Your FREE essential entertainment guide for the Midlands

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Birmingham

What's On

ISSUE 479 DECEMBER 2026

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

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inside:

MEET THE PLASTICS
Mean Girls musical stops off in Birmingham for Christmas



WHAT A CRACKER!
Barbara Nice visits MAC with her annual Christmas show



WINTER FUNLAND
enjoy the ride as Christmas comes to Birmingham's NEC




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December 2026

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A sparkling festive season at two city centre venues

Performances by Birmingham's own Toyah Willcox and vocal harmony group The Overtones are among the highlights of the Town Hall/Symphony Hall festive-season line-up of shows. The two venues are also showing a number of much-loved seasonal films (including The Muppet Christmas Carol, pictured), with scores being performed live - and in-sync with the screenings - by various orchestras, including the CBSO. Also featured is The Glenn Miller Orchestra, which will be taking audiences back to the golden age of swing on Sunday 27 December. To check out the Christmas programme at both venues and purchase tickets, visit bmusic.co.uk/bfestive

Stage 2 to present The Watsons at the Crescent

Stage2, Birmingham's longest-running youth theatre group, is this month presenting a theatrical adaptation of an abandoned Jane Austen manuscript. Adapted by Laura Wade from Austen's unfinished novel, The Watsons shows at the Crescent Theatre from Thursday 17 to Saturday 19 December. Tickets for the show are available via the venue's box office.

Cathedral to host Peaky Blinders by candlelight

Peaky Blinders fans can celebrate the award-winning television series at Birmingham Cathedral early next year, when the venue plays host to a show in which the series' soundtrack is reimagined in a classical format and performed by a local string quartet. Candlelight: Peaky Blinders takes place in the cathedral on Saturday 6 and Friday 19 February. For more information and to book tickets, visit feverup.com

May the Force be with you at Brum's Symphony Hall



Classic sci-fi film Star Wars: A New Hope will be screened at Birmingham's Symphony Hall in the spring - with a live orchestra playing its soundtrack as an accompaniment. The much-loved movie, which is next year celebrating its 50th anniversary, shows at the venue on Thursday 25 March. To find out more and book tickets, visit the website at disneytickets.co.uk

Mostly Jazz announces first headliners for 2027



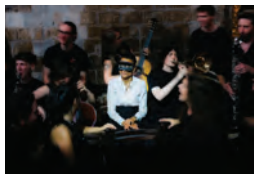
Mostly Jazz Funk & Soul Festival has announced Fat Freddy's Drop and DJ Shadow as the Sunday headliners for the Summer 2027 edition of the event.
The festival will take place at Birmingham's Moseley Park from Friday 9 to Sunday 11 July. To find out more and purchase tickets, visit the event's website at mostlyjazz.co.uk

Applications now open for gardening competition

Applications are now open for BBC Gardeners' World Live Beautiful Borders 2027. The Beautiful Borders 'feature eye-catching designs by a wide range of creators, from first-time designers and amateur gardeners to experienced horticulturalists, charities, schools and community gardening groups'. Next year's show will take place at Packington Estate in Warwickshire for the first time (Thursday 17 - Sunday 20 June). The deadline for Beautiful Borders applications is Friday 22 January. For more information and to purchase tickets for the show, visit bbcgardenersworldlive.com



In The Dark music show coming to the Midlands



A live-music experience performed entirely in darkness will visit Midlands venues as part of a UK tour next year.
Taking the title In The Dark, the show stops off at Lichfield Cathedral (Friday 15 January), King's Hall in Stoke-on-Trent (Saturday 16 January) and Coventry Cathedral (Saturday 20 February). For more information and to purchase your tickets, visit in-the-dark.com

Diary date for Birmingham International Tattoo 2027



The Birmingham International Tattoo will make a welcome return in February.
The annual event takes place on Saturday the 20th and Sunday the 21st of the month at the city's bp pulse LIVE venue.
For more information and to purchase your tickets, visit the website at bhamtattoo.com

Digbeth Dining Club's Sear & Smoke to return

Award-winning street-food brand Digbeth Dining Club will once again host its Sear & Smoke event in 2027. A celebration of the world's best BBQ and open-fire cooking culture, the two-day get-together takes place at Tudor Grange Park in Solihull on Saturday 14 & Sunday 15 May.

Billy Ocean marks 50th anniversary

Billy Ocean is heading to the Midlands next autumn.
The legendary singer-songwriter will bring his new touring show - celebrating the 50th anniversary of hit single Red Light Spells Danger - to Birmingham's Utilita Arena on Saturday 23 October 2027.
Billy will be joined for the occasion by Tony Hadley and Heather Small. For further information and to book your tickets, visit ticketmaster.co.uk

Synth-pop stars out on the road

Heaven 17 will perform alongside a full orchestra when they visit Birmingham next autumn with their 'greatest hits' tour. The synth-pop pioneers play Symphony Hall on Monday 8 November 2027. Support on the night comes from China Crisis.
To find out more and purchase tickets, visit ticketmaster.co.uk



Festive Pup Cafe at Alfred Works

Dog lovers should make a beeline for Alfresco at Alfred Works in Digbeth on Sunday 13 December, where up to 250 dogs and their owners will be taking part in the Pup Up Cafe Christmas Tour. The event will include a world-record attempt for the most puppuccinos served to a single breed at once. For more information and to book tickets, visit pupup.cafe



RSC's Hamnet heading to Birmingham in autumn 2027

The Royal Shakespeare Company's critically acclaimed production of Hamnet is heading out on tour next year and will be stopping off in Birmingham. Based on Maggie O'Farrell's bestselling novel of the same name, the stage adaptation will show at city-centre theatre The Alexandra from Tuesday 9 to Saturday 13 November...
To find out more about the production and purchase tickets, visit atgtickets.com

Tim Vine visits Sillypun Valley

Comedian Tim Vine will be visiting the Midlands in the spring with his brand-new stand-up show, Sillypun Valley.
Tim stops off at Birmingham theatre The Alexandra on Friday 9 April. He then returns to the region in May, to perform at the Grand Theatre in Wolverhampton on Tuesday the 25th.
To find out more and book tickets, visit timvine.com



An Inspector set to Call in early 2028



Stephen Daldry's award-winning National Theatre production of JB Priestley's An Inspector Calls will make stop-offs in Birmingham, Shrewsbury and Wolverhampton in early 2028 as part of a UK tour.
To check out where and when the show will be visiting, head to the production's official website at aninspectorcalls.com

MAC to host new Festive Night Market

Birmingham's Midlands Arts Centre (MAC) is hosting a brand-new and free-to-attend Festive Night Market early this month.
Offering 'a relaxed evening of independent creativity, festive shopping, live music and delicious food & drink', the event takes place on Friday the 4th. To find out more about the market, visit the venue's website at macbirmingham.co.uk

Titanique setting sail for the Midlands



Titanique The Musical is setting sail for the Midlands.
The splash-hit West End show will dock at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Monday 1 to Saturday 6 November 2027, with Myra DuBois (pictured) taking top billing.
To find out more and purchase your tickets, visit grandtheatre.co.uk

First acts announced for Wychwood Festival 2027

Supergrass and The Human League will headline next year's Wychwood Festival, with Razorlight, The Fratellis and Natalie Imbruglia also featuring in the line-up.
The festival takes place at Cheltenham Racecourse from Friday 4 to Sunday 6 June.
To find out more and purchase tickets, visit the website at wychwoodfestival.com

Classic casino games - but with none of the risk...

Fancy enjoying some casino classics - with all of the drama but none of the risk?...
If so, Resorts World Birmingham is now offering visitors the chance to check out First Roll - a fresh take on competitive socialising inspired by classic casino games but reinvented for social play. With no gambling involved and no money ever touching the table, the only stakes are 'bragging rights'...
Find out more and book your experience by visiting the website at firstroll.co.uk

Garden Rescue Live set to hit the road in 2027



BBC television's popular daytime makeover show Garden Rescue is heading out on the road next year and will be visiting two West Midlands venues. Charlie Dimmock and the team stop off at Warwick Arts Centre in Coventry on Wednesday 31 March and Stoke-on-Trent's Regent Theatre on Saturday 10 April.
For further information and to purchase tickets, visit cuffeandtaylor.com

Wolverhampton festival celebrating 10th birthday

Wolverhampton Literature Festival will be celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2027.
The popular event makes a return from Friday 5 to Sunday 7 February and features a mix of acclaimed authors, broadcasters, historians and public figures.
Gardening expert Adam Kirtland and best-selling historian Professor Janina Ramirez are just two of the well-known names so far announced for the event.
Creative workshops and an interactive trail also feature. To find out more, head to the website at wolvesliteraturefestival.co.uk



Richard Thompson to play Shrewsbury Folk Festival

Richard Thompson and Fisherman's Friends are among the high-quality acts which have so far been announced for next year's Shrewsbury Folk Festival.
The popular four-day event is celebrating its 30th year in 2027, and also marking the 20th anniversary of its move to the DMOS People West Mid Showground. The festival will take place from Friday 27 to Monday 30 August.
Commenting on next summer's get-together, director Sandra Surtees said: "Celebrating 30 years of the festival and 20 years at our showground home is going to be an amazing party! The line-up will include some of our favourite artists, some incredible talents never seen before at the festival, and some special shows just for Shrewsbury...
"I'm incredibly proud of what we've achieved and look forward to celebrating that in August."
Day and weekend tickets are now on sale at shrewsburyfolkfestival.co.uk

Steps stepping out with 30th anniversary show

Pop legends Steps are heading to the city's Utilita Arena next autumn (Saturday 20 November).
Claire, Faye, H, Lee and Lisa will be visiting the venue with Steps 30 Live, a special show marking the group's 30th anniversary.
To find out more and check ticket availability, visit stepsofficial.co.uk



Peaky creator becomes local film festival patron

Peaky Blinders creator Steven Knight has joined fellow Brummie Joe Lycett in becoming a patron of the city's Forward Film & Television Festival.
Steven's appointment follows Forward's second edition, which was held in the autumn across five venues centred on Birmingham's Digbeth district.

Christmas lectures return at Midlands arts centre

The award-winning Warwick Christmas Lectures return early this month, taking place at Coventry's Warwick Arts Centre on Wednesday the 2nd and Thursday the 3rd.
The lectures see University of Warwick scientists taking a break from their laboratory research 'to entertain, inspire and amaze audiences'.
To find out more and purchase tickets, visit the website at warwickartscentre.co.uk

Comic Peter Serafinowicz live at The Alexandra

Actor & comedian Peter Serafinowicz will visit the region with a brand-new show next spring. Peter stops off at Birmingham venue The Alexandra on Sunday 2 May.
To find out more and purchase tickets, visit his website at peterserafinowicz.co.uk

B:Festive

Town Hall & Symphony Hall

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The Overtones: Jivin' Home for Christmas
04.12 | Town Hall

FILM | LIVE MUSIC | CHRISTMAS CLASSIC



Disney's Muppet Christmas Carol in Concert: Film with Live Orchestra
08 & 09.12 | Symphony Hall

FEEL-GOOD | FESTIVE | SOULFUL



Joss Stone: Merry Christmas, Love
11.12 | Symphony Hall

ICON | HUMOUR | PARTY



Toyah's Christmas Party
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The Snowman: Film with Live Orchestra
20.12 | Town Hall

CAROLS | CLASSICS | JOY



Christmas with Sir Karl Jenkins
20.12 | Symphony Hall

DANCE SPECTACULAR | HITS | GLITZ



Xmas on the Dancefloor with Gorka Márquez
21.12 | Symphony Hall

FILM | LIVE MUSIC | FAMILY FAVOURITE



Home Alone in Concert
23.12 | Symphony Hall

CHARM | BIG BAND | SWING



The Glenn Miller Orchestra
27.12 | Symphony Hall

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DICKENS' DELIGHT

Birmingham Ormiston Academy celebrates the season with its very own version of A Christmas Carol The Musical

By Diane Parkes

Widely admired for its festive productions, Birmingham Ormiston Academy (BOA) will this year stage a home-grown version of Alan Menken & Lynn Ahrens' A Christmas Carol The Musical. What's On recently caught up with some of the cast and creatives from the BOA group to find out more...

Birmingham-based students are presenting a new musical production of Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol this month.

The young people from BOA Stage & Screen Production Academy and BOA Creative, Digital & Performing Arts Academy are not only performing in the show but have also created its sets, costumes and wigs, as well as undertaking a host of backstage roles.

Although it's the 11th time the academy has staged a home-grown Christmas production, it's the first time without the support of external professionals. And this year the show will be staged at BOA Creative's theatre.

The production, which marks 15 years since the foundation of BOA, is an adaptation of Alan Menken & Lynn Ahrens' A Christmas Carol The Musical.

BOA Stage & Screen Production's head of stage, Maddy Scott, says it was important to put the students at the centre of the show: "This year we really wanted to put the onus back on the students to have those stage roles and design roles. We're trying to give them the best experiences to unlock their potential and to get them prepared for the industry. It gives them a bit of a taste of how real-life theatre is made."

Previous BOA Christmas productions have included Pinocchio, Cinderella and Peter Pan.

"A Christmas Carol is such a good story," says Maddy. "It's about good morals, and it's also a lot of fun. And audiences will be able to see how these students have brought it to life. This show is fully student-produced - the actors and all backstage behind the scenes, they're all students.

"We always talk about this talent pipeline - and specifically in Birmingham - and seeing this show is a good way to support young talent. You may see this show and then, in the future, one of the students becomes a West End designer or works in film or TV. You'll see them on the credits and know you supported them when they were a student."

BOA Stage & Screen Academy student Harry Richardson has taken the role of assistant production manager. He's working across all departments to ensure they stay on track with budgets and timescales.

"I've been helping Miss Scott where it's needed," says 17-year-old Harry, who's from Stratford-upon-Avon and is studying Level 3 Lighting & Sound For Live Performances. "So [that's meant] writing a spreadsheet of what needs to be ordered, what's been sourced, and tracking when it's been ordered and delivered. I've also made the rota for show week.

"I wanted this role because it'll spread my knowledge of different parts of how production comes together. It gives me insight into other people's departments and what goes on behind the scenes before it turns into a production."

And Harry hopes their efforts will inspire other young people to consider a stage-and-screen career: "I think this show is quite unique in how long we've had to build it all and bring it together, as well as using students acting in the show. I hope that will inspire people to come to BOA and study acting, musical theatre, wigs, hair & makeup, set, lights and sound.

"A lot of schools study A Christmas Carol over November and December, so it will give them a visual representation of the book. They will see a different aspect of how the story can be told and brought to light."

Seventeen-year-old Katy Cooney, from Wolverhampton, has been designing and building the sets in a team of three.

"As the set designer, I've been supervising the rest of the set department and working very closely with the set supervisor," says Katy, who is studying Level 3 BOA Creative Set, Props & Costume at BOA Stage & Screen Academy.

"A lot of it has been scheduling and making sure that whatever we've designed and whatever we've planned to do is actually achievable in the time frame that we've got."

The team have built a single multi-purpose set.

"The director gave us a quite solid starting-point, with very definite things that she wanted to include, but we still have quite a lot of freedom with the actual aesthetics side of it. We have a standing set, so it stays the same throughout, but we have multiple areas of the sets. We've got Scrooge's office, Scrooge's bedroom, the Victorian Street in the set at all times, so we don't have to do as many changes."

Katy, who's aiming to be an art director or production developer in film and television, has gained so much experience from the role: "There's been a lot of very quick learning on the job. There's a lot of things, especially as we're building, where we don't have time to go and ask the teachers, so we're doing a lot of problem-solving as we go. It's being able to take the initiative, and if you can do it, just do it."

Eighteen-year-old BTEC Level 3 Musical Theatre student Corey Holmes - who hails from Burton-upon-Trent and is studying at BOA Creative - is one of the actors playing Scrooge, but he admits he was a little nervous to audition for the lead role: "In the assembly on the Monday when we first started, I was very nervous. But we were given the information that we're doing A Christmas Carol and I just thought 'Well, step out of my comfort zone and go for Scrooge.'

"Scrooge is such a multifaceted character, and I think it's a good lesson for young people today that actually, if somebody is of a lesser mood or if somebody isn't enjoying something, there's normally a reason why; there's normally a backstory.

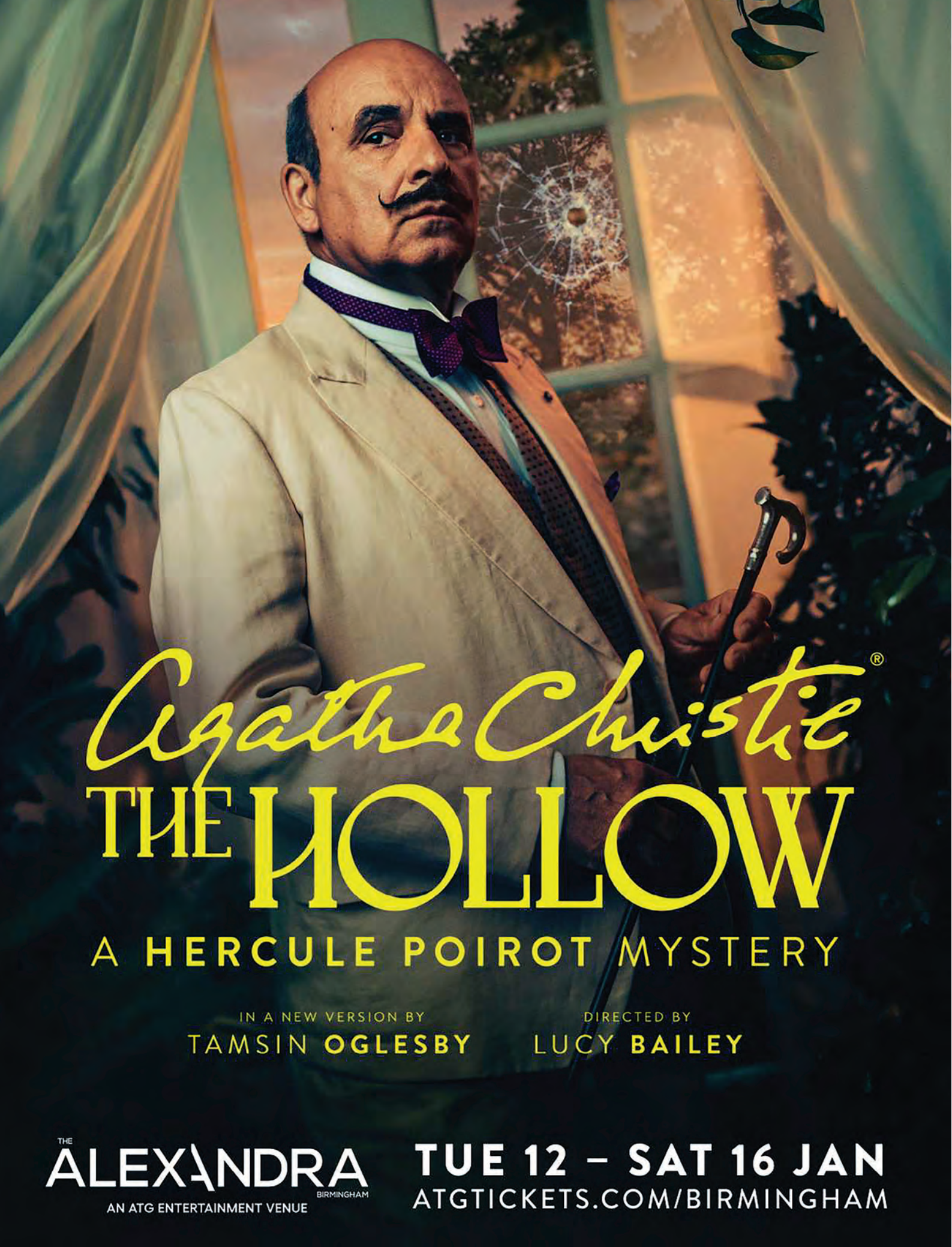
"So I like to convey Scrooge as a nasty and spiteful man who feels like the whole world's against him and that no one appreciates him for what he does. And then, as we go on through the story, I try to expose the vulnerable side of him and show more than the angry emotions that he's got. And I tend to soften up at the end a little bit and go into a bit more of a comical character."

For Corey, being in the show has taught him a good deal more than how to play Scrooge: "I've learned that everyone has a part to play in the show. Everyone is so talented, and when you're in such a safe space, you have no limits at all. I've learned that when I'm with the right people, I can really thrive, because I absolutely cherish everyone. It's genuinely changed my life."

And he hopes audiences will enjoy seeing the result of all their hard work: "I think people should come and see the show, not only to experience the moral of the story, but to experience Christmas and see what young people can offer to the world.

"A lot of the time there's a bit of a negative 'kids nowadays' perspective, but the kids here, they're really, really good. We're so dedicated to putting on a good show and making it a memorable experience. It's such a lovely show with such a lovely story and a unique twist."

BOA Group stage A Christmas Carol The Musical at the BOA Creative, Digital & Performing Arts Academy Theatre until Tuesday 15 December. To purchase tickets, visit ticketsource.com/boa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Gwenifer Raymond

Hare & Hounds, Birmingham, Mon 7 December

Cardiff-born, Brighton-based instrumentalist Gwenifer Raymond plays the Hare & Hounds at the end of a year in which she's enjoyed no shortage of professional highs, including appearances at Primavera and Roskilde Festival, an NPR Tiny Desk performance and invitations to perform with Mitski and Geese. A champion of the finger-picked guitar, Gwenifer has garnered significant acclaim for her repurposing of Mississippi blues and John Fahey's intricate Americana to embody her interests in folk horror and the avant-garde.



The Darkness

Utilita Arena Birmingham, Sat 12 December

Lead singer & guitarist Justin Hawkins is understandably excited by the prospect of The Darkness' arena visits this month, given that they mark the band's largest headline tour in two decades. "The very bestest of The Darkness!" he exclaims. "Imagine yourself luxuriating in the warm sonic and visual embrace of the best-ever Darkness songs, played by the best-ever Darkness band, in the best-ever rock-music venues of mainland Great Britain! You will float with us on the soft whoopee cushion of undulating rock tones, swim with us in the warm seas of loquacious balladry, jump with us in the heady miasma of pop rock, and also do the head bang with us in the electrical thundery storm of heavy metal... Roll up, roll up - the Darkness carnival is coming to town!"...
The boys are joined for their Birmingham gig by special guests Feeder and A.





Ledbyher **O2 Institute, Birmingham, Wed 9 December**

Shapeshifting synths, magnetic energy, and the sort of husky vocals you might expect on the other side of a cigarette or several, are essential elements of the immersive sound generated by London-based star-in-the-making Ledbyher (real name Rachel Diack). A distinctive voice on the UK underground scene, the German-born Scottish Indonesian self-taught rapper creates music which confidently nods in the direction of multiple genres, including soul, electronic, ambient, R&B and jerk.
Describing her musical style as "lady trap" and "bedroom drill", she visits Birmingham mid-month having earlier this year caused a significant stir with long-awaited 12-track mixtape The Elephant.
Her stage name, by the way, is inspired by a line from William Wordsworth's epic autobiographical poem, The Prelude: 'One summer evening (led by her) I found / A little boat tied to a willow tree...'.

R&B Winter Ball

bp pulse LIVE, Birmingham, Thurs 10 December

Classic soul, smooth grooves, throwback anthems and singalong moments will once again be the name of the game when the R&B Winter Ball makes a welcome return this month. The 2026 edition of the show features 1990s and noughties heavyweight acts Jagged Edge, B2K and SWV.

Joss Stone

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Fri 11 December

Award-winning soul star Joss Stone here lends her powerhouse vocals to a selection of festive favourites from critically acclaimed ninth studio album Merry Christmas, Love. Alongside soulful renditions of such classics as Away In A Manger, Let It Snow and In The Bleak Midwinter, the concert's playlist will also feature original tracks If You Believe and Bring On Christmas Day.

Sex Pistols ft. Frank Carter

O2 Academy, Birmingham, Mon 14 December

"We're having a blast," says guitarist Steve Jones, in talking about the Sex Pistols' 50 Years Of Punk tour. "We're like a well-oiled machine right now. And it's been incredible to get out there with these songs we wrote 50 years ago. We love it! Frank Carter's a great frontman and really gets the crowd going. Every person in the audience loves these songs as much as we do, and it's an absolute pleasure to get out there and play them."





