tony Hadley: The Christmas Big Band Tour
19.11 | Symphony Hall

BOOGIE WOOGIE | SPECIAL GUESTS | JOY

Jools Holland & His Rhythm & Blues Orchestra
20 & 21.11 | Symphony Hall

BERNSTEIN | MAHLER | SEASON HIGHLIGHT

Marin Alsop conducts the Philharmonia Orchestra
22.11 | Symphony Hall

REQUESTS VIA PAPER AIRPLANE!

Ben Folds Paper Airplane Request Tour
24.11 | Symphony Hall

FILM | LIVE MUSIC | FESTIVE

The Holiday in Concert: Film with Orchestra
28.11 & 10.12 | Symphony Hall

BOOKINGS & FULL LISTINGS: **bmusic.co.uk**

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New art space unveiled at Dockworks Waterfront

Digbeth Dining Club's newest food and culture venue has marked its first six months of business by unveiling an art space curated by acclaimed creative brand Black Country Type (BCT).
Dockworks Waterfront, located in Dudley, has collaborated with BCT artist Tom Hicks to curate an area dedicated to showcasing art by local creatives.
As well as displaying Black Country Type's signature work, featuring typography, words, handmade lettering and signs, the space also includes creations by General Blimey, Bag Lord and Claire Buckerfield.

Debbie McGee to star in Grease The Musical

The late Paul Daniels' wife and one-time magician's assistant, Debbie McGee, is to star as Miss Lynch when a new touring production of Grease The Musical visits the West Midlands next spring.
The hit show stops off at the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Monday 17 to Saturday 22 May, then spends the following week at the Regent Theatre in Stoke-on-Trent (Monday the 24th - Saturday the 29th). The production returns to the West Midlands region next autumn, showing at The Alexandra in Birmingham from Monday 18 to Saturday 23 October.
To find out more and purchase tickets, visit the website GreaseTheMusicalOnTour.com

Lichfield Garrick Theatre launches Creative Hub

Lichfield Garrick Theatre has unveiled its brand-new Creative Hub.
Located just a stone's throw from the Garrick building, the Hub provides a versatile space in which to hold workshops, exhibitions, classes and meetings.
Commenting on the venue's launch, the theatre's artistic director and CEO, Daniel Buckroyd, said: "Having this space means that we can both expand the opportunities we offer the communities we serve here in Staffordshire and play a bigger role in the creation of new works that will inspire and engage audiences in the years ahead."
For more information about how to hire the space, contact hello@lichfieldgarrick.com

Acclaimed composer to conduct seasonal favourites

A concert conducted by acclaimed composer Sir Karl Jenkins is among the festive-season treats on offer at Birmingham's Symphony Hall next month.
Taking place at the venue on Sunday 20 December, Christmas With Sir Karl Jenkins features a programme of timeless seasonal favourites presented alongside some of Sir Karl's most celebrated music, including Benedictus from The Armed Man.
To check out Symphony Hall's full line-up of Christmas concerts, visit bmusic.co.uk

New exhibition highlights tapestry connection

More than 140 years after a group of women brought the story of the Bayeux Tapestry to the town of Leek, a new exhibition is set to turn the spotlight on their extraordinary achievement.
The Bayeux Tapestry: Stories Through Stitch - which opens at the Nicholson Institute Museum & Art Gallery in Leek on Monday 11 January - will explore the fascinating but little-known connection between the Staffordshire Moorlands and one of the world's most famous historical artworks.
The exhibition will remain available to view until Wednesday 31 March.

Festive Dachshund event returns to Alderford Lake

The Dachshund Christmas Extravaganza returns to Alderford Lake on Sunday 29 November, offering dog lovers the chance to visit dog-related stalls and chill out in a dog-friendly cafe. A meeting with, er, Santa Paws(!) is also part of the package. All dog breeds are welcome, with more information about the venue available at alderford.com

Local company present Arthurian legend in Stoke

Local ensemble Claybody Theatre will next month present a new stage adaptation of Arthurian legend Sir Gawain And The Green Knight at Stoke-on-Trent venue The Dipping House. The production runs from Friday 4 to Sunday 20 December. For more information and tickets, visit claybodytheatre.com

Embers Fire Festival back in Ironbridge in the spring

Telford & Wrekin Council has confirmed that Embers Fire Festival will return to Dale End Park in Ironbridge for a second year on Saturday 1 & Sunday 2 May. Organised in partnership between the council and Embers Café Ironbridge, the event will be hosted by live-fire specialist Adam Purnell, also known as The Shropshire Lad. To find out more, visit the website at embersfirefestival.co.uk

Stoke orchestra to team up with local songwriters

The City of Stoke-on-Trent Symphony Orchestra will reimagine original songs by two local singer-songwriters - Julia Mosley and Hannah Sophie - when it presents a concert at St Giles' Church in Newcastle-under-Lyme this month (Saturday 21 November). Tickets are available now from @honeyboxlive on social media.

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Bill Bailey: Vaudevillean

Tue 10 Nov

Experience the magic of an Irish Christmas

Christmas in Ireland

Fri 13 Nov

Omigod, the hit musical is here

Legally Blonde

Tue 17 – Sat 21 Nov

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Dirty Dancing

Tue 24 – Sat 28 Nov

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Snow White

Fri 11 Dec – Sun 3 Jan

Victoria Hall

Iconic music performed by an orchestra

Classically Kate Bush

Sun 8 Nov

Step inside music history

The Cavern Club Story

Fri 20 Nov

The Phili soul group are back

The Stylistics

Thu 26 Nov

The golden era of R'n'B

Luther Live & Velvet Voices

Sat 28 Nov

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SCAN TO BOOK

NED TALK

by Steve Adams

Image credit: Alfie Harco

Jonn Penney, frontman of iconic Stourbridge indie rockers Ned's Atomic Dustbin - and 'accidental rock star' - discusses the lyric book he's written about the band's music...

Hard as it might be for some older readers to accept, iconic Stourbridge rock band Ned's Atomic Dustbin celebrate their 40th anniversary next year. Having initially split up in 1995 after releasing just three albums, the band has been an on-off concern almost ever since, habitually getting back together to play shows to long-term fans as well as those new to the tunes of their early-90s pomp.

It's a scenario that singer Jonn Penney claims works well for all concerned. The self-effacing frontman, who has been a stalwart of the Midlands arts scene for three decades, says treating the band as a hobby has removed the stress that caused them to call it a day in the first place.

"We've had two phases," he says. "The phase where we were a record-releasing and writing band, and now, when we're just a performing band. We don't write anymore. We had to put that to one side because, at the end, we became incapable of writing together - and that was the thing that kind of finished us."

The band's musical legacy amounts to 56 songs - a mix of singles, B sides, EPs and three albums - all released between 1990 and 1995. Jonn, who penned the words to all the tunes, has now written Self-ish, a 'lyric book meets autobiography' that gathers them all together. The publication was partly prompted by his children wanting to know about his life as a rock star.

"My kids were forever saying 'tell us about the band, tell us what you did.' I wouldn't know where to start, you know... I did this and I did that, and sometimes I'd be interested in something and sometimes I wouldn't."

Hardly an auspicious jumping-off point, the notion of writing a book was further hampered by Jonn being rather more reserved than the typical rock star. Despite enjoying "showing off and demanding attention" while on stage, away from the limelight he's pretty much the opposite.

"I never really enjoyed talking about me that much. One of our Achilles' heels when we shot to fame was that people suddenly wanted to get to the bottom of Jonn Penney, and I felt quite uncomfortable with that. A big part of it was that I didn't have a massive opinion of myself, and never will. That's a great leveller and a good way to live, but when people have got paper space to fill but nothing to fill it with, it's a bit of a difficulty."

The singer warmed to the task of writing the book when he decided it could be less about him and more about the songs he wrote.

"Talking constantly about myself is not exactly my idea of fun, so I decided to write a lyric book instead, because my words in our songs are what I'm most proud of. Hopefully, by reflecting on those words, I can reveal to Neds fans what was happening with the band and my own life at specific times in our story - and why."

The book takes its title from one of Jonn's favourite Ned tunes ("very much about being introspective, but also being brave enough to be yourself, so a nice fit really") and covers all the songs in chronological order, each getting its own chapter. The chapter lengths vary dramatically, from four lines long to eight pages ("because that's what I remember"). The whole thing looks fantastic, courtesy of beautiful designs by the same person who created Ned's logo and much of the band's artwork.

"I love that it's gone from a quick read to a coffee-table book," says the author, who admits that another benefit to basing everything around the lyrics is that he didn't feel the need to provide a definitive history of the band, fact check every element or clear it with all parties concerned.

"Happily I found a format that kind of bypasses a lot of that stuff and disclaims any inaccuracies. Basically it's all about the lyrics, and I'm going on what my memory tells me happened. But there's a dirty great disclaimer that says I could be wrong about some of these stories."

Deciding that "nothing was so crucially important that I had to get it exactly bang on" also gave him the freedom to write the way he wanted to.

"I felt like I could just take my written voice naturally and not worry about any constraints. And there's parallels with when we wrote the songs, in that I wrote my best lyrics when I was most relaxed.

"When I was with the boys and they were coming up with these fantastic tunes, the words just burped out of me. I didn't write outside of the rehearsal room; I wrote them all on the spot because I was inspired by the music."

Writing the book was more fun than Jonn expected it to be, and he admits being the "50-odd-year-old self looking at my 20-odd-year-old self" was illuminating as well as therapeutic. It's not only given him a sense of closure about the way the band originally ended, but a clue as to why they were successful in the first place - something he's keen to pass along.

"I had this urge to tell people 'if *I* could do this - the person that I am, with the issues I had - then so could you'. Without wanting to be a motivational speaker, I guess I'm just trying to say 'follow your nose and have a bit of belief because it's amazing what can happen if you just let yourself be.' It's a massive lesson for any kid - well, for *anybody* - to learn.

"Also, you may think you need to be a certain person and do certain things to succeed, but you can succeed by being yourself. From where I'm sitting, the people who are able to be themselves generally get on better in a creative world."

And judging by the initial response to the book, his mantra has paid off.

"I held my breath a bit when it came out, but the reaction has been fantastic. It's been amazing, and people are saying all the lovely stuff you want to hear,

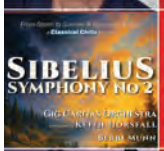
"I couldn't be any happier with it. It just feels like a piece of art, and it feels like a legacy. I've been able to be honest and straightforward, and I've revealed a lot about myself."

Jonn Penney's book, Self-ish, is available from threadsatomicdustbin.com/shop

THE DUDLEY COMEDY ALLSTARS
Friday 6 November

IN THE NAME OF LOVE: THE DIANA ROSS STORY
Friday 13 November

PETER COX (GO WEST)
Saturday 14 November



CLASSICAL CHILLS
Sunday 15 November

DOM JOLY - TRIGGER HAPPY TV, THE 25th ANNIVERSARY TOUR
Friday 20 November

K-POP DANCE HEROES
Saturday 21 November

WONDERS OF OUR UNIVERSE THE NEXT CHAPTER
Sunday 29 November

DEAR SANTA LIVE
Various December Dates

GODON HENDRICKS - THE KING'S VOICE CHRISTMAS SPECIAL
Saturday 5 December

THE WONDER OF CHRISTMAS
Monday 7 December

THE DRIFTERS
Friday 11 - Saturday 12 December

THE BIG POP PARTY
Saturday 12 December

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Walsall Arena and Arts Centre

November

Supreme Queen
Fri 13 Nov 7.30pm £32.00

December

Beauty & The Beast - Christmas Pantomime!
5 - 20 December
various times £15-18

January

Luther Live & The Velvet Voices
Fri 15 Jan 7.30pm £29.00

We Three Kings
Thurs 21 Jan 7.30pm £24.00

Always Jovi
Fri 29 Jan 7.30pm £28.00

Some Guys Have All The Luck
Sat 30 Jan 7.30pm £29.00

February

Drag Me To The 80s
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March

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Dan Owen

Katie Fitzgeralds, Stourbridge, Fri 20 November

Shrewsbury-born singer Dan Owen thought he'd be spending his life *making* guitars rather than playing them, but a workshop accident that damaged his left eye - leaving him unable to carry out any fine-detail craftwork - changed all that.
Celebrated for his arresting, husky vocals and a sound that fuses blues roots with modern rock, alternative songwriting and Americana, Dan visits Stourbridge having earlier this year released his third studio album, Neptune.

Echo & The Bunnymen

The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton, Fri 13 November

Hailing from Liverpool, rock band Echo & The Bunnymen have released 13 studio albums across almost half a century. Following Ian McCulloch's departure in 1988, the tragic loss of drummer Pete de Freitas on a Staffordshire road the following year, and a split in 1993, the band regrouped three years later and have since released seven albums, to varying degrees of success.
Their Wolverhampton gig comes as part of a short UK tour in support of Apples For Isaac, their first album of new material in 12 years.

Jools Holland And His Rhythm & Blues Orchestra

Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Thurs 19 November

Although originally finding fame in 1970s new-wave band Squeeze, Jools Holland is best known as a broadcaster who boasts an infectious enthusiasm for all kinds of music (his well-established BBC TV show has long championed an eclectic mixture of styles and genres). Jools' own talent on the piano is immense, his attitude towards his famed Rhythm & Blues Orchestra friendly and egalitarian. The result is a wonderfully joyous celebration of music, and a sound to which you can't help but tap your feet...
Jools and the gang are joined for this Stoke-on-Trent appearance by special guests Roachford and guest vocalists Ruby Turner, Louise Marshall and Sumudu Jayatilaka.

Baskery

LOOP, Shrewsbury, Thurs 19 November

Comprising three Swedish sisters - Greta, Stella and Sunniva Bondesson - who've been creating music since they were old enough to hold an instrument, Baskery play a combination of classic roots music and Americana, in the process generating a sound that oozes style and playfulness.
The self-titled Queens of Banjopunk have released six albums to date, the most recent being 2024's The Young Sessions.

Happy Mondays

Keele SU, Staffordshire, Fri 13 November

If ever you could guarantee that a gig would prove to be a cracking night out, a Happy Mondays gig is probably that gig.
The Mondays were surely the maddest band on the legendary late-80s 'Madchester' scene. Formed in 1980, by the end of the decade they were heading out on world tours and garnering praise from the likes of Sir Paul McCartney, who compared them to The Beatles during their mindbending Strawberry Fields phase.
Well known for their hard-partying ways, it's quite amazing that maraca player, dancer and band mascot Bez is still in a fit state to tour with the group, so spectacular were his excesses - even by lead singer Shaun Ryder's standards!

The Feeling

The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury, Thurs 19 November

The Feeling are stopping off at Shrewsbury's Buttermarket venue to celebrate the 20th anniversary of their multi-million-selling debut album, Twelve Stops And Home.
"It's an album that changed all our lives as a band," says frontman Dan Gillespie-Sells. "The success of Twelve Stops And Home allowed us to continue working and playing together for another 20 years, and we're still the best of mates. Celebrating this album is going to be so much fun. I can't wait to play it and sing along with you all!"

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St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury
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St Peter's Church, Wolverhampton
Thu 10 Dec, 7pm

St Martin-in-the-Fields, London
Fri 11 & Mon 14 Dec, 7pm

Hereford Cathedral
Wed 16 Dec, 7pm

Coventry Cathedral
Thu 17 Dec, 7pm

Great Hall, University of Birmingham
Fri 18 Dec, 7pm

St Paul's Church, Birmingham
Sat 19 Dec, 7pm
Mon 21 Dec, 7pm
Tue 22 Dec, 7pm

Flanders Symphony Orchestra

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Thurs 5 November

Belgium's highly regarded Flanders Symphony Orchestra here get their teeth into much-loved works by four composers. Widely acclaimed French violinist Alexandra Soumm (pictured) is the soloist for both Mozart's fifth Violin Concerto and Ralph Vaughan Williams' The Lark Ascending. The latter is one of two pastoral idylls of pre-First World War England which are featured in the concert, the other being A Shropshire Lad by George Butterworth. The concert programme is completed by Dvořák's Eighth Symphony, a work in part inspired by the folk traditions of the composer's native Bohemia...
Much-in-demand British conductor Duncan Ward is the man with the baton.

BBC Philharmonic

Victoria Hall, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, Fri 6 November

Residing at the Corporation's Manchester home of Media City in Salford Quays, the BBC Philharmonic is no stranger to Stoke-on-Trent, regularly presenting Victoria Hall concert-goers with works from its impressive repertoire.
This latest visit to the Potteries sees the orchestra getting to grips, in inevitably impressive style, with Beethoven's Piano Concerto No3 and Tchaikovsky's evocative 'Winter Dreams' symphony.
The conductor and soloist is award-winning South Korean pianist Sunwook Kim (pictured).

CBSO: Beethoven's Violin Concerto

Birmingham Town Hall, Sun 29 November

Ludwig van Beethoven gets a whole concert to himself at the end of the month, when the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO) perform four works which represent the composer at his romantic and dramatic best.
Three overtures - Leonore, Egmont and Coriolan - are followed by his 1806 Violin Concerto, a work which was so fussy and difficult that critics initially deemed it unplayable by all but the very finest of soloists. Indeed, it would be nearly half a century before the concerto would become part of the standard concert-hall repertoire. The CBSO's very own Eugene Tzikindelean (pictured) here plays the solo part in what has since become one of Beethoven's best-loved compositions. The talented Romanian also takes on conducting responsibilities for this mid-afternoon concert.

Marin Alsop & The Philharmonia Orchestra

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Sun 22 November

The trailblazing Marin Alsop makes a welcome return to Birmingham as the principal guest conductor of the world-class Philharmonia Orchestra.
A passionate advocate for female conductors, Marin here picks up the baton for a performance of Leonard Bernstein's Serenade (after Plato's Symposium), a series of musical dialogues between orchestra and solo violin (played by Esther Yoo). Also featuring on the concert programme is Mahler's sixth symphony, a work which has been described as a monumental tour-de-force.

The Welsh Chamber Orchestra

St Magdalene Church, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire, Thurs 26 November

Wales' only professional chamber orchestra are celebrating their 40th anniversary this year and visit Bridgnorth as part of a tour of the Marches area.
A Shropshire Music Trust event, the concert will see them performing a programme that includes works by Clara Schumann, Fanny Mendelssohn and Morfydd Owen. A new work by Susie Self for baritone and orchestra also features.

BORROWERS TIME

There's a family of tiny people - and the promise of a big show - at Staffordshire's New Vic Theatre this Christmas...

By Steve Adams

This year's Christmas show at the New Vic Theatre sees a welcome return for Artistic Director Theresa Heskins' 2014 adaptation of children's fantasy tale The Borrowers. And the critically acclaimed show isn't the only 'revival' to be presented at the Newcastle-under-Lyme venue in 2026 - to mark its 40th anniversary, the theatre has been revisiting some of its most popular productions. What's On caught up with Theresa to find out more...

"When I came here, I had a list of five plays that I thought we couldn't do 'in the round'. The Borrowers was one of them."

Theresa Heskins, artistic director of the New Vic Theatre, has never been one to shy away from a challenge, as her work at the Staffordshire venue - one of the UK's handful of permanent in-the-round theatres - emphatically confirms. Recent productions have featured trains, boats and an elephant (Around The World In 80 Days), tunnels in POW camps (Tom, Dick & Harry), acrobatic canines (The Company Of Wolves) and even swimmers with tails instead of legs (The Little Mermaid).

Theresa laughs when I mention the absurd levels of ambition that have become characteristic of her work.

"It's so lovely to hear that thought - thank you! We do want to make sure audiences are being constantly surprised and delighted by what they find here, and part of that is the scale of ambition that we try to achieve."

This year's Christmas production, The Borrowers, shares that same aspiration, just as it did before, since it's the revival of a production that was first staged in 2014. It's being brought back as part of the theatre's 40th anniversary celebrations, which have been taking place for most of the year, with a selection of audience favourites returning for an encore.

"To celebrate the 40 years, we thought we should do some of the shows that have made the biggest impact or been the most popular," explains Theresa. "We asked people what shows they should be, and we've been doing them all year. We did Good Golly Miss Molly in the spring, and in summer we did Around The World In 80 Days, which was one of the most lovely experiences to bring back again.

"When we asked what Christmas show people would most like to see, we were really delighted as well as surprised that the answer was The Borrowers, which was a really memorable production.

"I've had a lovely time revisiting these gorgeous shows, but with new audiences as well - 80 per cent of the people who came to Around The World In 80 Days hadn't been to see it before."

It's been 12 years since the original production of The Borrowers, so Theresa - who celebrates two decades at the venue next year - is expecting a similar split between original and first-time audience members.

"I think we'll find, like we did with 80 Days, that people who saw and loved it are now bringing their children along, who were young before but are now teens and young adults. And of course there'll be a whole new cohort of school children."

Adapted from the children's fantasy novel by Mary Norton, the show tells the story of the miniature Clock family, who secretly live beneath the floorboards of a regular human home, surviving by 'borrowing' items from the house above. The Clocks' existence is threatened when a member of the family is spotted by one of the house's habitants, leading to an exciting chase-fuelled story that mixes adventure and bravery with family and friendship. Throw in some lively music by James Atherton and it's the perfect festive family show, following the theatre's tradition of providing an alternative to the seasonal pantomime.

"When I came to the Vic, it was already established that the Christmas show would explore children's literature," says Theresa. "What was interesting for me is that I didn't come from a family who did reading, so I was doing shows without ever having read [the books] as a kid.

"I've been so lucky to be able to catch up on all that. And to think about those stories, not from the lens of my own past and how they impacted me when I was a child, but what they mean for people here locally, and the young people who might be our audiences.

"So it's been a real joy to discover all these stories and think about how to bring them to the stage."

Since they're children's books, they largely live in the imagination - doesn't that make them impossible to stage?

"Ha! Yeah, exactly - almost all of them! But one of the lovely things about being 'in the round' is that it invites the audience to use their imaginations. They're very aware of being in the space, and they can see each other, and a kind of creative collaboration takes place."

Theresa says audiences can expect a number of changes from the show's original incarnation, including an all-new (and bigger) cast, expanded climbing scenes ("we're bringing in an aerial circus specialist to help us to polish them up a bit"), more music and "clearer and crisper sound", courtesy of a new sound system installed over the summer.

"It's been a nice opportunity to brush it up and do something a little bit new with it," she says, noting that the show's fantastic props include a giant toothbrush, as well as a huge safety pin and enormous cheese grater.

"They're taller than I am, but they actually work! On the other hand, we've got this beautiful model village of tiny little houses - you can look into the windows and see fully fitted kitchens and even a bath with bubble bath in."

The theatre's configuration means audiences will have a chance to do just that when they're filing in and out of their seats. Theresa is hoping it adds to the magic, as well as reaffirming the quality of the work being produced by the venue, which continues to punch above its weight on the world stage. Its latest success saw a 2024 co-production of The Princess And The Pea being performed on Broadway, as well as at the Southbank Centre in London.

"We never thought a show like that would play a venue of that scale," she says, with more than a hint of glee. "Having started here, it's been so exciting to see it going further afield and meeting new audiences.