MEAN BUSINESS

Hit musical Mean Girls comes to The Alexandra this month

By Jessica Clixby

Classic noughties movie Mean Girls has been adapted as a stage musical, with the show having proved a hit both on Broadway and in the West End. The touring version lands in Birmingham this month, bringing a splash of pink to the city for the festive season. The story's iconic trio of 'mean girls', who are known as The Plastics - Gretchen Wieners, Karen Smith and 'queen bee' Regina George - are being played by Kiara Dario, Sophie Pourret and Vivian Panka respectively. They sat down with What's On to chat about the show ahead of its mid-month arrival in the West Midlands...

The endlessly quotable Mean Girls has made the move from movie to musical and stops off at Birmingham theatre The Alexandra this month, showing at the venue into the New Year.

Set in the fictional North Shore High School, the story follows newcomer Cady as she negotiates its strict social hierarchies. At the top of the pecking order are 'The Plastics': Regina, Gretchen and Karen.

"I absolutely loved the 2004 movie," Vivian Panka - who plays ultimate Mean Girl, Regina George - told What's On. "It changed the high-school rom-com landscape. I definitely grew up on it. I love all the quotes, I love the vibes, the clothes - it's all coming back, the early 2000s outfits."

"I play the iconic Gretchen Wieners," adds Kiara Dario. "Me and my friends, when we were in primary school, were much too young to be watching the movie, but we would quote the quotes... I never saw myself as a Gretchen Wieners. I think I was always a Janis or Cady, very much like an outsider. Playing Gretchen now, I get to be one of the pretty ones! It's just so much fun being able to say these iconic lines that I memorised when I was a kid."

Rounding out the trio is Sophie Pourret, who plays Karen Smith. She muses on the show's transition from screen to stage: "It was kind of inevitable that it would be a musical one day. Karen is so brilliant! I never saw myself as a Karen ever, but she was always my favourite because of her one-liners - and Amanda Seyfried did it so perfectly. It's so hard to get right, I think - especially on screen. She does it so subtly, it's perfect."

"There's so many heightened moments in the film that just call for a musical theatre song," adds Vivian. "There's this song called Someone Gets Hurt, and it's very Bond-villain-esque. There's different styles of music - it lends itself very well to becoming a musical."

"The reason why Mean Girls is so iconic is that it has so much visual iconography," says Kiara. "Immediately when you see the poster, you know what it's about. When you see the pink, when you see these three girls walking, and the cell phones and the bags and the shoes, you immediately know what it's about, and that's such a 'musical theatre' thing, the visual aspect. It's so satisfying to see on a big stage."

The musical's book is written by Tina Fey, who wrote and starred in the 2004 movie, a fact which helps to maintain the film's spirit in the stage version.

"It's so crazy that someone who wrote the movie then also wrote the musical," says Vivian. "That's rare, and really cool. Tina Fey was involved in everything, in every stage of the production, which is really, really lovely."

"The movie was iconic because it was set in the 2000s," adds Kiara. "The musical is set in the current time period, so we have a lot of jokes about current events - hashtags and selfies and stuff like that. I think the reason why it works as a musical is because it's immediate; we're directly speaking to the audience in this current moment. And having the characters of Janis and Damian as the narrators - breaking the fourth wall, speaking directly to the audience - makes that so much more palpable."

The musical opened on Broadway in 2018 and made its London West End debut in 2024, heading out on an extensive tour earlier this year. Vivian, Kiara, Sophie and the cast have now been joined by dancer, TV and musical-theatre star Jennifer Ellison. Jennifer has replaced Faye Tozer to play no fewer than *three* maternal figures - teacher Mrs Norbury, Cady's mum and Regina's mum

"Jennifer just bonded with the cast so easily," says Kiara. "She's such an extrovert as well... I aspire to be that kind of person, who's so magnetic immediately."

"She's one of the girls, really," adds Sophie. "She's so funny, and equally brilliant as Faye was. So different as well. It's so fun to play with something different."

The trio are having a blast playing the titular 'mean girls' - each with their own distinct personality. Both Sophie and Kiara have enjoyed exploring the characters of Regina's henchwomen - airhead Karen and highly strung Gretchen.

"I love playing Karen," says Sophie. "It was hard at first, but since I 'found' her, it's been so nice to go out on stage and just be level and calm, when everyone else around you is so chaotic. Calm in her own way, I mean - she's chaotic in a lot of ways, but there's a nice calmness to it. That actually really grounds me as an actor as well, when you're nervous and you have to just relax into it."

"I never thought I would play Gretchen," says Kiara. "I think she's such an Asian-coded character. Coming into this show, into this role, as an Asian woman - the need for acceptance, the need to fit in, the need to be perfect and to please everybody... She's so smart, but she uses it in ways that don't serve her at all. I feel like it's such a privilege to play a character like that, where I think a lot of young Asian girls see themselves. Playing her in the musical, she has such a depth to her that wasn't shown in the movie."

The story follows the aforementioned character of Cady Heron - a previously home-schooled student, who finds that there are similarities between her new high school and the ruthless animal life she encountered in Kenya. At the top of the high school food chain is Vivian's character: Regina George.

"Cady is the main character," says Vivian. "She's on stage all the time and it's such a tough part. Regina is the person who everyone loves to hate and hates to love. That comes with a lot of responsibility. I try not to feel that too much, because it's not useful to me, I try just to put my own stamp on it and not think about it too much. I have very big shoes to fill, with the original being Rachel McAdams, who's one of my favourite actresses. And then all the amazing actresses who have played Regina in the musical since. So it comes with a bit of pressure, but being able to sing those songs and say those iconic lines is worth it for me. I feel lucky every day that I get to strut on that stage with these girls."

And while they clearly have chemistry both on and off the stage, the trio are separated during the course of the show.

"We spend most of act one together, us three," says Vivian. "In rehearsals, we were always together because it takes a very long time to rehearse an act. Then, in act two, we were separated. I was like, 'Where are my girls?' They still get to hang out together, but I miss them when I'm not with them."

Vivian, Kiara and Sophie will have the chance to settle into a longer run during their visit to Birmingham this Christmas, with the production showing at The Alexandra across three weeks. Kiara in particular is looking forward to exploring the city during the festive period: "I really want to go to the Christmas market. I'm from the Philippines, so having Christmas in a cold place, in a cold country, with hot chocolate... I want to experience Christmas like I saw in the movies!"

Mean Girls shows at The Alexandra, Birmingham, from Monday 14 December to Saturday 2 January

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Ex Cathedra: Christmas Music By Candlelight

St John's Church, Hagley, Wed 2 December; Lichfield Cathedral, Fri 4 December; St Peter's Church, Wolverhampton, Thurs 10 December; Coventry Cathedral, Thurs 17 December; The Great Hall, University of Birmingham, Fri 18 December; St Paul's Church, Birmingham, Sat 19 - Tues 22 December

What better way to get into the Christmas spirit than by enjoying an evening with one of the country's most critically acclaimed choral music ensembles?
Under the directorship - this year for the final time - of its founder, Jeffrey Skidmore, Ex Cathedra's atmospheric and much-loved Christmas Music By Candlelight event features festive favourites from around the globe and across the centuries.
The music is interspersed with a variety of seasonal readings, all selected to 'reveal the quiet magic of Christmas'.
The concert lasts for two hours and 10 minutes, including an interval.

Christmas With Sir Karl Jenkins

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Sun 20 December

Acclaimed composer Sir Karl Jenkins picks up the baton to guide the London Concert Orchestra through a programme of timeless seasonal favourites at Symphony Hall.
Taking place just a handful of days before Christmas, the concert also features some of Sir Karl's most celebrated music, including Benedictus from The Armed Man...
Lucy Crowe (soprano), Philip Cobb (trumpeter) and Felix Higginbottom (hand drummer) also contribute to proceedings.





City of Birmingham Choir & the CBSO: Messiah

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Fri 4 December

The City of Birmingham Choir's December collaboration with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, to perform Handel's magnificent choral masterpiece - a retelling of the Christmas story - is a well-established element of the West Midlands' festive music scene. Adrian Lucas, the choir's musical director, will be helming the performance, with city organist Thomas Trotter playing the harpsichord. Other performers include Brittany King (soprano), Kate Symonds-Joy (mezzo) and Greg Tassell (tenor).

CBSO: Kazuki Conducts The Nutcrackers

Birmingham Town Hall, Thurs 10 December

If you go nuts for The Nutcracker at this time of year, then grab yourself a ticket for this Town Hall concert - a sure-to-be-memorable evening spent in the company of the ever-brilliant City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra.
The CBSO's acclaimed music director, Kazuki Yamada, takes to the podium to direct proceedings, as the orchestra perform a festive selection from the beloved Tchaikovsky ballet, presented alongside Duke Ellington's very individual take on the piece. Leonard Bernstein's Prelude, Fugue And Riffs also features.
The CBSO's own Oliver Janes takes the solo clarinet part, which was originally written for jazz supremo Benny Goodman.

RBC Symphony Orchestra: Enigma Variations

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, Fri 11 December

The Royal Birmingham Conservatoire's Symphony Orchestra here gets its teeth into the work for which Midlands maestro Edward Elgar is best known and most admired. Premiered in London in the summer of 1899, the Enigma Variations is a series of short musical portraits which take as their subject matter several of the composer's friends and family...
The concert is conducted by Daniele Rosina and also includes a performance of Magnus Lindberg's Gran Duo.

Viennese Christmas Spectacular By Candlelight

St Philip's Cathedral, Birmingham, Sat 19 December

The work of 'Waltz King' Johann Strauss II sits at the heart of this concert, with his Die Fledermaus Overture kickstarting proceedings, and the much-loved Blue Danube bringing an hour of candlelit musicmaking to a memorable close.
In between those two famous pieces, audience members can enjoy a selection of other familiar compositions, including Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Suite and Waltz from The Sleeping Beauty, and Korngold's Serenade from The Snowman.

FUNNY FOLK

Get ready to giggle! It's pantomime season (oh yes it is!), and that means the finest laughter-merchants Pantoland has to offer are donning daft costumes, trying out brand-new material - and telling some very old jokes!... What's On chats to some of the family-friendly comedians who are tasked with tickling funny bones at this very special time of year...



Matt Slack

Matt Slack plays Lester the Jester in Sleeping Beauty, which runs at Birmingham Hippodrome from Saturday 19 December to Sunday 31 January

How long does it take you to get in the zone before a show?
I'm very, very fortunate. I can walk onto the stage, and whatever's going on in my life - we still have lives going on, there are still personal things going on, we're human beings - I can leave that in the wings. I just walk on! People have paid good money, and I want to give them the best Matt Slack that I can offer.

With audiences returning year after year, do you feel that you have a special relationship with them?
It's brilliant. What's really nice, coming back year after year, is that I've seen kids grow up. I've had them on stage, and I remember seeing them and thinking 'You got on stage two years ago...' You see adults who were mums and dads and are now grandparents. It's like I'm growing older with the audience and vice versa!

Richard Blackwood

Richard Blackwood plays Long John Silver in Treasure Island, which runs at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre throughout December and until Sunday 3 January

You're no stranger to a live crowd, Richard, but do you enjoy interacting with a panto audience?
I love it, but it can sometimes throw you, because you've still got lines. You don't want to come too far off the script, because you can't then find your way back. Even though you're having fun with the audience, you have to 'contain the beast', because otherwise you might let go and truly lose it.

What were your first impressions when you stepped on stage at the Wolverhampton Grand?
When I first visited the Grand, as a stand-up comedian, I already knew what the room would be like. I can see the energy, the acoustics, everything - the way it's laid out, especially if it's full... It's the difference between watching something on the TV at home and going to the cinema. When you have a big, wide [cinema] screen, you're 'taken in', you're in the moment - and it's the same thing with the Grand. The Grand has that 'I'm at the wide-screen IMAX' kind of vibe.





Vince Williams

Vince Williams plays Dame Dolly Doughnut in Beauty And The Beast, which runs at the Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham, until Thurs 31 December

How would you describe your dame character?
Very traditional; it's a bloke in a frock. I will get rid of my beard... I like to bring that fun element. My first dame was in Beauty And The Beast, but I hadn't known that that was what I wanted to be - I'd been a comic in panto up until that point. It was the producer, Darren from Polka Dot, who said 'I see you as a dame!'
Once you've been a dame, there's no turning back, because it's just the best character. You get silliness for the kids, but you also get those jokes that go above their heads a little bit.

What's your favourite classic panto comedy routine?
We're lucky enough to be doing 'If I were not in pantomime' this year, and the ghost gag - I just like watching the kids go absolutely barmy at us because they can see something that we can't. One of my all-time favourites is Busy Bee... Those routines are just so much fun.



Craig Hollingsworth

Craig Hollingsworth plays Willy-Do-It in Beauty And The Beast, which runs at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, throughout December and until Saturday 2 January

You're returning to Coventry for another year! What keeps you coming back to the Belgrade?
This is my 15th year, would you believe?! Every time I come back, it's like a home from home. We're so lucky at the Belgrade Theatre - everything every year is brand new. The scripts are brand new, the costumes are brand new, the sets are brand new...

What's special about performing with Coventry's longstanding panto dame, director & writer, Iain Lauchlan?
I think the best word is 'trust'. We've been working together for so long now, we know what each other is thinking without needing to say anything. Ian writes and directs and dames - he has to do so much, and there's so much to think about. But when we're on stage together, I'll go off on a tangent - something will happen in the audience, and I'll jump on it - but because there's that trust there, he knows that I'll always bring it back.
I think the audience love our relationship on stage as well. It's like the gang's back together. I think Coventry audiences see us on stage and go 'Oh, this is Christmas!'



Morgan Philpott

Morgan Philpott plays Auntie Histamine in Peter Pan, which runs at The Core Theatre, Solihull, from Friday 4 December to Sunday 3 January

As dame, you get to wear some weird and wonderful costumes. Do you have a favourite?
Every year I'm surprised and amazed at the next ambitious drawing that Morgan Brind, the designer, has done. If I'm not on stage - running around and getting covered in custard pies! - I'll be very busy in the wings with two or three other people, desperately trying to get into the next costume. Someone will then turn me around and push me back on stage at the right time. Over the years, I've been an airplane, I've been a giant cake... I think a lot of my costumes have to live in the wings because they won't fit through a door to get into the theatre!

To hear more from our panto stars, visit whatsonlive.co.uk

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Kae Kurd

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 12 December

British-Kurdish stand-up Kae Kurd didn't have the easiest start in life. Even before he was one year old, he'd become a refugee, as his resistance-fighter parents fled Iraq and the brutality of Saddam Hussein's regime. In Iraq, Kae observes, 'activism' means risking death; in sharp contrast (he further notes), here in the UK, all you have to do to be an activist is tweet with the right hashtag!.. His mid-month show at Warwick Arts Centre comes complete with interactive games, chaotic crowd moments, and special guest appearances.



Barbara Nice's Christmas Cracker

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, Thurs 17 & Fri 18 December

Everybody's favourite Kings Heath housewife, the incomparable Barbara Nice, makes a welcome return to MAC to light up the season of good will with her annual Christmas Cracker show.
As well as containing more jokes than you'd find in an oversized holiday gag-bag (does such a thing even exist?!), Barbara's fabulous festive favourite usually features a tombola and raffle, no shortage of mince pies, and most excitingly of all, a surprise special guest or two.





Live At Christmas **Birmingham Town Hall, Wed 9 December**

Feminism and existential despair are among the subjects which Fern Brady contemplates during her stand-up shows.
Along the way, she deploys her acerbic wit to recount highly personal stories about her mental-health issues, her sexuality - and even her niche interest in Scottish amateur pornography! Original, challenging and - most importantly of all, of course - extremely funny, Fern is joined for this seasonal Town Hall gig by fellow comics Bridget Christie, Jen Nolan, John Kearns, Ivo Graham and Elis James.

Comedy Crackers

Birmingham Town Hall, Mon 21 December



Tom Davis and Suzi Ruffell (pictured) are among the comics lined up for this pre-Christmas laughter fest, a show described by its publicity as 'a perfectly wrapped night of comedy' delivering 'sled-loads of good cheer'.

Upfront Christmas Special

The Rep, Birmingham, Wed 23 December



Birmingham-born actor and comedian Jo Enright admits she's happiest when she's hiding behind a character. "I like anonymity," says Jo, whose CV includes Phoenix Nights, Life's Too Short, Trollied and The Job Lot. "That's the great thing about being an actor; you can be in things without anybody recognising you!"
Joining Jo in the Rep's Upfront Christmas Special is Marlon Davies, Ali Woods and Aurie Styla (pictured), the latter of whom is hosting proceedings.

Chuckl. Comedy Club

The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton, Fri 11 December



Now just a handful of years short of a half-century in comedy, American funnyman Rich Hall is perhaps best known for his creation of Otis Lee Crenshaw, a bourbon-swilling redneck jailbird from Tennessee whose many wives have all been named Brenda... Rich is joined on the bill for this Wolverhampton show by Tal Davies, John Robertson and Jay Neale.

Fitz of Laughter

Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge, Sun 6 December



Katie Fitzgerald's Christmas comedy special sees headliner Marcus Brigstocke being joined by Oliver Bowler, Masai Graham and host Wayne Beese. Shows take place in both the afternoon (3pm) and the evening (7pm)

CHRISTMAS WITH THE CBSO



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Thursday 17 December 2026, 7:30pm
Symphony Hall, Birmingham

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CBSO CHORAL CHRISTMAS

Friday 18 December 2026, 7:30pm
Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Enjoy glorious music with the CBSO Choruses, and sparkling saxophone from Jess Gillam. You're sure to leave feeling full of festive cheer!



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Symphony Hall, Birmingham

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VIENNESE NEW YEAR

Sunday 3 January 2027, 3pm
Symphony Hall, Birmingham

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Kevin Bridges

Utilita Arena Birmingham, Wed 2 December

Kevin Bridges was launched into the comedy stratosphere at the still-tender age of 18, when he reached the finals of the So You Think You're Funny? talent contest at the Edinburgh Fringe.

Since then, the Scottish-born stand-up has been making comedy look like the easiest gig in the world, engaging his audience with a laid-back style of delivery and bags and bags of high-quality wit.

Jokes include: "Americans go up to Edinburgh Castle and think it's a high school - every lunchtime they hear gunfire."



Tom Stade

The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton, Fri 4 December

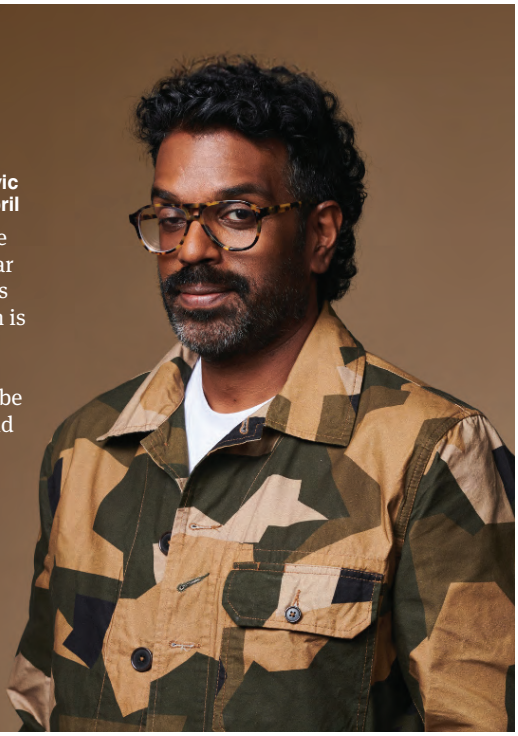
Clever, controversial and Canadian pretty much sums up Tom Stade, a familiar face on UK television programmes such as Michael McIntyre's Comedy Roadshow and Mock The Week. Tom has headlined gigs in comedy hotspots across the globe, not to mention far-flung war zones such as Afghanistan and Iraq, where he regularly entertained British troops... He visits Wolverhampton this month with brand-new offering Tom Stade Rules, a show in which he takes aim at the absurdities of modern times.



Romesh Ranganathan

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 4 December; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Sun 7 February; Utilita Arena Birmingham, Fri 2 & Sat 3 April; The Civic at The Halls, Wolverhampton, Wed 7 April

Romesh Ranganathan is a familiar face on television nowadays, with credits far too numerous to list. Most recently he's been seen on Celebrity Traitors - which is certainly a far cry from his previous career teaching maths in a Crawley classroom. "In the early days, I would be performing to eight people in a pub and my sixth formers would turn up," Romesh recalled in an interview with Crawley News. "I couldn't help but think 'Oh God, this isn't going to end well!' It undermined my authority to tell the students off the next day, because it must've been hilarious for them to see me die on stage and think "I'm just going to heckle him now!'"





Milton Jones

The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent, Sat 19 December

With a style of humour that's mainly based around puns and one-liners, Milton Jones has established himself as one of Britain's most in-demand funnymen. "If my comedy is working well, I put a cartoon in people's heads that surprises them," explains Milton. "So you start off and they're thinking one thing, then you surprise them by changing the ending as you go along. It's not political or particularly edgy, it's just daft."

Gags include: "Militant feminists - I take my hat off to them. They don't like that," and, "Recently on a flight to America, all the way across, my wife was going, 'Why don't you get an upgrade, why don't you get an upgrade?' It took a bit of time, but in the end I got a better wife."

An Evening With Clinton Baptiste

Huntingdon Hall, Worcester, Wed 2 December; The Benn Hall, Rugby, Thurs 3 December; Halesowen Town Hall, Thurs 17 December; Walsall Arena, Thurs 28 January

Actor Alex Lowe enjoyed big success with comic creation Clinton Baptiste when the character first appeared in Peter Kay's award-winning television series, Phoenix Nights. A tacky and inept clairvoyant, medium and psychic, Baptiste was Kay's brainchild but has since been fleshed-out further by the man who plays him. Despite the serious amount of work he's put into developing the character, Alex remains appreciative of Clinton's origin: "The fact that he's from Phoenix Nights is great. It's like having a head start, because I already feel four-nil up before I even get on stage!"





BACK ON THE SCENE

Birmingham's Britpop favourites, Ocean Colour Scene, celebrate the 30th anniversary of Moseley Shoals...

By Steve Adams

Formed in the Birmingham suburb of Moseley almost four decades ago, Britpop favourites Ocean Colour Scene are back on the road and playing some of the biggest shows of their career. Singer Simon Fowler recalls the band's halcyon days, as well as celebrating the 30th anniversary of seminal album Moseley Shoals...

Thirty years ago, Ocean Colour Scene were one of the biggest bands in the UK. Breakthrough album Moseley Shoals shot up the charts, spurred by a succession of hit singles, including You've Got It Bad, The Day We Caught The Train and The Riverboat Song. Live gigs became the stuff of legend, and the band even opened for Oasis at Knebworth.

Heady days, but three decades later the group are embarking on their biggest tour since then, following an upturn in fortunes that singer Simon Fowler is at something of a loss to explain.

"I've got no idea [how it happened]... it just seems like a certain sort of momentum has picked up. Two years ago, we played the NIA [aka Birmingham's Utilita Arena] and sold it out - I didn't think we'd be doing that again. Maybe it's the Oasis factor - everyone's got their bucket hats out again."

His explanation potentially holds water, given that the band are now managed by Alan McGee, the co-founder of Creation Records, who signed Oasis and became one of the faces of Britpop - almost as much as the musicians themselves.

It's a period in time which the legendary music-industry executive remains enraptured with, and is keen to recreate with his new charges.

"Ocean Colour Scene released Moseley Shoals at the epicentre of an incredible time for music: 1996," says Alan. "When I was asked to manage them four years ago, we set out on a journey to celebrate their unique sound and deliver it back to the masses. This tour is their biggest in 30 years and puts them in their rightful place as one of the truly great bands of their generation."

But if Alan is effusive, then Simon is rather more laidback about the whole affair. If he's excited, then the genial band leader hides it well behind a laconic, self-deprecating and largely deadpan manner.

He claims he's just as happy playing acoustic shows in smaller venues as he is playing arena gigs - he's been touring as a double act with drummer Oscar Harrison "for probably 25 years". And he no longer moves in rock & roll circles, preferring to live a quiet life on the outskirts of Stratford-upon-Avon.