"I'm so proud of the work being made here by people who live locally, as well as for local audiences to know that it's out there on the international stage, doing our area credit. The Potteries is a place that traditionally exported its culture to the rest of the world, and I'm really proud that we're following in that tradition."

Theresa's positivity clearly extends to the upcoming production, which is proving so popular that its run has already been extended way beyond the traditional festive season.

"I think we've now got one of the longest-running Christmas shows in the country, and it's just down to audience demand," she says, acknowledging that focusing on families and festive values, rather than Santa Claus or presents, will hopefully work in its favour come mid-January.

"We have those values that celebrate Christmas - for example, families that have been parted coming back together, which is a strong theme in all of our lives at this time of year - but also a story that will tide us through into January, where we don't have all that warmth and tradition. It can be quite a bleak month where people need a bit of cheering up, and I think we'll manage to do that!"

The Borrowers shows at the New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, from Friday 13 November to Saturday 23 January

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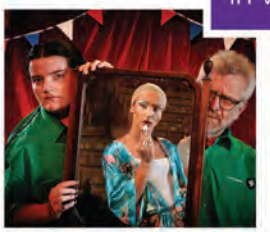

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Patrick Monahan

The Anstice, Madeley, Shropshire, Thurs 12 November

Half Iranian, half Irish stand-up comic Patrick Monahan is no slouch when it comes to bringing up the subject of his own ethnicity on stage. And why would he be... his material includes a quality joke about having to spend the whole of his holiday in customs - and he's not afraid to use it!
"I guess I like to think that maybe I'm breaking down stereotypes," explains Patrick, who's eager to make it clear that his comedy isn't just political. "I think it's important to look for positive stuff in life. Focusing on the bad stuff all the time would mean that the only people who'd come to my shows would be the ones who thought the end of the world was nigh!"

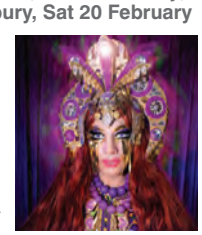
Comedy All Stars

Dudley Town Hall, Fri 6 November

Dudley's ever-popular evening of high-quality comedy makes a welcome return.
The show's latest line-up of laughter merchants features Fern Brady (pictured), Iain Stirling, Phil Ellis and Paul Sinha.

Ginger Johnson

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 14 November; Lichfield Garrick, Sat 6 February; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sat 20 February



Ginger Johnson is promising an evening that's outrageous, untamed and completely off the reins - which is pretty much exactly what fans would expect from the much-loved RuPaul's Drag Race UK winner and Celebrity Masterchef champion.
Publicised as 'a surprisingly psychedelic adventure into the outer reaches of Ginger's tiny little mind', Show Pony offers a winning blend of high-camp ridiculousness and whip-smart comedy, all cleverly presented by a performer who was once described as 'the unholy drag spawn of Evel Knievel, Lucille Ball and Danny La Rue'.

Jonny Cole

Utilita Arena Birmingham, Tues 3 November

Comedian Jonny Cole's seemingly meteoric rise has seen him graduate from the back rooms of pubs in his native Black Country to comedy clubs, theatres and - for one night only this month - Birmingham's Utilita Arena. His overnight success has actually been a decade in the making, and the former diesel salesman is determined not to leave anything in the tank. So much so, in fact, that he's even given up alcohol.
"I'd get very drunk before going on stage. I mean *really* drunk. So that just had to stop. I came from a rock & roll background, where you'd get hammered and then go and play. When I transitioned into comedy, no one told me that wasn't the gig. One night, when I was warming up for Joe Lycett, I drank a whole bottle of JD Honey. I then went on and did the same song three times!"

Rosie Holt

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Fri 6 November; Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, Thurs 19 November; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 13 February

Rosie Holt's online videos became so popular that her podcast hit number two in the charts before it had even been released.
A jobbing actor before the pandemic, lockdown saw her holed up with her parents and itching for something to do with the acres of spare time at her disposal. So she put her acting talents to good use by tweeting clips of herself 'skewering the political landscape', as she puts it.
Much to Rosie's surprise and delight, she became an online sensation, her up-to-the-minute satirising of Westminster life seeing her Twitter following rising from 3,000 to a quarter of a million in the proverbial blink of an eye.
Rosie is back on the road this month with The Illegal Aliens Have Landed!, a brand-new show which she describes as a 'sci-fi streaked satire'.

Bill Bailey

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Tues 10 November; Utilita Arena Birmingham, Wed 11 November; Coventry Building Society Arena, Fri 13 November

Bill Bailey presents an act that nicely mixes displays of his musical virtuosity with straight-down-the-line stand-up.
He visits three Midlands venues this month with Vaudeville!, a show which he describes as a celebration of comedy, songs, and multifarious skills.

Ed Patrick

Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent, Thurs 5 November

There's an obvious irony about being an entertainer when you're also a qualified anaesthetist, but stand-up comedian Ed Patrick hasn't yet put an audience to sleep. Ed scored a major hit at venues around the UK last year with touring show Catch Your Breath: The Sleepless Life Of An Anaesthetist. He's back on the road this autumn with brand-new offering Numb And Number, a show in which he's presenting a fresh batch of stories from the sometimes-surreal world of the hospital ward.

“I think the notion of surprise, both in the story and how you’re doing it, keeps an audience engaged. Sometimes we don’t realise how important the notion of surprise is in telling something - and this version is full of surprises and not what you expect.”

ONE FOR ALL

The Three Musketeers are bringing swashbuckling fun to Stratford-upon-Avon this festive season...

By Steve Adams

This year's Royal Shakespeare Company Christmas show is an all-new adaptation of Alexandre Dumas' The Three Musketeers by innovative theatre company Told By An Idiot. The classic swashbuckling adventure will be a real festive treat for all the family, says its director, Paul Hunter...

Alexandre Dumas' classic 19th-century historical adventure The Three Musketeers has been adapted for stage and screen no end of times, with more than 50 film and TV versions alone.

One particular rendering made a big impact on a youngster growing up in the Birmingham suburb of Harborne. Paul Hunter, co-founder & artistic director of London-based theatre company Told By An Idiot, was still at school when his father took him to see Richard Lester's 1973 movie starring such acting luminaries as Richard Chamberlain, Oliver Reed, Christopher Lee, Raquel Welch and even Spike Milligan.

"It left a big impression on me," says the actor, writer & director, whose memories of movie-going, and seeing that film in particular, ignited his interest in acting, storytelling and performance.

"When I was a kid, certainly up to the early teenage years, I used to be taken by my dad to the cinema. He worked nights, so he would often take me on a Friday afternoon after school. In 1974 we went to the Odeon in Selly Oak and saw Richard Lester's film version of The Three Musketeers and I absolutely loved it. It was that classic adventure story told brilliantly - I just adored it."

The movie clearly made an impression, as Paul has carried the idea of a stage adaptation in the back of his mind for the best part of a decade. When Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) artistic directors Tamara Harvey and Daniel Evans offered him the chance to create a Christmas show for the Royal Shakespeare Theatre (RST), it was the first thing that came to his mind.

"I suddenly thought I wanted to tackle a big story and do something that goes back to my childhood. In a way, the whole aim of the production was to make a show for my seven-year-old self - I thought that if I can do that, then the chances are that everybody else will enjoy it as well."

Paul has now lived in London longer than he resided in the second city, so his gently cheerful voice contains negligible Brummie twang, although he drops a variety of local references (he's worked at loads of regional venues) and admits the accent quickly returns whenever he's back "and certainly when I'm with my sisters or old school friends".

But what about the musketeers? Who will they sound like? Will they be speaking in French, or with French accents?

"That's a good question. And I don't know that I want to say!" he laughs. "Let's just say there might be some French spoken, but I don't think you'll hear a French accent.

"That was a conscious decision while I was adapting it, but we've got quite an international company of performers who speak a variety of languages, so we'll be including that in the action at some point."

Speaking of action, the production features plenty of swashbuckling and adventure, as well as a predominantly female cast, which the director thinks will enable audiences to view the tale from a fresh perspective.

"I wanted to explore the notion that the musketeers - Athos, Aramis and Porthos - were all women playing men, and it produced some really interesting ideas and dynamics in a story that can be quite male-oriented.

"Suddenly it opened up more possibilities when you saw these brilliant women - and the three women I've got are fantastic - and what they can do. What kind of happens is the audience forget that they're women playing musketeers but don't forget, if that makes sense?

"There's also one of the most iconic female villains; Milady is an absolute corker of a villain. I really like the fact that, as well as three women playing musketeers, you have a very dangerous and charismatic woman taking them on."

The show will be one of the biggest that Told By An Idiot - which typically specialises in experimental visual comedy - has ever put on, but Paul is embracing the challenge and the opportunities which playing in a big theatre will bring.

"Some people find it a bit intimidating, but I love the space as an actor with the audience around you on three sides. I think the key thing is to absolutely embrace that, because it's a wonderful theatrical space that audiences can get totally involved in."

He also has a way of dealing with things if he ever gets worried about the enormity of the project.

"I just imagine we're doing this in a tiny theatre above a pub in Digbeth," he laughs, admitting he sized up the RST while he was playing Pistol in an RSC production of Henry V earlier this year.

"I had to be very focused during performances, but you're sitting around a lot in technical rehearsals, so I spent all my time thinking 'what about that space?', and 'what about if that could happen there?'

"The best way for me to get to grips with that space was to play in it, so I can take that understanding. And hopefully, the brilliant acting company we've assembled will feel reassured by the fact that I've been in that space fairly recently."

Paul is also acutely aware of the importance of putting on a quality show during the festive season, which is often the only time families visit the theatre en masse.

"I'm very conscious that it's expensive and might be some people's first time at the theatre, and I take that responsibility very seriously. I want them to go home having had a great time."

Creating a family appeal is especially important for a production that's clearly not a pantomime or even a festive story, although Paul claims there's a Christmas element within the piece and teases "we might discover more".

"What this brings, which I think works as a Christmas show for all the family, is that it taps into some of those big adventure movies - Indiana Jones, Raiders Of The Lost Ark and so on - that we all watch together on telly."

The production also contains a number of surprises that he won't be drawn on, albeit dropping a huge hint about something else inspired by his childhood.

"My favourite band of the day was Slade, so my two influences were Richard Lester's film and the music of Slade - I won't go any further, but I'll leave that with you!"

He can't possibly reveal whether that means we're going to hear Noddy Holder screaming "It's Christmaaaas!", but he's confident to claim that the "funny, romantic adventure" will entertain families "in the style that only live theatre can do", and that the show has been created "in a way that feels inventive and surprising".

The latter element is especially appealing to someone who has regularly worked on children's productions and can liken the whole thing to wrapping up a Christmas gift for attendees.

"I think the notion of surprise, both in the story and how you're doing it, keeps an audience engaged. Sometimes we don't realise how important the notion of surprise is in telling something - and this version is full of surprises and not what you expect."

The Three Musketeers shows at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, from Saturday 28 November to Saturday 9 January

Christmas Carol Goes Wrong

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 10 - Sat 14 November; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Tues 16 - Sat 20 February 2027

Now here's an interesting spin on Charles Dickens' most famous and fantastic festive-season story...

The highly acclaimed Mischief theatre company are past masters at presenting productions that 'go wrong' - think The Play That Goes Wrong, Peter Pan Goes Wrong and Magic Goes Wrong, not to mention the BBC comedy series The Goes Wrong Show. This latest addition to that list sees the return of the Cornley Amateur Drama Society, an organisation whose byword is disorganisation.

Miscommunication, delays to their set, actors missing in action, and a growing feud over who will play the lead role are numbered among the Society's many and varied splendidly comedic trials and tribulations... Suitable for audience members aged eight-plus.

The Borrowers

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Fri 13 November - Sat 23 January

The New Vic is this Christmas once again turning its attention to Mary Norton's 1952 children's fantasy - a dozen years after the show was first staged by the theatre to great critical acclaim.

Living happily beneath the floorboards of a quiet old house, The Borrowers suddenly find their way of life compromised when young Arrietty gets itchy feet and goes exploring...

The New Vic team is here promising a yuletide package of 'magical storytelling, original music and thrilling live-on-stage effects'.

So if you're on the lookout for a Christmas show that's free of custard pies, rouged-up Dames and cries of "He's behind you!", this could well be the production for you.

Austentatious

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Sat 28 November

Austentatious stops off in the Midlands having garnered plenty of praise on its previous visits. Lighthearted and delightfully throwaway, the production sees its actors utilising audience suggestions to develop a laughter-laden play that pays loving homage to Jane Austen. Performed in period costume with live musical accompaniment, the show is described by its publicity as 'a riotous, razor-sharp production where swooning is guaranteed'.

The Three Musketeers

Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Sat 28 November - Sat 9 January

Get set for some serious swashing of bucklers as three of literature's finest rapier-thrusting heroes comically cavort in Stratford-upon-Avon this festive season.

In an imaginative collaboration between the Royal Shakespeare Company and the ever-brilliant Told By An Idiot, the legendary trio of fabulous fictional fighters are here all played by women.

"Alexandre Dumas' story is one of the great adventures," says the show's director, Paul Hunter, "full of friendship, courage, romance and reckless abandon. With Told By An Idiot's trademark blend of visual invention, physical comedy and joyful anarchy, we're creating a version that celebrates the sheer pleasure of live theatre."

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Tue 2 - Sat 6 Mar

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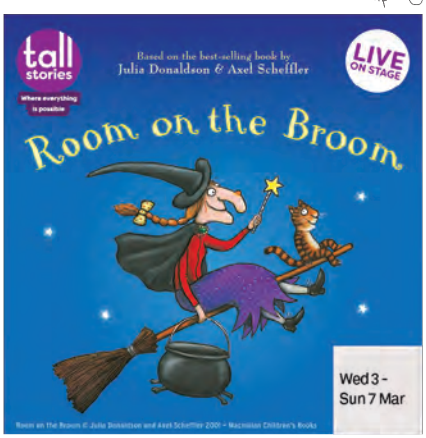

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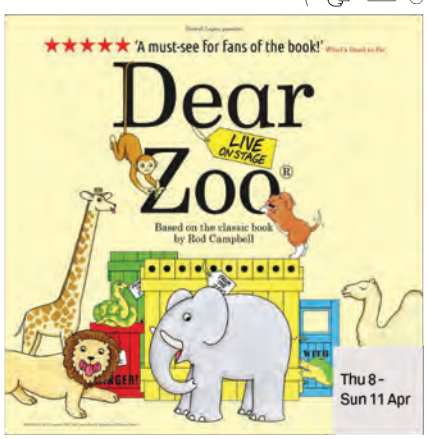

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Image credit: Mark Senior

Cats The Musical

Birmingham Hippodrome, until Sat 7 November

A spectacular and captivating adaptation of TS Eliot's Old Possum's Book Of Practical Cats, this Andrew Lloyd Webber-composed extravaganza premiered 45 years ago.
The show is widely considered to be the production that redefined the modern musical, not only paving the way for a seemingly relentless stream of blockbuster hits but also giving starring roles to Elaine Page and Sarah Brightman. Indeed, 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 production's famous anthem, Memory.
West End favourite Louise Dearman stars as Grizabella.

Jersey Boys

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).

Legally Blonde The Musical

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Tues 17 - Sat 21 November

Based on the hit 2001 movie starring Reese Witherspoon, this critically acclaimed musical follows the story of college sweetheart and homecoming queen Elle Woods, a girl who just doesn't take no for an answer. So when her boyfriend, Warner, announces that he's dumping her for someone more serious, Elle puts down the credit card, hits the books and heads for Harvard Law School...
One-time Love Island winner and Strictly Come Dancing finalist Amber Davies tops the bill as Elle.

Mamma Mia!

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, until Sat 7 November

As most people will know, this long-adored show is 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...

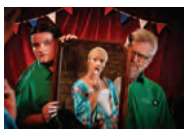
Dirty Dancing

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Tues 24 - Sat 28 November

Seen by millions across the globe, Eleanor Bergstein's smash-hit musical tells the classic story of Baby and Johnny, two fiercely independent young spirits from different worlds who come together for what will prove to be the most challenging and triumphant summer of their lives.
Hit numbers include Hungry Eyes, Hey Baby, Do You Love Me? and I've Had The Time Of My Life.

George And The Drag Queen

Charlton School Theatre, Wellington, Shropshire, Sat 14 November; Clungunford Village Hall, S. Shropshire, Sun 15 November



Publicity for Pipeline Theatre's latest play describes it as 'a bittersweet, bonkers cake-mix of the epic and the outlandish, beaten together with the everyday and the plain silly'...
The show focuses on two bantering first-aid volunteers at a village fête who find their stories becoming entwined with that of a Lebanese Drag Queen - leading to explosive results...

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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 makes his RSC debut in the role of Rosalind, while veteran musical theatre star Gary Wilmot plays both Duke Frederick and Duke Senior.

Once Upon A Time In Sokoto

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Thurs 5 - Sat 7 November

An award-winning new play about the unlikely friendship between a slave and her former master in pre-colonial Nigeria, Once Upon A Time In Sokoto is a powerful family drama set against the backdrop of traumatic real events.
"The play is mostly about business actually," explains its writer, Inua Ellams. "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."

Middlemarch Parts 1 & 2

Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, until 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. "Theatre is a great form for a story that luxuriates in how we are all essentially connected."

The Accrington Pals

Wolverhampton Arts Centre, Wed 11 - Fri 13 November

In the Lancashire mill town of Accrington, with the men away fighting for king and country, their mothers, wives, sisters and sweethearts find daily life being dramatically reshaped by the faraway conflict...
This is an amateur production of Midlands-born Peter Whelan's acclaimed 1981 drama - a thought-provoking exploration of the emotional realities of life on the home front during the First World War.

The Elephant Man

Oldbury Rep, Sat 7 - Sat 14 November

The Victorian-era Elephant Man - aka Joseph Merrick - came to real prominence when legendary director David Lynch made a film about him way back in 1980.
The tale of Merrick is certainly one of great courage and fortitude. A badly disfigured man shunned by society, he eked out a living for himself by making appearances as a 'fairground freak'... This amateur production of Bernard Pomerance's 1977 play is being performed by the Oldbury Rep Players.

A Christmas Carol

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Mon 16 & Tues 17 November; Bridge House Theatre, Warwick, Sat 28 November

Of all Charles Dickens' festive stories, A Christmas Carol reigns supreme...
The covetous sinning of the miserly Scrooge, the eternal hope offered by Tiny Tim, and the eerie visions of redemption - visiting Ebenezer in the shape of three seasonal ghosts and the spirit of his deceased business partner Jacob Marley - all combine to give the tale a real olde worlde charm.
The acclaimed Dickens Theatre Company (pictured) are the ensemble performing a two-man Carol at Shrewsbury's Theatre Severn, with the equally well regarded Dyad Productions presenting their one-man version of the story at the Bridge House Theatre in Warwick.

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Treasure Island

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Sat 28 November - Sun 3 January

Robert Louis Stevenson's high-seas caper here gets the pantomime treatment, as young Jim Hawkins heads off on the adventure of a lifetime - one which will see him not only setting sail in search of buried treasure, but also spending time in the company of a one-legged pirate with misdeeds in mind...
The production stars comedian Richard Blackwood as Long John Silver. Solomon Davy, Tam Ryan and Ian Adams - the latter celebrating his 10th year as Wolverhampton's dame - all make a welcome return.
Last year's Grand Theatre panto production of Sleeping Beauty took the top accolade at the prestigious UK Pantomime Awards - so be sure to check out this latest festive-season offering.

Robin Hood

Lichfield Garrick, Fri 20 November - Sun 10 January; Swan Theatre, Worcester, Sat 28 November - Sun 3 January

As if Robin Hood didn't already have enough on his plate dealing with the dastardly Sheriff of Nottingham and wooing the beautiful Maid Marion, the festive season also finds Sherwood Forest's most famous resident getting tangled up in all manner of pantomime traditions (custard pie in the boar-race, anyone?)...
There's a new dame in town at Lichfield Garrick this year, with Ben Stock taking on the role of Nurse Nellie (pictured), while another Ben - Thornton - stars as the eponymous hero.
The show marks the venue's first in-house-produced pantomime in over a decade.
Meanwhile, over at the Swan, the Worcester Repertory Company are promising a production that's positively awash with traditional panto mischief, mayhem and slapstick silliness.

Beauty And The Beast

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Wed 18 November - Sat 2 January

When a young woman is captured by a hideous beast, she finds herself facing a life of isolation in his mysterious palace.
The Beast, too, is trapped - seemingly forever - inside the grotesquery of his physical appearance, the consequence of a spell cast upon him by an evil witch. Only Beauty's ability to look beyond his ugliness and see the person within can save him...
So that's the basic storyline. Now... what about the Belgrade's festive-season version? Well, as usual, Coventry's favourite dame, Iain Lauchlan, has both written and stars in the show. And also as usual, Iain is promising a production that's replete with breathtaking sets, crazy costumes and seasonal silliness. Festive fun is a guarantee.

Peter Pan

The Rep, Birmingham, Wed 18 November - Sun 17 January

Fly away to Neverland with the boy who wouldn't grow up, meet a real fairy, marvellous mermaids, wonderful Wendy and the down-on-their-luck Lost Boys. Oh, and beware the ever-so-wicked Captain Hook and a very hungry crocodile who goes tick-tock (he swallowed a clock!). The Rep's artistic director, Joe Murphy, takes the helm for this faithful re-telling of JM Barrie's much-loved children's story.
Read our interview with Joe on page 30.

Snow White

Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham, Fri 20 November - Sun 6 December

Modern pantomime versions of Snow White don't always include her 'magnificent seven' mining pals - but whether the fellas are present-and-correct or missing in action, there's always plenty to enjoy in the much-loved fairytale. And that's certainly the case with this Blue Orange Theatre production. Expect 'adventure, comedy, lots of magical songs, dances, sweets, glorious costumes and buckets of audience participation'...

Aladdin

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Fri 27 November - Sun 3 January

If you're a dyed-in-the-wool fan of the Theatre Severn panto experience, you'll be delighted to know that this year's offering is following the usual recipe for success.
What does that mean in practice? Well, to put some meat on the bone, it means Telford-born Paul Hendy is writing it, Evolution is producing it, and Brad Fitt is both starring in it and taking the directorial reins.
"There are pantos out there that go a bit near the knuckle - but I don't think ours does," says Brad, who is this year appearing as Dame Dolly in what will be his 15th Theatre Severn pantomime. "I would never tell a joke that was offensive or rude. Sometimes, you can use a double entendre - but then that's in *your* mind; that's not me. You have to blame yourself!"

POLES APART

The Hippodrome's My First Musical returns to the Patrick Studio with a brand-new snowy adventure...

By Jessica Clixby

Songs, puppetry and adventure abound in One Tiny Penguin. A brand-new show for ages three and older, the production is the latest festive-season offering from Birmingham Hippodrome's acclaimed My First Musical scheme. Written by Julie Tsang and Jordan Li-Smith, the story follows title character Lumi on a globetrotting adventure from the North to the South Pole.
What's On chatted to Julie, along with the play's director, Laura Ryder, to find out what's in store for Lumi, his friends, and One Tiny Penguin's family audiences this Christmas...