"I'm sort of divorced from the music scene now," he admits. "I live in a village and just go to the pub. I don't know how to stream. I've never used a computer."

Thankfully he can work a calendar, and is as bemused as anyone at how much time has passed since the band's heyday, when their best-known album, whose title is a pun on legendary Alabama music city Muscle Shoals, was a chart fixture.

"It's hard to believe that Moseley Shoals has turned 30 in 2026. We owe so much to that album."

They do indeed. Released in April 1996, the LP reached number two in the UK charts, spawned four hit singles and kickstarted a career that saw the band go on a run of 17 Top 40 hits, including nine successive Top 20 singles.

"It was incredible," says Simon. "At one point, Moseley Shoals was at number two and our B-sides album [B-sides, Seasides And Freerides] was number four."

The band's follow-up LP, Marchin' Already, did even better, going straight in at number one and knocking Oasis' Be Here Now off the top spot, prompting a typically droll response from the elder Gallagher brother.

"Noel sent us a plaque saying 'congratulations to the second-best band in Britain'," laughs Simon.

Ocean Colour Scene is very much a family affair these days, with Harrison's son Leon playing percussion and guitarist Steve Cradock's son Cass on keyboards and guitar. "He's the pin-up of the band," quips Simon, acutely aware that he's known both of the 'kids' for most, if not all, of their lives.

He almost shudders when he realises that Leon "is in his 40s now", and accepts that the 30th anniversary tour will naturally be a reminder of how big the band became at the height of their fame. The final show of the 21-date trek is a hometown gig at Birmingham's bp pulse LIVE arena, a venue that holds a particularly personal memory from back in the day: "I remember the first time we played there. It was really weird because the Evening Mail, who I used to work for, sent a special truck out to the venue to sell papers that had a wraparound cover with us on it. It definitely felt like we'd made it."

Mention of his former career as a journalist ("I wanted to be a sports reporter like John Motson, but after a while realised I wanted to be like John Lennon") briefly takes our conversation down a rabbit hole about the decline of journalism, particularly local, and how few people read newspapers in 2026. The reason? Simon reckons it's got a lot to do with society's addiction to video clips on mobile phones. "One minute they're watching rioters in Dover and the next it's a dog doing tricks," he laments.

It's a far cry from when he swapped writing news stories for song lyrics in the late 80s and early 90s - including the tunes that would define the band's career after their eponymous debut LP flopped.

"I remember that time vividly," he recalls fondly. "We started off at Bob Lamb's studio in King's Heath because [Steve and I] both lived within walking distance.

"I'd write a couple of songs every night after we got back from the Jug of Ale, Snobs nightclub, the Institute or wherever. I couldn't go to sleep without having something to work on in the studio the following day."

The hard work might have been for nothing if not for a few well-known, and well-connected, supporters who helped advance the band's cause. Gigs with Paul Weller paid for recording sessions (Cradock became a regular member of his backing band), Noel Gallagher gave the band a support slot on an Oasis tour after hearing some of their demos, which in turn prompted a record deal with MCA, and Chris Evans played The Day We Caught The Train to death on the Radio One breakfast show.

"We owe Chris so much," says Simon. "He's a really good bloke, too."

With Evans, Weller and Oasis all still going strong 30 years later, it's tempting to think a Britpop revival might be on the cards, and with it maybe a little of the optimism that it brought to a beleaguered Britain in 1996. Simon's not so sure. Attending gigs is largely a chance to escape from the troubles of the world rather than debate them, and there's no harm in that.

"It seems like everyone's completely wrapped up with everything that's going on at the moment, and there's not a way [forward]," he sighs. "We're all going to be murdered by machines anyway, so get along to a gig while you can."

Ocean Colour Scene play bp pulse LIVE in Birmingham on Saturday 12 December. The band then play Loopfest at The Quarry in Shrewsbury on Friday 30 April. Simon Fowlers' The Ocean Colour Scene Songbook Tour visits The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton, on Saturday 6 March, Bilston Town Hall on 24 February 2028, Redditch Palace Theatre on 25 February 2028, Keele University on 20 April 2028, Stourbridge Town Hall on 22 April 2028 and Coventry hmv Empire on 29 April 2028.



Peter Pan
The Rep, Birmingham, until 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 retelling of JM Barrie's much-loved children's story.
"We want to try and offer quite a definitive or iconic Peter Pan," says Joe. "One that de-pantos it, that de-Disneyfies it, and that 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."

A Shoddy Nativity

Lichfield Garrick,
Fri 4 December - Sun 3 January



Having previously served up a fun-filled version of A Christmas Carol, Shoddy Theatre here get their teeth into the greatest Christmas story ever told. It's the opening night of the school Nativity, but the kids haven't turned up. What are a frazzled teacher, an overconfident deputy head, and a well-meaning but wildly misguided TA supposed to do - except maybe step into the breach and perform the show themselves?! Expect frantic costume changes, ill-advised accents, accidental theology, and carols that spiral spectacularly out of control.

Mean Girls

The Alexandra, Birmingham,
Mon 14 December -
Sat 2 January



West End favourite and familiar television face Jennifer Ellison takes on the roles of Ms Heron, Mrs George and Ms Norbury when hit stage musical Mean Girls stops off in Birmingham for the festive season. Based on the 2004 Lindsay Lohan film of the same name, the show focuses on The Plastics - Regina, Gretchen and Karen, the mean girls of the title - who not only rule their school, North Shore High, but will also burn anyone that gets in their way. It's a reality which home-schooled Cady Heron would do well to recognise. Instead, she devises a plan to bring Regina's reign to an end - and learns the hard way that you can't cross a queen bee without getting stung...

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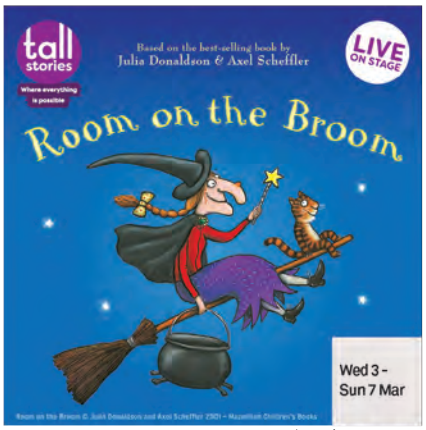
Tue 2 - Sat 6 Mar

CAP



Wed 3 - Sun 7 Mar

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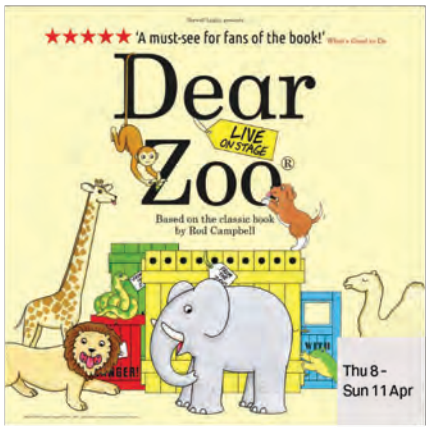

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Tue 13 - Sat 17 Apr

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Tue 20 - Sat 24 Apr

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Tue 27 Apr - Sat 1 May



Sleeping Beauty

Birmingham Hippodrome, Sat 19 December - Sun 31 January

The tragic tale of a young princess who's tricked by an evil fairy and pricks her finger on a spinning wheel, causing her to fall asleep for 100 years, offers a great story around which to build a pantomime production of real quality...

And Christmas 2026 sees Birmingham Hippodrome doing just that!

As usual, the nowadays-near-legendary Matt Slack will be keeping the laughter count high... And also as usual, the show's humour will be aimed at both children *and* adults.

"You've got to know where to draw the line and when to push the boundaries," explains Matt. "We are aimed towards a family audience, but we also want to entertain the adults. It's all about double entendre and disguising it - as long as it goes over the kids' heads and the adults are laughing, job done!"

Matt is joined in this year's panto by Rylan, Zoe Birkett and - returning for a 10th season - 'Birmingham's favourite dame', Andrew Ryan.

Aladdin

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, until 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!"



Cinderella

Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Fri 4 December - Sun 3 January; Palace Theatre, Redditch, Sat 12 December - Sat 2 January

With its comical Ugly Sisters, matchmaking fairy godmother, drop-dead-gorgeous Prince Charming, super-cute mice, and fits-one-foot-only glass slipper, Cinderella can justifiably lay claim to being the nation's favourite pantomime story...

The Royal Spa Centre's version (image left) sees AJ & Curtis Pritchard making a welcome return to pantoland for what will be their sixth appearance in Cinderella with Imagine Theatre. The siblings will play Prince Charming and Dandini respectively...

Meanwhile, over in Redditch (image right), the Palace Theatre version is promising side-splitting comedy, sensational songs, sparkling sets and dazzling dance routines.







Beauty And The Beast

The Old Rep, Birmingham, until Thurs 31 December; Walsall Arena, Sat 5 - Sun 20 December

Beauty And The Beast seems to be all the rage in pantoland this month.

Polka Dot Pantomimes are the ensemble bringing the ever-popular fairytale to life at The Old Rep this Christmas (complete with real live panto pooches), while over in Walsall, there's the promise of 'showstopping songs, awesome audience participation and groanworthy gags'.

Beauty And The Beast is also this year's pantomime of choice at the Coventry Belgrade, but you'll have to turn the page to read about that one...

Robin Hood

Swan Theatre, Worcester, until Sun 3 January; Lichfield Garrick, until Sun 10 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 boat-race, anyone?)...

There's a new dame in town at Lichfield Garrick this year, with Ben Stock taking on the role of Nurse Nellie, while another Ben - Thornton - (pictured below) stars as the eponymous hero.

Meanwhile, over at the Swan, the Worcester Repertory Company (pictured above) are promising a production that's positively awash with traditional pantomime mischief, mayhem and slapstick silliness.



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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.

Snow White

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent,
Fri 11 December - Sun 3 January

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 in Stoke-on-Trent, where Regent Theatre pantomime legend Jonathan Wilkes top-bills with another Potteries panto stalwart, Kai Owen.



Beauty And The Beast

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry,
until 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 panto 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.



Jack And The Beanstalk

Telford International Centre,
Tues 15 December - Sat 2 January

Telford is definitely the Midlands town to head for this festive season if you like your Christmas pantomime fun to be of the beanstalk-clambering, ogre-grappling variety. Coronation Street's Scott Wright gets wicked as Fleshcreep in a show that's also boasting a 3D giant and the return of Telford favourites Ian Smith (as Dame Trott) and Carl Dutfield (as Carl the Cow).



Peter Pan

The Core Theatre, Solihull,
Fri 4 December - Sun 3 January

If your youngsters can't get enough of the magical tale of Peter Pan, then you might find yourself purchasing tickets for not one but two Birmingham productions this festive season. As well as the show at the Rep (see page 24), there's also this Solihull swashbuckler from the award-winning Little Wolf Entertainment. The team are promising 'loopy Lost Boys, musical mermaids and some seriously potty pirates', not to mention 'barrel-loads of laughs and more than a sprinkling of fairy dust'.



Sleeping Beauty

Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire,
Wed 9 December - Sat 2 January

'Dazzling costumes, laugh-out-loud comedy, boos, hisses, and show-stopping songs' are all on the menu when professional actors and a cast of young local talent bring popular pantomime The Sleeping Beauty to the Assembly Rooms stage this month.
The production marks a fifth collaboration between the venue and local company Ludwig Theatre Arts.



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Songs, laughs and festive fun for everyone aged 3 to 103.

University of Warwick
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An evening of mind-boggling science and explosive experiments with Live Labs from 6pm!

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A feast of festive comedy.

KATE RUSBY AT CHRISTMAS
Sat 12 Dec 7pm
A perfect seasonal celebration.

THE ALBION CHRISTMAS BAND
Tue 15 Dec 7.45pm
Carols, storytelling and music make an evening filled with winter magic.

SWING INTO CHRISTMAS
Wed 16 Dec 7.30pm
A joyful set of festive and non-festive classics.

University of Warwick Symphony Orchestra & Chorus
MANCHESTER CAROLS
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Fri 4 Dec 7pm
Pause and experience the atmosphere of winter through choral music.

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Wed 9 Dec 7.30pm
A sparkling evening including Tchaikovsky's The Nutcracker and Duke Ellington and Strayhorn's jazz infused The Nutcracker Suite.

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The Borrowers

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, until 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 a young girl 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.

The Three Musketeers

Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, until 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, full of friendship, courage, romance and reckless abandon," says the show's director, Paul Hunter. "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."



It's A Wonderful Life

Stoke Rep Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Tues 1 - Sat 5 December

Almost as much of a seasonal staple as mince pies and mulled wine, Frank Capra's classic Christmas movie, It's A Wonderful Life, is 80 years old in 2026. And the ever-inventive Stoke Rep Players are marking the occasion by bringing the story to the stage. The heartwarming tale of hope and second chances follows the fortunes of George Bailey, a decent family man whose propensity for putting the needs of others ahead of his own leads him to a Christmas Eve crossroads - and a remarkable encounter with an angel who's desperate to earn its wings...

A Christmas Carol

Birmingham Ormiston Academy, until Tues 15 December

BOA Stage & Screen Production Academy and BOA Creative, Digital & Performing Arts Academy come together to present a new musical version of Charles Dickens' festive short story. Described as a playful twist on a classic tale - combining 'sparkling' songs and 'spectacular' dance numbers - the musical is BOA's 11th home-produced Christmas show.

Twelve Days Of Christmas

Bridge House Theatre, Warwick, Mon 21 December

Operation Moonlight take to the stage with a festive farce which they promise will be an endlessly chaotic, breakneck, madcap theatrical experience.
"The hapless Sir Edward is head over heels for the beautiful Miss Elizabeth," the Cardiff-based company explain. "But how to show his affection? Why, through gifts, of course! And as the presents stack up, so too does the mayhem!"
Sounds as though an evening of splendid (and certainly seasonal) fun could well be on the cards...

The Ugly Duckling

The Rep, Birmingham, Thurs 3 December - Sun 10 January

Hans Christian Andersen's The Ugly Duckling tells the tale of an odd-looking baby duck who's evicted from the farmyard and finds itself all alone in a scary and hostile world. Thankfully, the story has a happy ending, to ensure your youngsters head for home in fine spirits!... The show is directed by Caroline Wilkes, who's helmed two previous Rep productions: Jack And The Magic Beanstalk and Little Red Riding Hoody.

Father Christmas

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Thurs 3 - Sun 27 December

Raymond Briggs is best known for his story about a little boy who makes friends with a snowman, but talented theatre company Pins And Needles are doing plenty to promote one of the author's other less-famous tales.
Suitable for very little ones aged under six, Father Christmas features songs, live music, playful puppetry and plenty of trademark Briggs humour. Expect your children to be suitably enchanted.




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Tales From Acorn Wood At Christmas

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, Tues 1 - Sun 27 December

Originally based on the charming lift-the-flap book series, Midlands Arts Centre's (MAC) festive production, Tales From Acorn Wood At Christmas, brings the work of picture-book powerhouses Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler to the stage.

Packed with puppetry, toe-tapping tunes and interactive moments, the hour-long show is performed by five actors, who between them operate 17 animal puppets...

"We tell five main stories in this production," explains the play's director, Grace Goulding. "Fox's Socks, Hide-And-Seek Pig, Rabbit's Nap, Postman Bear - and then we'll finish with Squirrel's Snowman, which should make everyone feel Christmassy!"

The Gruffalo's Child

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, until 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 an hour-long production that brings together 'songs, laughs and scary fun for everyone aged three to 103'.



Santa's New Sleigh

The Albany Theatre, Coventry, Sat 5 - Tues 8 December; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Wed 9 - Thurs 24 December

When Theatre Severn regular Brad Fitt isn't busy playing pantomime Dames, he enjoys nothing more than replacing the panto wig with his playwright's hat.



Brad's Santa's New Sleigh comes complete with festive-show favourites, including audience participation, singalong opportunities and a special Christmas present from Santa Claus himself. And as an extra-special treat, audience members can also have their photo taken with the traditionally portly giver of gifts - so be sure to bring along your cameras and smart phones.

The Bear And The Piano

The Other Place, Stratford-upon-Avon, Fri 11 December - Sun 10 January



Author & illustrator David Litchfield's The Bear And The Piano has been translated into 37 languages and sold more than 800,000 copies worldwide. So this brand-new stage adaptation of the beloved book should have no trouble whatsoever finding an audience (it's suitable for youngsters aged three and older). A collaboration between the Royal Shakespeare Company and Regent's Park Open Air Theatre, the wordless show tells a heartwarming tale of curiosity, creativity and courage, in the process bringing together 'captivating' puppetry and 'breathtaking' music.

One Tiny Penguin

Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome, Sat 5 December - Sun 3 January



A brand-new musical adventure 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, the show is supported by the Hippodrome's My First Musical scheme, an initiative which previously produced festive-season children's musicals The Jingleclaw and No Such Thing As Wolves.

Jack And The Beanstalk (Sort Of!)

Wolverhampton Arts Centre, Sun 6 December

Hailed in its publicity as 'loud, silly and completely off its beanstalk', Half Moon theatre company's Black Country Touring-supported show sees rock-star legend Kid Carpet making a welcome return.

"This is Jack And The Beanstalk like it's been thrown in a blender with a drum machine and dodgy celebrity lookalikes," explain Half Moon. "Part air-guitar workshop, part magical mess, this lo-fi, hi-tech, big-beat bonkers show is stuffed with songs, silliness and surprise grannies. Perfect for families, party monsters and fans of noisy nonsense!"


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The Overtones

Birmingham Town Hall, Fri 4 December; Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Wed 9 December

Vocal harmony group The Overtones were working together as painters & decorators when they were discovered by a Warner Bros Records talent scout, who heard them singing during their tea break.
A multi-album deal was subsequently secured with the record label. Numerous TV appearances followed, with slots on shows such as Dancing On Ice and Britain's Got More Talent ensuring they remained firmly in the spotlight.
The boys are visiting Birmingham and Stoke-on-Trent this month with their seasonal offering Jivin' Home For Christmas.

James B Partridge: The Big Christmas Assembly

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Sat 12 December



From classroom teacher to viral TikTok sensation, James B Partridge has cornered the market in school-assembly nostalgia and is here turning his attention to the festive season - surely the most wonderful time of the whole school year when you're under the age of 10. With James promising an evening of holiday favourites and throwback mashups 'that will have everyone singing', expect to head for home well and truly in the Christmas spirit.

The Snowman Film With Live Orchestra

Birmingham Town Hall, Sun 20 December



Concerts in which a classic film is shown while an orchestra plays its score - live and in-sync with the screening - are all the rage right now, so it's no surprise that Carrot Productions' presentation of The Snowman has become such a popular festive-season attraction.
As well as a screening of the much-loved 1982 animation - based, of course, on Raymond Briggs' bestselling picture-book of the same name - the show also includes a short Christmas film featuring Shaun the Sheep, the soundtrack of which will also be performed live.
The fun continues with a joyful festive medley, an introduction to the orchestra by CBeebies Musical Storyland composer Daniel Whibley, a special visit from The Snowman himself, and the chance for everyone to sing Walking In The Air at the end of the show.

The Lord Of The Rings: The Fellowship Of The Ring In Concert

bp pulse LIVE, Birmingham, Sat 19 December

A concert celebrating the 25th anniversary of Academy Award-winning film The Lord Of The Rings: The Fellowship Of The Ring is pretty much guaranteed a large and hugely enthusiastic audience, such is the ongoing popularity of Peter Jackson's cinematic interpretation of Tolkien's legendary novel. Featuring Howard Shore's original score, performed live by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra to a screening of the epic movie, the film will be shown twice on the 19th - once at 1pm and then again at 7pm.

The Rat Pack At Christmas

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Mon 7 December

The warm and authentic friendship between Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and Sammy Davis Jr - particularly during its heyday in the late 1950s and early 1960s - continues to be the stuff of legend.
The three superstar singers, affectionately known as The Rat Pack, were fun-loving guys who brought entertainment to millions with a nice'n'easy style it was hard to dislike...
This seriously impressive touring show, paying loving tribute to Frank, Dean and Sammy, is packed to its yuletide rafters with memorable tunes, including a host of festive favourites.

Swing Into Christmas

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Wed 16 December



Highly regarded vintage ensemble The Down For The Count Swing Orchestra are promising to leave their audience 'in the warm glow of the holiday spirit' when they visit Coventry in the middle of the month.
Their seasonal show sees them presenting fresh arrangements of a host of iconic songs, including Let It Snow, The Most Wonderful Time Of The Year and New York, New York, all of which will be performed in the orchestra's authentic big-band-with-strings style.

Toyah's Christmas Party

Birmingham Town Hall, Sun 13 December



Grab yourself a ticket for an evening of festive fun with the Midlands' very own Toyah Willcox.
Toyah famously found fame in the late 1970s when she earned herself the mantle of 'princess of punk', enjoying chart hits with It's A Mystery, Thunder In The Mountains and I Want To Be Free. She's since done a brilliant job of 'adapting to survive', her later career embracing such diverse theatrical challenges as performing in pantomime and starring in Shakespeare. In recent times, she's reached a whole new audience thanks to the runaway YouTube success of Toyah & Robert's Sunday Lunch, a series she makes with husband Robert Fripp from their Worcestershire home.

BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET

Director Carlos Acosta



Yasiel Hodelín, Yu Kurihara.
© Manvir Rai.

Carlos Acosta's

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Birmingham Royal Ballet: The Nutcracker

Birmingham Hippodrome, until Sat 12 December

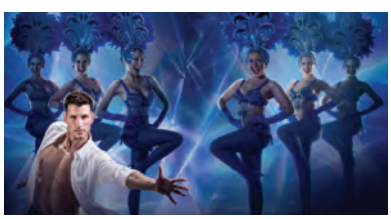
A gift to the people of Birmingham - from then-Artistic Director Sir Peter Wright - when the company transferred to the city from London's Sadler's Wells in 1990, Birmingham Royal Ballet's (BRB) spectacular production of The Nutcracker is once again lighting up the Hippodrome stage this month.

A lavish Christmas fantasy - underscored by the beloved music of Tchaikovsky - the story follows Clara's Christmas Eve adventure with her toy Nutcracker, which has come to life.

"It's always very difficult for me to say 'this is the best Nutcracker in the world', because it's very subjective," says Paul James, chief executive of BRB. "And also, we're slightly biased! It's the scale of the storytelling, the scale of the sets, the growing tree, the snow goose, the snow, a full company of musicians [the Royal Ballet Symphonia] - it's all just mind-blowing!"

Xmas On The Dancefloor

Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Sun 20 December;
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Mon 21 December



This is Christmas - turned all the way up.

So says the publicity for a show that 'brings iconic festive hits to life with breathtaking choreography, powerhouse vocals and non-stop energy'.

Former Strictly Come Dancing professional Gorka Márquez leads a cast of talented performers, including the Rockettes-inspired dance troupe Xmas Dolls.

Mariah Carey, Slade, the Spice Girls, Whitney Houston, Elton John and Michael Bublé are among the star names whose festive hits are given Christmas-week outings in Stoke and Birmingham.

Anton At Christmas

The Civic at The Halls
Wolverhampton,
Wed 16 December



A regular visitor to the West Midlands, Anton Du Beke is once again making a stop-off in the region, on this occasion liberally sprinkling on-stage proceedings with a healthy dose of yuletide cheer.

He's joined for the occasion by critically acclaimed vocalist Lance Ellington, a live band and a troupe of professional dancers.



Avengers: Doomsday

CERT **tbc (265 mins)**

Starring **Robert Downey Jr, Pedro Pascal, Chris Hemsworth, Vanessa Kirby, Anthony Mackie, Sebastian Stan** Directed by **Anthony Russo** and **Joe Russo**

Avengers assemble! The clarion call to all manner of cape, cowl and spandex-wearing superheroes rings out once more, as the Marvel Cinematic Universe's (MCU) most successful franchise makes a yuletide return.
Robert Downey Jr - whose performances as Tony Stark/Ironman in three standalone movies really established the MCU as a place worth visiting - is also back. This time, however, he's crossed over to the dark side, taking on the role of mysterious and hugely menacing supervillain Victor von Doom...
After a spell of wretched filmmaking, Marvel Studios has reinvigorated its fanbase in recent times with a successful Fantastic Four reboot and a critically acclaimed Spider-Man movie.
There's little question, though, that it will be the success or otherwise of this latest Avengers outing which defines MCU's fortunes in the years ahead.

Released Wed 16 December



Behemoth! CERT tbc (124 mins)

Starring **Pedro Pascal, Olivia Wilde, Eva Victor, Alexa Swinton, Kaya Ralls, Erik Griffin** Directed by **Tony Gilroy**

Gifted and nomadic, orchestra cellist Alex Serian decides it's time to put down some roots back in Los Angeles, two decades after leaving the city and his family behind him. Returning so that he can reconnect with his family - his mother is in declining health - he gets work writing music for movies and television shows. He also finds himself not only recalling memories of a passionate relationship with a now-deceased prima violinist, but wondering whether her musical prodigy daughter might actually be his...
The first film directed by Tony Gilroy since he helmed 2012 actioner The Bourne Legacy, Behemoth! hasn't faired well with the critics. The general concensus has been that a ponderous and aimlessly wandering storyline has been further compromised by the film's non-linear and chapter-based structure.

Released Fri 4 December

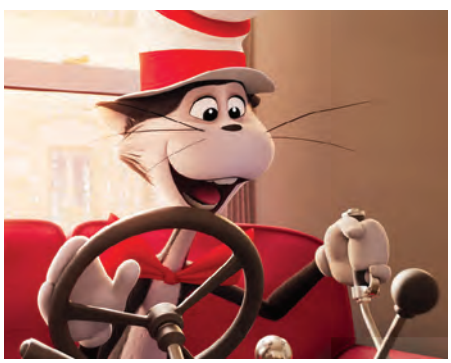
The Cat In The Hat

CERT **PG (107 mins)**

With the voices of **Bill Hader, Xochitl Gomez, Tiago Martinez, Quinta Brunson, America Ferrera, Matt Berry** Directed by **Alessandro Carloni** and **Erica Rivinoja**

Loosely based on Theodor 'Dr Seuss' Geisel's classic picture book of the same title, which celebrates its 70th anniversary next year, this animated adventure finds the much-loved titular character - an anthropomorphic cat who wears a magical red-and-white striped top-hat - working as an agent for the I.I.I.I. (Institute for the Institution of Imagination and Inspiration, LLC). His mission? To cheer up relocating siblings Gabby and Sebastian. And the stakes are certainly high: failure to do so could well see him losing his magical hat... The movie is Warner Bros Pictures Animation's first full-length feature film.

Released Fri 4 December





I See Buildings Fall Like Lightning CERT 15 (109 mins)

Starring **Anthony Boyle, Joe Cole, Jay Lycurgo, Daryl McCormack, Lola Petticrew, Lucie Shorthouse** Directed by **Clio Barnard**

Now here's a rarity - a film set in the Midlands! Based on the book of the same name by Brummie Keiran Goddard, and adapted by screenwriter Enda Walsh, I See Buildings Fall Like Lightning focuses on five friends from a working-class Birmingham council estate.
Following the characters as adults heading into their 30s, the film explores the numerous challenges they face, from addiction and class struggles, to the impact of inequality, housing and cost-of-living crises.
As is often the case with any social-realist drama worth its salt, director Clio Barnard's absorbing tale has made a significant splash with critics, winning a best-film prize at the Rome Film Fest, the Golden Hitchcock at the Dinard British & Irish Film Festival and the Directors' Fortnight Audience Award at Cannes.

Released Fri 4 December

Dune: Part Three CERT 15 (140 mins)

Starring **Timothée Chalamet, Zendaya, Florence Pugh, Anya Taylor-Joy, Robert Pattinson, Rebecca Ferguson** Directed by **Denis Villeneuve**

Two decades after seizing control of the Imperium, and now a ruthless Emperor, Paul Atreides must face the consequences of his reign of terror, as old allies return, new threats emerge, and betrayal lurks in every shadow... As rebellion brews and enemies close in, Paul must confront the true cost of power and the fate of those he loves the most...

That's the official synopsis for the new Dune movie, the film that brings to a close director Denis Villeneuve's epic space-opera trilogy, based on the novels of the late Frank Herbert.

"We are back with the same characters, but this time the world has totally changed," Villeneuve told Empire. "Their psyches, their perspective on reality, has totally changed, and Paul is living with the burden of what he created, trying to find a way out of this spiral of violence."

Released Fri 18 December



Violent Night 2 CERT tbc (110 mins)

Starring **David Harbour, Kristen Bell, Jared Harris, Joe Pantoliano, Daniela Melchior, Andrew Bachelor** Directed by **Tommy Wirkola**

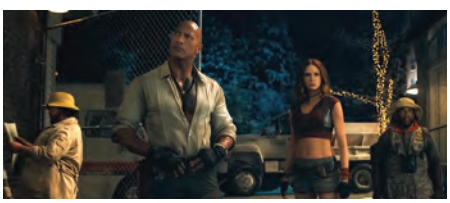
Bring together the much-loved character of Santa Claus, a gritty action-hero vibe and some serious kick-ass combat choreography and what do you get?... Surprising holiday hit Violent Night, that's what.

Four years after that imaginative spin on a Santa story landed in multiplexes, its sequel is aiming to deliver a similarly enjoyable Christmas gift to festive-season cinemagoers. The film sees Stranger Things actor David Harbour returning in the role of St Nicholas and finding himself caught up in a shopping-mall battle with a ruthless criminal gang.

"Aside from this obviously being a Christmas action-movie first and foremost," explains director Tommy Wirkola, "it also has a very strong Western vibe, where Santa is our lone hero riding into town - the mall - and helping the villagers - the shop owners - in need."

Released Fri 4 December





Jumanji: Open World CERT tbc

Starring **Dwayne Johnson, Karen Gillan, Madison Iseman, Jack Black, Kevin Hart, Danny DeVito** Directed by **Jake Kasdan**

Jumanji fans' excitement at the arrival of this latest entry in the hit series is bound to be somewhat tempered by the fact that it will also be the last.

Inspired by the 1995 original starring Robin Williams, the franchise rebooted in 2017 with Welcome To The Jungle. Sequel offering The Next Level followed two years later...

This latest adventure finds teens Spencer, Fridge, Bethany and Martha having to deal with the fact that Jumanji is out of the console, with their avatars, Bravestone, Mouse, Shelly and Ruby respectively, roaming around in demo mode.

The film sees Dwayne Johnson paying touching tribute to Williams' character in the original movie. "It was my idea to honour him in some way, but I didn't know how to do it," Johnson told People. "Then our costume designer goes, 'What if I got the original dice [from the first film]?' So that's what happened."

Released Wed 23 December

The Angry Birds Movie 3

CERT **PG**

With the voices of **Lily James, Jason Sudeikis, Sam Richardson, Keke Palmer, Emma Myers, Danny McBride** Directed by **John Rice**

Ted Lasso star Jason Sudeikis once again lends his voice to the character of short-tempered and irritable Red, as the popular physics-based puzzle video game's cast of anthropomorphic flightless birds make a welcome return to the big screen. The new movie finds Red torn in two directions and facing probably his greatest challenge yet: navigating full-time parenthood while simultaneously doing his best to try and save the world.

Released Wed 23 December





Permindar Kaur: Dread Naught

Wolverhampton Art Gallery, until Sun 11 April

Dread Naught features both recent commissions and examples of early-career work by leading 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."







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

Emmy Bridgwater And Birmingham Surrealists

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, until Sun 10 January

"Emmy Bridgwater brought a new purity of outlook to British Surrealism," said French writer & poet André Breton, "returning to the early days of the movement, to its 'automatic' beginnings in France. The swirling lines, plant forms and vaguely suggestive forms seem to have been exorcised from the deep recesses of the mind."

Breton, a principal theorist and co-founder of surrealism, made his measured assessment in the 1940s... and he was by no means a voice in the wilderness when it came to enthusing about the talent and influence of the Birmingham-born artist - Emmy was a pivotal figure in both the British Surrealism movement and the Birmingham Surrealist Group...

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

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.

The Southbank Centre Hayward Gallery touring exhibition - taking the title A Chorus Of Strangers - comprises works by more than 30 artists and shows across three Coventry venues.



Alex Margo Arden, Accounts, 2025. © the artist. Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre London

Providing an overview of the most exciting art produced in the UK in 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."

Illustrating Birmingham

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

The changing face of Birmingham, as reflected through the eyes and work of father and son artists, is the subject of this brand-new exhibition. Recording a place in flux from the 1920s through to the 2010s, Frank and Arthur Lockwood's paintings capture a sense of Birmingham's streets, buildings and people, as well as the demolition and redevelopment which has been so much a part of the city's story across the decades.



Arthur Lockwood, 'Selfridges', 2021 Credit: ©The Lockwood Family. Photo by Birmingham Museums Trust.

The Unhomely

Brampton Museum, Newcastle-under-Lyme, until Sun 13 December

Rooted in psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud's concept of 'the uncanny' - the familiar suddenly feeling strange - The Unhomely is a thought-provoking exploration of the diasporic experience of migration, cultural displacement and unbelonging. The programme and exhibition brings together stories, objects and creative commissions to contemplate the question: what does it mean to feel at home - and what happens when home becomes unhomely?



Image credit: Greg Say

Winter Funland™



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Winter Funland

NEC, Birmingham, Fri 4 December - Sun 3 January

Get into the Christmas spirit at Winter Funland, this month returning to the NEC with a packed programme of festive entertainment for all the family to enjoy.
Described as the UK's largest indoor Christmas funfair, the event offers four hours of unlimited rides, a gigantic ice rink, a spectacular festival circus and an extreme motorbike show.
Younger visitors can meet Santa, enjoy a photo opportunity, and keep an eye open for mischievous elves bringing some extra festive magic to the occasion.
There's plenty of food & drink available too, as vendors create the atmosphere of a traditional Christmas market. With all rides and attractions included in the admission price, families can enjoy a full day of indoor festive fun whatever the weather.
Plus, children under three go free!



Winter Light Experience

The Belfry Hotel & Resort, Sutton Coldfield, until 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 take place on selected dates.

The Elf Express

Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster, Sat 5 & Sun 6, Sat 12 & Sun 13, Sat 19 & Sun 20, Wed 23 & Thurs 24 December

All aboard for a magical Christmas adventure as The Elf Express returns to the Severn Valley Railway for 2026.
Departing from Bridgnorth, this festive steam-train journey invites families to step into a world of Christmas storytelling, mischief and surprises. Passengers will meet Santa and his merry team of helpers, including Gingersnap the Gingerbread Man, Poppy the Post Elf and Trixie the Trickster Elf, with interactive performances and puppetry bringing the experience to life.
Santa will also visit each family to deliver a special present for every child. Passengers can enjoy a gingerbread biscuit, while adults receive a bespoke wooden Christmas tree decoration. The 75-minute return journey travels to Highley and back, with private compartments available for four or six passengers.



Spectacle Of Light

Sudeley Castle, Winchcombe, until 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 features 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.
Festive food & drink is available throughout the experience.

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



THE POLAR EXPRESS Train Ride

Birmingham Moor Street Station, Sat 5 & Sun 6, Sat 12 & Sun 13, Fri 18 - Wed 23 December

THE POLAR EXPRESS Train Ride is back in Birmingham, 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.



Visit Santa: Vintage Sleigh Ride Experience

Coventry Transport Museum, Sat 5 & Sun 6, Fri 11 - Sun 13, Fri 18 - Wed 23 December

Step back in time as the Visit Santa: Vintage Sleigh Ride Experience returns to Coventry Transport Museum, celebrating the 70th anniversary of the venue's much-loved vintage sleigh. This year's event takes inspiration from the 1950s, with a Driving Home For Christmas theme, vintage cars and nostalgic festive decorations all in evidence.

Families can enjoy a ride on Santa's sleigh before meeting the man himself to share their Christmas wishes.

Little ones can also explore the Elves' Toy Shop, where every child gets to choose a Christmas present and take home a festive goody bag... Tickets also include an annual museum pass for two adults and one child, allowing visitors to return to the venue and enjoy the collection on another occasion.

Christmas Tree Festival

Worcester Cathedral, until 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, while special Dedication Trees offer an opportunity to remember loved ones.

This year's festival also features new Community Trees - wooden trees made by Men's Shed Worcester - which have been decorated by individuals, families, schools and other groups.

The Christmas Light Show

Lichfield Cathedral,
Tues 15 - Mon 21 December

Lichfield Cathedral's much-loved Christmas Light Show returns mid-month with an all-new theme inspired by the Nativity story. Created by renowned animation team Illuminos, Follow The Star features 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.



The Elf Express

28, 29 NOVEMBER
5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20, 23, 24 DECEMBER



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SANTA'S STEAM SPECIALS

DEPARTING FROM KIDDERMINSTER
SELECTED DATES FROM 28 NOVEMBER 2026 TO CHRISTMAS EVE



SANTA'S STEAM Special

The RECIPE for CHRISTMAS

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SVR.CO.UK/SANTA

Visit Santa

VINTAGE SLEIGH EXPERIENCE

5 - 23 DECEMBER 2026

COVENTRY TRANSPORT MUSEUM

This year is extra special as we celebrate **the Vintage Sleigh's 70th anniversary,** with a 1950s "Driving home for a Coventry Christmas" theme. The experience will feature 1950s-inspired Christmas décor, vintage cars and plenty of festive touches throughout.

Book your tickets in advance at **transport-museum.com**
Tickets are non-refundable and non-transferable.





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 festive light trail. Visitors can follow the illuminated route through a series of seasonal scenes. Music, storytelling and plenty of Christmas cheer all add to the experience.

Along the way, keep an eye open for mischievous elves, frosty characters and even Santa himself!

The family fun continues beyond the trail too, courtesy of seasonal entertainment, a selection of food and the chance to enjoy a warming mug of hot chocolate.



Elf Cadet Training

The Royal Air Force Museum Midlands, Cosford, Sat 5 & Sun 6, Sat 12 & Sun 13 December

Children get to take on a special festive mission at RAF Museum Midlands in Cosford this month.

Young recruits are invited to join Santa's team and complete four special challenges to help prepare for the biggest delivery mission of the year.

Taking place inside the National Cold War Exhibition, the 30-minute experience gives youngsters the chance to go behind the scenes and discover how the RAF is assisting Santa in getting ready for Christmas.

The activities will see children practising radio communications, parachuting presents onto a target, sorting festive post and creating a personalised shipping label. Once all four challenges have been completed, each child can add their label to a collective display celebrating the museum's new Elf Cadets.

Illuminated

The Royal British Legion National Remembrance Gardens, Staffordshire, Fri 4 - Tues 22 December

Discover a magical winter wonderland at Illuminated, the festive light trail at the National Remembrance Gardens.

As darkness descends, the gardens will be magically transformed by dazzling installations, colourful illuminations and immersive soundscapes, with visitors invited to explore a series of stories celebrating the site's first 25 years.

Various interactive displays and hands-on elements also feature, offering plenty of opportunities for families to get involved...

The experience is designed to be enjoyed at your own pace - visitors are welcome to spend as long as they like exploring the trail. Festive food & drink will also be available, including hot refreshments and seasonal treats



Christmas at The Commandery

The Commandery, Worcester, Sat 12 & Sun 13 December

Celebrate the festive season with this special event at The Commandery, where families can enjoy a day of Christmas crafts and yuletide activities.

Visitors can follow a family trail around the beautifully decorated building before heading to the craft room to make their own elf to take home...

Mother Christmas will be sharing a heartwarming festive story beneath the Christmas tree in the Great Hall (sessions take place at midday and 1.30pm)...

The availability of seasonal refreshments - including mulled wine, mince pies and hot chocolate - further add to the experience, while children can enjoy an exclusive 10-minute visit to Santa and his Head Elf in the cosy Victorian Kitchen (there will be a special present for every child!).

Santa's Grotto must be booked separately, with general admission also required.

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Festive Fun at Kenilworth Castle

Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire, Sat 5 & Sun 6, Sat 12 & Sun 13 and Sat 19 & Sun 20 December

Celebrate the festive season at Kenilworth Castle and Elizabethan Garden, where families can enjoy a magical Christmas experience. Running across the first three weekends of the month, Festive Fun invites visitors to follow a Christmas Quest trail around the historic grounds, get creative with Christmas card-making and decorate their own wooden baubles to take home... Families can also say a big hello to Father Christmas, who will be sharing some of his favourite festive stories, posing for pics and providing each child with a traditional Christmas gift to take home.



Christmas at Alderford Lake

Alderford Lake, Whitchurch, Shropshire, until Thurs 24 December

Make Christmas extra special with a festive visit to Alderford Lake. Families can set sail for the magical Santa Island Experience, where little ones can meet Father Christmas, explore his toy workshop, enjoy toasting marshmallows and listen to a festive story. Other attractions include a real ice rink, themed skating sessions and the chilly Woodland Ice Bar, complete with hand-carved ice sculptures.
Visitors can also meet the reindeer, enjoy seasonal food & drink around fire pits, and settle in for a Christmas Drive-In Cinema screening (The Holiday shows on Friday the 11th and Home Alone on Sunday the 13th).

North Pole Adventure

National Forest Adventure Farm, Burton-upon-Trent, Sat 5 & Sun 6, Sat 12 & Sun 13 and Sat 19 - Thurs 24 December

Step into a world of festive magic at the National Forest Adventure Farm, where families can enjoy an immersive Christmas experience packed with seasonal surprises. Highlights include the chance for children to have personalised encounters with both a talking polar bear and Father Christmas, and a brand-new interactive show that runs regularly throughout the day.
The enchanting Victorian Village has been given a makeover and expanded for this year. Groups will be smaller, creating a more intimate adventure, while the main North Pole experience lasts for just over an hour.



Christmas at Staffordshire History Centre

Staffordshire History Centre, Stafford, throughout December

Make history part of your Christmas with a festive visit to the free-to-enter Staffordshire History Centre. The venue offers families the chance to explore more than 1,000 years of local history through fascinating objects, hands-on interactives and family trails. There's also a packed programme of seasonal activities to enjoy, including Elves And The Shoemaker Storytime (Saturday the 19th), Victorian Papercrafts (Tuesday the 22nd), Toy Time Travellers Storytime and A Very Stafford Christmas spotlight talk (Wednesday the 23rd) and an Illustrated Beast creative workshop (Wednesday the 30th).
Older visitors, meanwhile, can try their hand at Mindful Bookbinding on Saturday the 19th.



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thelist

Your week-by-week listings guide
December 2026



Joss Stone: Merry Christmas, Love Tour at Symphony Hall, Birmingham on Fri 11 December

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

What's On

Tues 1 - Sun 6 December



Winter Funland - NEC, B'ham

Sat 5 December - Sun 3 January

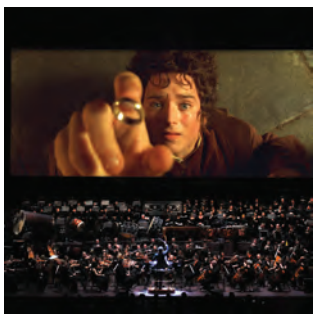
Mon 7 - Sun 13 December



Festive Gardens - Telford Town Park, Shropshire

Thurs 10 - Tues 22 December

Mon 14 - Sun 20 December



The Lord of The Rings in Concert at bp pulse LIVE, Birmingham

Sat 19 December

Mon 21 - Thurs 31 December



Santa Paws at Hartlebury Castle, Worcester

Mon 21 December

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.

ILLUSTRATING BIRMINGHAM Discover a changing city though the work of father and son artists Frank and Arthur Lockwood, whose work tells a personal story of a city that has never stood still.

HANDSWORTH STORIES Display exploring the experiences of one of Britain's earliest and most significant multicultural communities. Featuring an award-winning documentary film, directed by John Akomfrah, alongside photographs from the 1979 project Handsworth Self-Portrait, open for unguided access from Tues 15 Dec

DELETED BOY: THE 21 PIRATES An audio-visual experience celebrating the iconic technologies that have disappeared from our lives but have left a lasting mark on how we think, work, create and play, until Sun 31 Jan

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

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

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

Coventry Music Museum

BEING HAZEL Exhibition celebrating Coventry-born legend Hazel O'Connor's life and career through memorabilia, displays and clips, until Sun 20 Dec

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

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

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

RESISTANCE, RE-IMAGINE A collaboration between GRAIN Projects and Pathshala Media Institute (Bangladesh), featuring artists Mushfiq Mahbub Turjo and Zillah Bowes - a dialogue and exploration of the climate emergency, until Sun 3 Jan

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

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

Mead 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

LAURA ONIONS EXHIBITION 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. until Sun 11 April

RBSA Gallery, Birmingham

RBSA ANNUAL EXHIBITION 2026 Display of work from The Membership, including 14 newly elected Associates, until Sat 2 Jan

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 local painter & printmaker Piers, until Sat 2 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

Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

WORCESTER SOCIETY OF ARTISTS ANNUAL EXHIBITION Exhibition celebrating the Society's shared passion for art and creativity, until Sun 3 Jan

Elsewhere:

HERITAGE TO INSPIRE EXHIBITION Exhibition featuring artwork created in three nature-inspired workshops led by local artists Zoe Needle and Nicola Slawson, until December, The Hive, Shrewsbury

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

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

BEYOND THE COLONIAL FRAME A mixed-media exhibition exploring identity and creative expression beyond the narratives imposed by colonial histories, which invites the audience to reconsider how we see ourselves and our cultures, Wed 9 - Sun 13 Dec, The Old Print Works, Birmingham

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

30 YEARS OF THE NATIONAL TRUST AT CROOME Discover the remarkable story behind the restoration of Croome's parkland, which returned the landscape to Capability Brown's original vision, until Thurs 31 Dec, Croome, Worcestershire

THE OTHER GLASS: THE ART OF RECYCLED GLASS 10 artists from seven countries contribute glass art made from Recycled, Repurposed, Second-Life, and Geo-Specific glass, until Sat 27 Feb, Stourbridge Glass Museum

25 YEARS OF REMEMBRANCE New exhibition bringing together archive material and personal memories, reflecting on the site's journey from a gravel pit to the gardens we see today, Sun 16 May, The Royal British Legion National Remembrance Gardens, Staffordshire

THE BAYEUX TAPESTRY AND NORMAN HERITAGE TRAIL Experience a full-scale 70-metre reproduction of the Bayeux Tapestry and step inside the world it created, until Sun 11 July, Tewkesbury Abbey

BEAR STEPS SOLO EXHIBITIONS Featuring works by Gill Stokes, Sun 6 - Thurs 24 Dec, Bear Steps Art Gallery, Shrewsbury

Gigs

MACDARA YEATES Tues 1 Dec, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

ELECTRIC SIX + THE OOZES Tues 1 Dec, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE MIKE KENEALLY REPORT + DAVE CURETON Tues 1 Dec, The Flapper, B'ham

THE ORDINARY BOYS Tues 1 Dec, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

JAMES YORKSTON Tues 1 Dec, Wolverhampton Arts Centres

KNEECAP Tues 1 Dec, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

SUNAMI + MISSING LINK + DESOLATED + EXTINGUISH + SMOTHER Tues 1 Dec, The Underground, Stoke-on-Trent

THE BUG CLUB Wed 2 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE GROOVE ASSEMBLY Wed 2 Dec, The Jam House, Birmingham

PARKER BARROW + WOOD BURNT RED Wed 2 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE HUNNA Wed 2 Dec, O2 Academy, B'ham

CLOBBER + UPTIGHT + FATALISM Wed 2 Dec, Centrala, Birmingham

ABI BUDGEN AND ROB PETERS + THE SLAPDASH COWBOYS Wed 2 Dec, Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

LIAM C Wed 2 Dec, Mama Roux's, B'ham

DEMI MARRINER BAND Wed 2 Dec, Temperance, Leamington Spa

WARREN JAMES LONESOME TRAVELLERS Wed 2 Dec, Boldmere Sports and Social Club, Sutton Coldfield

ROYAL BLOOD + UNPEOPLE Wed 2 Dec, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

BIG DUVET + LEWIS ROSS- ROBSON + KEZ LIDDLE Wed 2 Dec, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