A brand-new musical for brand-new theatregoers slides into Birmingham Hippodrome's Patrick Studio this month.

Co-written by Julie Tsang and Jordan Li-Smith, One Tiny Penguin features a puppet penguin on a journey of self-discovery. Aimed at audiences aged three upwards, it promises to be an ideal introduction to the world of musical theatre.

Julie met Jordan on the Hippodrome's residency for playwrights, writers and composers, when the pair proposed a children's musical to be developed at the theatre this festive season.

"We had an intensive two days, which was just a delight," Julie told What's On. "A bit of playfulness to discover if it was something that we wanted to do. At the end of it, you could match up with someone - a bit like speed dating - and pitch your ideas."

The story which Julie and Jordan pitched concerns Lumi, the 'tiny penguin' of the title, who lives with polar bears in the North Pole - a place which penguin fans will know is not the bird's natural habitat.

"That's his family,"explains Julie. "That's the world that he knows, and it's a really beautiful, lovely and loving, caring world, but he does feel a little bit different.

"He's tasked with going on a huge journey to the South Pole, to get some ice to help light up the Northern sky. On the way, he meets lots of penguins - in Chile, in South Africa.

"Jordan and I were talking about being of mixed heritage and coming from two different backgrounds. When you spend time in that heritage, you feel like you belong, but you're still a bit different."

"I read the script and I fell madly in love with it," says Laura Ryder, the show's director. "It's beautiful. It's a really rich story. I was excited by how ambitious it is in terms of its storytelling and its scale, but also how ambitious the Hippodrome are with their production and the quality of what they want to make for children."

The ongoing development of One Tiny Penguin is supported by the Hippodrome's My First Musical scheme. The initiative is now in its third year - following the success of newly produced children's musicals The Jingleclaw and No Such Thing As Wolves.

"They've really supported us; they've helped us through that journey," says Julie. "I don't think there are many theatre venues that would do that, especially when you're going into something new you've never done before. It's been lovely to know that you can take risks, make mistakes, and that it's okay because everyone's in it together. It feels very collaborative."

The scheme is intended to foster working relationships, and then at the end of the process to present high-quality theatre for younger audiences. This makes for a dynamic and collaborative environment, according to Laura: "It's been great to get scenes on their feet, and then Julie and Jordan will walk away and rework them and play with them in live time. To have such a rich, creative process - with lots of different creative voices, skill and craft - has been lovely."

Laura's role as director includes working with designers to combine Julie and Jordan's words and music with visual storytelling.

"From the get-go, when we were looking at the story, there's so much scale," she says. "Lumi travels around the world, and I was really excited by what storytelling we could do when we 'zoom out' and Lumi can be really small as a puppet.

"We start in the North Pole, and then he journeys around the whole world. Our designer has come up with the most beautiful design that allows us to play with scale, that allows us to travel round the space and arrive at different locations. I'm a big fan of spectacle - I think it's important at Christmas to have moments which make an audience go 'Wow!' or 'Ooh!' There's lots of elements of that in the set, and in the design. It's going to look very visually beautiful."

For Julie, an important moment came when she first saw her penguin protagonist, portrayed by actor & puppeteer Dylan Collymore.

"To see him as a puppet is just the icing on the cake," she says. "It just makes it more real - and I can't wait to see the children's faces when they see Lumi. What I would love for them to do is look at Lumi and think 'Wow, if Lumi can do this big thing, maybe *I* can do whatever *I* want to do!' That sense of belonging is going to be lovely for families as well. Regardless of your family makeup, it's all about love and friendship."

With the Midlands' biggest panto just next door, My First Musical provides a theatrical festive offering for younger audiences in the venue's more intimate Patrick Studio.

Laura explains just how important those first experiences in the theatre can be: "I love family theatre at Christmas time. Sometimes it can be a child's very first theatre show, sometimes it can be an *adult's* very first theatre show. I've had lots of chats with the creative team on this - we can all pinpoint the first show we saw, or the first moment in theatre that made you go 'Wow!' Children navigate the world with play, and to be part of that, they engage with the storytelling of theatre so easily and so excitedly.

"We record the soundtrack, which will be available later. The idea of being able to re-listen and dance around your living room, and act out some of the moments, or be on a long car journey and listen to the album for the third time or whatever, is really joyful - a shared experience; all together. The story is beautiful, and fundamentally I think that's what good children's theatre needs - a good story. Julie and Jordan have created a story that hopefully really speaks to children who are learning about themselves, but also learning what it is to be brave, and learning to celebrate difference."

One Tiny Penguin shows at Birmingham Hippodrome's Patrick Studio from Saturday 5 December to Sunday 3 January

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The Gruffalo's Child © Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler 2004 – Macmillan Children's Books

The Gruffalo's Child

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 28 November - Sun 27 December

With millions of copies having been sold in double-quick time after it was published in 1999, it's fair to say that Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler's picture book The Gruffalo captured the hearts and minds of children everywhere. So it was no surprise when the dynamic duo then produced this sequel story five years later...

Despite her dad's warning to stay away from the deep, dark wood, the Gruffalo's child decides it's time to go and explore, caring not a jot about the legend of the Big Bad Mouse...

Award-winning theatre company Tall Stories, who certainly know a thing or two about adapting Donaldson/Scheffler books for the stage, here present a production that brings together 'songs, laughs and scary fun for everyone aged three to 103'.

Disney On Ice: Discover The Magic

bp pulse LIVE, Birmingham, until Sun 8 November

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

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...

Little Red Riding Hood

Albany Theatre, Coventry, Sat 28 November

This 50-minute show, suitable for youngsters between the ages of three and eight, takes families into the darkness of the woods for an adventure with Little Red Riding Hood.

A young girl who takes good care of her grandmother, she also knows a thing or two about outwitting big hairy wolves who'd very much like to make a meal out of her...

Mr Sleepybum's Dream Machine

The Little Theatre, Dawley, Shropshire, Sat 21 November

With accolades and glittering gongs aplenty to recommend it, Mr Sleepybum was a show well worth checking out. Now, the title character - a fella who has 'stupid, silly dreams' at night - is making a welcome return with this new production.

Running for one hour and suitable for children aged between three and eight, the show sees Mr Sleepybum invent a machine that magically brings to life all manner of dreams, including ones featuring dinosaurs, robots, car chases and, er, the world's largest blanket!

The Dinosaur That Pooped A Rock Show

Birmingham Town Hall, Sun 8 November

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

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

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

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

FLY AWAY TO NEVERLAND

A new production of Peter Pan opens at Birmingham Repertory Theatre this month

By Diane Parkes

JM Barrie's Peter Pan, telling the terrific tale of a young boy who refuses to grow up, has been enchanting audiences for generations. A firm family favourite, the classic children's story receives a sprinkling of Birmingham Repertory Theatre magic this Christmas, with a brand-new adaptation being presented on the venue's main stage. The Rep's artistic director, Joe Murphy, is helming the production and recently chatted to What's On about his love of Peter Pan...

When Birmingham Rep artistic director Joe Murphy was a child, one of his favourite stories was Peter Pan. Which is why Joe has chosen to create a new production of this ever-popular adventure tale for the venue's Christmas show this year.

"I deeply love Peter Pan," he says. "The original book and the original play are among my earliest memories of storytelling, and of me using my imagination to pretend to be other people and build other worlds.

"All I wanted to do as a kid was fly away with Peter Pan to Neverland. It really stuck with me. The adventures and the gang and never growing old just felt so exciting to me."

Joe believes JM Barrie's classic story of the boy who never grows up and the Darling children, who are whisked away to the magical Neverland and battle evil pirate Captain Hook, is a truly timeless tale: "It's so funny and chaotic and exciting, but it's also got a beautiful melancholia, a real emotional punch to it. In the end, I think those are the stories that really stay with you; the stories which, even through a childhood lens, are really wrestling with something important.

"I think ultimately Peter Pan is wrestling with the idea of 'is time our enemy or is time our ally?' It beautifully charts its way through that possibility and flips the script a lot of times on which way round that is.

"Instinctually you think 'time is the enemy and Peter Pan is immortally young, and isn't that amazing? He has awesome adventures and Hook is old and cranky'. But as the story goes on and you begin to see it through Wendy's lens, you start to realise that eternal youth is amazing but it can't accumulate experience or love or wisdom and all these things which give life its texture and its rarity and its beauty.

"So it comes to that bittersweet moment that I think we've all had, where you have to say goodbye to childhood."

The new production, adapted by Phil Porter, features around 20 original new songs - composed by Ruth Chan - and designs by Hayley Grindle. Joe and the team have been keen to ensure the production gets to the heart of the story of Peter Pan.

"We want to try and offer quite a definitive or iconic Peter Pan that de-pantos it, that de-Disneyfies it, and takes us back to that original source material, celebrating all the wonderful parts of that story which make it funny, exciting, moving and for all ages.

"Our roots as a producing drama house mean we always want to engage with the story and the characters as much as we can. Panto is fantastic and I love a panto, but it's a very specific form and doesn't lend itself to our Christmas show.

"Our family Christmas show is based on a fantastic story with compelling characters, beautiful scenery, magical moments and gorgeous songs, all originally created and produced for that production. It's something to offer audiences which is unique in the city."

And Joe is convinced the production will appeal across the generations: "It's a family show, so whether you're seven or 70, you're going to have a fantastic experience with us. I think that's why Peter Pan really endures. Like any of the best kids' stories, it's dealing with lots of different things, like childhood does. Childhood veers from great anarchy and wildness and wonder to sadness and growing up and responsibility, and I think Peter Pan captures that in such a light and deft way.

"The best family stories wrestle with real-world things in a safe, fun environment that allows children to subconsciously experience all these parts of growing up and give space to experiencing that. I think the book and the original play do it so well that we're just following that roadmap really."

Joe was keen for music to be at the heart of the show, and a cast of actor-musicians will perform the songs: "To me, Christmas is as much about music and singing as it is about socialising with friends and storytelling. I always want music running through the Christmas shows I want to see - and so, too, the ones I want to make.

"Peter Pan is also such rich territory for music. There are so many different worlds and characters, so the different worlds of music you can open up can feel really exciting.

"And it gives us this extra element we can give to our audiences. We love to celebrate live performance in all its ways, so to have a show that will feature flying and fighting and live music and beautiful costumes and brilliant actors... I love it when all of those elements come together to give a singular vision of a story; it's the most exciting brand of theatre."

For Joe, theatre has a huge role to play in bringing families together during the festive period: "I think people yearn for connection at Christmas. There's a reason that A Christmas Carol and Peter Pan are enduring Christmas stories. They are both joyous but also get to the heart of what Christmas is about, what family is about, what love for each other is about."

While Peter Pan plays the Main House, The Rep's smaller space, The Door, is given over to another classic story: Hans Christian Andersen's The Ugly Duckling.

"Our aim is that if you are seven and up, you know you can go to the Main House and see a wonderful Peter Pan, and if you're six and under, you know you can go to The Door. Caroline Wilkes, who's directing The Ugly Duckling, is such a wonderful director anyway, but for that age group she is utterly fantastic.

"We've been growing a fabulous Christmas audience for years. They know what to expect from The Rep and hopefully come back time and time again. Peter Pan and The Ugly Duckling are complementary - whatever age your kids are, you know there's a show for them at The Rep this Christmas."

Peter Pan shows at Birmingham Repertory Theatre from Wednesday 18 November to Sunday 17 January.
The Ugly Duckling shows at The Door from Thursday 3 December to Sunday 10 January.

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Christmas In Ireland

Lichfield Garrick, Fri 6 & Sat 7 November; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sun 8 November; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Fri 13 November; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Mon 23 November

Timeless Irish classics, powerful ballads and much-loved seasonal songs are all present and correct in this feelgood family offering. Performed live by a cast of musicians and singers, the show features a selection of popular hits, with Dirty Old Town, Driving Home For Christmas and Fairytale Of New York all featuring.

Fatt Butcher: Congregational

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 27 & Sat 28 November

"Nightclubs have saved countless queer lives," says Birmingham composer & vocalist Fatt Butcher, the creative force behind this brand-new show.
"Congregational is about honouring those spaces and asks what happens when those venues die?...
"It's joyful, messy, emotional, funny, spiritual, sweaty and loud - just like queer nightlife has always been."
Using ritual and song to transform the theatre into a nightclub, this avante-garde musical boasts a thumping original score of newly composed 'hymns for the dancefloor', with house, trance, gospel, classical and experimental music all featuring.

I'm Sorry, I Haven't A Clue

Birmingham Hippodrome, Sat 14 November

One-time Young Ones favourite Adrian Edmondson has called it "the most ridiculous, most surreal, most incomprehensibly funny show on any medium," while The Radio Times confidently described it as "indisputably the greatest radio comedy of all time."
Having garnered plenty more similarly effusive praise across its 54 years and 80-plus series, I'm Sorry I Haven't A Clue continues to strike chords with BBC Radio Four listeners throughout the country. The comedy panel game has been touring to theatres since 2007 and here makes a welcome return to the Midlands region.
This particular evening of inspired nonsense sees host Jack Dee joined by Colin Sell at the piano and a panel of quick-witted comedians.

Whisky Tango Foxtrot

Stourbridge Town Hall, Fri 27 November

Described as a tragi-comedy journey through modern British policing, Whisky Tango Foxtrot sees Jack Bryan presenting a humorous and at times challenging autobiographical account of his 30-year career in the force.
Alongside his day-to-day policing, Jack also describes entering a bizarre parallel world hidden from the public - a space governed by dark, surreal and unpredictable rules...

Dom Joly: Trigger Happy TV - The 25th Anniversary

Dudley Town Hall, Fri 20 November

From a launchpad provided by Trigger Happy TV, Dom Joly has led an extraordinary life. Some of his more memorable experiences include skiing down volcanoes and trying to fly across the Grand Canyon strapped to an eight-foot rocket...
...Oh, and he's also eaten from the pants of Dr Gillian McKeith (remember her?) while imprisoned in the Australian jungle during a series of I'm A Celebrity, Get Me Out Of Here!... As his latest show's title makes clear, Dom will be visiting the region in celebration of a quarter-century of Trigger Happy TV.

Ben Folds' Paper Airplane Request Tour

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Tues 24 November

Now here's a novel idea for a concert...
After performing a standard set list before the show's interval, Ben Folds will then sing songs requested by his fans - but requested in a somewhat unusual way: the audience will be invited to write their song requests on paper, fold them into airplanes, and launch them toward the stage... Those attending are encouraged to bring pre-made paper airplanes to the show - although paper and pens *will* be available at the merchandise table for anyone needing to make a paper airplane on site.

Step Into Christmas

The Assembly, Leamington Spa, Sat 21 November; Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Sun 22 November; Albany Theatre, Coventry, Mon 23 November; Palace Theatre, Redditch, Tues 24 November; Birmingham Town Hall, Sun 6 & Fri 11 December; Kidderminster Town Hall, Sun 13 December; Dudley Town Hall, Mon 21 December

This warm-hearted family spectacular is the ideal show for anybody who fancies spending a relaxing evening enjoying a jukebox-worth of festive-season hits. Expect all the favourites - from heartwarming ballads to upbeat Christmas anthems - in a show which is being publicised as 'bigger, brighter and more festive than ever before'.

DANCE ON!

South Asian arts & heritage organisation Sampad is 36 years old and still going strong...

By Diane Parkes

It's another busy season of dance for South Asian arts & heritage organisation Sampad, as director, Piali Ray recently told What's On...

Sampad South Asian Arts & Heritage is promising a new season packed with opportunities for people to watch, engage with and take part in activities across the city.

The organisation, which was founded in 1990 to foster and promote South Asian arts and heritage in Birmingham and the West Midlands, has announced a new programme featuring theatre, an interactive walk, music, dance and community engagement.

It's a busy season, says Sampad's director, Piali Ray, but also one that's emblematic of the work the organisation does: "When the story of Sampad started as a foundation arts development organisation, we were trying to raise awareness through doing arts activities. Now, the foundation of the organisation remains the same - we want to connect with people in the city, in the region, nationally and internationally wherever possible.

"And we want to connect with people in different ways, whether they are artists or participants or our audiences - and particularly with specific groups who have specific needs, whether they are in a school environment or a community space.

"That principle remains with the organisation, and the programme reflects that. We are really committed to ensuring that we give the best possible experience of South Asian arts to each and every person or group we are connecting with."

One season highlight is An Evening With Vidya Patel (Birmingham Rep, Saturday 21 November), in which the nationally renowned Birmingham-born performer will present a blend of conversation and dance.

"Vidya is an amazing dancer," says Piali. "She has worked with remarkable companies and choreographers across the country and Europe. It is essentially *her* evening, and it will be her journey back to Birmingham; that is what she will talk about and dance.

"She has achieved what many South Asian dancers would aspire to, so as a role model, she is an inspiration. And she is also a beautiful Kathak dancer who has trained in other forms and worked with other choreographers. Here, she is coming back to her roots."

Another key event is Midday Mantra, a season of Saturday afternoon concerts taking place in Symphony Hall's Jennifer Blackwell performance space.

Featuring a host of different music traditions, from South Asian folk and jazz through to Indian classical and contemporary, the team are always willing to hear from new musicians who would like to perform at the event.

"One of the things we are constantly looking out for is an exciting British Asian sound," Piali says. "A new generation of artists are creating work that has a strong South Asian element alongside narratives of their life in the UK.

"It is always exciting to look at the new British Asian sounds that are coming through, whether that's intercultural or within particular genres of music."

The new season kicks off with Bedlam Arts & Mental Health Symposium, in which Sampad is a partner alongside Birmingham Rep and Midlands Arts Centre. This year's get-together features a number of Sampad events, including Can We Talk?, Birmingham-based writer & actor Rochi Rampal's new short play exploring artificial intelligence (MAC, Friday 6 & Saturday 7 November).

Speaking about the production, Sampad's programme manager, James Vegnuti, said: "Can We Talk? is very much a family story. Rochi has been workshopping it with lots of different people: head teachers, health-care professionals - and with 17-year-olds, the teenagers that the story is centred around.

"The piece lasts about 35 minutes and will be followed by a conversation which we feel is really important. Our audiences usually love a bit of discussion and debate, and this will be a perfect opportunity for people to hear about things they have been reading a lot about."

Also in the festival is a chance to take part in a gentle movement workshop called Let's Dance, while Sampad's Stratford Road Walking Tour: Diwali Special (Saturday 7 November) opens the door into a host of diverse stories and experiences.

"Our Stratford Road Walking Tour has been going on for about six years," says James. "It's one of our most recommended events in Birmingham. You learn about all kinds of migration stories and the importance of the Stratford Road.

"For this time, our guide, Vimal Korpal, is working on some brand-new stories, including Diwali. It will be the day before Diwali - so expect the shops to be really busy, and there will be a real buzz down the high street. Vimal is able to get access inside Grade One listed churches, inside Hindu temples, Sikh Gurdwaras, Yemeni coffee shops, Gohil's Emporium. Each one of these locations has a story, whether it be from the founder, from longstanding customers or from another member of the community who feels that the space is very important to them."

Another Sampad event is Chai And Chat: From Fast Fashion To Upcycling, a discussion with sustainable fashion entrepreneur Rukhsana Sardar which takes place at the National Trust's Back to Backs on Thursday 12 November.

"Rukhsana will be talking a bit about her story, as well as giving practical advice about upcycling," says James. "And hopefully the discussion afterwards turns into a bit of a learning and shared experience for everyone. What's really cool about this event is that there's an actual call to action for people to bring along their own upcycling project."

The season's finale, Asian Spring, takes place next year and is one of Sampad's most popular events - as Piali explains: "People love it. As soon as the evening is finished, people start asking 'so what's the date for next year?'

"Asian Spring is a showcase of community South Asian dance in all its variety - classical, Bollywood, folk. We've even seen Bharatanatyam and Morris dancing together in the past! It's a celebration of dance in the region, with a lot of teachers and groups profiling their work. At least 15 or 16 groups perform side by side. Each and every group puts immense effort into it, into creating the piece, the look, the costumes, the endless hours of practice. We really appreciate the amount of effort that goes in.

"Some of the groups have been in it since the very first programme, and we are now in about the 25th or 26th version of it. And we are always on the look-out for new groups and artists, because that brings freshness to the stage."

In many ways, says Piali, Asian Spring is the epitome not just of Sampad's 2026/27 season but of its entire philosophy: "We try to do the best for our artists, for our audiences and our communities. That is at the heart of Sampad. There are challenges, particularly as resources become more and more difficult to access, but we have brilliant partnerships, and we are grateful that we have such a thriving cultural scene in Birmingham so we can have those conversations.

"We have a loyal audience of people who have known us for a long time and come back, but there are also people who do not know about Sampad. I would like to invite them to come and join us this season, in whatever way they want to.

"Come and see our events, come and talk to us, and hopefully there will be something there for you - whether it's through performance or workshops. Or if you are a young person who wants to share your talent, please come and work with us."

For more information on individual events, visit sampad.org.uk

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Director Carlos Acosta
Rosanna Ely Image © Manvir Rai.
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20 November – 12 December
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ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

Silvia Gribaudi - Graces

Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome, Fri 20 November

Antonio Canova's sculpture The Three Graces - representing Zeus' daughters Euphrosyne, Aglaea and Thalia - provides the inspiration for this award-winning show from Italian choreographer Silvia Gribaudi, whose recent work has seen her questioning gender stereotypes and female and male identities. The work sees three male performers, together with Silvia herself, embark on a search for new meanings of the word 'grace'. In so doing, the quartet embrace a comic style that blurs the boundaries between dance, theatre and performance.

Protein Dance: The Magic Flute

Walsall Arena, Wed 18 November

The Magic Flute tells the story of two young lovers who, on a perilous journey through a mysterious land of sorcerers and magic, find themselves being assisted by a curious cosmic character who dresses as a bird...

Mozart's famous fairytale-opera has here been adapted by Protein Dance's artistic director, Luca Silvestrini, and comes to life through the company's playful mix of dance, storytelling, singing and striking visuals. Suitable for family members aged seven and older, the production is performed twice on Wednesday the 18th, at 1pm and 7pm.

Amina Khayyam Dance

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, Thurs 19 November

High-energy Kathak is the vehicle by which the story of Bird, Amina Khayyam's widely praised dancework, is expressed.

A stage sequel to her company's critically acclaimed lockdown-era film, Catch The Bird Who Won't Fly, the 55-minute production does what Amina's work does best: investigates hard-hitting subject matter... In this particular case, the award-winning choreographer is exploring the issue of women living with domestic abuse.

New English Ballet Theatre: The Nutcracker

Lichfield Garrick, Tues 3 & Wed 4 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 New English Ballet Theatre, who toured the work for the first time last autumn, to great critical acclaim.

Anatomy Of Survival

Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome, Thurs 26 November

"Anatomy Of Survival is a theatre/dance show with drumming," explains its choreographer, the psychotherapist Frauke Requardt, to therecs.co.uk. "The show revisits an interaction which has gone wrong in a coffee shop, where a woman loses her sh*t."

Running for 60 minutes without an interval and produced by Frauke in collaboration with award-winning playwright Vivienne Franzmann, the offbeat collaboration comprises 22 very different eyewitness accounts of the very public altercation.