MIDWINTER REVELS Wed 2 Dec, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

OZRIC TENTACLES Thurs 3 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

JARROD DICKENSON Thurs 3 Dec, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

THISTLE. Thurs 3 Dec, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

SPEAK! Thurs 3 Dec, The Night Owl, B'ham

NEMZZZ Thurs 3 Dec, O2 Institute, B'ham

THESE WICKED RIVERS + BEAUX GRIS GRIS Thurs 3 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

BIG COUNTRY + EVAN PETER'S ALARM Thurs 3 Dec, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE POGUES + MARTIN STEPHENSON & THE DAINTEES Thurs 3 Dec, O2 Academy, B'ham

YOUNG KNIVES + HOT FACE Thurs 3 Dec, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

PRESERVE THE STRANGERS Thurs 3 Dec, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

SMALL BANDS Thurs 3 Dec, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

TREVOR HORN AND HIS BAND Thurs 3 Dec, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

VIRGINIA KETTLE'S ROLLING FOLK Thurs 3 Dec, Temperance, Leamington Spa

MARTIN SIMPSON Thurs 3 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

TYKETTO + SCARLET REBELS Thurs 3 Dec, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

WARD THOMAS Thurs 3 Dec, Kidderminster Town Hall

SEVENDUST + OVERGROWN Thurs 3 Dec, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

THE JOHN STREET REVIVAL + CHRIS HOWARTH + DANIEL NIXON Thurs 3 Dec, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

ALMSHOUSE ALL-STARS Thurs 3 Dec, Bill's Kitchen, Ludlow, South Shropshire

SEAN REEVES Fri 4 Dec, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

THE ANOMALYS Fri 4 Dec, The Night Owl, Birmingham

WINGS OF DESIRE + BELTANE MOON Fri 4 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

HARD-FI Fri 4 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

ABSOLUTE BOWIE Fri 4 Dec, O2 Academy, Birmingham

VINCENT FLATTS Fri 4 Dec, Tower of Song, Birmingham

ARNIE SOMOGYI Fri 4 Dec, 1000 Trades, Birmingham

SKIDS + THEATRE OF HATE Fri 4 Dec, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

NAMELESS + INSURGENT + VINDICTIVE +DREAMBOAT EMPEROR Fri 4 Dec, Dead Wax, Digbeth, Birmingham

PHIL CAMPBELLS BASTARD SONS Fri 4 Dec, The Asylum, Birmingham

FREEDOM TO GLIDE + FORGOTTEN GODS Fri 4 Dec, The Flapper, Birmingham

THE OVERTONES Fri 4 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

BLOSSOMS + THE ROYSTON CLUB + ARKAYLA Fri 4 Dec, Utilita Arena B'ham

DAYDREAMERS Fri 4 Dec, Mama Roux's, Birmingham

THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC - TRIBUTE TO ABBA Fri 4 Dec, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

MAN THE LIFEBOATS Fri 4 Dec, Temperance, Leamington Spa

SKABUCKS Fri 4 Dec, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

THE CORE REGGAE BAND Fri 4 Dec, The Royal, Sutton Coldfield

PICTISH TRAIL + CALLUM EASTER Fri 4 Dec, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

ALTER RED + PALINDRONES + DEVIANT UK Fri 4 Dec, Arches Venue, Coventry

TYPE OF NEGATIVE + PANTERA A.D. Fri 4 Dec, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

THE OBLIVIOUS BAND Fri 4 Dec, Drummonds, Worcester

FLEETWOOD BAC Fri 4 Dec, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

THE PUPPET FOLK EXPERIENCE Fri 4 Dec, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

EAST 17 + BLAZIN' SQUAD Fri 4 Dec, The Halls Wolverhampton

FOARN Fri 4 Dec, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

ELO ENCOUNTER Fri 4 Dec, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

ABBA REVIVAL Fri 4 Dec, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

AUDIO THIEVES Fri 4 Dec, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

WATERMELON CHRONICLES Fri 4 Dec, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

TOM HINGLEY AND THE KAR-PETS Fri 4 Dec, LOOP, Shrewsbury

RED BY NIGHT Fri 4 Dec, Albert's Shed, Telford

THE KING'S VOICE WITH GORDON HENDRICKS Fri 4 Dec, Telford Theatre

STRIDE Sat 5 Dec, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

THE TUMBLING PADDIES Sat 5 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SOMETHING LIKE SLEEP + OVERBOARD + MARTYRS + MANTIS + VASTIER Sat 5 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

ULTIMATE COLDPLAY Sat 5 Dec, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE DAMNED + THE SAINTS '73-'78 Sat 5 Dec, O2 Academy, Birmingham

GENE LOVES JEZEBEL + DAWN AFTER DARK Sat 5 Dec, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

SUNAMI + DESOLATED + MISSING LINK + EXTINGUISH Sat 5 Dec, Dead Wax, Birmingham

THE HARA + HIGH REGARD Sat 5 Dec, The Asylum, Birmingham

GASOLINE & MATCHES + LIAM PRICE + THE LOST NOTES + KATIE RIGBY + **JACKSON WARD** Sat 5 Dec, Jennifer Blackwell Performance Space, Symphony Hall, B'ham

UB40 FT. ALI CAMPBELL + KATCHAFIRE + BITTY MCLEAN Sat 5 Dec, Utilita Arena B'ham

JACKIE OATES & JOHN SPIERS Sat 5 Dec, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

FLEETWOOD MAD Sat 5 Dec, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

FRANKIE LEE AND THE CASUALS Sat 5 Dec, Temperance, Leamington Spa

LAURENCE JONES + AMY EFTEKHARI Sat 5 Dec, Temperance, Leamington Spa

THE QUAD ROX Sat 5 Dec, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

RE-COVER Sat 5 Dec, The Royal, Sutton Coldfield

UZAK Sat 5 Dec, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

BIG GUNS Sat 5 Dec, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

A BAND CALLED MALICE Sat 5 Dec, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

POP WILL EAT ITSELF + NED'S ATOMIC DUSTBIN Sat 5 Dec, Stourbridge Town Hall

GORDON HENDRICKS - THE KING'S VOICE CHRISTMAS SPECIAL Sat 5 Dec, Dudley Town Hall

T.REXTASY Sat 5 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

ROTTING CHRIST + 1914 + PEST CONTROL + PARTY CANNON + RED RUM + WITCH SORROW + SHRAPNEL Sat 5 Dec, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

MACC LADS Sat 5 Dec, The Underground, Stoke-on-Trent

VICKY JACKSON AS PINK Sat 5 Dec, Top Of The World, Stafford

AUDIO JUNKIES Sat 5 Dec, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

SAM BROOKES Sat 5 Dec, Morris Hall, Shrewsbury

ERASURED + BANANARAMA TRIBUTE Sat 5 Dec, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

NORTHERN ECHOES Sat 5 Dec, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

THE BELL BAND Sun 6 Dec, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

GERRY COLVIN BAND Sun 6 Dec, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

MATT BLANEY Sun 6 Dec, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

SLIM RICK'S BIG SIX Sun 6 Dec, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

ANKOR + SELF DECEPTION + LAUREN BABIC Sun 6 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

ABBA ALIKE Sun 6 Dec, Jo Jo Jims, B'ham

THE GARRY ALLCOCK JAZZ TRIO Sun 6 Dec, Tower of Song, B'ham

WARNING + SEMANTRON Sun 6 Dec, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

DAN WHITEHOUSE AND FRIENDS Sun 6 Dec, Justham Family Room & Jane How Room, Symphony Hall, B'ham

CONOR MCLAIN + DANNY ADDISON Sun 6 Dec, The Glee Club, B'ham

CHANTEL MCGREGOR Sun 6 Dec, Temperance, Leamington Spa

ANNIE B & THE DREAMERS Sun 6 Dec, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

SCHOOL OF ROCK - TEACHERS PET Sun 6 Dec, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

GRACE Sun 6 Dec, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

BEANS ON TOAST Sun 6 Dec, The Rigger, Newcastle-Under-Lyme

THE APEX SINGERS Sun 6 Dec, Morris Hall, Shrewsbury

AN EVENING OF TEDDY SWIMS AND RAG 'N' BONE MAN Sun 6 Dec, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

GUTTERSNIPE Sun 6 Dec, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

JAMIE T Sun 6 - Mon 7 Dec, O2 Academy, Birmingham

Classical Music

GABRIELI ROAR PRESENTS MR HANDEL'S CHRISTMAS STORY Featuring Paul McCreesh (artistic director), Tues 1 Dec, Coventry Cathedral

HARRIET ADIE HARP RECITAL Featuring a programme of carols, seasonal music by Sibelius & more..., Tues 1 Dec, Unitarian Chapel, Warwick

ARMONICO CONSORT: J.S. BACH'S CHRISTMAS ORATORIO, PART I, III, V & VI Featuring Christopher Monks (director), Tues 1 Dec, Holy Trinity Church, Leamington Spa

GEMA LU PIANO RECITAL Tues 1 Dec, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

CBSO: ELGAR'S CELLO CONCERTO Featuring Christoph Koncz (conductor) & Alisa Weilerstein (cello). Programme includes works by Weinberg, Elgar & Shostakovich, Wed 2 Dec, Symphony Hall, B'ham

SCOTT DICKINSON VIOLA CONCERT Also featuring Susan Frank (piano) & Nicholas Trygstad (cello). Programme includes works by Beethoven, A Robertson & Dohnanyi, Wed 2 Dec, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

BIRMINGHAM NEW MUSIC: FRONTIERS Experience vibrant new works in a showcase of bold creative talent by emerging student composers, Wed 2 Dec, The Lab, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

EX CATHEDRA: CHRISTMAS MUSIC BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor). Seasonal music with a sprinkling of carols and readings, Wed 2 Dec, St John's Church, Hagley, Worcestershire

NORTH WALES OPERA: PUCCINI'S MADAMA BUTTERFLY Featuring Anne Williams-King (director), Andrew Charity (musical director), Alex Postlethwaite (ensemble leader) & Ensemble SY1, Thurs 3 Dec, Shrewsbury Abbey

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM CHOIR & CBSO: HANDEL'S MESSIAH Featuring Adrian Lucas (conductor), Brittany King (soprano), Kate Symonds-Joy (mezzo), Greg Tassell (tenor), Thomas Humphreys (bass), Thomas Trotter (harpsichord) & Matthew Perkins (organ), Fri 4 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

RBC BRASS CELEBRATION Featuring Ed Jones & Ian Porthouse (conductors), RBC Symphonic Brass, RBC Brass Band & Ensemble of the Band of the Royal Air Force Regiment. Programme includes works by L Trewartha, E Whitacre, Piazzolla & more..., Fri 4 Dec, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

VOXBOX: THE MASKED BALL - A CELEBRATION OF LES SIX Programme includes works by Poulenc, Tailleferre, Milhaud & more..., Fri 4 Dec, Recital Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

EX CATHEDRA: CHRISTMAS MUSIC BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor) & Nicholas Wearne (organ). Seasonal music with a sprinkling of carols and readings, Fri 4 Dec, Lichfield Cathedral

THE TEAL QUARTET Featuring Caroline Herbert (clarinet) & Adam Albrighton (piano), Fri 4 Dec, St Mary's Church, Warwick

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK CHAMBER CHOIR: A TIME OF SNOW Programme includes works by Chilcott, A Bebbington & E Wallen, Fri 4 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

CONCERTS IN THE ROUND Featuring students from Chetham's School of Music, Fri 4 Dec, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

EX CATHEDRA: BRITTEN AT CHRISTMAS Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor), Sebastian Hill (tenor), Katherine Thomas (harp) & City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Sat 5 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

BPSO PROMS NIGHT SPECTACULAR: ONCE UPON A SYMPHONY - FAIRYTALES, FOLKLORE AND FANTASY Featuring Dr Richard Jenkinson (conductor) & The British Police Symphony Orchestra. Programme includes works by Menkin, Dukas, Grieg & more..., Sat 5 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE MIDLAND SINFONIA: A CHRISTMAS GREETING Programme includes works by Corelli, Handel, Glazunov & more..., Sat 5 Dec, St Laurence Church, Birmingham

BOURNVILLE CLARINET CHOIR WINTER CONCERT A mixture of traditional music and Christmas favourites, Sat 5 Dec, Weoley Hill United Reformed Church, Birmingham

LONDON CONCERTANTE: MOONLIGHT SONATA BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring Daniel Grimwood (piano). Programme also includes works by Chopin & Liszt, Sat 5 Dec, Coventry Cathedral

LONDON CONCERTANTE: VIENNESE CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR Featuring Claire Wild (soprano). Programme includes works by Strauss II, Shostakovich, Sibelius & more..., Sat 5 Dec, Coventry Cathedral

LUDLOW CHORAL SOCIETY Featuring Alice Madden & Sophie Henderson (soloists), Emily Hopper (harp), Emma Capp (cello), Marion Bettsworth (organ & piano) & Nicola Starkie (director). Programme includes works by Britten, Quartel, Esmail & more..., Sat 5 Dec, St Laurence's Church, Ludlow, South Shropshire

BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA Featuring Daniele Rosina (conductor). Programme includes works by Weinberg, Dvořák & Sibelius, Sun 6 Dec, Elgar Concert Hall, Bramall Music Building, University of Birmingham

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA & CHORUS: MANCHESTER CAROLS Programme includes works by Tchaikovsky & Johnson Manning, Sun 6 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

EMMA ABBATE & JULIAN PERKINS PIANO DUO Programme includes works by J C Bach, Mozart, Warlock & Schubert, Sun 6 Dec, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

WOMBOURNE & DISTRICT CHORAL SOCIETY: BRITTEN'S ST NICOLAS CANTATA Sun 6 Dec, St. Michaels & All Angels C Of E Church, Tettenhall

Comedy

CHRISTMAS COMEDY SPECIAL Wed 2 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham

KEVIN BRIDGES Wed 2 Dec, Utilita Arena Birmingham

CLINTON BAPTISTE Wed 2 Dec, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

FLO & JOAN Thurs 3 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

PROJECT MAYHEM COMEDY Thurs 3 Dec, Scruffy Murphy's, Birmingham

KUM-N-AVALOFF COMEDY NIGHT Thurs 3 Dec, Stourbridge Town Hall

PAUL THORNE, DANA ALEXANDER, DAVE LONGLEY & VLAD ILICH Thurs 3 - Sat 5 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham

TOM STADE Fri 4 Dec, The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

ROMESH RANGANATHAN Fri 4 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

ANGELOS EPITHEMIOU, OLIVIA LEE & JON PEARSON Sat 5 Dec, Rosie's, Birmingham

GEOFF NORCOTT, STEVE HALL & JULIAN DEANE Sat 5 Dec, The Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

CONOR MCLAIN & DANNY ADDISON Sun 6 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham

Theatre

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, until Tues 15 Dec, Birmingham Ormiston Academy

THE THREE MUSKETEERS Visual comedy based on Alexandre Dumas' classic novel. Co-produced by the RSC and Told By An Idiot, until Sat 9 Jan, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

MIDDLEMARCH PARTS 1 & 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

PETER PAN Joe Murphy directs a faithful retelling of JM Barrie's much-loved children's story, until Sun 17 Jan, The Rep, Birmingham

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

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

IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE Stoke Rep Players present an amateur stage adaptation of the iconic Christmas movie, Tues 1 - Sat 5 Dec, Stoke Repertory Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

TWELFTH NIGHT RBC Actors present Shakespeare's tale of shipwrecks, cross dressing and mistaken identity, Thurs 3 - Sat 5 Dec, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

A SHODDY NATIVITY Shoddy Theatre return with a brand-new festive fiasco, Fri 4 Dec - Sun 3 Jan, Lichfield Garrick

Pantomime

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST Polka Dot Pantomimes present a new version of the classic fairytale, until Thurs 31 Dec, The Old Rep, Birmingham

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST Family pantomime written by and starring Coventry's favourite dame, Iain Lauchlan. Expect breathtaking sets, crazy costumes and seasonal silliness, until Sat 2 Jan, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

ALADDIN Festive family fun featuring legendary panto dame Brad Fitt and jester Tommy J, until Sun 3 Jan, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

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, until Sun 3 Jan, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

ROBIN HOOD A merry pantomime adventure presented by Worcester Repertory Company, until Sun 3 Jan, Swan Theatre, Worcester

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, until Sun 10 Jan, Lichfield Garrick

PETER PAN: A NEW PANTOMIME ADVENTURE Swashbuckling festive

family fun featuring Lost Boys, musical mermaids and seriously potty pirates, Fri 4 Dec - Sun 3 Jan, The Core Theatre, Solihull

CINDERELLA Much-loved rags-to-riches pantomime featuring AJ & Curtis Pritchard, Fri 4 Dec - Sun 3 Jan, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST - CHRISTMAS PANTOMIME Join brave Belle as she embarks on a spellbinding adventure..., Sat 5 - Sun 20 Dec, Walsall Arena

Kids Theatre

THE GRUFFALO'S CHILD Tall Stories present an enchanting version of Julia Donaldson's much-loved picture book, until Sun 27 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

TALES FROM ACORN WOOD Festive show for younger audiences based on favourite stories by Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler, Tues 1 - Sun 27 Dec, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

FATHER CHRISTMAS Festive family favourite in which Santa awakes from a dream of sun, sea and sand only to find it's the busiest day of the year... Based on Raymond Briggs' much-loved children's book, Thurs 3 - Sun 27 Dec, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

THE UGLY DUCKLING One brave little duckling embarks on a mission to find a place where they truly belong. Suitable for audiences aged three to six, Thurs 3 Dec - Sun 10 Jan, The Rep, Birmingham

ONE TINY PENGUIN Fun-filled musical adventure 'packed with laughter' and perfect for audience members aged three-plus, Sat 5 Dec - Sun 3 Jan, Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

JACK & THE BEANSTALK (SORT OF) Family theatre and rock-star legend Kid Carpet is back with a brand-new show that's suitable for children aged three to 10, Sun 6 Dec, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

Dance

BRB: THE NUTCRACKER Sir Peter Wright's acclaimed festive production, set to Tchaikovsky's famous score, until Sat 12 Dec, Birmingham Hippodrome

Light Entertainment

AN EVENING OF MEDIUMSHIP WITH TONY STOCKWELL Tues 1 Dec, Bilston Town Hall

MIDWINTER REVELS GreenMatthews present a new festive show celebrating yuletide past with carols, winter folk songs and a plethora of weird and wonderful instruments, Wed 2 Dec, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

G4 CHRISTMAS An evening of yuletide magic with unique renditions of traditional carols, sacred contemplations and modern festive hits, Wed 2 Dec, Shrewsbury Abbey

A GOOD OLD-FASHIONED CHRISTMAS Nostalgic event featuring a festive soundtrack from the likes of Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby and Judy Garland..., Thurs 3 Dec, Halesowen Town Hall

CHRISTMAS THE CANDLELIGHT CONCERT An evening where 'music, candlelight and holiday wonder come together in perfect harmony', Thurs 3 Dec, Dudley Town Hall

THE PUPPET FOLK EXPERIENCE WITH THE MUPPET CHRISTMAS CAROL Expect songs, comedy, audience interaction and plenty of festive surprises, followed by the chance to enjoy one of the most cherished Christmas films ever made, Fri 4 Dec, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

THE OVERTONES - JIVIN' HOME FOR CHRISTMAS Join the multi-platinum-selling vocal harmony group for what promises to be a joyous festive celebration, Fri 4 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

AN ABBA CHRISTMAS BY CANDLELIGHT Fri 4 Dec, Shrewsbury Abbey

BIRMINGHAM GAY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA & RAINBOW VOICES: CHRISTMAS TOGETHER Featuring Neavan Lobban & Sam Lewis (conductors). Programme includes toe-tapping medleys, Christmas carols & modern favourites, Sat 5 Dec, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

DADDY ISSUES A 'glittery and unapologetically queer night of drag', Sat 5 Dec, Swan Theatre, Worcester

CHRISTMAS IN THE SUN A celebration of festive music from warmer climates around the world, Sat 5 Dec, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

BEAR GRYLLS: NEVER GIVE UP Join the globally renowned adventurer, TV host and bestselling author for an evening of stories, survival and inspiration, Sat 5 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

KARL LOXLEY - THE SONGS OF CHRISTMAS Sun 6 Dec, Shrewsbury Abbey

STEP INTO CHRISTMAS Feelgood concert spectacular that promises to have audiences singing along from start to finish..., Sun 6 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

BIRMINGHAM PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA: THE SNOWMAN Live screening accompanied by full symphony orchestra, Sun 6 Dec, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

THE CITY OF LICHFIELD CONCERT BAND: CHRISTMAS CONCERT Programme includes festive favourites The Snowman and Sleigh Ride plus traditional carols, Sun 6 Dec, Lichfield Cathedral

Events

ALDERFORD'S SANTA ISLAND EXPERIENCE Step aboard the festive boat and journey across Alderford Lake to a hidden island where Christmas comes to life, until Thurs 24 Dec, Alderford Lake, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

SANTA'S GROTTO Visit Santa in his grotto, set within the walls of the 11th-century castle, until Thurs 24 Dec, Dudley Zoo & Castle

BIRMINGHAM FRANKFURT CHRISTMAS MARKET Long-established attraction offering a large range of traditional goods and gifts plus a selection of food & drink, until Thurs 24 Dec, Victoria Square, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS IN CATHEDRAL SQUARE CRAFT MARKET Featuring a variety of crafts, gifts and food & drink stalls, until, Thurs 24 Dec, St Philip's Cathedral, Cathedral Square, Colmore Row

SPECTACLE OF LIGHT 2026 Event based around the theme of Alice's Amazing Adventures In Wonderland, until Wed 30 Dec, Sudeley Castle, Cheltenham



MAGICAL ELF FAMILY TRAIL Follow a trail of festive elf doors around the venue, until Thurs 31 Dec, The Commandery, Worcester

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, until Sun 3 Jan, Wightwick Manor, Wolverhampton

CHRISTMAS AT BLISTS HILL Soak up the Christmas spirit and enjoy festive activities, until Mon 4 Jan, Blists Hill Victorian Town, Ironbridge

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL 2026 Featuring 50 trees decorated by local businesses, schools and community groups, until Tues 5 Jan, Worcester Cathedral

CAROL TRAINS Musicians from across Shropshire and Worcestershire sing a selection of seasonal songs, Fri 4 - Sat 5 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

THE GIFT FAIR Take the stress out of Christmas shopping and find gifts for family, friends and yourself, Fri 4 - Sun 6 Dec, Compton Verney, Warks



MYTON HOSPICE CHRISTMAS FAYRE Featuring festive stalls and fun games for all the family to enjoy, Sat 5 Dec, Myton Hospice, Coventry

K-POP ICE PARTY High-energy skating session packed with huge K-pop hits, Sat 5 Dec, Alderford Lake, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

SANTA'S STEAM SPECIALS Step aboard a 'magical' steam train from Kidderminster Station and journey into 'a world of festive wonder', Sat 5 - Sun 6 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

'A CHRISTMAS CAROL' GUIDED TOUR Join a guided tour of the town to learn about the locations used for the 1984 film version of A Christmas Carol, filmed in Shrewsbury and starring Academy Award winner George C Scott, Sat 5 - Sun 6 Dec, Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

THE POLAR EXPRESS™ TRAIN RIDE The beloved Christmas story is brought to life, Sat 5 - Sun 6 Dec, Moor Street Station, Birmingham

GLADIATORS LIVE TOUR The Gladiators storm back into the arena to face fearless contenders, Sat 5 - Sun 6 Dec, bp pulse LIVE, Birmingham

THE LOVEPLANTS CHRISTMAS MARKET Browse for Christmas gifts, pick out a fresh Christmas tree, and enjoy mulled wine and seasonal treats, Sat 5 - Sun 6 Dec, Salop Leisure, Shrewsbury

WINTER FUNLAND Enjoy unlimited funfair rides, skate on the gigantic ice rink, visit the circus and more, Sat 5 Dec - Sun 3 Jan, NEC, Birmingham

THE MYTON HOSPICES' SANTA DASH Put on a Santa suit and run, jog or walk 5km in aid of the Myton Hospices, Sun 6 Dec, Victoria Park, Leamington Spa