"The show's proposal is that everybody's reality has merit," continues Frauke. "You can have yours, and perhaps at the same time let in someone else's reality too, to get a fuller picture."

Ace Dance & Music: The World As We See It

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Tues 17 November

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.

Images from last year's opening night at Birmingham Hippodrome (c) Johan Persson 2025

FLIGHT OF FANCY

Festive favourite The Nutcracker makes a welcome return this month, brought to the Birmingham Hippodrome stage by Birmingham Royal Ballet. A mainstay of Christmas programming at the Hippodrome since being gifted to the city by Sir Peter Wright in 1990, the production continues to inspire audiences with the spirit of the season. Take a look behind the magic, and find out more about this Christmas classic, with our round-up of fascinating facts and figures...

MAKING HISTORY

The Nutcracker was first performed in 1892, featuring music by Tchaikovsky and a story based on a fairytale called The Nutcracker And The Mouse King by ETA Hoffmann.

Thanks to its festive setting and fantastical story, which continue to delight audiences of all ages, it has since become a staple of the Christmas period around the world.

Sir Peter Wright created a new production of The Nutcracker in 1984, to be performed by the Royal Ballet. When the Sadler Wells Royal Ballet moved to Birmingham in 1990 - becoming Birmingham Royal Ballet (BRB), with Sir Peter at the helm - he staged a new version of the production. Making numerous departures from the 1892 original, the show leans into the magic and wonder of the journey that's undertaken by the story's 15-year-old protagonist, Clara.

The Nutcracker has since become a firm festive favourite with Midlands ballet fans, performed by Birmingham's very own company, accompanied by the Royal Ballet Sinfonia, and set against the sumptuous backdrop of John Macfarlane's design.

LIGHT AND SHADE

While the warm, festive feeling of The Nutcracker undoubtedly adds to its enduring charm and popularity, the show contains moments of darkness, too.

From the uncanny battle with the Rat King, to the unknown powers of the magician Drosselmeyer, and even the slightly eerie music which accompanies the Sugar Plum Fairy, protagonist Clara encounters plenty of sinister strangeness on her travels, as well as many magical wonders.

A CHRISTMAS CLASSIC

Set at that magical moment when the clock strikes midnight to welcome in Christmas Day, it's no surprise that The Nutcracker has become synonymous with the season. The spectacle is undeniably festive, featuring swirling snowflakes, sweet treats, treasured gifts, and of course a magnificent Christmas tree, which grows in size before the audience's very eyes. Accompanied by Tchaikovsky's evocative score, The Nutcracker remains one of the very best ways to harness the spirit of the festive season.

LASTING LEGACY

First staged by Birmingham Royal Ballet in 1990, The Nutcracker has since become a much-loved addition to the Midlands' cultural calendar, the magical production regularly welcoming audience members of all ages. Those who saw the show as children now revisit the experience with their own children and grandchildren, making it a real family affair.

By Jessica Clixby

WHO'S WHO IN BRB'S THE NUTCRACKER?

CLARA

Fifteen-year-old Clara is training to be a dancer - just like her mother, who is a former ballerina. On Christmas Eve, Clara is strangely drawn to one of her gifts - a Nutcracker toy, which magically mends itself after being broken by her brother.
On the stroke of midnight, as Clara is searching for the Nutcracker, something strange happens: the world seems to grow enormous around her, and she finds herself embarking on a magical adventure. Clara flies to a dream-like land, helps to defeat the villainous Rat King, and joins in the dancing...

DROSSELMEYER

Drosselmeyer is a magician, invited to the Christmas Eve party at Clara's house by her parents, to provide entertainment. He brings gifts for the children, including the Nutcracker doll.
Drosselmeyer conjures up a magical land, which Clara visits, flying through the clouds on the back of a white goose. Another altercation with the Rat King ensues, but he is defeated by the Nutcracker Prince and Drosselmeyer, who arranges a grand celebration in Clara's honour.

THE NUTCRACKER

Given to Clara as a Christmas gift, the Nutcracker begins the story as a doll but then comes to life, accompanied by an army of toy soldiers. They are soon set upon by a swarm of giant rats - led by their king - who attack Clara.
The Nutcracker is about to be overpowered by the Rat King, when Clara intervenes, but he falls down, exhausted. Clara tries to revive him, and he comes back to life - just as he was magically mended when he was merely a toy.
To Clara's amazement, the Nutcracker turns into a handsome prince and they dance together.

THE SUGAR PLUM FAIRY

As the celebrations begin in Drosselmeyer's fantasy world, dancers from many different lands come together. Clara joins in and - in this version of the story - is finally transformed into the ballerina of her dreams: The Sugar Plum Fairy.
The Dance Of The Sugar Plum Fairy is one of the most iconic musical moments in Tchaikovsky's score, utilising the bell-like sounds of the orchestra's celeste.
The Sugar Plum Fairy dances alone, before being joined by the Nutcracker Prince, as Clara's adventure comes to an end...

THE NUTCRACKER BY NUMBERS...

To date, The Nutcracker has been performed **669** times at Birmingham Hippodrome.

The production features **118** different character roles, performed by the Company's **63** dancers.

The flying goose that transports Clara travels **20** metres across the stage every performance. Since 1990, the goose has flown more than **8** miles at Birmingham Hippodrome.

5 set changes transport the audience through the story, while more than **200** people work on- and off-stage each year to bring The Nutcracker to life.

The Christmas tree is **3.7** metres tall at first, then grows to an impressive **7.5** metres.

Approximately **1** tonne of dry ice and **75** kilograms of artificial snow is used during the production.

Clara has approximately **1** minute to change from her day dress into her nightdress during Act One. **2** members of BRB's costume team assist with this quick change.

Each performance involves **61** musicians and **12** singers.

Dancers across the company will use more than **350** pairs of pointe shoes during the run's **20** performances.

Tchaikovsky's famous score requires more than **20** types of instrument, including the celeste, whose magical sound is synonymous with Christmas.

BRB's The Nutcracker shows at Birmingham Hippodrome from Friday 20 November to Saturday 12 December
Visit brb.org.uk for further information and tickets

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The Hunger Games: Sunrise On The Reaping CERT 12a (158 mins)

Starring **Joseph Zada, Jesse Plemons, Ralph Fiennes, Glenn Close, Kieran Culkin, Elle Fanning**
Directed by **Francis Lawrence**

This sci-fi action-adventure prequel film is set four decades after its immediate predecessor in the franchise, The Ballad Of Songbirds And Snakes, but 24 years before the events of the original Hunger Games trilogy.
Based on the same-named 2025 novel by Suzanne Collins, the latest movie focuses on the character of 16-year-old Haymitch Abernathy, a fan favourite who was played as an adult in the original Hunger Games films by Woody Harrelson.
Reaped into the Games, Haymitch forms an alliance with fellow tribute Maysilee Donner, becoming part of a broader resistance effort to challenge the oppressive control of President Snow (Ralph Fiennes)...
Most of which will mean precious little to anybody who's not an actual fan of The Hunger Games!
I Am Legend director Francis Lawrence helms this eagerly anticipated sixth entry.

Released Fri 20 November

Being Heumann

CERT **12a (127 mins)**

Starring **Ruth Madeley, Mark Ruffalo, Dylan O'Brien, Rob Delaney, Ray Fisher, Jon Beavers**
Directed by **Sian Heder**

At first glance, the subject matter of Being Heumann may seem somewhat dry and uninteresting. Thankfully, director Sian Heder has done an excellent job of corralling all of the true-life story's essential elements into a cinematic experience that manages to be both absorbing and uplifting.
The movie chronicles a historic fight for disability rights that took place way back in 1977. Central to the narrative is wheelchair-using Judy Heumann, who inspired more than 100 disabled activists to occupy the federal building in San Francisco for 28 days. Their aim? To demand that the government sign and enforce a law protecting people with disabilities from discrimination in federally funded programmes...
Ruth Madeley has earned glowing praise for her powerhouse portrayal of the tenacious Heumann.

Released Fri 6 November

Ebenezer CERT tbc

Starring **Johnny Depp, Daisy Ridley, Sam Claflin, Ian McKellen, Rupert Grint, Andrea Riseborough** Directed by **Ti West**

Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without a retelling or several of Charles Dickens' most famous festive-season story of them all.
This latest cinematic adaptation sees Johnny Depp - on the comeback trail following well-documented personal-life trials and tribulations - disappearing beneath the old-man make-up to play Victorian London's most famous 'squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner'.
But no traditional heartwarming holiday tale is this, with man-at-the-helm Ti West choosing to ramp up the story's supernatural elements and go heavy as a festive snowfall on the jump scares. This is hardly a surprise - West is, first and foremost, an indie horror director, with a CV that includes terrifying trilogy X, Pearl, and MaXXXine...
Ebenezer is certainly shaping up to be an intriguing release - although one wonders whether it might have more of a Halloween feel about it than a Christmas one.

Released Fri 13 November

How To Rob A Bank

CERT **15 (122 mins)**

Starring **Nicholas Hoult, Christian Slater, Zoë Kravitz, Anna Sawai, John C Reilly, Pete Davidson** Directed by **David Leitch**

David Leitch is the man in the director's chair for a film which focuses on a crew of social-media-savvy bank robbers who not only carry out daring heists but also have the audacity to broadcast them.
Their viral fame comes at a cost, though, depositing them in the crosshairs of a veteran FBI agent and a brilliant software engineer. Despite the unlikely duo closing in, the crime ring pushes past their limits, putting everything on the line for their most ambitious heist yet...
The film is being billed as Point Break meets Fast And Furious. Director Leitch has experience of the latter, having helmed the 2019 spinoff movie Hobbs & Shaw.

Released Fri 13 November

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Focker-In-Law CERT tbc (100 mins)

Starring **Robert De Niro, Skyler Gisondo, Owen Wilson, Ben Stiller, Ariana Grande, Teri Polo** Directed by **John Hamburg**

If you've seen the original film in the Meet The Parents franchise, the storyline of Focker-In-Law will be very familiar to you: grown-up child brings home new partner to meet Mum and Dad, only to find that Dad is suspicious as hell of the new arrival. The main plot difference between that first and this fourth installment in the series is that Ben Stiller's character, Greg Focker, is now the suspicious father.

In the original film, Greg was the new partner brought home by his girlfriend to meet her sceptical dad, Jack - brilliantly played by Robert De Niro. This time round, Greg and his wife Pam's son, Henry, brings home his new partner - trained FBI hostage negotiator Olivia (Ariana Grande) - and announces his intention to propose. But Greg is seriously concerned that his future daughter-in-law might be a terrible mismatch. Jack, on the other hand - a retired CIA counterintelligence agent - takes rather a liking to her...

Released Wed 25 November

Prima Facie CERT 13 (106 mins)

Starring **Cynthia Erivo, Daniel Ings, Harry Treadaway, Noma Dumezweni, Toheeb Jimoh, Simon Russell Beale** Directed by **Susanna White**

From page to stage and now to film, Suzie Miller's Prima Facie is best known as the vehicle via which Jodie Comer showed just how brilliant and accomplished an actor she is. The Killing Eve star performed the two-hour one-woman play to universal acclaim both in the West End and on Broadway.

The film version sees Wicked's Cynthia Erivo taking on the Comer role of Tessa Ensler.

A brilliant criminal defence barrister, Tessa is sexually assaulted by a colleague and forced to confront the flaws of the legal system from the perspective of a survivor.

Premiered at the Toronto Film Festival, the movie received a lukewarm response from the critics. The prevailing feeling was that much of the original play's intensity had been lost as a result of the decision to introduce a supporting cast of characters.

Released Fri 13 November

A Talent For Murder

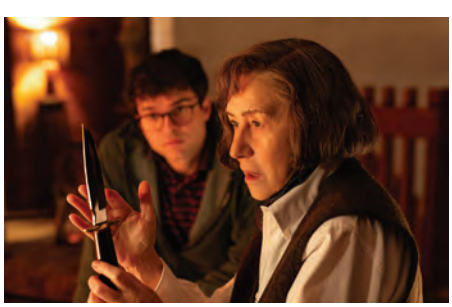
CERT **tbc (106 mins)**

Starring **Olivia Cooke, Helen Mirren, Alden Ehrenreich, Juliet Stevenson, James Faulkner, Brid Brennan** Directed by **Anton Corbijn**

Helen Mirren stars as real-life novelist and Talented Mr Ripley author Patricia Highsmith in this mid-1990s-set psychological noir thriller. The storyline sees a young editor named Edward Ridgeway dispatched by a New York publisher to Highsmith's isolated chalet in the Alps. His mission: to persuade the reclusive and cantankerous novelist to write a final, long-awaited installment in her Tom Ripley book series.

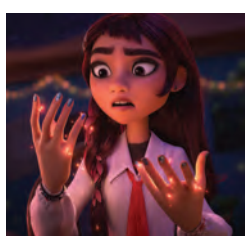
But Highsmith is having none of it - unless, that is, Edward first agrees to engage in a dangerous and disturbing game of cat-and-mouse, collaborating with her to plot a 'perfect murder' that blurs the lines between reality, fiction and psychological manipulation.

Released Fri 20 November



Hexed CERT PG

With the voices of **Hailee Steinfeld, Tracey Ullman,Walton Goggins, Alan Tudyk, Jodie Foster, Rashida Jones** Directed by **Jason Hand, Josie Trinidad** and **Fawn Veerasunthorn**



Walt Disney Animation Studios' latest fantasy-adventure film focuses on the character of Billie Doe, an impulsive teenage girl who accidentally unleashes magical abilities that she didn't know she had.

But that's not all. Her newly discovered powers rip her out of suburbia and into Hexe - a vast, hidden realm of witches, where wild and unhinged magic positively thrives.

Along with her mother, Alice, she begins to investigate family secrets connected to the world of witches...

When Hexed was announced by Disney last year, the hero was a teenage boy, but by this summer, the main character had undergone a gender change.

"A parent-child relationship was always the core of the story," explained director Jason Hand, "and we found the strongest story was between a mother and a daughter. It spoke to the idea of being a witch. It spoke to this empowerment that she was looking for."

Released Fri 27 November

Installation view of British Art Show 10: A Chorus of Strangers. Image courtesy Hayward Gallery Touring. Photo: David Parry.

British Art Show 10

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry; Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry; Coventry University, until Sun 10 January

Painting, sculpture, photography, film and installation all feature in British Art Show 10. Comprising works by more than 30 artists, the Southbank Centre Hayward Gallery touring exhibition, taking the title A Chorus Of Strangers, launched across three Coventry venues at the start of last month.

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

Commenting on the exhibition, Brian Cass, Head of Hayward Gallery Touring, said: "This 10th edition of the British Art Show is an invitation to shift perspective and see the world from multiple positions at once. As it travels to five UK cities, A Chorus Of Strangers will illuminate the power of art to transform uncertainty into a shared journey of kinship and possibility."

Permindar Kaur: Dread Naught

Wolverhampton Art Gallery, until Sun 11 April

This recently opened exhibition features both new commissions and examples of early-career work by leading British sculptor & installation artist Permindar Kaur.
"I always want people to have some sort of emotional response to my work," says Permindar. "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 art, where you don't know how to feel. There are boundaries, and you don't know which side to be on."

Image credit: River Scene with Ducks, Charles-François Daubigny, 1859 © The National Gallery, London. Salting Bequest, 1910.

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.

Raqib Shaw: Night Sonnets

Compton Verney, Warwickshire, until Sun 21 February

It's been more than a decade since Raqib Shaw mounted an exhibition of new work in the UK, so his admirers will surely be eager to check out this brand-new offering.
Night Sonnets brings together a cycle of nocturnal paintings and tapestry which has been informed by the 52-year-old artist's lifelong interest in moonlight and the conditions of the night.
The paintings act as vehicles via which Raqib contemplates difficult issues such as human consciousness, environmental loss and destruction of knowledge, in the process exploring questions about the complexities of modern-day existence.
The exhibition includes a number of works which have never before been exhibited in the UK. These include The Retrospective 2002-2022, an epic, highly detailed painting which functions as a visual inventory of the Calcutta-born artist's impressive career.

MADE At MAC: Capturing The Human Form

Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham, until Sun 7 February

This Made At MAC exhibition showcases work produced by participants across the full breadth of the venue's artistic courses.
Featuring everything from life drawing to dance, and sculpture to photography, the show explores the ways in which tutors and students create work which takes its inspiration from the human form. The exhibition also aims to highlight the commitment of MAC's team of life models, 'whose tireless efforts enable study, creation and experimentation'.

Discovering Lisel Haas

Library of Birmingham, until Sat 12 December

Library of Birmingham's free-to-view exhibition features photographs, archive material and new pieces of art inspired by the life and work of Lisel Haas. A German-born Jewish photographer, Lisel left her home town of Mönchengladbach in 1938, emigrating to Birmingham with her partner Grete Bermbach. Once settled, she quickly established herself as a creative force, despite facing both institutional and cultural barriers.

Rooted In Recovery

Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery, until Mon 9 November

A powerful and thought-provoking collection of artwork exploring recovery, resilience and connection awaits early-November visitors to Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery.
Bringing together work created by participants in a nature-based art psychotherapy programme, Rooted In Recovery is inspired by local woodlands and features a varied collection of watercolours, mixed-media pieces, ceramics and photography, presented alongside audio and video work.
Commenting on the exhibition, Councillor Alex Wagner, Shropshire Council's Portfolio Holder for Culture, said: "Rooted In Recovery is living proof that arts and culture have a major role to play in supporting the health and wellbeing of people across our county. It shows how creativity can provide a voice, build confidence, and help people reconnect with themselves, with others, and with the world around them."

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Festive Good Food Show

NEC, Birmingham, Thurs 26 - Sun 29 November

The countdown to Christmas gets a delicious kick-start when the Festive Good Food Show returns to the NEC this month.
Bringing together top chefs, food experts, artisan producers and household brands, the four-day event promises plenty of inspiration for festive entertaining, seasonal recipes and Christmas shopping.
Visitors can check out live cooking demonstrations by well-known culinary stars including John Torode and James Martin (pictured), pick up tips and tricks for Christmas feasts, and enjoy tastings, workshops and interactive experiences.
More than 350 independent food & drink producers will be showcasing their products, offering everything from gourmet treats and festive ingredients to unique gifts and kitchen essentials.

Crafting, cakes and Christmas at the NEC...

NEC, Birmingham, Thurs 5 - Sun 8 November

Creative enthusiasts are invited to enjoy a packed day of inspiration, shopping and festive fun when four popular events come together under one roof at the NEC early this month.
One ticket gives visitors access to The Creative Craft Show, Sewing For Pleasure Winter, Simply Christmas and Cake & Bake International, creating what organisers describe as the biggest and best-value creative day out.
Shoppers can browse hundreds of exhibitors offering everything from craft supplies, fabrics and sewing essentials to handmade gifts, festive decorations, jewellery and home accessories. Demonstrations, workshops and expert advice, for anyone looking to learn new skills or find inspiration for their next project, also feature.
Cake lovers can marvel at spectacular edible creations - including a life-size display featuring the Prince and Princess of Wales - alongside thousands of competition entries.
Baking stars Cherish Finden and Andrew Fuller, from Netflix's Is It Cake?, will also be in attendance.

Mind Body Spirit Festival

NEC, Birmingham, Fri 13 - Sun 15 November

The Mind Body Spirit Festival is offering three days of wellbeing, spirituality and self-care at the NEC mid-month.
Visitors can explore a packed programme of talks, workshops, classes and experiences designed to inspire healthier, more mindful living.
The festival features a bustling Wellbeing Market, free stages, expert speakers and wide-ranging opportunities to engage with holistic practices including yoga, meditation, energy healing and mindfulness.
Attendees can also take part in interactive experiences, explore different therapies and connect with like-minded people from across the wellbeing community.

The National Festival Of Railway Modelling

NEC, Birmingham, Sat 21 & Sun 22 November

Widely regarded as the UK's largest model railway exhibition, The National Festival Of Railway Modelling is a two-day event bringing together over 120 manufacturers, retailers, clubs and societies from across the country and more than 60 expertly crafted layouts.
Visitors can access live demonstrations, expert talks and practical modelling advice at the World of Railways Stage, while family-friendly attractions include the Marble Express Train Game and a free ride-on train.

Netball Aid

Utilita Arena Birmingham, Sun 15 November

Sport, entertainment and fundraising come together in Birmingham this month as star-studded charity event Netball Aid makes a return. The popular get-together will see celebrities, former netball stars and special guests join forces for an afternoon of netball action, music and family-friendly activities and entertainment. The annually held event is raising vital funds and awareness for Shelter, the long-established homelessness charity which works to support people facing housing insecurity across the country.

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museumsworcestershire.org.uk
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Santa Steam Specials

Severn Valley Railway, Kidderminster, Sat 28 & Sun 29 November, Sat 5 & Sun 6, Sat 12 & Sun 13, Sat 19 & Sun 20 and Thurs 24 December

All aboard Severn Valley Railway's Santa's Steam Specials, running on selected dates from the end of the month.
The family-focused experience combines a heritage steam-train journey - from Kidderminster to Arley Station - with a brand-new musical adventure entitled The Recipe For Christmas.
Every child will receive a special gift to take home, while selected departures also offer visitors the opportunity to explore Bewdley during the return journey.
Relaxed performances, designed for visitors who prefer a calmer environment, will be available at 10am on Sundays in December.

THE POLAR EXPRESS Train Ride

Birmingham Moor Street Station, Sun 22, Sat 28 & Sun 29 November, Sat 5 & Sun 6, Sat 12 & Sun 13, Fri 18 - Tues 23 December

THE POLAR EXPRESS Train Ride returns to Birmingham for Christmas 2026 with a brand-new show, inviting families to step into the magic of the much-loved festive story.
Departing from Birmingham Moor Street Station, the immersive theatrical experience brings to life the world of the 2004 film aboard a heritage steam train. Passengers can enjoy live performances, festive music and storytelling, as familiar characters help recreate the enchanting adventure.
Guests are encouraged to wear their favourite pyjamas and dressing gowns as they settle in for a journey that comes complete with singing chefs, hot chocolate and a cookie. Santa Claus will also make a special appearance, presenting every guest with the treasured First Gift of Christmas - a silver sleigh bell.

Neverland

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, until Sun 3 January

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery's Gas Hall has transformed into the magical world of Neverland for Christmas. The immersive festive experience, inspired by JM Barrie's classic children's story Peter Pan, features twinkling fairy lights, pirate ships, whimsical forests and familiar characters including Peter Pan, Wendy, Captain Hook, Tinkerbell and the alarm-clock-swallowing crocodile.
The Neverland experience is supporting a meaningful cause, with £1 from every ticket sold being donated to Great Ormond Street Hospital Charity, helping to support seriously ill children and their families.

Christmas Tree Festival

Worcester Cathedral, Fri 27 November - Tues 5 January

Worcester Cathedral's historic cloisters and Chapter House are once again playing host to hundreds of individually decorated Christmas trees created by local schools, charities, businesses and community groups.
Visitors can explore the displays and discover the stories behind the decorations, with Dedication Trees offering an opportunity to remember loved ones or celebrate someone special. The festival will also introduce new Community Trees, wooden trees made by Men's Shed Worcester, which have been decorated by individuals, families, schools and other groups.

THE WINTER LIGHT EXPERIENCE

Make this Christmas one to remember.

Follow a trail of light and mystery at the Winter Light Experience, taking place at The Belfry Hotel and Resort. Explore over a mile of illuminated landscapes filled with live characters, interactive games and more!

There's a festive mystery waiting to be unravelled... After an unexpected landing, Santa's presents, reindeer and Christmas magic are scattered along the trail. Follow the clues, explore the installations and see if you can help set things right before the night is through.

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

Scan here to book your tickets!

@winterlightexperience

SPARKLE & SHINE

Four fabulous light events taking place across the region in the lead-up to Christmas

Winter Light Experience

The Belfry Hotel & Resort, Sutton Coldfield,
Fri 27 November - Sat 2 January

A brand-new Christmas-season attraction, Winter Light Experience features more than 30 illuminated installations and takes visitors on a magical journey across part of the iconic Brabazon golf course.
The after-dark trail follows a festive storyline in which Santa has made an unexpected landing. Visitors can follow the lights, uncover clues and help restore Christmas magic as they travel the route.
Festive food & drink, fire pits for toasting marshmallows and a fully licensed après bar within a free-to-access Christmas courtyard are also available to enjoy. Sensory-friendly and dog-friendly sessions will take place on selected dates.

Spectacle Of Light

Sudeley Castle, Winchcombe, Fri 20 November - Wed 30 December

Spectacle Of Light, one of the Cotswolds' most popular Christmas attractions, makes a welcome return this month, transforming the grounds of Sudeley Castle into a magical Alice In Wonderland-inspired adventure.
Now in its 11th year, the illuminated trail comes complete with dazzling displays, immersive storytelling and a host of new installations designed to bring Lewis Carroll's much-loved story to life. Visitors will follow the White Rabbit through the gardens, along the way encountering familiar characters including the Mad Hatter, Cheshire Cat, Tweedledum & Tweedledee, and the Queen of Hearts. Spectacular projections onto the castle façade, a giant chessboard and the mysterious Smoking Keyhole also feature, with festive food & drink available throughout the experience.

Telford Festive Gardens

Chelsea & Maxell Gardens, Telford Town Park, Shropshire,
Fri 11 - Sun 13 and Thurs 17 - Mon 21 December

Step into a winter wonderland as the Chelsea and Maxell Gardens are once again transformed by a dazzling Christmas light trail.
Visitors can follow the illuminated route through a series of festive scenes, with music, storytelling and plenty of Christmas cheer adding to the experience. Along the way, keep an eye out for mischievous elves, frosty characters and even Santa himself.
The family fun continues beyond the trail, courtesy of seasonal entertainment, a selection of food and the chance to enjoy a warming mug of hot chocolate.

The Christmas Light Show

Lichfield Cathedral, Staffordshire, Tues 15 - Mon 21 December

Lichfield Cathedral's much-loved Christmas Light Show returns this December with an all-new theme inspired by the Nativity story.
Created by renowned animation team Illuminos, Follow The Star will feature stunning displays on the Bishop's Palace and the Cathedral's famous West Front, as well as, for the first time, projections inside the cathedral itself.
Alongside the illuminations, guests can check out the Christmas Tree Festival and crib, enjoy performances by local choirs, browse the gift shop and keep themselves warm with seasonal refreshments in the recently opened SALT café. Proceeds from ticket sales will support the ongoing work of Lichfield Cathedral.

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thelist

Your week-by-week listings guide

November 2026

Dirty Dancing at The Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Tues 24 - Sat 28 November

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

What's On

Sun 1 - Sun 8 November

Freya Skye at The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

Sun 1 & Mon 2 November

Mon 9 - Sun 15 November

Bill Bailey: Vaudevillean at The Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

Tues 10 November

Mon 16 - Sun 22 November

DRAWN Contemporary Fair at Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

Sat 21 & Sun 22 November

Mon 23 - Mon 30 November

China Crisis at St Mary's Church, Shrewsbury

Sat 28 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

NANCY CADOGAN: THE LOST TREES Series of poetic and precise, serene yet deeply stirring landscape paintings, exploring the emotional and environmental significance of trees, until Sun 22 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

The Exchange, Centenary Square, Birmingham

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

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

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

COVENTRY BIENNIAL PRESENTS: A DISPLAY OF JOHN RIDDY'S MODERNIST SPACES Exhibition featuring a range of photographs taken in locations around the world between 1998 and 2006, until Sun 10 Jan

PRASHANT KANSARA: IN THE SIGHT OF GOD Exhibition of over 100 drawings by the artist, challenging collective political and societal acceptance of the horrors that war and genocide inflict upon children, until Sun 8 Nov

SIKH STORIES IN COLOURS Family-friendly exhibition, bringing together children's books, original illustrations, music, animation and film to explore creativity, identity and representation, until Thurs 5 Nov

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, until Sun 10 Jan

CURIOUS CREATURES, STONES AND BONES Explore incredible specimens from the natural sciences collection and discover fascinating facts about them - from tiny insects to mighty mammals, sea creatures to rocks from outer space, until July 2028

Ikon Gallery, Birmingham

LOCATIONS: NO11 ARTS Collection of works by participants in the ongoing No11 Arts research & learning programme, which explores how older people connect with the places where they live, until Wed 4 Nov

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

Midlands Arts Centre, Edgbaston

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

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

EMMY BRIDGWATER AND BIRMINGHAM SURREALISTS Celebrating Birmingham-born surrealist Emmy Bridgwater (1906 - 1999), this major exhibition brings together paintings, drawings, collages and poetry spanning over six decades of her life, 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, until Sun 10 Jan

New Art Gallery, Walsall

TEREZA BUŠKOVÁ: MOTHERS WITHOUT HANDS An international project developed by the Birmingham-based artist, using collaborative making, participatory traditions and folklore as means to protest violence against women and girls, until Sun 15 Nov

LAURA ONIONS Informed by feminist ways of learning and archival material, Laura uses printmaking as a tool for participation, dialogue and community-building, until Sun 6 Dec

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

VIBRATION CALIBRATION: BLACK COUNTRY TYPE & CLAIRE BUCKERFIELD Taking its name from a mechanical process that measures the accuracy of vibration sensors, the exhibition offers a recalibration of perceptions of the Black Country through the artists' portrayal of the area, until Sun 28 Feb

CHARMAINE WATKISS: THE THINGS WE HOLD SACRED New solo exhibition featuring major loans and newly commissioned sculptures. The show is the artist's most significant sculptural installation to date, until Sun 11 April

Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

BLUE REMEMBERED HILLS: PIERS BROWNE EXHIBITION To mark the 130th anniversary of the publication of AE Housman's A Shropshire Lad, discover the work of Shropshire painter & printmaker Piers, until Sat 2 Jan

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

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

BETHESDA GARDENS: PAST TIMES Outdoor exhibition bringing together a variety of paintings from the museum's art collection that explore the rhythms of daily life across generations, until Sun 31 Jan

Wolverhampton Art Gallery

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, until 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, until Sun 21 Feb

Elsewhere:

ENDANGERED CRAFTS Major group exhibition exploring glassmaking skills that are endangered, critically endangered or extinct in the UK, until Sat 7 November, Stourbridge Glass Museum

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

SHROUD OF TURIN EXHIBITION Display featuring a full-size replica of the Shroud of Turin - a relic hailed as the burial cloth of Jesus Christ - and supporting information panels, until Thurs 12 Nov, St Leonard's Church, Bridgnorth, Shropshire

UNHOMELY A public programme and exhibition series exploring how histories of migration, displacement, belonging and identity shape people's understandings of home, until Sun 13 Dec, The Brampton Museum, Newcastle-under-Lyme

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

THE OTHER GLASS: THE ART OF RECYCLED GLASS until Sat 27 Feb, Stourbridge Glass Museum

BEAR STEPS GROUP EXHIBITION Featuring works by Ffeisty Ffelters, Sun 8 Nov - Sat 21 Nov, Bear Steps Art Gallery, Shrewsbury

THE SALOPIAN OPEN 2026 A selection of artworks by artists from Shropshire and further afield, Fri 13 Nov - Fri 15 Jan, Gateway Gallery, Shrewsbury

Freya Skye - The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

Gigs

FLAT MOON Sun 1 Nov, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

LUKE JACKSON Sun 1 Nov, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

GREAT STONE REVIVAL Sun 1 Nov, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

STATIC DRESS + SOUL BLIND + HOLDER + LOVER RARELY Sun 1 Nov, O2 Academy, B'ham

BRAT + CAGE FIGHT Sun 1 Nov, The Flapper, B'ham

CODY JOHNSON + PARKER MCCOLLUM + EMILY ANN ROBERTS Sun 1 Nov, Utilita Arena Birmingham

REIGEN LEVI + JEMMA + OHMELMY + ANTHONY MCKAY Sun 1 Nov, The Rainbow, Birmingham

JAMES T - REGGAE & UB40 Sun 1 Nov, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

TAYLORMANIA Sun 1 Nov, hmv Empire, Coventry

ALCHEMY - THE PINK FLOYD SHOW Sun 1 Nov, The Robin, Bilston

SIMPLE PLAN UK + COURTNAY REDDY AS AVRIL LAVIGNE + ME YOU AT SIX Sun 1 Nov, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

IMAR Sun 1 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

PETER COX Sun 1 Nov, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

FREYA SKYE Sun 1 - Mon 2 Nov, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

DEBORAH ROSE Mon 2 Nov, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

EL PONY PISADOR Mon 2 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

ROB HERON & CONRAD BIRD Tues 3 Nov, The Night Owl, Birmingham

AGAINST THE CURRENT Tues 3 Nov, O2 Institute, B'ham

HARVEST: A CELEBRATION OF NEIL YOUNG Tues 3 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

SKYE NEWMAN Tues 3 - Wed 4 Nov, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

BLIND YEO Wed 4 Nov, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

DOM GLYNN & HIS SUNDAY BEST Wed 4 Nov, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

DESPISED ICON + CARNIFEX + SUFFOCATION + GATES TO HELL Wed 4 Nov, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE STREETS Wed 4 Nov, O2 Academy, Birmingham

GIPSY KINGS BY ANDRÉ REYES Wed 4 Nov, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

PASSENGER Wed 4 Nov, XOYO, Birmingham

IMMERSION Wed 4 Nov, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

MILLICENT CHAPANDA Wed 4 Nov, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

TOM MEIGHAN Wed 4 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

LOTUS JUICE + SHAO DOW Thurs 5 Nov, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE POOZIES Thurs 5 Nov, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

PAPA ROACH + LANDMVRKS + SLEEP THEORY Thurs 5 Nov, Utilita Arena Birmingham

CHOP SUEY + SLIP-NOT Thurs 5 Nov, XOYO, Birmingham

MARTIN MCALOON Thurs 5 Nov, The Robin, Bilston

HER HEAD'S ON FIRE + BACK TEETH Thurs 5 Nov, Dive, Wolverhampton

THE BUDAPEST CAFÉ ORCHESTRA Thurs 5 Nov, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

THE HARRY STYLES TRIBUTE SHOW Thurs 5 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE BUG CLUB Thurs 5 Nov, LOOP, Shrewsbury

SIOBHAN MILLER Fri 6 Nov, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

NICK HAKIM Fri 6 Nov, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

ED COSENS Fri 6 Nov, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

HEADWIRED Fri 6 Nov, The Sunflower Lounge, B'ham

THE HOME TEAM + ARROWS IN ACTION + TRUE NORTH Fri 6 Nov, O2 Academy, B'ham

THE AMY WINEHOUSE BAND Fri 6 Nov, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

COLTRANE 100: BOTH DIRECTIONS AT ONCE Fri 6 Nov, Birmingham Town Hall

THE SCRIPT + JAMES MORRISON Fri 6 Nov, Utilita Arena Birmingham

UNDER THE COVERS Fri 6 Nov, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

OASIS - DEFINITELY MIGHT BE V THE STONE ROSES - ADORED Fri 6 Nov, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

MONEY FOR NOTHING - DIRE STRAITS TRIBUTE Fri 6 Nov, The Robin, Bilston

L.A. GUNS Fri 6 Nov, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

CARPENTER BRUT + HEALTH Fri 6 Nov, The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

BOOTLEG BLONDIE Fri 6 Nov, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

WARDEN + SILENCE ME + INVASION Fri 6 Nov, Riff Factory, Stoke-on-Trent

ANTARCTIC MONKEYS Fri 6 Nov, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

MEGAN DIXON HOOD + ALESUND Fri 6 Nov, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

INME + THE OTHER THINGS + FLUTTER Fri 6 Nov, The Rigger, Newcastle-Under-Lyme

FLOYD IN THE FLESH Fri 6 Nov, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

MEAT LOUD Fri 6 Nov, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

TRANSMISSION - THE SOUND OF JOY DIVISION Fri 6 Nov, The Station, Cannock

SANTU Fri 6 Nov, Lichfield Guildhall

THE DETOURS Fri 6 Nov, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

JOHN ADAMS Fri 6 Nov, Morris Hall, Shrewsbury

RICHARD SHINDELL Fri 6 Nov, The Hive, Shrewsbury

LOVE DISTRACTION + JIMMY SOMERVILLE TRIBUTE Fri 6 Nov, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

INSIDER TRADING Sat 7 Nov, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

MADNEZZ OF AMY Sat 7 Nov, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

BLACKGOLD + DEADWAX + INDIGO BLAZE Sat 7 Nov, O2 Institute, Birmingham

OVERPASS Sat 7 Nov, O2 Academy, Birmingham

MORGAN WALLEN TRIBUTE UK Sat 7 Nov, O2 Academy, Birmingham

GICHARD + THE COURTESY GROUP + MOTHS OF THE MOON Sat 7 Nov, Centrala, B'ham

DEAD MOB Sat 7 Nov, Dead Wax, Birmingham

THEBOYSHADOW Sat 7 Nov, The Flapper, Birmingham

THE MUSIC OF STRANGER THINGS: PERFORMED BY KYLE DIXON & MICHAEL STEIN Sat 7 Nov, Birmingham Town Hall

THE PROCLAIMERS Sat 7 Nov, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

MANIC STREET PREACHERS + SUEDE Sat 7 Nov, Utilita Arena Birmingham

AC30S SKA + ROCKSTEADY BAND Sat 7 Nov, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

SEVEN WONDERS Sat 7 Nov, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

ROY ORBISON SONGBOOK Sat 7 Nov, Halesowen Town Hall

BROOKS WILLIAMS Sat 7 Nov, Birchmeadow Centre, Broseley, South Shropshire

ASSERT + ROTUNDA, TOMORROW BURNS + LEECH BLEEDERS Sat 7 Nov, Dive, Wolverhampton

AQUALINE + SØWT + THE WAMEKI + DEAD BIRD LADY Sat 7 Nov, Riff Factory, Stoke-on-Trent

PINK WITH VICKY JACKSON Sat 7 Nov, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

JEAN GENIE - BOWIE TRIBUTE Sat 7 Nov, The Station, Cannock

ROVING CROWS Sat 7 Nov, Lichfield Guildhall

THE TOM MORGAN TRIO Sat 7 Nov, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

R.I.P.D Sat 7 Nov, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

THE SOUTH Sat 7 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

DARTS Sat 7 Nov, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

MAATEKARE + ALYRIS Sat 7 Nov, Percy's Cafe Bar, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

WAVES CRASHING + HEALEES + FALLING & LAUGHING Sun 8 Nov, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

SUSY WALL, ROBIN TUDOR & MATT SAYERS Sun 8 Nov, Kitchen Garden, B'ham

WASIA PROJECT + LUMI Sun 8 Nov, O2 Institute, Birmingham

TYLA'S DOGS DAMOUR + SOHO DUKES Sun 8 Nov, The Robin, Bilston

WISHBONE Sun 8 Nov, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

OUTNUMBERED + SAVE YOUR BREATH + H.A.T.E + NEW BAND Sun 8 Nov, Riff Factory, Stoke-on-Trent

KASPAR & LUCY + ERIN HARPE & JIM COUNTRYMAN Sun 8 Nov, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

CLASSICALLY KATE BUSH Sun 8 Nov, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

SUNDAY ACOUSTIC LOUNGE Sun 8 Nov, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

BIM SKALA BIM Sun 8 Nov, LOOP, Shrewsbury

Peter Cox - The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

Classical Music

ANSON TANG PIANO RECITAL Programme includes works by Glass, Scriabin, Satie & more..., Tues 3 Nov, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

RBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA PRE-CBSO SHOWCASE: FIREBIRD SUITE Featuring Michael Seal (conductor), Tues 3 Nov, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CBSO: BRUCKNER'S 7TH SYMPHONY Featuring Ilan Volkov (conductor) & Ilya Gringolts (violin). Programme also includes Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No.1, Tues 3 Nov, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

REMEMBRANCE CONCERT Featuring Shrewsbury School Chamber Choir, Tues 3 Nov, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

CBSO CENTRE STAGE: SHOSTAKOVICH'S PIANO QUINTET Featuring Lowri Porter (violin), Bethan Allmand (violin), Chris Yates (viola), Kate Setterfield (cello) & Robert Markham (piano). Programme also includes Suk's Elegy, Thurs 5 Nov, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

FLANDERS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: FROM ENGLAND TO BOHEMIA Featuring Duncan Ward (conductor) & Alexandra Soumm (violin). Programme includes works by Butterworth, Mozart, Vaughan Williams & Dvořák, Thurs 5 Nov, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

PAUL CARR ORGAN RECITAL Programme includes works by JS Bach & Marcel Dupré, Thurs 5 Nov, St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham

PETER AND THE WOLF Featuring Allan Toop (narrator) & Nigel Pursey (organ). A multi-media presentation designed for schools, but everyone is welcome, Fri 6 Nov, Shrewsbury Abbey

CONCERTS IN THE ROUND: DAVID SHINGLER ORGAN RECITAL Fri 6 Nov, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

PUCCINI: GIANNI SCHICCHI Featuring Jonathan Lyness (conductor) & Mid Wales Opera, Fri 6 Nov, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

SOT CLASSICS: BBC PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA - FROST AND FIRE Featuring Sunwook Kim (conductor & soloist). Programme includes works by Beethoven & Tchaikovsky, Fri 6 Nov, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

STAFFORD SINFONIA: MAJESTIC CLASSICS Featuring Jack Lovell-Huckle (musical director) & Brittany King (soloist). Programme includes works by Wagner & Mendelssohn, Sat 7 Nov, Rising Brook Community Church, Stafford

MUSIC FOR REMEMBERANCE Programme includes works by Chilcott & Jenkins, Sat 7 Nov, Shrewsbury Abbey

RUSSIAN WINTER FT. SWAN LAKE Featuring Juan Ortuño (conductor), Yurii Kyrychenko (soloist) & North Staffs Symphony Orchestra. Programme includes works by Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Khachaturian & Tchaikovsky, Sat 7 Nov, St John Fisher Catholic College, Newcastle-under-Lyme

ECHO RISING STARS 2026/27: PETAR PEJČIĆ (CELLO) Featuring Nour Ayadi (piano). Programme includes works by Boulanger, Piazzolla, Živković & more..., Sun 8 Nov, Jennifer Blackwell Performance Space, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Comedy

DANIEL KITSON Sun 1 Nov, Birmingham Town Hall

AURIE STYLA Sun 1 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

FINLAY CHRISTIE Sun 1 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

GARY DELANEY Sun 1 Nov, Dudley Town Hall

MILTON JONES & COMICS TBC Sun 1 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

JONNY COLE Tues 3 Nov, Utilita Arena Birmingham

RICH HALL Tues 3 Nov, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

JAMIE HUTCHINSON & SIMON WOZNIAK Wed 4 Nov, The Glee Club, B'ham

DAN TIERNAN Wed 4 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

EMMANUEL SONUBI & COMICS TBC Wed 4 Nov, Herbert's Yard, Birmingham

THE ALTER COMEDY CLUB Wed 4 Nov, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

MAISIE ADAM Thurs 5 Nov, Birmingham Town Hall

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, STEVE WILLIAMS & LOUISE YOUNG Thurs 5 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

DARREN HARRIOTT & COMICS TBC Thurs 5 Nov, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

KUM-N-AVALOFF COMEDY NIGHT Thurs 5 Nov, Stourbridge Town Hall

ALFIE MOORE Thurs 5 Nov, Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shrops

BIRMINGHAM IMPROV FESTIVAL Thurs 5 - Sat 7 Nov, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

ED PATRICK Thurs 5 Nov, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

JONATHAN ELSTON, STEVE WILLIAMS, LOUISE YOUNG, ROMAN HARRIS & COMIC TBC Fri 6 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

MUHSIN YESILADA Fri 6 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

MICHAEL SPICER Fri 6 Nov, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

SIMON BRODKIN Fri 6 Nov, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

FERN BRADY, IAIN STIRLING, PHIL ELLIS & PAUL SINHA Fri 6 Nov, Dudley Town Hall

ROSIE HOLT Fri 6 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

JONATHAN ELSTON, STEVE WILLIAMS, LOUISE YOUNG & COMIC TBC Sat 7 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JORDAN BROOKES Sat 7 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

IAN STONE Sat 7 Nov, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffordshire

MARK WATSON Sat 7 Nov, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

BRIAN CONLEY, LINDSEY SANTORO, PRESIDENT OBONJO & WAYNE BEESE Sat 7 Nov, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

SL Sun 8 Nov, The Glee Club, B'ham

MICHAEL SHAFAR, MICHAEL MCKENZIE, KEVIN DANIEL & DANNY MCLOUGHLIN Sun 8 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Theatre

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

BEING FRANK Brand-new comedy-horror farce concerning a down-on-his-luck research assistant and a boss who's demanding results, until Sat 7 Nov, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

CATS New production of Andrew Lloyd Webber's award-winning musical, based on TS Eliot's Old Possum's Book Of Practical Cats, until 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, until Sat 7 Nov, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

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, until Sat 16 Jan, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

JERSEY BOYS Smash-hit musical that charts the rise to fame of Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons, Mon 2 - Sat 21 Nov, The Alexandra, Birmingham

SISTER ACT Amateur version presented by Cradley Heath Operatic Society, Tues 3 - Sat 7 Nov, Stourbridge Town Hall

OUR HOUSE Sutton Coldfield Musical Youth Theatre present an amateur version of the Madness musical, Tues 3 - Sat 7 Nov, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER Humorous and thought-provoking story of comradeship, betrayal, and promises broken and kept following the carnage of World War One, Wed 4 Nov, The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

DEAD MEN'S EYES RM Lloyd Parry presents two chilling tales from the pen of MR James: A View From A Hill and Dead Men's Eyes, Wed 4 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

UP POMPEII Ambient Night Theatre Productions present an amateur version of the classic BBC comedy starring Frankie Howerd, Wed 4 & Thurs 5 Nov, Rugeley Rose Theatre

THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY Stafford Players present an amateur version of Oscar Wilde's famous story of vanity, temptation, and the price of a perfect life, Wed 4 - Sat 7 Nov, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