LIGHT UP A LIFE Dedicate a light on the Christmas tree to remember a loved one, Sun 6 Dec, Myton Hospice, Coventry

FROZEN PARTY WITH ELSA & ANNA Sing, dance and party with Elsa & Anna in this Frozen-inspired family experience, Sun 6 Dec, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

thelist

Gigs

GWENIFER RAYMOND Mon 7 Dec, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

DOM MARTIN BAND Mon 7 Dec, Temperance, Leamington Spa

THE FAMILY BATTENBERG Tues 8 Dec, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

TORI KELLY Tues 8 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

BIG NARSTIE Tues 8 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SNUTS + THE KAIROS Tues 8 Dec, O2 Academy, B'ham

KEYSIDE Tues 8 Dec, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

RHYTHMS OF INDIA Tues 8 Dec, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

MELANIE C Tues 8 Dec, hmv Empire, Coventry

SHED SEVEN Tues 8 Dec, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent



JESUS JONES Tues 8 - Wed 9 Dec, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

NANNA RADLEYS Tues 8 - Wed 9 Dec, The Jam House, Birmingham

LEDBYHER Wed 9 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE WONDER STUFF + PASTEL Wed 9 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

BRYSON TILLER + MAJID JORDAN Wed 9 Dec, bp pulse LIVE, Birmingham

THE SWAPS + HOLLY CARTER + CRIMSON FLAME Wed 9 Dec, Temperance, Leamington Spa

NEW ORLEANS BUMP Wed 9 Dec, Boldmere Sports and Social Club, Sutton Coldfield

SCANDAL BROTHERS Wed 9 Dec, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

THE WEDDING PRESENT Wed 9 Dec, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

DESPERATE JOURNALIST + SUGAR WITCH Thurs 10 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

LUKE BROHAM Thurs 10 Dec, Actress & Bishop, B'ham

BARENAKED LADIES + BOOTHBY GRAFFOE Thurs 10 Dec, O2 Institute, B'ham

CHALKY WONG Thurs 10 Dec, Dead Wax, Digbeth, B'ham

JAZZ GALA Thurs 10 Dec, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

WATERLOO - A TRIBUTE TO ABBA Thurs 10 Dec, Utilita Arena Birmingham

GABRIEL MORENO AND THE QUIVERING POETS Thurs 10 Dec, Catshill Club, Bromsgrove

REBECCA DOWNES Thurs 10 Dec, Temperance, Leamington Spa

PET SHOP BOYS, ACTUALLY Thurs 10 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

THE FELL Thurs 10 Dec, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

JAMES KIRBY Thurs 10 Dec, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

SHOWADDYWADDY Thurs 10 Dec, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

A TASTE OF DARKLIGHT Thurs 10 Dec, Bill's Kitchen, Ludlow, South Shropshire

UP4 THE DOWNSTROKE Thurs 10 - Sat 12 Dec, The Jam House, Birmingham

DAVID J Fri 11 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

FAYE SMITH Fri 11 Dec, Actress & Bishop, B'ham

TNL VZN + MOGY + SPIRALLING + JAZZCAT Fri 11 Dec, O2 Institute, B'ham

BLEECH 9:3 Fri 11 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

POLYPHIA + PERTURBATOR + RJ PASIN Fri 11 Dec, O2 Academy, Birmingham

UNDER THE COVERS Fri 11 Dec, Jo Jo Jims, Birmingham

FLEETWOOD SHACK Fri 11 Dec, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

LITTLE MISS NASTY + I YA TOYAH Fri 11 Dec, The Asylum, Birmingham

LINK N PARK Fri 11 Dec, The Flapper, Birmingham

JOSS STONE Fri 11 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

KASABIAN + THE VACCINES Fri 11 Dec, Utilita Arena B'ham

DILL PICKLE + CROSSFIRE + VELLAR + THE KOLLARS + L'EXTERIEUR Fri 11 Dec, The Rainbow, Birmingham

THE ELO EXPERIENCE Fri 11 Dec, The Alexandra, B'ham

SUPERSONIC QUEEN Fri 11 Dec, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

THE ROCK STEADY ORCHESTRA Fri 11 Dec, The Royal, Sutton Coldfield

REANIMATION Fri 11 Dec, Arches Venue, Coventry

PAUL SIMON'S 'GRACELAND': REIMAGINED BY THE LONDON AFRICAN GOSPEL CHOIR Fri 11 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

MAETLIVE AND THE NEVER NEVERLAND EXPRESS Fri 11 Dec, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

THE DELRAY ROCKETS Fri 11 Dec, Queens Hall, Nuneaton



NICK PARKER AND THE FALSE ALARMS + HAUNTED SOULS + GAVIN OSBORN Fri 11 Dec, Marrs Bar, Worcester

THE BRIGHTSIDES Fri 11 Dec, Drummonds, Worcester

T-REXTASY Fri 11 Dec, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

OK KALA Fri 11 Dec, The Red Lion, Evesham

ICONIC DECADES Fri 11 Dec, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

BRAIN OF J + THE GRUNGE ADDICTION Fri 11 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

ERAZURE + VERY PET SHOP BOYS Fri 11 Dec, Civic, Stourport

STARVING RASCALS Fri 11 Dec, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

SWEET + JOHN OTWAY Fri 11 Dec, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

FAMOUS MONSTERS + METH CLUB 7 + THE MUCKAZ Fri 11 Dec, Dive, Wolverhampton

WALTER KOCAYS + MOB + LOUIE'S LOST LIMB Fri 11 Dec, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

ROB LAMBERTI - PERFECTLY GEORGE Fri 11 Dec, King's Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

NARTHEN Fri 11 Dec, Fenton Town Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

JANICE BURNS & JON DORAN Fri 11 Dec, Marston's Social Club, Burton upon Trent

FROM THE JAM Fri 11 Dec, Top Of The World, Stafford

THE ELVIS EXPERIENCE Fri 11 Dec, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

JOHNNY2BAD Fri 11 Dec, The Station, Cannock

CHANTEL MCGREGOR Fri 11 Dec, Lichfield Guildhall

THE AMY'S WINEHOUSE BAND Fri 11 Dec, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

THE ENTITLED SONS Fri 11 Dec, LOOP, Shrewsbury

THE DRIFTERS Fri 11 - Sat 12 Dec, Dudley Town Hall

HALF ME Sat 12 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE DUALERS Sat 12 Dec, O2 Academy, Birmingham

MUTAGENIC HOST + SMOULDERING TOMB + SPAWNED FROM HATE + ANCIENT RIVALRY Sat 12 Dec, Dead Wax, Birmingham

STILLMARILLION Sat 12 Dec, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

THE NUMBER ONE NIRVANA TRIBUTE BAND Sat 12 Dec, The Asylum, Birmingham

SOFTCULT Sat 12 Dec, The Flapper, Birmingham

OCEAN COLOUR SCENE + THE ENEMY + DIRTY CIRCUS Sat 12 Dec, bp pulse LIVE, B'ham

THE DARKNESS + FEEDER Sat 12 Dec, Utilita Arena B'ham

THE THOMAS HEPPELL BAND Sat 12 Dec, Temperance, Leamington Spa

SIGNING OFF UB40 Sat 12 Dec, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

TOO HOT 4 SOCKS Sat 12 Dec, The Royal, Sutton Coldfield

SATSANGI + SUPERHOOCH + THE CAROLINE BOMB Sat 12 Dec, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

DAVE PEARCE Sat 12 Dec, hmv Empire, Coventry

THE BLACK CHARADE Sat 12 Dec, Arches Venue, Coventry

KATE RUSBY Sat 12 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

PINK BY VICKY JACKSON Sat 12 Dec, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

FOREVER QUEEN Sat 12 Dec, Marrs Bar, Worcester

THE UPBEAT BEATLES Sat 12 Dec, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

BLACKSHEEP Sat 12 Dec, The Valkyrie Bar, Evesham

FLEETWOOD BAC Sat 12 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

ABBA ALIKE Sat 12 Dec, Civic, Stourport

ROB LAMBERTI PRESENTS PERFECTLY GEORGE Sat 12 Dec, The Civic at The Halls, Wolverhampton

GORDON HENDRICKS - THE KING'S VOICE Sat 12 Dec, King's Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

THE KILLERZ Sat 12 Dec, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

ABBA LEGACY Sat 12 Dec, Two Gates Club, Tamworth

FAR BEYOND GRUNGE Sat 12 Dec, The Station, Cannock

THE SLEAZE BROTHERS + ROBOT GARDEN PARTY Sat 12 Dec, Lichfield Guildhall

TIN DRAGONS Sat 12 Dec, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

MIK ARTISTIK'S EGO TRIP Sat 12 Dec, LOOP, Shrewsbury

THE HEELS Sun 13 Dec, Actress & Bishop, B'ham



ARTEMAS + HENRY MORRIS Sun 13 Dec, O2 Academy, Birmingham

DRIFTER Sun 13 Dec, Jo Jo Jims, Birmingham

REGGAE FEST BIRMINGHAM Sun 13 Dec, Tower of Song, Birmingham

FRANK SINATRA & LOUIS ARMSTRONG TRIBUTE Sun 13 Dec, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

GRÁINNE HUNT WITH JULES STEWART Sun 13 Dec, Temperance, Leamington Spa

THE SONGS OF TOM WAITS Sun 13 Dec, Temperance, Leamington Spa

THE AUSTRIAN STONES Sun 13 Dec, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

CARA DILLON Sun 13 Dec, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

AMBER LIADAN Sun 13 Dec, The Red Lion, Evesham

THE CUREHEADS + SIOUXSIE AND THE BUDGIEES Sun 13 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

WEDNESDAY 13 + THE BIRTHDAY MASSACRE + KILLUS Sun 13 Dec, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

SOPHIE LAIRD WITH BEN SHANKLAND & TOM HENERY Sun 13 Dec, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

BAR FIGHT + ERP WALK + SAVE YOUR BREATH + D-COY Sun 13 Dec, The Underground, Stoke-on-Trent

JUST DOIN' IT' - STATUS QUO TRIBUTE Sun 13 Dec, The Station, Cannock

GORDON HENDRICKS IS ELVIS Sun 13 Dec, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

Classical Music

CHRISTMAS ORGAN CONCERT Featuring Christopher Gray (conductor), Thomas Trotter (organ) & The Choir of St John's College, Cambridge. Programme includes traditional and modern festive classics, Mon 7 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

ENGLISH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA DOWNSIDEUP IN CONCERT Featuring Corinne Frost (cello) & Stephen Warner (double bass, classical guitar & ukulele), Mon 7 Dec, Pershore Abbey

CHAMBER PRINCIPALS OF LONDON Featuring Sergey Levitin (violin), Rachel Roberts (viola - pictured), Jonathan Aasgaard (cello), Tim Gibbs (double bass) & Victor Sangiorgio (piano). Programme includes works by Bridge & Schubert, Tues 8 Dec, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire



EX CATHEDRA: CHRISTMAS MUSIC BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor). Seasonal music with a sprinkling of carols and readings, Tues 8 Dec, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

MESSIAEN'S LA NATIVITÉ DU SEIGNEUR Featuring Andrew Caskie (organ), Tues 8 Dec, Great Malvern Priory

DOWNSIDEUP: DEMENTIA FRIENDLY CHRISTMAS CONCERT Featuring Corinne Frost (cello) & Stephen Warner (double bass), Tues 8 Dec, Malvern Theatres

DOMINIC DOWNS PIANO RECITAL Tues 8 Dec, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

CBSO CENTRE STAGE: TWO HARPS Featuring Katherine Thomas & Alex Rider. Programme includes works by Salzedo, Ravel & Debussy, Wed 9 Dec, CBSO Centre, Birmingham



CBSO: KAZUKI CONDUCTS THE NUTCRACKERS Featuring Kazuki Yamada (conductor) & Oliver Janes (clarinet). Programme includes works by Tchaikovsky, Bernstein & Ellington arr. Strayhorn, Wed 9 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

PICCADILLY SINFONIETTA: CHRISTMAS BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring Warren Mailley-Smith (piano). Programme includes works by Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninov & more..., Wed 9 Dec, Worcester Cathedral

CBSO: KAZUKI CONDUCTS THE NUTCRACKERS Featuring Kazuki Yamada (conductor) & Oliver Janes (clarinet). Programme includes works by Tchaikovsky, Bernstein & Ellington arr. Strayhorn, Thurs 10 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

EX CATHEDRA: CHRISTMAS MUSIC BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor). Seasonal music with a sprinkling of carols and readings, Thurs 10 Dec, St Peter's Church, Wolverhampton

RBC MUSICIANS: AN EARLY CHRISTMAS An enchanting evening of early music spanning five centuries, performed on period instruments, Thurs 10 Dec, Recital Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

REBECA OMORDIA PIANO RECITAL: AFRICAN PIANISM Thurs 10 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

ROBBIE ROBERTS: MODERN PIANO CLASSICS Programme includes works by Einaudi, Yiruma, Tierson & more..., Thurs 10 Dec, Great Malvern Priory

ORCHESTRA OF THE SWAN: UPON A WINTER'S NIGHT Programme includes works by Debussy, Bach, Corelli & more..., Thurs 10 Dec, St Nicholas Church, Warwick

VIVALDI'S FOUR SEASONS AT CHRISTMAS Featuring The Piccadilly Sinfonietta. Programme also includes works by Pachelbel, Corelli, Elgar & more..., Thurs 10 Dec, Shrewsbury Abbey

RBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: ENIGMA VARIATIONS Featuring Daniele Rosina (conductor). Programme includes works by Lindberg & Elgar, Fri 11 Dec, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

STEPHEN UPSHAW (VIOLA) & HUW WATKINS (PIANO) Programme includes works by H Watkins, R Schumann & M Z Gordon, Fri 11 Dec, Elgar Concert Hall, Bramall Music Building, University of Birmingham

PERSHORE TOWN CHOIR: CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION Featuring David Barclay (musical director), James MacDowall-Scott (organ) & Avonbank Brass Band, Fri 11 Dec, Pershore Abbey

SAM HAYES ORGAN RECITAL Fri 11 Dec, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

THE JIGSAW CHOIR An evening of traditional Christmas songs, much-loved carols and festive harmonies, Fri 11 Dec, Wem Town Hall, North Shropshire

CBSO: KAZUKI CONDUCTS THE NUTCRACKERS Featuring Kazuki Yamada (conductor) & Oliver Janes (clarinet). Programme includes works by Tchaikovsky, Bernstein & Ellington arr. Strayhorn, Fri 11 Dec, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

RBC CHAMBER CHOIR BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring Julian Wilkins (conductor). A varied programme of seasonal choral music, Sat 12 Dec, Compton Verney, Warwickshire

THE MIDLAND SINFONIA: CHRISTMAS FAMILY CONCERT A fun-filled seasonal afternoon of music. Programme includes music by Tchaikovsky, Sat 12 Dec, St. George's C of E Church, Worcester

HANDEL'S MESSIAH Featuring Coventry Philharmonic Choir & Leamington Chamber Orchestra, Sat 12 Dec, All Saints Church, Leamington Spa

COVENTRY CATHEDRAL CHORUS: HANDEL'S MESSIAH Featuring Liam Condon (conductor), Rose Johnson (soprano), David Whitworth (alto), Nick Drew (tenor), Luke Busbridge (bass) & Orchestra Pro Anima, Sat 12 Dec, Coventry Cathedral

CHRISTMAS WITH THE JENNY LIND SINGERS Programme includes works by Britten & more..., Sat 12 Dec, Great Malvern Priory

HEREFORD CHORAL SOCIETY: HANDEL'S MESSIAH BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring Ffion Davies (soprano), Alexandra Meier (mezzo-soprano), James Oxley (tenor) & Jonathan Eyers (bass), Sat 12 Dec, Hereford Cathedral

WORCESTER FESTIVAL CHORAL SOCIETY: HANDEL'S MESSIAH Featuring Alexandra Kidgell (soprano), Kate Symonds-Joy (mezzo soprano), William Balkwill (tenor) & Alex Ashworth (bass baritone), Sat 12 Dec, Worcester Cathedral

HALESOWEN ORCHESTRA: A WINTER CONCERT Featuring Lee Armstrong (conductor) & Claire Thompson (leader). Programme includes works by Sibelius, Verdi & Moniuszko, Sat 12 Dec, Halesowen Town Hall

SHREWSBURY CHORAL: SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS Featuring Chris Barnes (tenor), Jeremy Lund (compere), Shrewsbury Brass Band, the choirs of Meole Brace School & Adcote School, Sat 12 Dec, Shrewsbury Abbey

CATHEDRAL CHOIR: A CEREMONY OF CAROLS Featuring David Hardie (conductor), Conor McGlone (organ) & Rita Schindler (harp). Programme includes Benjamin's Britten's Ceremony of Carols and other festive favourites, Sun 13 Dec, St Philip's Cathedral, Birmingham

MIDLAND CHAMBER ORCHESTRA: A CHRISTMAS MIRACLE Programme includes works by Handel, Mozart & Haydn, Sun 13 Dec, St Mary's Church, Birmingham

BRANDHALL COMMUNITY CHOIR & LANGLEY COMMUNITY BRASS: CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR Programme includes festive favourites and Christmas classics, Sun 13 Dec, Halesowen Town Hall

CHRISTMAS BY CANDLELIGHT A unique and eclectic blend of classical, folk and jazz, Sun 13 Dec, St Laurence's Church, Ludlow, South Shropshire

STAFFORD SINFONIA: CHRISTMAS CLASSICS CONCERT Featuring Benjamin Hamilton (conductor), Sun 13 Dec, St. John the Baptist Church, Stafford

Comedy

AN EVENING WITH JOE LYCETT & FRIENDS Mon 7 Dec, The Alexandra, Birmingham



FERN BRADY, BRIDGET CHRISTIE, IVO GRAHAM & MORE Wed 9 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

CHRISTMAS COMEDY SPECIAL Wed 9 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham

MICHELLE DE SWARTE, ROSE MATAFEO, DAVID O'DOHERTY, BRIDGET CHRISTIE & JEN BRISTER Thurs 10 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

DUNCAN OAKLEY, TONY COWARDS, SAMANTHA DAY & JAVIER JARQUIN Thurs 10 Dec, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

BRENNAN REECE, HARRIET DYER, GARRETT MILLERICK & ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 10 - Sat 12 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham

RICH HALL, JOHN ROBERTSON, TAL DAVIES & JAY NEALE Fri 11 Dec, The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

DARREN HARRIOTT, OLIVER BOWLER & JON PEARSON Sat 12 Dec, Rosies, Birmingham

KAE KURD Sat 12 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

Theatre

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE* (*SORT OF) Isobel McArthur's award-winning comedy presents a unique and audacious retelling of Jane Austen's iconic love story, until Sat 5 Dec, Malvern Theatres

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



Middlemarch - Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

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, until Tues 15 Dec, Birmingham Ormiston Academy

MIDDLEMARCH PARTS 1 & 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

PETER PAN Joe Murphy directs a faithful retelling of JM Barrie's much-loved children's story, until Sun 17 Jan, The Rep, Birmingham

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

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM Perfect Circle Youth Theatre present Shakespeare's classic comedy, Mon 7 & Tues 8 Dec, Malvern Theatres

A CHRISTMAS CAROL A one-man performance of Charles Dickens' festive tale, adapted and performed by Mat Jones, Tues 8 Dec, Stoke Rep Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

A CHRISTMAS CAROL A one-man performance of the Charles Dickens classic, adapted and performed by Christopher Commander, Wed 9 Dec, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, B'ham

A CHRISTMAS CAROL Jonathan Goodwin plays a host of characters in a solo performance of Dickens' famous festive tale, Wed 9 Dec, Biddulph Grange, Stoke-on-Trent

A VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS CONVIVIAL Jonathan Goodwin brings to life an array of Victorian characters in a one-man performance based on several seasonal classics, including The Gift Of The Magi and The Nutcracker And The Mouse King, Fri 11 Dec, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

THE GHOST OF A SMILE Gavin Robertson presents two of Charles Dickens' creepiest tales, performed with a comic twist, Fri 11 Dec, Clungunford Village Hall, Shropshire

PROVENANCE THE MUSICAL Staged reading of a new musical featuring a professional cast and 25 brand-new compositions, Fri 11 Dec, The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

MITCH BENN: A CHRISTMAS CAROL One-man production based on Charles Dickens' famous festive tale, Sat 12 Dec, Norbury Theatre, Droitwich Spa

THE GHOST OF A SMILE Gavin Robertson presents two of Charles Dickens' creepiest tales, performed with a comic twist, Sat 12 Dec, The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

WINGBEAT Emily Henry's story of girlhood, silence, and the cost of breaking it, Sat 12 & Sun 13 Dec, Malvern Theatres

Pantomimes

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST Polka Dot Pantomimes present a new version of the classic fairytale, until Thurs 31 Dec, The Old Rep, Birmingham

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST Family pantomime written by and starring Coventry's favourite dame, Iain Lauchlan. Expect breathtaking sets, crazy costumes and seasonal silliness, until Sat 2 Jan, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

ALADDIN Festive family fun featuring legendary panto dame Brad Fitt and jester Tommy J, until Sun 3 Jan, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

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, until Sun 3 Jan, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

ROBIN HOOD A merry pantomime adventure presented by Worcester Repertory Company, until Sun 3 Jan, Swan Theatre, Worcester

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, until Sun 10 Jan, Lichfield Garrick

SLEEPING BEAUTY Journey to a faraway land full of magic and laughter in a lively festive production that sees a cast of local young talent performing alongside professional actors, Tues 8 Dec - Sat 2 Jan, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK Amateur version presented by the Abbey Players, Wed 9 - Sun 13 Dec, Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK Pantomime adventure presented by Shrewsbury College, Thurs 10 Dec, The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

ALADDIN Starring Tristam Gemmil as Abanazar, Bunny Galore as Widow Twankey, Sev Keoshgerian as Aladdin, Claire Greenway as The Spirit Of The Ring and Samara Rawlins as Princess Jasmine, Thurs 10 Dec - Sun 3 Jan, Malvern Theatres

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK 'Festive fun for all the family', Fri 11 - Sun 13 Dec, Festival Drayton, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

DICK WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT Sat 12 - Thurs 24 Dec, Bedworth Civic Hall

ROBIN HOOD THE PANTOMIME Presented by Tread The Boards Theatre Company, Sat 12 - Thurs 31 Dec, Rother Street Arts House, Stratford-upon-Avon

CINDERELLA Much-loved family panto featuring Gyasi Sheppy as Prince Charming, Oliver Gray as Lavina Hardup, Dean Horner as Louisa Hardup, Simon Bashford as Dandini, Ian Weichardt as Buttons, Charlotte Castle as Cinderella, Janine Pardoe as Fairy Godmother and Andrew Haynes as Baron Hardup, Sat 12 Dec - Sat 2 Jan, Palace Theatre, Redditch

Kids Theatre

THE GRUFFALO'S CHILD Tall Stories present an enchanting version of Julia Donaldson's much-loved picture book, until Sun 27 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

SANTA'S NEW SLEIGH Festive play penned by Brad Fitt, with music and songs by Richard Lamming. Perfect for pre-school kids and children up to the age of eight, Wed 9 - Thurs 24 Dec, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE BEAR AND THE PIANO Puppetry and music combine in a new stage production that brings to life David Litchfield's popular children's book, Fri 11 Dec - Sun 10 Jan, The Other Place, Stratford-upon-Avon

THE SNOW QUEEN Stage adaptation of the famous story, featuring puppetry, changing scenery, music and sound effects, Sat 12 Dec, Wem Town Hall, North Shropshire

THE GINGERBREAD MAN Worcester Repertory Company presents a festive story filled with magic, music and laughter, Sat 12 - Thurs 24 Dec, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

Dance

BRB: THE NUTCRACKER Sir Peter Wright's acclaimed festive production, set to Tchaikovsky's famous score, until Sat 12 Dec, Birmingham Hippodrome

Light Entertainment

THE BEST OF BUBLE - HOME FOR CHRISTMAS Featuring Josh Hindle and a live band, Mon 7 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE RAT PACK AT CHRISTMAS An evening of festive classics and all-time favourites, Mon 7 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham



A CHRISTMAS WASSAIL The Crescent Theatre presents a 'festive feast' of choral music, solo songs, spoken word and comedy, Mon 7 & Tues 8 Dec, Highbury Hall, Birmingham

AN ORCHESTRAL TRIBUTE TO TIM BURTON & DARK FANTASY BY MOONLIGHT Live performance of whimsical and otherworldly dark fantasy films, brought to life by the Illuminated Orchestra beneath the glow of a giant moon, Tues 8 Dec, The Alexandra, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS MEMORIES Join Neil Sands and cast for an entertaining afternoon packed with 'festive joy and heartwarming nostalgia', Tues 8 Dec, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

RHYTHMS OF INDIA WITH RBC INDIA ASSEMBLE Blending Indian classical traditions with Western music and contemporary influences, Tues 8 Dec, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery

DISNEY'S MUPPET CHRISTMAS CAROL IN CONCERT: FILM WITH LIVE ORCHESTRA

Tues 8 & Wed 9 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

ALL KILLA NO FILLA: LIVE AT CHRISTMAS! Stage version of Kiri Pritchard-McLean and Rachel Fairburn's true-crime comedy podcast, Wed 9 Dec, The Alexandra, Birmingham



BOX OF FROGS 'Birmingham's premiere improv group' present an evening of high-octane, improvised comedy nonsense, based entirely on audience suggestions, Wed 9 Dec, 1000 Trades, The Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

THE OVERTONES - JIVIN' HOME FOR CHRISTMAS Join the multi-platinum-selling vocal harmony group for what promises to be a joyous festive celebration, Wed 9 Dec, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

ADRIANA BROWNLEE: LIFE IN THE DEATH ZONE Join the British mountaineer, certified paragliding pilot and adventure athlete as she shares stories from her travels to some of the most hostile environments in the world, Wed 9 Dec, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

ANYA & FRIENDS PRESENT DIVAS & LEGENDS Expect 'big voices, legendary songs and a few surprises along the way', Thurs 10 Dec, The Dovehouse Theatre, Solihull

AN EVENING WITH DEBBIE ISITT Nativity writer/director Debbie Isitt in conversation with Brody Swain, Thurs 10 Dec, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

FATT BUTCHER'S CHRISTMAS SPECIAL Evening of cabaret, festive favourites and outrageous comedy, Thurs 10 & Fri 11 Dec, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

STEP INTO CHRISTMAS Feelgood concert spectacular that promises to have audiences singing along from start to finish..., Fri 11 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

CHRIS DEAN'S SYD LAWRENCE ORCHESTRA: BIG BAND WONDERLAND Step into a world of swing, sparkle and seasonal magic..., Fri 11 Dec, Stoke Rep Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

THE 2026 CHRISTMAS IMPROV SHOW Fri 11 Dec, Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

CHRISTMAS BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring a host of festive singalong classics, including White Christmas, Let It Snow! Let It Snow!, Santa Baby and Winter Wonderland..., Fri 11 Dec, Coventry Cathedral

JOHN KIRKPATRICK - CAROLLING AND CRUMPETS SHOW Fri 11 Dec, The Talbot Theatre, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

YULETIDE - DASHING THROUGH THE MUSICALS A 'festive spectacular' promising 'soaring vocals, powerful storytelling, heartwarming moments and a sprinkling of festive enchantment', Fri 11 & Sat 12 Dec, Rugby Theatre

SWING INTO CHRISTMAS WITH CHARLIE GREEN AND HIS BIG BAND Fri 11 & Sat 12 Dec, Kidderminster Town Hall

CHRISTMAS WASSAIL Annual winter celebration, Fri 11 - Sun 13 Dec, Oldbury Rep

RAT PACK REPRISE Join Frank, Dean & Sammy for an evening of Las Vegas glitz and glamour, Sat 12 Dec, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

WINTER FUNK SHOW 2026: FUSION OF ERAS Shiamak Midlands showcase their skills in an evening of dance and music, Sat 12 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

JAMES B PARTRIDGE - THE BIG CHRISTMAS ASSEMBLY 2026 Nostalgic and feelgood festive singalong that promises to bring your childhood Christmases back to life, Sat 12 Dec, The Alexandra, Birmingham

THE BIG PANTS PARTY High-energy live concert in which four female vocalists - and a live band - bring the 'soundtrack of your friendships to the stage', Sat 12 Dec, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

SUPERSONIC KIDS GIG: BEN SADLER FESTIVE SPECIAL Ben will be dusting off the wigs and costumes he wears when showcasing covers of popular songs, Sat 12 Dec, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

THE PEOPLE'S ORCHESTRA: SOMETHING MAGICAL - A FILM NIGHT IN An evening of fan favourites and forgotten treasures from stage and screen, Sat 12 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

TEENA BIZKIT'S NAUGHTY LIST Solihull's 'most lovable' drag artist returns for an evening of 'big laughs, festive filth and a whole lot of sparkle', Sat 12 Dec, The Core Theatre, Solihull

A CHRISTMAS WASSAIL The Crescent Theatre presents a festive feast of choral music, solo songs, spoken word and comedy, Sat 12 Dec, Coughton Court, Warwickshire

THE FULL FATT SOUND: KEEP THE YULETIDE GAY Evening of contemporary choral delights sprinkled with some secular festive cheer, Sat 12 Dec, Jennifer Blackwell Performance Space, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

STEP INTO CHRISTMAS Join theatre-maker and BBC Radio Four regular John Osbourne as he journeys through a lifetime of Christmas songs in a show described as 'funny, nostalgic and full of seasonal spirit', Sun 13 Dec, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

NAYAB MIDHA LIVE Acclaimed spoken-word poetry show offering a perspective-shifting experience of deep, emotional and thought-provoking storytelling, Sun 13 Dec, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

TOYAH'S CHRISTMAS PARTY Join the It's A Mystery star for a sparkling seasonal celebration, Sun 13 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

STEP INTO CHRISTMAS Feelgood concert spectacular that promises to have audiences singing along from start to finish..., Sun 13 Dec, Kidderminster Town Hall

CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR Brandhall Community Choir & Langley Community Brass present a concert filled with festive favourites and Christmas classics, Sun 13 Dec, Halesowen Town Hall

CHRISTMAS WITH THE SALVATION ARMY Feast of music featuring carol favourites, Sun 13 Dec, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

HIGHBURY CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE Sun 13 Dec, Emmanuel Church, Sutton Coldfield

D-DAY DARLINGS - A CHRISTMAS TO REMEMBER Featuring a collection of festive favourites, including White Christmas, Winter Wonderland, Jingle Bells and It's The Most Wonderful Time Of The Year, Sun 13 Dec, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

CHRISTMAS BY CANDLELIGHT A programme of carols, Christmas classics and seasonal surprises, Sun 13 Dec, St Laurence's Church, Ludlow, South Shropshire

A CHRISTMAS WASSAIL The Crescent Theatre presents a festive feast of choral music, solo songs, spoken word and comedy, Sun 13 & Mon 14 Dec, The Crescent Theatre, B'ham

Carol Concerts

CHRISTMAS CAROL CONCERT Featuring Music Academy of Singing & Whittle Academy. Programme features 'beloved carols, beautiful music, and seasonal spirit', Tues 8 Dec, Coventry Cathedral

CHARITY CHRISTMAS CONCERT Featuring the young musicians of Shrewsbury School, Wed 9 Dec, Shrewsbury School

BCU CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE Featuring Elli-Mae McGlone (conductor) & RBC Camerata, Thurs 10 Dec, St Philip's Cathedral, B'ham

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM CHOIR: CAROLS AT ST MARTIN'S Featuring Adrian Lucas (conductor) & Paul Carr (organ). Programme includes carols old and new, Sat 12 Dec, St Martin in the Bullring, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS WITH THE SALVATION ARMY A 'Christmas feast of music', Sun 13 Dec, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

Events

SANTA'S GROTTO Visit Santa in his grotto, set within the walls of the 11th-century castle, until Thurs 24 Dec, Dudley Zoo & Castle

BIRMINGHAM FRANKFURT CHRISTMAS MARKET Long-established attraction offering a large range of traditional goods and gifts plus a selection of food & drink, until Thurs 24 Dec, Victoria Square, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS IN CATHEDRAL SQUARE CRAFT MARKET Featuring a variety of crafts, gifts and food & drink stalls, until, Thurs 24 Dec, St Philip's Cathedral, Cathedral Square, Colmore Row, Birmingham

SPECTACLE OF LIGHT 2026 Event based around the theme of Alice's Amazing Adventures In Wonderland, until Wed 30 Dec, Sudeley Castle, Cheltenham

MAGICAL ELF FAMILY TRAIL Follow a trail of festive elf doors around the venue, until Thurs 31 Dec, The Commandery, Worcester

WINTER LIGHT EXPERIENCE A brand-new Christmas-season attraction featuring more than 30 illuminated installations, until Sat 2 Jan, The Belfry Hotel & Resort, Sutton Coldfield

SANTA'S SPECIAL DELIVERY FAMILY TRAIL Can you find all eight missing Christmas presents, have a look inside each gift box, and draw the toy you can see? until Sun 3 Jan, Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

WINTER FUNLAND Enjoy unlimited funfair rides, skate on the gigantic ice rink, visit the circus and more, Sat 5 Dec - Sun 3 Jan, NEC, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS EVENING TOUR Special after-hours tour and Christmas dinner, Tues 8 Dec, Baddesley Clinton, Warwickshire

AN EVENING WITH SANTA Featuring seasonal music from a local choir, warming hot chocolate and the chance to meet Santa, Wed 9 Dec, Coughton Court, Warwickshire

EARLY YEARS CHRISTMAS: EXPERIENCE SLEIGH, STORIES & SANTA Step into the magic of Christmas with a festive adventure designed especially for little ones up to and including the age of four, Wed 9 Dec, Coventry Transport Museum

FOLLIES SAFARI Take a 4x4 journey through the enchanted forest to find Santa in his secret hillside grotto, Wed 9 - Wed 23 Dec, Hawkstone Park Follies, Shropshire



Santa's Grotto - Dudley Zoo & Castle

CHRISTMAS EVENING TOUR Special after-hours tour and Christmas dinner, Thurs 10 Dec, Baddesley Clinton, Warwickshire

SEASONAL MAKERS MARKET Featuring an array of independent, local traders selling handcrafted and sustainably made items, Thurs 10 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

ASTON BY CANDLELIGHT: A CHRISTMAS TOUR Experience this Grade 1 listed building at night as you're guided through Christmases past, Thurs 10 - Sun 13 Dec, Aston Hall, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS DRIVE IN CINEMA Enjoy a Christmas movie night from the comfort of your own car, Fri 11 Dec, Alderford Lake, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

LIGHT UP A LIFE Dedicate a light on the Christmas tree to remember a loved one, Fri 11 Dec, Myton Hospice Support Hub, Rugby

NASHVILLE ON ICE Take to the real ice for a themed skating session, Fri 11 Dec, Alderford Lake, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

CAROL TRAINS Musicians from across Shropshire and Worcestershire sing a selection of seasonal songs, Fri 11 - Sat 12 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

TELFORD FESTIVE GARDENS Follow the illuminated route through a series of seasonal scenes. Music, storytelling and plenty of Christmas cheer all add to the experience, Thurs 10 - Sun 13 Dec, The Chelsea & Maxwell Gardens, Telford Town Park, Shropshire



SANTA ISLAND EXPERIENCE Sail across sparkling waters to Santa's secret island, where elves share sweet treats, tell magical tales, and lead you to Santa's cosy grotto, Fri 11 - Sun 13 Dec, Alderford Lake, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

ICE SKATING BY THE LAKE Get your skates on and enjoy Alderford Lake's real ice rink, Fri 11 - Sun 13 Dec, Alderford Lake, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

FESTIVE LIGHTS The annual festive lights display returns, Fri 11 - Sun 13 Dec, Biddulph Grange Garden, Staffordshire

VISIT SANTA: VINTAGE SLEIGH RIDE EXPERIENCE Celebrating the Vintage Sleigh's 70th anniversary with a 1950s 'Driving Home For Christmas' theme, Fri 11 - Sun 13 Dec, Coventry Transport Museum

SOFT WAX PENDANT-MAKING WORKSHOP WITH ATYPICAL THING Join independent jeweller Josefina Flello Martinez of Atypical Thing for a hands-on jewellery-making workshop, Sat 12 Dec, Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS GROTTO & FESTIVE FUN Santa visits the lock-up with a gift for every child, Sat 12 Dec, West Midlands Police Museum, B'ham

CHRISTMAS VILLAGE & SANTA'S GROTTO Wander through the zoo and village, 'surrounded by twinkling lights and Christmas magic', Sat 12 Dec, Exotic Zoo, Telford Town Park, Shropshire

MEET FATHER CHRISTMAS Say hello to Father Christmas within a decorated seasonal setting, Sat 12 Dec, Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

BONGO'S BINGO - CHRISTMAS SPECIAL The original bingo rave sensation, Sat 12 Dec, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

THE POLAR EXPRESS™ TRAIN RIDE Experience the magic of the much-loved Christmas story, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Dec, Moor Street Station, B'ham

'A CHRISTMAS CAROL' GUIDED TOUR Take a guided tour of the town to learn about the locations used in the 1984 version of A Christmas Carol, filmed in Shrewsbury and starring Academy Award winner George C Scott, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Dec, Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

CHRISTMAS ELF CADET TRAINING Train to become one of the RAF Museum's finest Elf Cadets, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Dec, Royal Air Force Museum Midlands, Cosford

WELCOME TO ELF ACADEMY Step into the magic of Christmas as you meet Santa and train to become an elf, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Dec, Hartlebury Castle, Worcester

SANTA'S STEAM SPECIALS Step aboard a 'magical' steam train from Kidderminster Station and journey into 'a world of festive wonder', Sat 12 - Sun 13 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

NORTH POLE ADVENTURE Go on 'a magical journey to the heart of the wondrous North Pole', Sat 12 - Sun 13 Dec, National Forest Adventure Farm, Burton upon Trent

FESTIVE BEWDLEY SHUTTLE Festive shuttle service between Kidderminster and Bewdley, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

SANTA'S GROTTO Meet Santa in his cosy grotto, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Dec, Apley Farm Shop, nr Shifnal, Shropshire

CHRISTMAS AT THE COMMANDERY Featuring fun festive activities, seasonal music and the chance to meet Santa, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Dec, The Commandery, Worcester

MEET FATHER CHRISTMAS Children can meet Santa and share their Christmas wishes, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Dec, Coughton Court, Warwickshire

SEVERN HOSPICE CHRISTMAS FAYRE Browse local stalls filled with gifts, crafts and festive food, enjoy live music and seasonal refreshments, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Dec, Severn Hospice Bicton Heath, Shrewsbury

SPOT SANTA Santa takes a break from his workshop for a wander around the museum, making surprise appearances in the galleries, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Dec, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

SANTA'S WORKSHOP Enjoy a special meeting with Father Christmas before joining his Christmas Elves in the workshop for a hands-on craft activity, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Dec, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

CHRISTMAS JUMPER WEEKEND Pull on your favourite festive knit and enjoy 10% off your public skate ticket, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Dec, Telford Ice Rink, Shropshire

SANTA SKATE SESSIONS Enjoy a festive skate and keep an eye out for a very special guest, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Dec, Telford Ice Rink, Shropshire

THE ELF EXPRESS Join in with the elves' Christmas capers and discover plenty of surprises along the way, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

STORYTIME WITH SANTA Meet Santa and enjoy some yuletide songs and stories to get you in the festive spirit, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Dec, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

FESTIVE FUN Enjoy seasonal activities throughout the castle, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Dec, Kenilworth Castle, Warks



MEET FATHER CHRISTMAS Father Christmas takes time out of his busy festive schedule to tell some of his favourite seasonal stories, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Dec, Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire

SANTA'S WORKSHOP Enjoy a special meeting with Father Christmas before joining his Christmas elves in the workshop for a hands-on craft activity, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Dec, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

FESTIVE BEWDLEY SHUTTLE Festive shuttle service between Kidderminster and Bewdley, Sat 12 - Sun 13 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

LIGHT UP A LIFE Dedicate a light on the Christmas tree to remember a loved one, Sun 13 Dec, Myton Hospice, Warwick

A WINTER TRADITION WITH THE BRUMMIE GEMS Sun 13 Dec, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery

THE POLAR EXPRESS AND SANTA VISIT Enjoy the festive favourite on Birmingham's biggest screen, Sun 13 Dec, Millennium Point, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS DRIVE IN CINEMA Enjoy a Christmas movie night from the comfort of your own car, Sun 13 Dec, Alderford Lake, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR Browse a variety of craft stalls to find a unique Christmas gift or several, Sun 13 Dec, Forge Mill Needle Museum, Redditch

PARTY WITH SANTA Play traditional party games with Santa and enjoy a festive storytime, Sun 13 Dec, Hartlebury Castle, Worcester

TELFORD 10K Statistically proven as the fastest 10k course in the UK, Sun 13 Dec, Telford Town Park, Shropshire



Talisk - Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

Gigs

TALISK Mon 14 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

GHOSTFACE KILLAH Mon 14 Dec, O2 Institute, B'ham

SEX PISTOLS FEAT. FRANK CARTER Mon 14 Dec, O2 Academy, Birmingham

WESSELBOBS Mon 14 Dec, The Fleece Inn, Bretforton, Nr Evesham

JIM CAUSLEY & MIRANDA SYKES Mon 14 Dec, West Malvern Social Club

THE ALBION CHRISTMAS BAND Mon 14 Dec, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

THE DIDDY SWEG NATIVITY Tues 15 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

ASH Tues 15 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE BOOTLEG BEATLES Tues 15 Dec, Symphony Hall, B'ham

THE OGRETONES Tues 15 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE ALBION CHRISTMAS BAND Tues 15 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

RICHARD HAWLEY Tues 15 Dec, Kidderminster Town Hall

B'SPOKE Tues 15 - Wed 16 Dec, The Jam House, B'ham

VIVID SOUL Wed 16 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

TREVOR HORN Wed 16 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

MIRANDA SYKES AND JIM CAUSLEY Wed 16 Dec, Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

OLLY MURS TRIBUTE Wed 16 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

JAMES OLIVER BAND Wed 16 Dec, Temperance, Leamington Spa

RICHARD BENNETT'S NEW ORLEANS ALL STARS JAZZ BAND Wed 16 Dec, Boldmere Sports and Social Club, Sutton Coldfield

THE BRACKISH Wed 16 Dec, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

THE STYLE COUNCILLORS Wed 16 Dec, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

BETH PRIOR COLLECTIVE Wed 16 Dec, LOOP, Shrewsbury

ORCHESTRA MAMBO INTERNATIONAL Thurs 17 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

SWEETPOOL Thurs 17 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

CRUEL SEASON Thurs 17 Dec, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

THE LUKE COMBS COLLECTION Thurs 17 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

ENSEMBLE BEDNIERI + SUPERSONIC HOUSE BAND Thurs 17 Dec, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

ELTONS SONG - BEYOND THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD Thurs 17 Dec, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE CHURCHFITTERS Thurs 17 Dec, Temperance, Leamington Spa

THE AMY WINEHOUSE BAND Thurs 17 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

THE ALBION CHRISTMAS BAND Thurs 17 Dec, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

MAN IN THE MIRROR Thurs 17 Dec, Kidderminster Town Hall

AKA NOEL GALLAGHER + TRULY WELLER Thurs 17 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

COMMON TRUTHS RADIO LIVE Thurs 17 Dec, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

GINGER WILDHEART BAND + CLAM ABUSE + SILVER GINGER 5 Thurs 17 Dec, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

ALISON RAYNER QUINTET Thurs 17 Dec, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

ROB LAMBERTI PRESENTS PERFECTLY GEORGE MICHAEL Thurs 17 Dec, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

DUSTBIRDS Thurs 17 Dec, Bill's Kitchen, Ludlow, South Shropshire

DETROIT SOUL COLLECTIVE Thurs 17 - Sat 19 Dec, The Jam House, Birmingham

PROFESSOR GREEN Fri 18 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

KURUPT FM Fri 18 Dec, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE 3 SIXTIES Fri 18 Dec, Jo Jo Jims, Birmingham

ENJOY THE SILENCE UK Fri 18 Dec, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

FLUOXETINE Fri 18 Dec, Dead Wax, Digbeth, Birmingham

TALON Fri 18 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

CULTURE CLUB + ABC + HAIRCUT 100 Fri 18 Dec, Utilita Arena Birmingham

BLUES MAFIA Fri 18 Dec, Temperance, Leamington Spa

OASIIS Fri 18 Dec, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

ONE 4 THE ROAD Fri 18 Dec, The Royal, Sutton Coldfield

SABBOTAGE + WIZARDS OF OZ Fri 18 Dec, Arches Venue, Coventry

THE ROOTERS Fri 18 Dec, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

ULTIMATE COLDPLAY Fri 18 Dec, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

THE BRIGHTSIDES Fri 18 Dec, Drummonds, Worcester

KING PLEASURE AND THE BISCUIT BOYS Fri 18 Dec, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

MAET LIVE AND THE NEVER NEVERLAND EXPRESS Fri 18 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

DIZZY LIZZY Fri 18 Dec, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

FLEETWOOD SHACK Fri 18 Dec, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

REARVIEW MIRROR Fri 18 Dec, Riff Factory, Stoke-on-Trent

THE GERRY CINNAMAN EXPERIENCE Fri 18 Dec, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

DISCHARGE + RETSU + HATE + HEAD DENT Fri 18 Dec, The Underground, Stoke-on-Trent

BLONDISH Fri 18 Dec, Two Gates Club, Tamworth

THE DETOURS Fri 18 Dec, The Station, Cannock

SKADILLACS Fri 18 Dec, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

DON'T STOP QUEEN NOW Fri 18 Dec, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

THE RONALDOS Fri 18 Dec, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

ELVIS THROUGH THE DECADES Fri 18 Dec, The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

UNDER THE COVERS Sat 19 Dec, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

CHARLOTTE YOUNG Sat 19 Dec, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

BLACK PARADE Sat 19 Dec, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE TWANG Sat 19 Dec, O2 Academy, Birmingham

DISCHARGE Sat 19 Dec, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

SLEEP BROKEN Sat 19 Dec, The Flapper, Birmingham

MINISTRY OF SOUND CLASSICAL Sat 19 Dec, Symphony Hall, B'ham

SOUTHERN BEAUTY FT. ALISON WHEELER Sat 19 Dec, Temperance, Leamington Spa

UNDER THE COVERS Sat 19 Dec, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

JB DIVINE & THE SOUL WHISPERERS Sat 19 Dec, The Royal, Sutton Coldfield

7TH SON Sat 19 Dec, The Royal, Sutton Coldfield

BEDROCKS BULLETS Sat 19 Dec, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

FRED ZEPPELIN Sat 19 Dec, Marrs Bar, Worcester

ST AGNES FOUNTAIN Sat 19 Dec, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

MALVERN BIG BAND JAZZ CHRISTMAS CLASSICS Sat 19 Dec, Malvern Cube

FLAT TONIC Sat 19 Dec, The Valkyrie Bar, Evesham

GO WEST Sat 19 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

SPACEHOPPERS Sat 19 Dec, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

A WINTER UNION Sat 19 Dec, Wolverhampton Arts Centre



FELL OUT BOY + STIFF BIZKIT + DOOKIE Sat 19 Dec, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

BON GIOVI Sat 19 Dec, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

BLACK COAST Sat 19 Dec, The Underground, Stoke-on-Trent

THE LONGFORD SCUTTERS Sat 19 Dec, The Station, Cannock

KD AND THE DOGS Sat 19 Dec, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

THE FLEETWOOD MACK EXPERIENCE Sat 19 Dec, Rugeley Rose Theatre

THE CHRISTIANS Sat 19 Dec, The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

VASELINE Sat 19 - Sun 20 Dec, Jo Jo Jims, Birmingham

ROVING CROWS Sat 19 - Sun 20 Dec, West Malvern Social Club

PETE WILLIAMS & HIS BAND Sun 20 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE DEADLIANS Sun 20 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

MIDNIGHT CITY SOUL Sun 20 Dec, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