DRACULA Jonathan Goodwin stars in a one-man stage version of Bram Stoker's gothic novel, Thurs 5 Nov, Haden Hill House Museum, Cradley Heath

DAD'S ARMY Market Drayton Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society present a show based on the popular 1970s BBC TV comedy series, Thurs 5 - Sat 7 Nov, Festival Drayton, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

SHED STORIES Theatre, movement and documentary combine to shine a light on the growing phenomenon of 'men's sheds' and the communities around them, Fri 6 Nov, Glasshouse Arts Centre, Stourbridge

I WAS A TEENAGE BISEXUAL Vintage horror B-movie meets 90s teen flick in a show from Polis Loizou exploring the life of a bisexual man... 'with all the horrors that involves', Fri 6 Nov, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

MID WALES OPERA: GIANNI SCHICCHI Puccini's one-act comedy, featuring twists, turns and madcap ensembles, Fri 6 Nov, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

LETTERS THROUGH TIME Traditional tales, singalong songs and extracts from personal letters bring to life the inspirational story of Simon Evans, Shropshire's first postman, Fri 6 Nov, Church Stretton Library, South Shropshire

BEDLAM: CAN WE TALK Rochi Rampal's new play, exploring the growing relationship between young people, artificial intelligence and mental health, Fri 6 & Sat 7 Nov, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

ROCK OF AGES Amateur version of the high-energy musical Fri 6 & Sat 7 Nov, The Rugeley Rose Theatre

JACK ABSOLUTE FLIES AGAIN Amateur version of Richard Bean's farce, Fri 6 - Sat 14 Nov, The Crown Wharf Theatre, Stone, Staffs

SHREK JR. Shrewsbury PQA students present an amateur version of the

family-friendly musical, Sat 7 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

MORTUUS Immersive theatre storytelling experience, taking audiences on a journey from the campfire ghost story, through a rich tapestry of global myths, folklore and soundscapes, Sat 7 Nov, Wednesbury Museum & Art Gallery

LETTERS THROUGH TIME Traditional tales, singalong songs and extracts from personal letters bring to life the inspirational story of Simon Evans, Shropshire's first postman, Sat 7 Nov, Bitterley Village Hall, Shropshire

THE ELEPHANT MAN Amateur version of Bernard Pomerance's heart-rending true story, Sat 7 - Sat 14 Nov, Oldbury Rep

MORTUUS Immersive theatre storytelling experience, taking audiences on a journey from the campfire ghost story, through a rich tapestry of global myths, folklore and soundscapes, Sun 8 Nov, Thimblemill Library, Smethwick

Kids Theatre

THE SNOWMAN World premiere of a brand-new stage version of Raymond Briggs' much-loved children's story, until Sun 1 Nov, The Rep, B'ham

DISNEY ON ICE PRESENTS DISCOVER THE MAGIC Fast-paced and family-friendly production that follows the search for Tinker Bell through various Disney worlds, until Sun 1 Nov & Fri 6 - Sun 8 Nov, bp pulse LIVE, Birmingham

THERE'S A MONSTER IN YOUR SHOW Tom Fletcher's interactive adventures for big imaginations leap from page to stage in a long-touring musical show for younger audiences, Sat 31 Oct - Sun 1 Nov, Halesowen Town Hall

FUNGI FRIDA AND THE MYCO HEROES Family show about fungi and how they can help save the environment. Interactive outdoor performance full of songs, games, clowning and puppetry, Sun 1 Nov, Oak House Museum, West Bromwich

THE DINOSAUR THAT POOPED A ROCK SHOW Children's stage show adapted from Tom Fletcher and Dougie Poynter's bestselling children's books, Sun 8 Nov, Birmingham Town Hall

Dance

THE NUTCRACKER A fresh interpretation of a timeless tale, presented by New English Ballet, Tues 3 - Wed 4 Nov, Lichfield Garrick

JO BANNON - THE DIRTY WORK New solo performance which takes a peek into a world where truth and illusion, performance and reality converge, Sat 7 Nov, Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

SWAN LAKE Presented by Imperial Classical Ballet, Sun 8 Nov, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

Light Entertainment

K-POP LIVE Tribute to the global K-Pop phenomenon, Sun 1 Nov, Lichfield Garrick

AN EVENING WITH JOHN LYDON Join the Sex Pistols frontman & lyricist as he shares stories from his career. An audience Q&A also features, Wed 4 Nov, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN: THE CANDLELIGHT CONCERT Wed 4 Nov, Lichfield Cathedral

THAT'LL BE CHRISTMAS! New show featuring festive classics, Fri 6 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

SHAUN RYDER Spoken-word tour in support of Shaun's new book, Happy Mondays - And Fridays And Saturdays And Sundays, Fri 6 Nov, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

CHRISTMAS IN IRELAND Feelgood show capturing the true magic of an Irish Christmas, Fri 6 & Sat 7 Nov, Lichfield Garrick

BIRMINGHAM DRAG & BURLESQUE FESTIVAL: THE FOLLIES GRANDÉ Step into a glamorous world in which 'sizzling striptease, daring drag and vivacious variety whip you into a luxurious, comedic cocktail of the downright outrageous', Sat 7 Nov, The Old Rep, Birmingham

THE RONNIES - FROM BLITZ TO GLITZ Evening of music, memories and celebration, featuring the sounds of the 1940s, Sat 7 Nov, The Little Theatre, Donnington, Shropshire

MICHAEL STARRING BEN Sun 8 Nov, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

K-POP SUPERSTARS Musical adventure through the biggest K-Pop hits, Sun 8 Nov, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

A SHAMELESS NIGHT An evening with the cast of iconic TV series Shameless. Lewis Nicholls hosts, Sun 8 Nov, Birmingham Town Hall

CHRISTMAS IN IRELAND Feelgood show capturing the true magic of an Irish Christmas, Sun 8 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Talks & Spoken Word

ANNE HATHAWAY: A MONOLOGUE BY LESLEY SMITH A thoughtful and engaging portrayal of the woman behind one of history's greatest literary figures, Sun 1 Nov, Lichfield Cathedral

AN EVENING WITH SIR GEOFF HURST: FAREWELL TOUR Tues 3 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

BENJAMIN ZEPHANIAH COMMUNITY LECTURE WITH AFUA HIRSCH Wed 4 Nov, University of Birmingham

PROFESSOR ALICE ROBERTS: FROM CELL TO CIVILISATION - LIVE ON STAGE Exploring four billion years of human evolution, Wed 4 Nov, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

Events

OCTOBER HALF TERM: JET AND SPACE WEEK A week of aviation and space-themed family activities, until Sun 1 Nov, RAF Museum Midlands, Cosford

OCTOBER HALF TERM FUN - MYTHS AND SUPERSTITIONS Ghostly apparitions, curious cures and mysterious goings-on await at the museum, until Sun 1 Nov, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

THE GREAT BIG HALLOWEEN HUNT TRAIL Featuring an interactive story trail and activities including pumpkin spotting, casting a spell and flying like a witch on a broomstick, until Sun 1 Nov, Shugborough Estate, Staffordshire

NIGHTMARE ISLAND Make your way through the darkness as live scare actors emerge from the shadows, until Sun 1 Nov, Alderford Lake, Whitchurch, Shropshire

AUTUMN HALF TERM Climb aboard a heritage diesel or steam-hauled train and see what you can spot as you travel along the line, until Sun 1 Nov, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, nr Kidderminster

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

SHREWSBURY TOWN FIREWORKS & FOOD A night of fireworks, food, entertainment and family fun, Thurs 5 Nov, Shrewsbury Town Football Club

THE CREATIVE CRAFT SHOW Bringing together hundreds of exhibitors, demonstrations, workshops, and hands-on creative experiences across a wide range of crafts, Thurs 5 - Sun 8 Nov, NEC, Birmingham

SIMPLY CHRISTMAS Discover beautiful handmade gifts, Christmas decorations, seasonal crafts and unique treats from talented designers and makers, Thurs 5 - Sun 8 Nov, NEC, Birmingham

STAFFORD STAMP SHOW Event featuring 40-plus dealers and covering all aspects of philately, Fri 6 - Sat 7 Nov, Staffordshire Count Showground, Stafford

CAKE INTERNATIONAL AND BAKE INTERNATIONAL The biggest cake-decorating and baking event in the world, Fri 6 - Sun 8 Nov, NEC, Birmingham

ULTIMATE FIREWORKS NIGHT SPECTACULAR Show packed with 'dazzling lights, thrilling rides and family-friendly fun', Fri 6 - Sun 8 Nov, Alton Towers Resorts, Staffordshire

HIMLEY FIREWORKS 2026 Event celebrating its 50th anniversary, Sat 7 Nov, Himley Hall & Park, Dudley

BONFIRE NIGHT A 'dazzling' night by the lake, complete with fireworks displays, Sat 7 Nov, Alderford Lake, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

STATFOLD'S FIREWORKS SPECTACULAR 2026 Family day and night packed with entertainment and spectacular fireworks, Sat 7 Nov, Statfold Country Park, Tamworth

FESTIVAL OF LIGHT The museum comes alive with the vibrant sights, sounds and spirit of Diwali, Sat 7 Nov, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

ARTISAN MARKET Featuring local craftspeople and producers, Sat 7 Nov, Lichfield Cathedral

FIREWORKS & BONFIRE PARTY Two firework and bonfire parties with live music, Sat 7 - Sun 8 Nov, Lower Drayton Farm, Staffordshire

FIREWORKS ON THE FARM Full afternoon of activities, followed by a fireworks display, Sat 7 - Sun 8 Nov, National Forest Adventure Farm, Staffordshire

SCALE MODEL WORLD 2026 Fine scale model show with group displays and trade stands, Sat 7 - Sun 8 Nov, Telford International Centre, Shropshire

THE POLAR EXPRESS TRAIN RIDE Recreate the adventure and excitement of the popular Christmas movie, Sat 7 Nov - Wed 23 Dec, Churnet Valley Railway, Staffordshire

BONFIRE & FIREWORKS NIGHT Featuring two firework displays across the evening, one giant roaring bonfire and a traditional funfair, Sun 8 Nov, Weston Park, Shropshire

Gigs

ASHLEY SINGH Mon 9 Nov, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

HOTHOUSE FLOWERS Mon 9 Nov, O2 Institute, B'ham

THE SHIRES Mon 9 Nov, Symphony Hall, B'ham

TRACK DOGS Mon 9 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

JUNIOR BROTHER + JIM GHEDI Tues 10 Nov, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

LUCY FARRELL & SHANE PENDERGAST Tues 10 Nov, Kitchen Garden, B'ham

CRISTINA HEART Tues 10 Nov, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

IGORRR + SHINING + OTTO VON SCHIRACH Tues 10 Nov, O2 Institute, B'ham

BREED 77 Tues 10 Nov, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE AUSTRALIAN PINK FLOYD Tues 10 Nov, Symphony Hall, B'ham

AMY LOU Tues 10 Nov, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

THE WRAN Wed 11 Nov, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

RUTH TRIMBLE Wed 11 Nov, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

REVEREND AND THE MAKERS Wed 11 Nov, O2 Institute, Birmingham

PARIS PALOMA Wed 11 Nov, O2 Academy, B'ham

RICKY WARWICK & THE FIGHTING HEARTS + RT-ZED Wed 11 Nov, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

THE JACKSONS Wed 11 Nov, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

ELEANOR MCEVOY Wed 11 Nov, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

OZRIC TENTACLES Wed 11 Nov, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

ELEANOR MCEVOY Thurs 12 Nov, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

CHLOE SLATER Thurs 12 Nov, O2 Institute, B'ham

CHASING ABBEY Thurs 12 Nov, O2 Academy, B'ham

WOJTEK MAZOLEWSKI Thurs 12 Nov, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

BBY Thurs 12 Nov, Dead Wax, Birmingham

EDDIE & THE HOT RODS Thurs 12 Nov, The Flapper, Birmingham

BAY CITY ROLLERS Thurs 12 Nov, Birmingham Town Hall

BOYZLIFE Thurs 12 Nov, Symphony Hall, B'ham

MYLES SMITH + CHANCE PENA Thurs 12 Nov, bp pulse LIVE, Birmingham

THE BEST OF BUBLE Thurs 12 Nov, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

NASHVILLE AT HEART Thurs 12 Nov, Stourbridge Town Hall

MASON HILL Thurs 12 Nov, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

ALISON MOYET Thurs 12 Nov, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

MIK ARTISTIK EGOTRIP Thurs 12 Nov, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

STEVE KNIGHTLEY AND THE WINTER YARDS BAND Thurs 12 Nov, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

MIK ARTISTIK'S EGO TRIP Fri 13 Nov, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

JOSHUA IDEHEN Fri 13 Nov, O2 Institute, Birmingham

BONNIE PRINCE BILLY Fri 13 Nov, O2 Institute, B'ham

JUST RADIOHEAD Fri 13 Nov, O2 Academy, B'ham

BURNING ROPE Fri 13 Nov, Jo Jo Jims, Birmingham

JEP-RD Fri 13 Nov, Tower of Song, Birmingham

JAMES ALLSOPP Fri 13 Nov, 1000 Trades, Birmingham

MANTRA + [REANIMATION] Fri 13 Nov, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

FANGSLINGER Fri 13 Nov, The Flapper, Birmingham

ANTWERP GIPSY SKA ORKESTRA Fri 13 Nov, The Victoria, Birmingham

ATIF ASLAM Fri 13 Nov, bp pulse LIVE, Birmingham

PAUL HEATON + THE LIGHTNING SEEDS + RIANNE DOWNEY Fri 13 Nov, Utilita Arena B'ham

SUPREME QUEEN Fri 13 Nov, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

THE DIANA ROSS STORY Fri 13 Nov, Dudley Town Hall

KERRANG'D! Fri 13 Nov, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

KICK UP THE 80S Fri 13 Nov, The Robin, Bilston

ASOMVEL + PIECES OF MOLLY Fri 13 Nov, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN Fri 13 Nov, The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

TOM A SMITH Fri 13 Nov, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

DAVID LIVE Fri 13 Nov, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

NERVOUS TWITCH Fri 13 Nov, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

HAPPY MONDAYS Fri 13 Nov, Keele University, Stoke-on-Trent

ANTI-NOWHERE LEAGUE + WASTED LIFE + THE THIRTEENTH TURN Fri 13 Nov, The Underground, Stoke-on-Trent

ROBB JOHNSON Fri 13 Nov, Fenton Town Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

CANNONBALL QUINTET Fri 13 Nov, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

CARRIVICK SISTERS Fri 13 Nov, Marston's Social Club, Burton upon Trent

KARNATAKA Fri 13 Nov, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

NICKLEBACK UK Fri 13 Nov, The Station, Cannock

INXS GB Fri 13 Nov, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

AND FINALLY… PHIL COLLINS Fri 13 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

MARTIN HARLEY Fri 13 Nov, Morris Hall, Shrewsbury

DEFINITELY OASIS Fri 13 Nov, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

THE MEN THEY COULDN'T HANG Fri 13 Nov, LOOP, Shrewsbury

DAVE MCCABE + JAMES JAY LEWIS Sat 14 Nov, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

ASH XO + SUPA D + COLDSTEPS + TERMINAL 4 Sat 14 Nov, O2 Institute, Birmingham

NIEVE ELLA Sat 14 Nov, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SPLIT SECOND Sat 14 Nov, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SHED SEVEN Sat 14 Nov, O2 Academy, Birmingham

WILD COUNTRY Sat 14 Nov, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

LOFT Sat 14 Nov, Dead Wax, Birmingham

THE LEGEND OF BARRY WHITE Sat 14 Nov, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

ULTIMATE RNB Sat 14 Nov, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

FEROCIOUS DOG Sat 14 Nov, The Robin, Bilston

VINCENT FLATTS FINAL DRIVE Sat 14 Nov, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

CURRENTS + ERRA + CASKETS + AVIANA Sat 14 Nov, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

THE CRYSTAL TEARDROP + TUPPENNY BUNTERS Sat 14 Nov, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

THE SEARCHERS & HOLLIES EXPERIENCE Sat 14 Nov, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

ME, YOU AT SIX + SIMPLE PLAN UK Sat 14 Nov, The Station, Cannock

LIMEHOUSE LIZZY Sat 14 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

TRISH CLOWES - MY IRIS QUARTET Sat 14 Nov, The Hive, Shrewsbury

FROM GOLD TO RIO Sat 14 Nov, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

BLEAK SQUAD Sun 15 Nov, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

ABIGAIL LAPELL Sun 15 Nov, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT Sun 15 Nov, O2 Institute, Birmingham

RADIO FREE ALICE Sun 15 Nov, O2 Institute, B'ham

MEEK + HEADWIRED Sun 15 Nov, O2 Academy, Birmingham

KATZEYE Sun 15 Nov, Dudley Town Hall

TRIBUTE TO SABRINA CARPENTER AND OLIVIA RODRIGO Sun 15 Nov, The Robin, Bilston

YARD ACT Sun 15 Nov, The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

HALFCOURT + VORDERMANN + GUDEWIFE + BLACKBIRDS Sun 15 Nov, Riff Factory, Stoke-on-Trent

HOLY DIVA Sun 15 Nov, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

FINDLAY NAPIER + BOB M Sun 15 Nov, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

ELECTRIC EEL SHOCK Sun 15 Nov, LOOP, Shrewsbury

Classical Music

THOMAS TROTTER ORGAN CONCERT: IN MEMORIAM Programme includes works by JS Bach, Guilmant, Walford Davies & more..., Mon 9 Nov, Birmingham Town Hall

XUAN WU TRIO Tues 10 Nov, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

ATÉA QUINTET Featuring Alena Walentin (flute), Anna Hashimoto (clarinet), Ashley Myall (bassoon), Chris Beagles (horn) & Philip Haworth (oboe). Programme includes works by Hoffmeister, Schulhoff & Beethoven, Wed 11 Nov, Recital Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

CONCERTS IN THE ROUND: STUDENTS FROM CHETHAM'S SCHOOL OF MUSIC Fri 13 Nov, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

LUDLOW PIANO FESTIVAL POP-UP: CORDELIA WILLIAMS (PIANO) & ALISTAIR MCGOWAN (PICTURED) Programme includes works by Bach, Janacek, Prokofiev & Chopin, Fri 13 Nov, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

EX CATHEDRA: WORDS APART - BACH & SANDSTRÖM MOTETS Featuring James Burton (conductor), Sat 14 Nov, St Francis Church, Birmingham

THE PHOENIX SINGERS: SONGS OF HEAVEN AND EARTH Programme includes works by Bernstein, Britten & Barber, Sat 14 Nov, St.Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

IMAGINARY LANDSCAPES Featuring Lucy Nolan (harp) & Chris Tutton (poet), Sat 14 Nov, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

THE UNFINISHED JOURNEY: ST CECILIA Programme includes works by Schubert & Carr, Sat 14 Nov, Shrewsbury School

LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL CHORUS: ECHOES OF REMEMBERANCE Programme includes works by Mozart, Sat 14 Nov, Lichfield Cathedral

CHRISTIAN CARTWRIGHT ORGAN PROM Sat 14 Nov, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

RUBY HOWELLS (FLUTE) & RODOLFO ALBERO (PIANO) Programme includes works by Benjamin & Poulenc, Sun 15 Nov, Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, South Shropshire

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM CHOIR: DANCES OF TIME Programme includes works by Chilcott, Holst, Rutter & Haydn, Sun 15 Nov, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

GIG CARITAS: CLASSICAL CHILLS Featuring Keith Horsfall (conductor) & Berri Munn (violin). Programme includes works by Bruch & Beethoven, Sun 15 Nov, Stourbridge Town Hall

Comedy

PADDY YOUNG Mon 9 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

RICKY GERVAIS Mon 9 - Tues 10 Nov, Utilita Arena Birmingham

CHARLIE BAKER Tues 10 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

MIKE WOZNIAK Wed 11 Nov, Birmingham Town Hall

NIGEL PLANER Wed 11 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

BILL BAILEY Wed 11 Nov, Utilita Arena Birmingham

JEFF INNOCENT Wed 11 Nov, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

PAUL SMITH Wed 11 Nov, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

JOSH THOMAS Thurs 12 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, CRAIG HILL & DANNY MCLOUGHLIN Thurs 12 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

TAL DAVIES, HANNAH WEETMAN & MICHAEL SHAFAR Thurs 12 Nov, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

PATRICK MONAHAN Thurs 12 Nov, The Anstice, Madeley, Shropshire

SINDHU VEE Fri 13 Nov, Birmingham Town Hall

WILL HANNIGAN, DANNY MCLOUGHLIN, CRAIG HILL, ADAM HOPKINS & WILL HITT Fri 13 Nov, The Glee Club, B'ham

STUART GOLDSMITH Fri 13 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

HARRY ENFIELD AND NO CHUMS Fri 13 Nov, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

THOMAS GREEN Sat 14 Nov, Birmingham Town Hall

WILL HANNIGAN, DANNY MCLOUGHLIN, CRAIG HILL & COMIC TBC Sat 14 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

RUSSELL KANE, IAN CRAWFORD, OLIVER BOWEN & WAYNE BEESE Sat 14 Nov, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

GARY MEIKLE Sun 15 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

KILLIAN SUNDERMANN Sun 15 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

Theatre

CHRISTMAS CAROL GOES WRONG Award-winning company Mischief present a festive slice of chaos of escapism, Tues 10 - Sat 14 Nov, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

YDE AND OLIVE: A MEDIEVAL LOVE STORY Storyteller & academic Daisy Black presents a 13th-century tale of disguise, high adventure, public baths, gender fluidity, straight-talking angels and queer love, Wed 11 Nov, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

YOU OUGHTA BE IN PICTURES One-man show in which award-winning theatre-maker Polis Loizou tells 'a tale to fill you with dread..., and doubt', Wed 11 Nov, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek

SHREK THE MUSICAL Amateur version presented by Five Towns Theatre, Tues 11 - Sat 14 Nov, Stoke Repertory Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

KATIE HOARE: POSITIVE RISK Play exploring the highs and lows of a young woman who finds herself stuck within the outdated British mental-health system, Thurs 12 Nov, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

GOLDILOCKS AND THE THREE BEARS (THE PANTO) Presented by Rugeley Musical Theatre Company, Thurs 12 - Sat 14 Nov, Rugeley Rose Theatre

JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT Get Your Wigle On present an amateur version of the Andrew Lloyd Webber/Tim Rice musical, Thurs 12 - Sun 15 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

KATIE HOARE: POSITIVE RISK Play exploring the highs and lows of a young woman who finds herself stuck within the outdated British mental-health system, Fri 13 Nov, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

MORTUUS Immersive theatre storytelling experience, taking audiences on a journey from the campfire ghost story, through a rich tapestry of global myths, folklore and soundscapes, Fri 13 Nov, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

MOTHERHOOD Actress & writer Elli Mackenzie explores the highs and lows, frustrations and joys of raising children whilst running a family business, Fri 13 Nov, The Anstice, Madeley, Telford, Shropshire

MIXED DOUBLES: AN ENTERTAINMENT ON MARRIAGE Shropshire Drama Company present a series of eight short plays or revue sketches, each with two characters and eight monologues, composed by various English playwrights, Fri 13 Nov, Wem Town Hall, North Shropshire

Mixed Doubles: An Entertainment on Marriage - Wem Town Hall, Shropshire

LAST DANCE SALOON A multi-story mix of music, song, tango and ancient and modern stories, Fri 13 Nov, Welshampton Parish Hall, North Shropshire

THE BORROWERS Theresa Heskins' acclaimed version of Mary Norton's magical adventure, complete with an original musical score, Fri 13 Nov - Sat 23 Jan, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

A CHILD'S CHRISTMAS IN WALES Guy Masterson brings Dylan Thomas' festive story to life, Sat 14 Nov, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

GEORGE & THE DRAG QUEEN Pipeline Theatre present a new play featuring 'comedy, heartbreak, music and a transmogrifying set', Sat 14 Nov, Charlton School Theatre, Wellington, Shropshire

RENT THE MUSICAL Amateur version presented by Curtain Call Theatre Company, Sun 15 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

GEORGE & THE DRAG QUEEN Pipeline Theatre present a new play featuring 'comedy, heartbreak, music and a transmogrifying set', Sun 15 Nov, Clungunford Village Hall, South Shropshire

Dance

PROPEL DANCE: MOMENTUM Showcase of work presented by the UK's first and only professional wheelchair dance company, Wed 11 Nov, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

Light Entertainment

D-DAY DARLINGS Nostalgic show taking audiences on a musical journey back to the heart of wartime Britain, Tues 10 Nov, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

ALEX MCALEER - MIND READER Evening of psychological illusion, Wed 11 Nov, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

PERSONAL SPOT: MIDGITTE BARDOT Interdisciplinary performance programme featuring 'the UK's most exciting cabaret, theatre and nightlife performers', Thurs 12 Nov, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

CHRISTMAS IN IRELAND Feelgood show capturing the true magic of an Irish Christmas, Fri 13 Nov, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

THE MUSIC OF OASIS BY CANDLELIGHT Fri 13 Nov, Lichfield Cathedral

UNPLUGGED LIVE Intimate evening bringing together emerging and established musicians, singers and songwriters. Artists include Karima Jannat, Saazib and Ayon Paul, Sat 14 Nov, Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

I'M SORRY I HAVEN'T GOT A CLUE Join chairman Jack Dee, a panel of top comedians and pianist Colin Sell for an evening of inspired nonsense, Sat 14 Nov, Birmingham Hippodrome

THE SOUND OF EPIC ANIME Experience a full symphony orchestra perform legendary scores from Naruto, One Piece, Demon Slayer and Attack On Titan, presented alongside timeless soundtracks from Studio Ghibli and Makoto Shinkai, Sun 15 Nov, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

RAY QUINN: A SWINGING CHRISTMAS Sun 15 Nov, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

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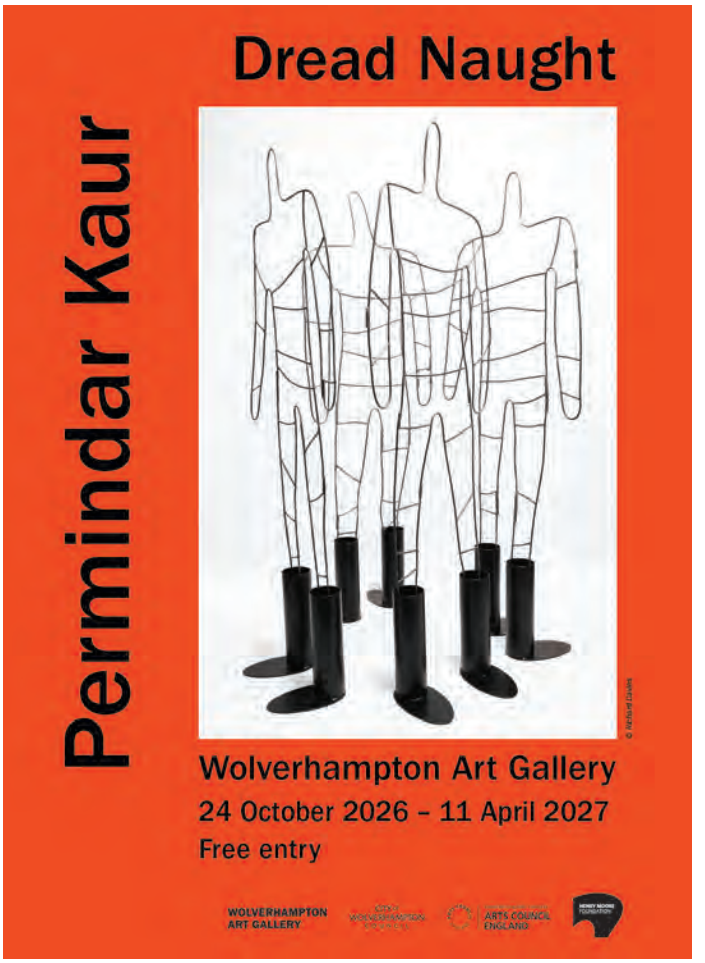
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Family theatre & rock star legend Kid Carpet comes to Wolves this Christmas with a brand new show...
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6TH DECEMBER
11AM AND 2PM
KID CARPET & THE NOISY ANIMALS PRESENT
Jack & the Beanstalk (Sort of)
MAGIC BEANZ
"The Mighty Boosh for kids" - Strike A Light Fesitval
WOLVERHAMPTON ARTS CENTRE

Talks & Spoken Word

DANNY HART - WON'T SIT DOWN Journey through the life of one of downhill mountain bike racing's elite participants, Tues 10 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

MY MOUNTAIN LIFE Illustrated presentation by mountaineer Simon Yates, Thurs 12 Nov, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

PROFESSOR ALICE ROBERTS: FROM CELL TO CIVILISATION - LIVE ON STAGE Exploring four billion years of human evolution, Sun 15 - Mon 16 Nov, Birmingham Town Hall

Events

WORLD NURSERY RHYME WEEK - I SPY TRAIL Search the museum for familiar nursery rhymes hidden among the collections, Mon 9 - Fri 13 Nov, Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

LANCASTER INSURANCE CLASSIC MOTOR SHOW The UK's biggest indoor car show, featuring 3,000 classic cars, Fri 13 - Sun 15 Nov, NEC, Birmingham

MIND BODY SPIRIT FESTIVAL Event focusing on wellness, spirituality and self-care, Fri 13 - Sun 15 Nov, NEC, Birmingham

PRIDE IN STEM DAY Full day of activities celebrating International Day of LGBTQIA+ People in STEM, Sat 14 Nov, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

BONGO'S BINGO The original bingo rave sensation, Sat 14 Nov, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

CHRISTMAS CRAFT & GIFT FAIR Organised by Black Country Fairs, Sat 14 Nov, Himley Hall & Park, Dudley

ABBEY CHRISTMAS FAYRE Enjoy a day of festive shopping, Sat 14 Nov, Shrewsbury Abbey, Shropshire

DIWALI COMMUNITY DAY The gallery's annual celebration of the Festival of Lights, Sat 14 Nov, The New Art Gallery Walsall

PEAKY BLINDERS NIGHT Walk in the footsteps of the hit TV series' biggest stars, Sat 14 Nov, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

BEER FESTIVAL RACEDAY A celebration of beers and ales, Sat 14 Nov, Uttoxeter Racecourse, Staffordshire

Mind Body Spirit Festival - NEC, Birmingham

THE SUPER WEEKENDER DANCE CONVENTION The 'ultimate celebration of dance', attracting over 15,000 dancers, spectators and industry professionals, Sat 14 - Sun 15 Nov, NEC, Birmingham

FROST FAIR Featuring a wide selection of handmade crafts and Christmas gifts, created by talented Shropshire craftspeople, Sat 14 - Sun 15 Nov, Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre, Craven Arms, South Shropshire

NETBALL AID 2026 Celebrities, influencers and reality TV stars go head-to-head on court in a high-energy showdown, Sun 15 Nov, Utilita Arena Birmingham

Gigs

JAIMEE HARRIS Mon 16 Nov, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

HYENA Mon 16 Nov, The Dark Horse, Birmingham

JACK SAVORETTI Mon 16 Nov, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

BLUE ROSE CODE Mon 16 Nov, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

LOTS OF HANDS + SUNDOTS Tues 17 Nov, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE SOUNDS OF SIMON Tues 17 Nov, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

DRAKE MILLIGAN + JOSH WEATHERS Tues 17 Nov, O2 Institute, Birmingham

AARON ROWE + SCARLET LORAN Tues 17 Nov, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE LORDS OF ALTAMONT + ZIPSTYLE Tues 17 Nov, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

CAPTAIN FANTASTIC AND THE ROCKET MAN BAND Tues 17 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

ELLIE GOWERS Wed 18 Nov, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

HEIDI TALBOT & BOO HEWERDINE Wed 18 Nov, Kitchen Garden, B'ham

THE BIG MOON Wed 18 Nov, O2 Institute, B'ham

ALEX HART Wed 18 Nov, Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

PAULS JACKMAN'S JAZZ MASTERS Wed 18 Nov, Boldmere Sports and Social Club, Sutton Coldfield

THE GREATEST HITS OF MOTOWN Wed 18 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

HORSE Thurs 19 Nov, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

HARRY HUDSON TAYLOR Thurs 19 Nov, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

THE ROSADOCS Thurs 19 Nov, O2 Institute, B'ham

TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKET + SAM RUSSO Thurs 19 Nov, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

PILORI Thurs 19 Nov, The Flapper, Birmingham

TONY HADLEY Thurs 19 Nov, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

DON TOLIVER Thurs 19 Nov, Utilita Arena Birmingham

DUTTY MOONSHINE BIG BAND Thurs 19 Nov, XOYO, Birmingham

HERMAN'S HERMITS Thurs 19 Nov, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

DAN PATLANSKY + GREG COULSON Thurs 19 Nov, The Robin, Bilston

JOSHUA BURNELL BAND Thurs 19 Nov, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

UNCLE ACID AND THE DEADBEATS + THE WYTCHES Thurs 19 Nov, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

HUTCH + CHIN + BLEEDING HEARTS Thurs 19 Nov, Riff Factory, Stoke-on-Trent

JOOLS HOLLAND & HIS RHYTHM AND BLUES ORCHESTRA Thurs 19 Nov, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

PETER KNIGHT'S GIGSPANNER TRIO Thurs 19 Nov, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

ANYTHING FOR LOVE Thurs 19 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE FEELING Thurs 19 Nov, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

BASKERY Thurs 19 Nov, LOOP, Shrewsbury

ABIGAIL LAPELL Fri 20 Nov, Kitchen Garden, B'ham

SEB LOWE Fri 20 Nov, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SONGER Fri 20 Nov, O2 Academy, Birmingham

ERASURED Fri 20 Nov, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

URNE + THE GREY AND MOON REAPER Fri 20 Nov, The Asylum, Birmingham

BLOC PARTY + INTERPOL Fri 20 Nov, Utilita Arena Birmingham

MONKEY BUSINESS Fri 20 Nov, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

THE ELO TRIBUTE SHOW Fri 20 Nov, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

KAISER MONKEY KILLERS Fri 20 Nov, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

THE SPECIALS LTD Fri 20 Nov, The Robin, Bilston

DAN OWEN Fri 20 Nov, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

AVATAR + NECKBREAKKER Fri 20 Nov, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

ELVANA Fri 20 Nov, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

AIRTIGHT 80S Fri 20 Nov, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

THE CAVERN CLUB STORY Fri 20 Nov, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

SCOTT LAVENE Fri 20 Nov, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

WE THREE KINGS - OF COUNTRY Fri 20 Nov, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

BORN GAGA Fri 20 Nov, The Station, Cannock

THE BEARDS Fri 20 Nov, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

FLEETING RUMOURS Fri 20 Nov, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

AGABAS Fri 20 Nov, LOOP, Shrewsbury

ARRIVAL - THE HITS OF ABBA, Fri 20 Nov, The Little Theatre, Telford, Shrops

JOOLS HOLLAND AND HIS RHYTHM AND BLUES ORCHESTRA Fri 20 - Sat 21 Nov, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

LAND OF THE GIANTS Sat 21 Nov, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

BOOTLEG BLONDIE Sat 21 Nov, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

SKASTUDS Sat 21 Nov, Actress & Bishop, B'ham

THE RIFLES + JOE CARNALL JNR + NICO CANN Sat 21 Nov, O2 Institute, B'ham

JENNA RAINE Sat 21 Nov, O2 Institute, Birmingham

EMBRACE Sat 21 Nov, O2 Academy, Birmingham

BRITALLICA Sat 21 Nov, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

THE YACHT ROCK EXPERIENCE Sat 21 Nov, Birmingham Town Hall

THE SUN'S JOURNEY THROUGH THE NIGHT Sat 21 Nov, The Flapper, B'ham

ELVANA Sat 21 Nov, XOYO, Birmingham

THE FAIRWAY + THE STRAITS + SOMETHING LIKE SLEEP + SAY LESS Sat 21 Nov, The Rainbow, Digbeth, Birmingham

JACK & JACK Sat 21 Nov, Mama Roux's, B'ham

COURTEENERS Sat 21 Nov, Utilita Arena Birmingham

COUNTERFEIT STONES Sat 21 Nov, The Robin, Bilston

GAZ BROOKFIELD Sat 21 Nov, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

LITTLE ANGELS + LUKE MORLEY Sat 21 Nov, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

ELO AGAIN Sat 21 Nov, The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

THE BEAT FEATURING RANKING JUNIOR + THE PERRY TONES Sat 21 Nov, The Underground, Stoke-on-Trent

RAG 'N' BONE MAN & TEDDY SWIMS TRIBUTE Sat 21 Nov, Two Gates Club, Tamworth

AC/DSHE Sat 21 Nov, The Station, Cannock

THE JO HARMAN TRIO Sat 21 Nov, Morris Hall, Shrewsbury

RÍOGHNACH CONNOLLY & HONEYFEET Sun 22 Nov, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

NIRVANHER + HELL IN CHAINS + SPINORS Sun 22 Nov, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

PARVIZ + WIFFENEY Sun 22 Nov, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

JULIA WOLF Sun 22 Nov, O2 Institute, Birmingham

KING OF POP STARRING NAVI Sun 22 Nov, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

FM + SEAN HARRIS Sun 22 Nov, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

PARAMORED X AVRIL LAVIGNE BY COURTNAY REDDY Sun 22 Nov, The Robin, Bilston

TONY WRIGHT Sun 22 Nov, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

ED COSENS Sun 22 Nov, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

BUDDY HOLLY AND THE CRICKETERS Sun 22 Nov, Stafford Gatehouse

Classical Music

HWAN HEE KIM PIANO RECITAL Tues 17 Nov, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

CONCERTS IN THE ROUND: DVOŘÁK'S PIANO TRIO NO 4 Featuring Anne Tupling (violin), Fiona Rattray (cello) & Richard Walker (piano), Fri 20 Nov, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

SHREWSBURY CANTATA CHOIR: HAYDN - THE CREATION Featuring Anthony Coupe (conductor), David Joyce (leader), Gemma King (soprano), Will Smith (tenor) & Piran Legg (bass), Sat 21 Nov, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Featuring Peter Morris (conductor) & Ros Rayner (leader). Programme includes works by Saint-Saëns, Morricone, Walton & Berlioz, Sat 21 Nov, Wolverhampton Grammar School

LUDLOW ORCHESTRA CONCERT Featuring Jonathan Lyness (conductor), Claire Tocknell (leader) & James Maltby (clarinet). Programme includes works by Mendelssohn, Weber & Beethoven, Sat 21 Nov, St Laurence's Church, Ludlow, South Shropshire

STAFFORD CHORAL SOCIETY: ROSSINI - PETITE MESSE SOLONNELLE Featuring Sam Hayes (musical director), Russell Medley (accompanist), Lilian Noble (soprano), Yvonne Howard (mezzo soprano), Alex Grainger (tenor) & Andrew Greenan (bass), Sat 21 Nov, Rising Brook Community Church, Stafford

POÈMES, MELODIES, ET DANSES Featuring James Lisney (piano). Programme includes works by Liszt, Schubert, Chopin & Rachmaninoff, Sun 22 Nov, Recital Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

MARIN ALSOP CONDUCTS THE PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA Featuring Esther Yoo (violin). Programme includes works by Bernstein & Mahler, Sun 22 Nov, Symphony Hall, B'ham

Comedy

RED RICHARDSON Mon 16 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

DYLAN MORAN Tues 17 Nov, Birmingham Town Hall

JACOB HAWLEY & JAKE FARRELL Wed 18 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

FATIHA EL-GHORRI Thurs 19 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, MARK MAIER & INGRID DAHLE Thurs 19 Nov, The Glee Club, B'ham

ROSIE HOLT Thurs 19 Nov, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

SUSAN CALMAN Fri 20 Nov, Birmingham Town Hall

COMEDY IN THE MET Fri 20 Nov, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

DOM JOLY Fri 20 Nov, Dudley Town Hall

MICHAEL ODEWALE, MARK MAIER, IGRID DAHLE & JOE DAYMOND Fri 20 - Sat 21 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ADAM RICHES Sat 21 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

HARRIET KEMSLEY Sat 21 Nov, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

LUNCHTIME FAMILY COMEDY SHOW Sun 22 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

DAN NIGHTINGALE, PHIL NICHOL & ESHAAN AKBAR Sun 22 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

KIM BLYTHE Sun 22 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

Theatre

A CHRISTMAS CAROL Dickens Theatre Company's highly acclaimed version of the classic festive tale, Mon 16 - Tues 17 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

JANE EYRE Conn Artists Theatre Company present Charlotte Bronte's gothic romance, performed by a cast of five and featuring original music and songs, Tues 17 - Wed 18 Nov, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

LEGALLY BLONDE THE MUSICAL Amber Davies plays Elle Woods in the smash-hit rom-com musical. Based on the award-winning film, Tues 17 - Sat 21 Nov, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

BONES IN THE DESERT New play from British-Armenian playwright Joe Nerssessian about where we come from, who we carry with us, and what it means to belong, Wed 18 Nov, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

PETER PAN Joe Murphy directs a faithful retelling of JM Barrie's much-loved children's story, Wed 18 Nov - Sun 17 Jan, The Rep, Birmingham

NOT EVERYTHING IS A SIGNIFICANT Ben Moor's hour-long comic monologue concerning 'echoes, diaries and the stuff of life', Thurs 19 Nov, The Crown Wharf Theatre, Stone

ROBIN HOOD Brand-new in-house pantomime promising 'laugh-out-loud comedy, show-stopping songs and heaps of audience participation'. Ben Thornton, Ben Stock, Joe Feeney and Anna Soden star, Fri 20 Nov - Sun 10 Jan, Lichfield Garrick

MR SLEEPYBUM Award-winning interactive family show filled with sketches, slapstick and silliness, Sat 21 Nov, The Little Theatre, Donnington, Telford

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST Polka Dot Pantomimes present a new version of the classic fairytale, Sat 21 Nov - Thurs 31 Dec, The Old Rep, B'ham

SHERLOCK HOLMES CHRISTMAS CASEBOOK Jonathan Goodwin plays the famous detective in a new version of The Adventure Of The Blue Carbuncle - and other festive delights, Sun 22 Nov, Biddulph Grange, Stoke-on-Trent

Dance

PROTEIN DANCE: THE MAGIC FLUTE Luca Silvestrini's acclaimed new dance-theatre adaptation of Mozart's opera, Wed 18 Nov, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

AMINA KHAYYAM DANCE: BIRD A story of domestic-violence survivors, presented via a performance of high-energy Kathak dance..., Thurs 19 Nov, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

SILVIA GRIBAUDI - GRACES Three male figures take to the stage in a space and time suspended between the human and the abstract, Fri 20 Nov, Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

BRB: THE NUTCRACKER Sir Peter Wright's acclaimed festive production, set to Tchaikovsky's famous score, Fri 20 Nov - Sat 12 Dec, Birmingham Hippodrome

AN EVENING WITH VIDYA PATEL Show featuring classical Indian dance and music, Sat 21 Nov, The Rep, B'ham

Light Entertainment

THE RAT PACK - CHRISTMAS IN VEGAS Tribute show starring David Alacey (Love Joy & Inspector Alleyn) as Frank Sinatra, Tim Harwood as Dean Martin and Jim Whitley as Sammy Davis Jnr, Thurs 19 Nov, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

TRIGGER HAPPY TV - THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR Join Dom Joly as he brings his most iconic characters and sketches to the stage, Fri 20 Nov, Dudley Town Hall

THE MUSIC OF BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN - THE CANDLELIGHT CONCERT Fri 20 Nov, Shrewsbury Abbey

G4 CHRISTMAS Fri 20 Nov, Lichfield Cathedral

MASSAOKE: CHRISTMAS LIVE Sing your heart out to favourite festive classics from The Pogues, Slade, Wizzard and others..., Sat 21 Nov, Walsall Arena

K-POP DANCE HEROES Musical adventure through the biggest K-Pop hits, Sat 21 Nov, Dudley Town Hall

KNIGHTMARE LIVE Tom Bell (The Mash Report) and Paul Flannery (Phantom Peak) star alongside a host of guest comedians in a live version of the fantasy gameshow, Sat 21 Nov, The Crown Wharf Theatre, Stone

VOICES OF VALJEAN Evening of powerhouse vocals and iconic musical theatre, Sat 21 Nov, Shrewsbury Abbey

PAUL MERTON & SUKI WEBSTER'S IMPROV SHOW Featuring fast and funny games, scenes, stories and 'laugh-out-loud' surrealism. Improv virtuoso Mike McShane and a host of 'very special guests' also feature, Sun 22 Nov, The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

STEP INTO CHRISTMAS Feelgood show packed with festive-season classics, performed by a live band against a backdrop of Christmas visuals, Sun 22 Nov, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

FAWLTY TOWERS THE DINING EXPERIENCE Interactive evening during which audiences enjoy a three-course meal whilst being entertained by characters from the iconic BBC TV series, Sun 22 Nov, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

Talks & Spoken Word

BETTANY HUGHES: UNCOVERING ANCIENT EGYPT Join the award-winning historian as she brings the land of the pharaohs vividly to life, Mon 16 Nov, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

AN EVENING WITH MICHAEL PORTILLO The former Secretary of State, traveller and presenter shares his life story and tales from his adventures whilst travelling, Wed 18 Nov, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

JOHN SIMPSON: THE LEADERS & LUNATICS TOUR Join the journalist & broadcaster as he explores the personalities that have shaped history and how sane societies slip into despotism, Sun 22 Nov, Birmingham Town Hall

Events

CHRISTMAS WREATH MAKING WORKSHOP Create your own bespoke Christmas wreath using the finest seasonal materials, Thurs 19 Nov, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

PIECE OF WORK - NATIONAL POETRY DAY SPECIAL Event including open-mic sessions, Thurs 19 Nov, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

CLASSIC ANTIQUE FAIRS Featuring a wide range of specialist dealers offering a variety of high-quality pieces, Fri 20 - Sun 22 Nov, NEC, Birmingham

SEE WIGHTWICK MANOR DECORATED FOR A TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS Enjoy the real decorated trees and arrangements, lit by candlelight throughout the ground floor of the manor, Fri 20 Nov - Sun 3 Jan, Wightwick Manor, Wolverhampton

FESTIVE WREATH MAKING AT BLAKESLEY HALL Workshop inspired by the venue's beautiful gardens and historic surroundings, Sat 21 Nov, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

STORYTIME WITH FATHER CHRISTMAS Enjoy a magical festive story with Father Christmas and receive a special gift, Sat 21 Nov, Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery, Shropshire

ENGLISH WHISKY FESTIVAL Featuring unlimited samples across more than 30 distilleries and brands, Sat 21 Nov, The Bond Company, Birmingham

ULTRA WHITE COLLAR BOXING Enjoy an evening of boxing bouts raising money for charity, Sat 21 Nov, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

MARKET DRAYTON FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS Featuring a street market and a full day of entertainment, Sat 21 Nov, Market Drayton Town Centre, North Shropshire

DAY OUT WITH THOMAS: FESTIVE CELEBRATION Enjoy a festive ride behind steam engines Thomas, James and Percy, Sat 21 - Sun 22 Nov, Statfold Country Park, Tamworth

DRAWN CONTEMPORARY ART, MAKERS AND DESIGN FAIR Carefully curated showcase of contemporary art, craft & design, Sat 21 - Sun 22 Nov, Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery, Shropshire

THE NATIONAL FESTIVAL OF RAILWAY MODELLING Event attracting thousands of enthusiasts, Sat 21 - Sun 22 Nov, NEC, Birmingham

NORTH POLE EXPRESS Meet Santa and his helpers, and enjoy seasonal treats on this festive journey, Sat 21 - Sun 22 Nov, Foxfield Railway, Stoke-on-Trent

SANTA SAFARI Four-mile winter safari, including a visit to Santa in his grotto, Sat 21 - Sun 22 Nov, West Midland Safari Park, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

MOTORCYCLE LIVE The UK's largest motorcycle show, featuring 50-plus manufacturers, Sat 21 - Sun 29 Nov, NEC, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS AT BLISTS HILL Sat 21 Nov - Mon 4 Jan, Blists Hill Victorian Town, Ironbridge, Shropshire

SPARKLING DAY EVENTS WEDDING FAIR Sun 22 Nov, Himley Hall & Park, Dudley

THE POLAR EXPRESS TRAIN RIDE Recreate the adventure and excitement of the popular Christmas movie, Sun 22 Nov, Moor Street Station, Birmingham

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Gigs

WILT + UGLY OZO Mon 23 Nov, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

PRESIDENT + VIANOVA + DREAMWAKE Mon 23 Nov, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE STYLISTICS Mon 23 Nov, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE RISE OF THE BEATLES Mon 23 Nov, Mitchell Arts Centre, Stoke-on-Trent

JULIA WOLF Tues 24 Nov, O2 Institute, Birmingham

GLENN JONES Tues 24 Nov, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

CATTY Tues 24 Nov, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

DEL AMITRI Tues 24 Nov, O2 Institute, Birmingham

JAMES AND THE COLD GUN Tues 24 Nov, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

BEANS ON TOAST Tues 24 Nov, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

BIG SPECIAL Tues 24 Nov, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

DAVID FORD Wed 25 Nov, Kitchen Garden, B'ham

THE RABBITTS Wed 25 Nov, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

HELD Wed 25 Nov, O2 Institute, Birmingham

BELLOWHEAD Wed 25 Nov, Symphony Hall, B'ham

FURTHER ON UP THE ROAD Wed 25 Nov, Birmingham Town Hall

FONTAINES D.C. Wed 25 Nov, Utilita Arena Birmingham

JOHN ADAMS Wed 25 Nov, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

OUTPOST DRIVE Thurs 26 Nov, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

BLUE ROSE CODE Thurs 26 Nov, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

FRIGHT YEARS + CHLOE WILSON Thurs 26 Nov, The Sunflower Lounge, B'ham

ZIMMER90 Thurs 26 Nov, O2 Institute, Birmingham

FAT DOG Thurs 26 Nov, O2 Institute, Birmingham

GABRIELLA CILMI Thurs 26 Nov, Dead Wax, B'ham

BOB DYLAN Thurs 26 Nov, bp pulse LIVE, Birmingham

DENYS BAPTISTE-GARY CROSBY QUARTET Thurs 26 Nov, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

UK PINK FLOYD EXPERIENCE Thurs 26 Nov, The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

HAWKLORDS Thurs 26 Nov, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

THE STYLISTICS Thurs 26 Nov, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

DAVID FORD Thurs 26 Nov, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

KIRA MAC Thurs 26 Nov, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

JEREMY SASSOON Thurs 26 Nov, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

BIG BAND OF BOOM Fri 27 Nov, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

TAKURA Fri 27 Nov, O2 Institute, Birmingham

GARETH Fri 27 Nov, O2 Institute, Birmingham

MIRRORTALK Fri 27 Nov, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE SMYTHS Fri 27 Nov, O2 Academy, Birmingham

VINCENT FLATTS FINAL DRIVE Fri 27 Nov, Jo Jo Jims, Birmingham

SISTERS OF MURPHY Fri 27 Nov, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

SCOTT MATTHEWS Fri 27 Nov, Birmingham Town Hall

MARIAH CAREY Fri 27 Nov, Utilita Arena Birmingham

DUTCH + GRAFT Fri 27 Nov, Mama Roux's, B'ham

THE BON JOVI EXPERIENCE Fri 27 Nov, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

MANTRA Fri 27 Nov, The Robin, Bilston

THE CHARLOTTE CARRIVICK BAND Fri 27 Nov, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

THE PRETTY RECKLESS Fri 27 Nov, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

STEREOTONICS Fri 27 Nov, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

SHADER + JELLY DIVE Fri 27 Nov, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

SAM CARTER Fri 27 Nov, Marston's Social Club, Burton upon Trent

JACK LUKEMAN Fri 27 Nov, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

THE BEAT INSTITUTE Fri 27 Nov, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

P!NK SHOW LIVE - STARRING VICKY JACKSON Fri 27 Nov, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

DUB PISTOLS Fri 27 Nov, LOOP, Shrewsbury

THE ENDINGS + THE SHIREISH ROVERS + TWO BLANK PAGES Fri 27 Nov, The Little Theatre, Telford

GOOD HABITS Fri 27 Nov, Wellington Orbit, Shropshire

INTO THE SHADOWS Fri 27 - Sat 28 Nov, Lichfield Garrick

SLAM Sat 28 Nov, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

LITTLE JUKE + POSTMAN + LIGHT HOUSE Sat 28 Nov, O2 Institute, Birmingham

BLEACHERS Sat 28 Nov, O2 Academy, Birmingham

VALENCIA GRACE Sat 28 Nov, O2 Academy, B'ham

ADAM F Sat 28 Nov, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

WHEN RIVERS MEET Sat 28 Nov, The Asylum, B'ham

PHOEBE BRIDGERS Sat 28 Nov, Thurs 26 bp pulse LIVE, Birmingham

SQUEEZE Sat 28 Nov, Utilita Arena Birmingham

CHARLIE DORE Sat 28 Nov, The Glee Club, B'ham

BON GIOVI Sat 28 Nov, The Robin, Bilston

NEARLY DAN Sat 28 Nov, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

RAZORLIGHT Sat 28 Nov, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

THE CLAUSE Sat 28 Nov, The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

MR APOLLO+ WHICH WAY UP + PAUL& ROSIE Sat 28 Nov, Thimblemill Library, Sandwell

LUTHER LIVE & VELVET VOICES Sat 28 Nov, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

CINEMA STEREO Sat 28 Nov, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

FOO FIGHTERS GB Sat 28 Nov, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

MATRIX CLUB MATRIX Sat 28 Nov, The Station, Cannock

STATEASE QUO Sat 28 Nov, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

CHINA CRISIS Sat 28 Nov, St Mary's Church, Shrewsbury

CAPTAIN ACCIDENT Sat 28 Nov, LOOP, Shrewsbury

THE RISE OF THE BEATLES Sat 28 Nov, The Little Theatre, Telford

DAYSEEKER + NORTHLANE + SIAMESE Sat 28 - Sun 29 Nov, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

JAYWALKERS Sun 29 Nov, Kitchen Garden, B'ham

TAXI FOR JESUS Sun 29 Nov, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

SUBHUMANS Sun 29 Nov, The Dark Horse, B'ham

GENESIS OWUSU Sun 29 Nov, O2 Institute, B'ham

L1NKN P4RK + SIX YEAR SILENCE Sun 29 Nov, The Asylum, Birmingham

STAMPIN GROUND Sun 29 Nov, The Flapper, B'ham

THE MAGIC NUMBERS Sun 29 Nov, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

WESTSIDE COWBOY Sun 29 Nov, XOYO, Birmingham

SKIDS + THEATRE OF HATE Sun 29 Nov, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

MYKE GRAY FT KIM JENNETT Sun 29 Nov, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

JOHN OTWAY + ZIPSTYLE Sun 29 Nov, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

TEDDY SLIMS V RAG 'N' BONE Sun 29 Nov, The Station, Cannock

MOMEN + RHUBIQS Sun 29 Nov, Unitarian Church, Shrewsbury

LUKE COMBS UK Sun 29 Nov, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

LEAP Mon 30 Nov, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

MENTAL CRUELTY + OV SULFUR + EXTERMINATION DISMEMBERMENT + SUN EATER Mon 30 Nov, The Asylum, Birmingham

THE AUSTRALIAN PINK FLOYD Mon 30 Nov, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

Classical Music

THOMAS TROTTER ORGAN CONCERT Programme includes works by Rossini, Daquin, Dupré & more..., Mon 23 Nov, Birmingham Town Hall

JOAO CORREIA SAXOPHONE RECITAL Tues 24 Nov, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

THE WELSH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA Featuring Jeremy Huw Williams (baritone). Programme includes works by C Schumann, Fanny Mendelssohn & M Owen plus a new composition by Susie Self, Thurs 26 Nov, St Mary Magdalene Church, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

CONCERTS IN THE ROUND: ANTHONY PINEL ORGAN RECITAL Fri 27 Nov, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

KIDDERMINSTER CHORAL SOCIETY: GLORIA! Featuring Geoff Weaver (musical director), Marcus Huxley (organ), Elizabeth Adams (soprano), Sacha Fullerton (contralto), Tom Castle (tenor), Alex Hopkins (baritone) & The Elgar Sinfonia. Programme includes works by Vivaldi & Puccini, Sat 28 Nov, Kidderminster Town Hall

THE MARCHES CHOIR: HAYDN'S HARMONIEMESSE Featuring Alistair Auld (conductor), David Gregory (leader), Chris Lacey (flute), Emily Harris (harp) & The Marches Sinfonia. Programme also includes Mozart's Concerto for Flute and Harp, Sat 28 Nov, St John's Church, Bishop's Castle, Shropshire

BEETHOVEN'S VIOLIN CONCERTO Featuring Eugene Tzikindelean (violin), Sun 29 Nov, Birmingham Town Hall

Comedy

PETER ANTONIOU Tues 24 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

LARRY DEAN Wed 25 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

KANE BROWN & COMICS TBC Wed 25 - Thurs 26 Nov, Herbert's Yard, B'ham

FIN TAYLOR Thurs 26 Nov, Birmingham Town Hall

SARA PASCOE, KAZEEM JAMAL, JAMIE DSOUZA & DAVE TWENTYMAN Thurs 26 Nov, Rosies, Birmingham

MARK SIMMONS & DANNY WARD Thurs 26 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, ELEANOR TIERNAN & COMIC TBC Thurs 26 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

MICHAEL AKADIRI Fri 27 Nov, The Glee Club, Birmingham

LGBTQTEEHEE! COMEDY FESTIVAL Fri 27 - Sat 28 Nov, The Rep, B'ham

The Toymaker - Glasshouse Arts Centre, Stourbridge

CHRIS RAMSEY Fri 27 Nov, The Alexandra, Birmingham

TOM STADE Fri 27 Nov, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

DAN NIGHTINGALE, ESHAAN AKBAR & ROB MULHOLLAND Fri 27 Nov, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

JONATHAN PIE Fri 27 Nov, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

ARTHUR SMITH, ANDREW WATTS, ERIC RUSHTON & RICKY BALSHAW Sat 28 Nov, The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

JOSH PUGH Sun 29 Nov, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

ADAM ROWE Sun 29 Nov, The Alexandra, Birmingham

Theatre

A CHRISTMAS CAROL Jonathan Goodwin plays a host of characters in a solo performance of Dickens' festive tale, Tues 24 Nov, Middleport Pottery, Stoke-on-Trent

A CHRISTMAS CAROL - A RADIO PLAY LIVE ON STAGE New adaptation of Dickens' festive favourite, starring Colin Baker, Sophie Aldred and Tom Baker, Tues 24 Nov, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY Little Theatre Company present an amateur version of Roald Dahl's classic tale, Tues 24 - Sat 28 Nov, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

DIRTY DANCING Smash-hit musical, telling the classic story of Baby and Johnny, and featuring hit songs Hungry Eyes, Hey! Baby and (I've Had) The Time Of My Life, Tues 24 - Sat 28 Nov, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

OF MICE AND MEN John Steinbeck's classic portrait of two migrant workers during the Great Depression, Thurs 26 & Fri 27 Nov, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

RUMPELSTILTSKIN Masque Theatre Company present their version of the Brothers Grimm fairytale, Thurs 26 & Fri 27 Nov, Mitchell Arts Centre, Stoke-on-Trent

RULES FOR LIVING Stourbridge Theatre Company present Sam Holcroft's modern-day farce, Thurs 26 - Sat 28 Nov, Stourbridge Town Hall

WHISKY TANGO FOXTROT! Jack Bryan's moving and gritty tale of policing from the late 1970s onwards, Fri 27 Nov, Stourbridge Town Hall

DON'T CRY FOR ME KENNY DALGLISH 'Moving and humorous' one-man play exploring identity, memory and belonging, Fri 27 Nov, The Talbot Theatre, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

ALADDIN Festive family fun featuring legendary panto dame Brad Fitt and jester Tommy J, Fri 27 Nov - Sun 3 Jan, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

AUSTENTATIOUS: AN IMPROVISED JANE AUSTEN NOVEL 'Razor-sharp' show inspired entirely by a title from the audience, Sat 28 Nov, The Alexandra, Birmingham

DON'T CRY FOR ME KENNY DALGLISH A 'moving and humorous' one-man play exploring identity, memory and belonging, Sat 28 Nov, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, South Shrops

DOCTOR MARIGOLD'S PRESCRIPTIONS Ian Pearce's solo show, based on Charles Dickens' moving story of loss and unexpected love, Sat 28 Nov, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

TREASURE ISLAND Brand-new panto featuring comedian Richard Blackwood as Long John Silver and West End star Solomon Davy as Jim Hawkins. Tam Ryan, Ian Adams, Alexia McIntosh (SIX The Musical) and Leonie Wall also star, Sat 28 Nov - Sun 3 Jan, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

THE THREE MUSKETEERS Visual comedy based on Alexandre Dumas' classic novel. Co-produced by the RSC and Told By An Idiot, Sat 28 Nov - Sat 9 Jan, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

A CHRISTMAS CAROL Jonathan Goodwin plays a host of characters in a solo performance of Dickens' festive tale of redemption and compassion, Sun 29 Nov, St Michael's Church, Stone, Staffs

SPEND, SPEND, SPEND ERIC! Join New Vic regular Eric in a show that promises 'non-stop comedy alongside a plethora of 60s hits', Mon 30 Nov - Sat 12 Dec, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

A CHRISTMAS CAROL Dickens' festive favourite gets the BOA treatment in a show promising sparkling songs, spectacular dance numbers and heartwarming moments for the whole family to enjoy, Mon 30 Nov - Tues 15 Dec, Birmingham Ormiston Academy

Kids Theatre

THE TOYMAKER Family-focused show featuring traditional stories from around the world, Sat 28 Nov, Glasshouse Arts Centre, Stourbridge

Dance

VIVIENNE FRANZMANN & FRAUKE REQUARDT: ANATOMY OF SURVIVAL Offbeat collaboration bringing together eyewitness accounts of an everyday altercation 'to show how our nervous systems are stuck in the Stone Age', Thurs 26 Nov, Birmingham Hippodrome

Light Entertainment

CHRISTMAS IN IRELAND Feelgood show capturing the true magic of an Irish Christmas, Mon 23 Nov, The Alexandra, Birmingham

BEN FOLDS' PAPER AIRPLANE REQUEST TOUR A unique concert format during which the audience is invited to write their favourite Ben Folds song requests on paper, fold them into airplanes, and launch them toward the stage, Tues 24 Nov, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE ARCHERS: LIVE AT 75 Unique show celebrating 75 years of BBC Radio Four soap opera The Archers. Hosted by superfan and comedian, Angela Barnes, Thurs 26 Nov, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

MUSIC OF WESTLIFE BY CANDLELIGHT Sat 28 Nov, Shrewsbury Abbey

WONDERS OF OUR UNIVERSE: THE NEXT CHAPTER Visuals, storytelling and live music come together in an innovative show during which the universe 'unfolds before your eyes', Sun 29 Nov, Stourbridge Town Hall

SEASONAL SWING WITH THE NICK DEWHURST BAND Sun 29 Nov, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

Talks & Spoken Word

THE FALCON & THE ROSE Historians Alison Weir and Siobhan Clarke discuss how a child of tragedy became England's greatest Tudor queen, Thurs 26 Nov, Lichfield Cathedral

Events

DUDLEY WINTER ALES FAYRE Celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2026, Thurs 26 - Sat 28 Nov, Dudley Town Hall

FESTIVE GOOD FOOD SHOW Featuring over 350 handpicked and independent food & drink producers, Thurs 26 - Sun 29 Nov, NEC, B'ham

SANTA SAFARI Four-mile winter safari featuring a visit to Santa in his grotto, Thurs 26 Nov - Thurs 24 Dec, West Midland Safari Park, Bewdley

PLANETARIUM LATES : DUNE (1984) A screening of the cult film, inside the cinema dome, Fri 27 Nov, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

ELLESMERE WINTER FESTIVAL Featuring festive trails, live entertainment, music, markets and Santa, Fri 27 Nov, Ellesmere, North Shropshire

SANTA SLEEPOVER 'Immerse yourself in a world of enchantment with a festive short break', Fri 27 Nov - Wed 23 Dec, Alton Towers Resort, Staffordshire

FOLLIES SAFARI Embark on a 4x4 journey through the enchanted forest to find Santa in his secret hillside Grotto, Fri 27 Nov - Wed 23 Dec, Hawkstone Park Follies, Shropshire

THE MAGICAL SANTA EXPRESS Board a beautifully lit steam train to the 'North Pole', where you'll meet Santa, Mrs Claus and all the elves, Fri 27 Nov - Wed 23 Dec, Statfold Country Park, Tamworth

ALDERFORD'S SANTA ISLAND EXPERIENCE Step aboard the festive boat and journey across Alderford Lake to a hidden island where Christmas comes to life, Fri 27 Nov - Thurs 24 Dec, Alderford Lake, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

BONGO'S BINGO - CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

The original bingo rave sensation, Sat 28 Nov, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

CHRISTMAS MAKERS' MARKET Discover unique and original crafts from local makers and craftspeople, Sat 28 Nov, The New Art Gallery Walsall

CHRISTMAS MAKERS MARKETS Featuring talented artists, crafters, vintage traders and award-winning local food & drink, Sat 28 - Sun 29 Nov, Trentham Shopping Village, Stoke-on-Trent

THE SANTA EXPERIENCE Visit Santa and his elves, Sat 28 - Sun 29 Nov, Park Hall Farm, Oswestry, Shropshire

MAGICAL CHRISTMAS Featuring Christmas shows, seasonal surprises and 'plenty of festive fun', Sat 28 - Sun 29 Nov, Drayton Manor Resort, Staffordshire

NORTH POLE ADVENTURE Head to the heart of the North Pole and meet Father Christmas, Sat 28 - Sun 29 Nov, National Forest Adventure Farm, Staffordshire

NORTH POLE EXPRESS Meet Santa and his helpers, and enjoy seasonal treats, Sat 28 - Sun 29 Nov, Foxfield Railway, Stoke-on-Trent

SANTA'S STEAM SPECIALS Step aboard a 'magical' steam train from Kidderminster Station and journey into a world of 'festive wonder', Sat 28 - Sun 29 Nov, Severn Valley Railway, Kidderminster

THE ELF EXPRESS Join in with the elves' Christmas capers and discover plenty of surprises along the way, Sat 28 - Sun 29 Nov, Severn Valley Railway, Bridgnorth, Shropshire

SANTA HUNTS Uncover the secret location of Santa's Black Country grotto, Sat 28 - Sun 29 Nov, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

CHRISTMAS UNDERGROUND: A FESTIVE LIGHT TRAIL Follow an illuminated trail through the underground cavern network, complete with twinkling lights, festive displays and Christmas music, Sat 28 - Sun 29 Nov, Dudley Canal & Caverns

CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR Browse the stalls for that special festive gift, Sat 28 - Sun 29 Nov, Ford Green Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

THE POLAR EXPRESS TRAIN RIDE Recreate the adventure and excitement of the popular Christmas movie, Sat 28 - Sun 29 Nov, Moor Street Station, Birmingham

VISIT FATHER CHRISTMAS Meet Father Christmas, share your Christmas wishes and receive a special gift to take home, Sat 28 Nov - Wed 23 Dec, Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery, Shropshire

The Elf Express - Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

SANTA'S GROTTO Visit Santa in his grotto, set within the walls of the 11th-century castle, Sat 28 Nov - Thurs 24 Dec, Dudley Zoo & Castle

LUMINATE LIGHT TRAIL 2026 The gardens are transformed for the festive season by 'mesmerising installations, projections, music and glowing tunnels of light', Sat 28 Nov - Sat 2 Jan, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

CHRISTMAS AT BCLM Take a step back in time this festive season, Sat 28 Nov - Sun 3 Jan, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley

THE CHRISTMAS GROTTO See Santa in his cosy cabin, Sat 29 Nov - Wed 24 Dec, Webbs, West Hagley, Stourbridge

WIN! with What's On...

Enter now at whatsonlive.co.uk to be in with a chance of bagging one of these fabulous prizes!

Win! A family ticket to The Winter Light Experience!

Step into a world of festive magic at The Winter Light Experience, available to enjoy at The Belfry Hotel & Resort in Sutton Coldfield. The mile-long illuminated trail features more than 30 dazzling installations, interactive games and live characters, with visitors following a magical Christmas story...
What's On is giving you the chance to win a family ticket to enjoy this enchanting experience during the festive season.

Competition closes Monday 16 November

Win! Four tickets to see Peter Pan at Birmingham Repertory Theatre!

Fly away to Neverland with Peter Pan at Birmingham Rep!
Join Peter, Wendy and the Lost Boys on a magical adventure as they encounter mischievous fairies, mermaids and the dastardly Captain Hook. Packed with excitement, imagination and festive fun, this enchanting family production brings JM Barrie's much-loved tale to life... We have four tickets to give away to the show this December.

Competition closes Monday 30 November

BUY TICKETS HERE:

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