TOMMY ASHBY + LYDIA CLOWES + JODIE MARIE Sun 20 Dec, Temperance, Leamington Spa

SAINT SENARA Sun 20 Dec, Temperance, Leamington Spa



WHAT ABOUT ERIC? + LASERBUN + WE ARE COMMUNIST + THE THORNS Sun 20 Dec, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

KICK THE FRIDGE Sun 20 Dec, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

STONE FOUNDATION Sun 20 Dec, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

SOUL STRIPPER Sun 20 Dec, Marrs Bar, Worcester

AC/DSHE + HIGHWAY Sun 20 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

FLINT FIRE - THE PRODIGY TRIBUTE Sun 20 Dec, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

THE WEST COAST EAGLES Sun 20 Dec, The Station, Cannock

DAYTON GREY Sun 20 Dec, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

Classical Music

GAUDETE! Charity Christmas concert, Mon 14 Dec, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

STAFFORD CHORAL SOCIETY: HANDEL'S MESSIAH Featuring Bellini Strings, Russell Medley (accompanist) & Sam Hayes (musical director), Mon 14 Dec, St Mary's Church, Stafford

ARMONICO CONSORT: CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring Christopher Monks (musical director). Programme includes works by Chilcott, Grüber, Rutter & more... Tues 15 Dec, St Mary's Church, Warwick

TASO KIPIANI PIANO RECITAL Tues 15 Dec, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

BRITTEN'S CEREMONY OF CAROLS Featuring the Girls' Choir of the Collegiate Church of St Mary's, Wed 16 Dec, St Mary's Church, Warwick

CBSO CHRISTMAS PARTY Featuring Stephen Bell (conductor), Jess Gillam (presenter), Sumudu Jayatilaka & Tom Solomon (vocalists), CBSO Chorus, Youth Chorus & Children's Chorus. Programme includes a selection of festive favourites, Thurs 17 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

EX CATHEDRA: CHRISTMAS MUSIC BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor) & Rupert Jeffcoat (organ). Seasonal music with a sprinkling of carols and readings, Thurs 17 Dec, Coventry Cathedral

BRITTEN'S CEREMONY OF CAROLS Featuring The Cathedral Girls' Choir & Chloe Chousmer-Kerr (harp), Thurs 17 Dec, Coventry Cathedral

PHOENIX SINGERS: A GIFT OF HOPE Featuring Samantha Oxborough, (mezzo soprano), Richard Dawson (organ), Ladies Fighting Breast Cancer Choir, RGS Dodderhill School Choir & Gemini Brass Ensemble, Thurs 17 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

THE BREWOOD SINGERS: COUNTDOWN TO CHRISTMAS! Featuring Cor Bach Male Choir, Thurs 17 Dec, St Mary & St Chad Church, Brewood

CBSO CHORAL CHRISTMAS Featuring Michael Seal (conductor), Jess Gillam (presenter), CBSO Chorus, Youth Chorus, Children's Chorus & SO Vocal. Programme includes a selection of festive favourites, Fri 18 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

EX CATHEDRA: CHRISTMAS MUSIC BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor) & Rupert Jeffcoat (organ). Seasonal music with a sprinkling of carols and readings, Fri 18 Dec, The Great Hall, University of Birmingham

COVENTRY CATHEDRAL CHOIR CHRISTMAS CONCERT Featuring the Brass Band of Central England, Fri 18 Dec, Coventry Cathedral

COVENTRY CATHEDRAL CHORUS: CONCERTS BY CANDELIGHT Fri 18 Dec, Compton Verney, Warwickshire

SHREWSBURY BAROQUE ORCHESTRA: FESTIVE BAROQUE Featuring Conor Gricmanis (director). Programme includes works by Vivaldi, Bach & Corelli, Fri 18 Dec, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

CONCERTS IN THE ROUND Featuring Gill Styles & Richard Walker (piano). Programme includes a series of seasonal piano duets, Fri 18 Dec, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

BIRMINGHAM CHORAL UNION: FAMILY CHRISTMAS CONCERT Featuring Colin Baines (conductor) & Darren Hogg (organ & piano). Programme includes a range of seasonal songs and carols, and a visit from Father Christmas..., Sat 19 Dec, Selly Oak Methodist Church, Birmingham

ARMONICO CONSORT: CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring Christopher Monks (musical director). Programme includes works by Chilcott, Grüber, Rutter & more..., Sat 19 Dec, St Mary's Church, Warwick

VOX POPULI: A CHRISTMAS TAPESTRY Featuring Orchestra of the Swan, Kate Brook (voice), David le Page & Harvey Brough (leaders). Programme includes carols, wassails and seasonal songs, Sat 19 Dec, Holy Trinity Church, Leamington Spa

TIDINGS OF JOY Featuring Worcester Cathedral Choir. An enchanting evening of Christmas music, Sat 19 Dec, Worcester Cathedral

HANDEL'S MESSIAH Featuring Richard Robbins (director), Sat 19 Dec, Shrewsbury Abbey

EX CATHEDRA: CHRISTMAS MUSIC BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor) & Nicholas Wearne (organ). Seasonal music with a sprinkling of carols and readings, Sat 19 Dec, St Paul's Church, B'ham

WOMBOURNE AND DISTRICT CHORAL SOCIETY: CHRISTMAS MUSIC & CAROLS Sat 19 Dec, Beckminster Methodist Church, Wolverhampton

CHRISTMAS WITH SIR KARL JENKINS Also featuring Lucy Crowe (soprano), Philip Cobb (trumpeter), Felix Higginbottom (hand drummer), Manchester Chorale & London Concert Orchestra. Programme includes carols and classics from Sir Karl's festive albums, Sun 20 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

SHREWSBURY CANTATA CHOIR: CAROLS Featuring Anthony Coupe (musical director). A relaxed family carol service with mulled wine, mince pies and Trombones, Sun 20 Dec, Shrewsbury United Reformed Church

CHRISTMAS WITH THE JOHN RUTTER ENSEMBLE Sun 20 Dec, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

Comedy

JOE LYCETT & FRIENDS Mon 14 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ANGELOS EPITHEMIOU, JENNY HART, ROGER MONKHOUSE & FREDDIE QUINNE Wed 16 Dec, Herbert's Yard, B'ham

KATE BARRON, LINDSEY SANTORO, ANDREW BIRD & PHIL NICHOL Wed 16 - Sat 19 Dec, The Glee Club, B'ham

CLINTON BAPTISTE Thurs 17 Dec, Halesowen Town Hall

BARBARA NICE'S CHRISTMAS CRACKER Thurs 17 - Fri 18 Dec, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

ROGER MONKHOUSE, STEVE HARRIS & COMIC TBC Sat 19 Dec, Rosies, Birmingham

CHRIS WASHINGTON, RICH AUSTIN, MICHAEL LEGGE & WILL DUGGAN Sat 19 Dec, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

MILTON JONES & GUESTS Sat 19 Dec, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

FAMILY COMEDY SHOW WITH ALEXANDER BENNETT, MAT RICARDO & TED HILL Sun 20 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham

TOMMY SANDHU, SUGAR SAMMY, DALISO CHAPONDA & DIESEL Sun 20 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SUKH OJLA, BLANK PENG, ANNETTE FAGON & SAMIRA BANKS Sun 20 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham

Theatre

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, until Tues 15 Dec, Birmingham Ormiston Academy

MIDDLEMARCH PARTS 1 & 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

PETER PAN Joe Murphy directs a faithful retelling of JM Barrie's much-loved children's story, until Sun 17 Jan, The Rep, Birmingham

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

MEAN GIRLS Meet The Plastics in this award-winning musical starring Jennifer Ellison, Emily Lane and Vivian Panka, Mon 14 Dec - Sat 2 Jan, The Alexandra, Birmingham

A CHRISTMAS CAROL One-man version of Charles Dickens' classic festive tale, adapted and performed by Mat Jones, Tues 15 Dec, Sandon Hall, Stafford

THE WATSONS Stage2 present an amateur stage version of Jane Austen's unfinished novel, Thurs 17 - Sat 19 Dec, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

PETER PAN Playbox Theatre present an amateur stage version of JM Barrie's timeless tale, Thurs 17 - Wed 30 Dec, The Dream Factory, Warwick

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS Paperback Theatre's festive stage version of Kenneth Grahame's enchanting tale, Fri 18 Dec, The Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

A CHRISTMAS CAROL One-man performance of Charles Dickens' classic festive tale, adapted and performed by Mat Jones, Fri 18 Dec, Lightwoods Park and House, Smethwick

Pantomimes

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST Polka Dot Pantomimes present a new version of the classic fairytale, until Thurs 31 Dec, The Old Rep, Birmingham

ROBIN HOOD THE PANTOMIME Presented by Tread The Boards Theatre Company, until Thurs 31 Dec, Rother Street Arts House, Stratford-upon-Avon

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST Family pantomime written by and starring Coventry's favourite dame, Iain Lauchlan. Expect breathtaking sets, crazy costumes and seasonal silliness, until Sat 2 Jan, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

SLEEPING BEAUTY Journey to a faraway land full of magic and laughter in a lively festive production that sees a cast of local young talent performing alongside professional actors, until Sat 2 Jan, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

CINDERELLA Much-loved family panto featuring Gyasi Sheppy as Prince Charming, Oliver Gray as Lavina Hardup, Dean Horner as Louisa Hardup, Simon Bashford as Dandini, Ian Weichardt as Buttons, Charlotte Castle as Cinderella, Janine Pardoe as Fairy Godmother and Andrew Haynes as Baron Hardup, until Sat 2 Jan, Palace Theatre, Redditch

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, until Sun 3 Jan, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

ROBIN HOOD A merry pantomime adventure presented by Worcester Repertory Company, until Sun 3 Jan, Swan Theatre, Worcester

ALADDIN Festive family fun featuring

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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, until Sun 10 Jan, Lichfield Garrick

CINDERELLA DE Caversmill present an amateur version of the festive family favourite, Mon 14 - Sun 20 Dec, Stoke Rep Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK Starring Telford favourites Ian Smith as Dame Trott and Carl Dutfield as Carl The Cow. Coronation Street's Scott Wright appears as Fleshcreep, local favourite Sally Cove is Princess Jill, Ryan Rooth plays Jack, and Georgina Newton waves her wand as the Fairy, Tues 15 Dec - Sat 2 Jan, Telford International Centre, Shropshire

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK Amateur version of the fun family pantomime, Tues 15 Dec - Sun 3 Jan, Priory Theatre, Kenilworth

DICK WHITTINGTON Family pantomime starring Liam Burton as Dick, Matthew Dye as Dame Sarah, Tim Churchill as King Ra, Lucy Wainwright as Alice Fitzwarren, Patrick Buckley as Alderman and Catherine O'Reilly as Fairy Bowbells, Fri 18 - Thurs 31 Dec, Mitchell Arts Centre, Stoke-on-Trent

CINDERELLA Amateur version of the much-loved family favourite, Sat 19 Dec - Sat 2 Jan, Talisman Theatre & Arts Centre, Kenilworth

SLEEPING BEAUTY The 'pantomime of your dreams', starring Rylan, Zoe Birckett, Ben Culleton and Keziah Ibe alongside Hippodrome regulars Matt Slack and Andrew Ryan, Sat 19 Dec - Sun 31 Jan, Birmingham Hippodrome

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK Tread Productions present a 'high-octane, gag-aplenty pantomime', Sun 20 Dec, Rugeley Rose Theatre

Kids Theatre

SANTA'S NEW SLEIGH Festive play penned by Brad Fitt, with music and songs by Richard Lamming. Perfect for pre-school kids and children up to the age of eight, until Thurs 24 Dec, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE GINGERBREAD MAN Worcester Repertory Company presents a festive story filled with magic, music and laughter, until Thurs 24 Dec, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

THE GRUFFALO'S CHILD Tall Stories present an enchanting version of Julia Donaldson's much-loved picture book, until Sun 27 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

THE BEAR AND THE PIANO Puppetry and music combine in a new stage production that brings to life David Litchfield's popular children's book, until Sun 10 Jan, The Other Place, Stratford-upon-Avon

SANTA'S BEST EVER CHRISTMAS Brand-new interactive musical adventure, ideal for youngsters aged between two and eight, Fri 18 - Thurs 24 Dec, The Core Theatre, Solihull

THE TOYMAKER Festive family show inspired by various traditional stories from around the world. Suitable for children aged five-plus, Sat 19 Dec, The Hub, Newport, Shropshire

Dance

ANTON AT CHRISTMAS Brand-new festive-season show promising sparkle, glamour, music and spectacular dancing, Wed 16 Dec, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

XMAS ON THE DANCEFLOOR Strictly star Gorka Márquez is joined by a cast of dancers and singers in a show that brings iconic Christmas hits to life, Sun 20 Dec, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

Light Entertainment

G4 CHRISTMAS An evening of yuletide magic with unique renditions of traditional carols, sacred contemplations and modern festive hits, Tues 15 Dec, Coventry Cathedral

THE BIG CHRISTMAS SING A-LONG WITH ALED JONES & ALEXANDER ARMSTRONG A 'heartwarming' live experience, featuring music, laughter and plenty of Christmas cheer, Tues 15 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

IOLA WILLIAMS: WONDERFUL WELSH WILDLIFE Join the ornithologist and TV presenter for 'an insight into wildlife, interspersed with personal anecdotes and plenty of humour', Wed 16 Dec, Festival Drayton, Market Drayton, South Shropshire

SWING INTO CHRISTMAS An evening of festive and non-festive classics, performed by the Down For The Count Swing Orchestra, Wed 16 Dec, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

NADIA EIDE - CHRISTMAS AT THE MUSICALS Wed 16 Dec, Shrewsbury Abbey

RAT PACK REPRISE Join Frank, Dean and Sammy for an evening of Las Vegas glitz and glamour, Thurs 17 Dec, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

A VERY MERRY VINTAGE CHRISTMAS Cathy Morris and Dean Thomas present an evening of vintage and swing music, plus Christmas classics, Thurs 17 Dec, The Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton

MUSIC OF BUBLE BY CANDLELIGHT Thurs 17 Dec, Shrewsbury Abbey

STONE CHORAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT 'Carols, classics and brass to brighten your Christmas', Thurs 17 Dec, Crown Wharf Theatre, Stone

A GIFT OF HOME: VOICES UNITED AGAINST BREAST CANCER Featuring Gemini Brass, Samantha Oxborough and Richard Dawson, Thurs 17 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

MUSICALS AT CHRISTMAS Presented by Langley Band & Tinkers Farm Operatic Society, Fri 18 Dec, Halesowen Town Hall

THAT'LL BE CHRISTMAS Show featuring 'festive favourites, heartwarming moments and laugh-out-loud comedy', Fri 18 Dec, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

WORD UP 80'S CHRISTMAS! Nostalgic show taking audiences back to the decade of big hair, tinsel and epic anthems, Fri 18 Dec, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

THE MAGIC ROOM! Show mixing 'breathtaking' stage magic and stand-up comedy, Fri 18 Dec, Rugeley Rose Theatre

RAT PACK REPRISE Join Frank, Dean and Sammy for an evening of Las Vegas glitz and glamour, Fri 18 Dec, The Civic, Stourport

CHRISTMAS BY CANDLELIGHT A programme of carols, Christmas classics and seasonal surprises, Fri 18 Dec, Shrewsbury Abbey

MINISTRY OF SOUND CLASSICAL The very best tunes hand-picked from dance music history and recreated in a breathtaking performance by an incredible 31-piece orchestra, Sat 19 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE LORD OF THE RINGS - THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING IN CONCERT Anniversary concert featuring Howard Shore's original score performed live to the epic motion picture, Sat 19 Dec, bp pulse LIVE, Birmingham



TEA & BISCUITS PRESENTS: SLEIGH QUEENS! Spruced-up local drag queens Cruella de Phil and Ho Ho Chocho Escandalo host an evening of games, prizes, songs, interviews, lip-syncs and more..., Sat 19 Dec, The Hive, Shrewsbury

A LITTLE BIG CHRISTMAS Show celebrating 'the music, magic and joy of musical theatre', Sun 19 Dec, Crown Wharf Theatre, Stone

GREAT BIG XMAS SHOW A Christmas party for all ages, complete with music and a special visit from Santa and his cheeky elves, Sat 19 Dec, Stourbridge Town Hall

THE SNOWMAN WITH LIVE ORCHESTRA Screening of Raymond Briggs' magical story, accompanied by a live orchestra and a solo from the Cathedral's choristers, Sat 19 Dec, Coventry Cathedral

FESTIVE STORY BAZAAR An evening of storytelling, real-talk poetry and music, Sun 20 Dec, Wolverhampton Arts Centre

A CELTIC CHRISTMAS Production promising powerful melodies, haunting instruments and bewitching harmonies, Sun 20 Dec, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

THE SNOWMAN: FILM WITH LIVE ORCHESTRA The much-loved film is projected on to a huge screen, with its soundtrack performed live by a professional orchestra, Sun 20 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

WIFI WARS: CHRISTMAS SPECIAL Audience participation is a must during this unique experience, in which games and quizzes are magically beamed into smartphones and tablets using WiFi Wars' impressive tech, Sun 20 Dec, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

SLEIGH THE STAGE Christmas concert full of singing, dancing, family entertainment and 'a few laughs along the way', Sun 20 Dec, Dudley Town Hall

Events

SANTA'S GROTTO Visit Santa in his grotto, set within the walls of the 11th-century castle, until Thurs 24 Dec, Dudley Zoo & Castle

BIRMINGHAM FRANKFURT CHRISTMAS MARKET Long-established attraction offering a large range of traditional goods and gifts plus a selection of food & drink, until Thurs 24 Dec, Victoria Square, Birmingham

CHRISTMAS IN CATHEDRAL SQUARE CRAFT MARKET Featuring a variety of crafts, gifts and food & drink stalls, until Thurs 24 Dec, St Philip's Cathedral, Cathedral Square, Colmore Row, Birmingham

SPECTACLE OF LIGHT 2026 Event based around the theme of Alice's Amazing Adventures In Wonderland, until Wed 30 Dec, Sudeley Castle, Cheltenham

MAGICAL ELF FAMILY TRAIL Follow a trail of festive elf doors around the venue, until Thurs 31 Dec, The Commandery, Worcester

WINTER LIGHT EXPERIENCE A brand-new Christmas-season attraction

featuring more than 30 illuminated installations, until Sat 2 Jan, The Belfry Hotel & Resort, Sutton Coldfield

SANTA'S SPECIAL DELIVERY FAMILY TRAIL Can you find all eight missing Christmas presents, have a look inside each gift box, and draw the toy you can see? until Sun 3 Jan, Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

WINTER FUNLAND Enjoy unlimited funfair rides, skate on the gigantic ice rink, visit the circus and more, until Sun 3 Jan, NEC, Birmingham



THE CHRISTMAS LIGHT SHOW Acclaimed animation team Illuminos bring Lichfield Cathedral to life with a spectacular projection show, Tues 15 - Mon 21 Dec, Lichfield Cathedral

EARLY YEARS CHRISTMAS: EXPERIENCE SLEIGH, STORIES & SANTA Step into the magic of Christmas with a festive adventure designed especially for little ones up to and including the age of four, Wed 16 Dec, Coventry Transport Museum

MORNINGS WITH FATHER CHRISTMAS Opportunity for younger ones to meet Father Christmas on a quieter day, Wed 16 Dec, Forge Mill Needle Museum, Redditch

ICE SKATING BY THE LAKE Get your skates on and enjoy Alderford Lake's real ice rink, Wed 16 - Wed 23 Dec, Alderford Lake, Ellesmere, Shropshire

TELFORD FESTIVE GARDENS Follow the illuminated route through a series of seasonal scenes. Music, storytelling and plenty of Christmas cheer all add to the experience, Thurs 17 - Mon 21 December

SANTA'S GROTTO AFTER HOURS Meet Santa and discover more about his reindeer helpers, Fri 18 Dec, Dudley Zoo & Castle

CAROL TRAINS Musicians from across Shropshire and Worcestershire sing seasonal songs, Fri 18 - Sat 19 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

VISIT SANTA: VINTAGE SLEIGH RIDE EXPERIENCE Celebrating the Vintage Sleigh's 70th anniversary with a 1950s 'Driving Home For Christmas' theme, Fri 18 - Sun 20 Dec, Coventry Transport Museum

SANTA SKATE SESSIONS Enjoy a festive skate and keep an eye out for a very special guest, Fri 18 - Sun 20 Dec, Telford Ice Rink, Shropshire

THE POLAR EXPRESS™ TRAIN RIDE Experience the magic of the much-loved Christmas story, Fri 18 - Wed 23 Dec, Moor Street Station, Birmingham

K-POP ICE PARTY High-energy skating session packed with huge K-pop hits, Sat 19 Dec, Alderford Lake, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

CHRISTMAS VILLAGE & SANTA'S GROTTO Wander through the zoo and village, 'surrounded by twinkling lights and Christmas magic', Sat 19 Dec, Exotic Zoo, Telford Town Park, Shropshire

CHRISTMAS GROTTO & FESTIVE FUN Santa visits the lock-up with a gift for every child, Sat 19 Dec, West Midlands Police Museum, Birmingham

WELCOME TO ELF ACADEMY Step into the magic of Christmas as you meet Santa and train to become an elf, Sat 19 - Sun 20 Dec, Hartlebury Castle, Worcester

FESTIVE FUN Enjoy seasonal activities throughout the castle, Sat 19 - Sun 20 Dec, Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire

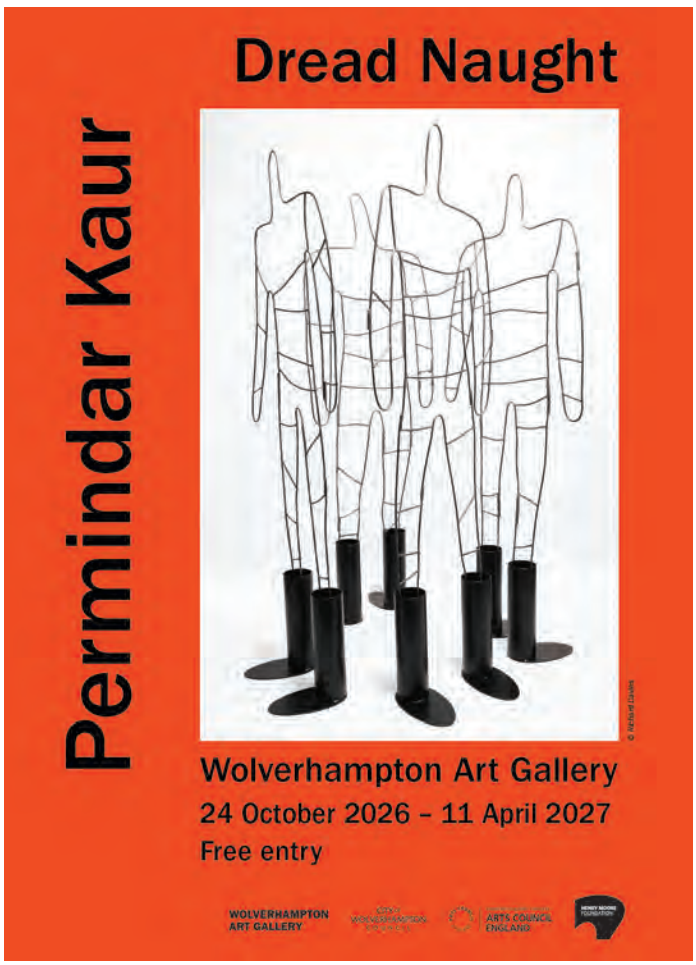
SANTA'S STEAM SPECIALS Step aboard a 'magical' steam train from Kidderminster Station and journey into 'a world of festive wonder', Sat 19 - Sun 20 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

THE ELF EXPRESS Join in with the elves' Christmas capers and discover plenty of surprises along the way, Sat 19 - Sun 20 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

'A CHRISTMAS CAROL' GUIDED TOUR Take a guided tour of the town to learn about the locations used in the 1984 version of A Christmas Carol, filmed in Shrewsbury and starring Academy Award winner George C Scott, Sat 19 - Sun 20 Dec, Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

FATHER CHRISTMAS Father Christmas takes time out from his busy festive schedule to tell some of his favourite seasonal stories, Sat 19 - Sun 20 Dec, Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire





Gigs

IRE-ISH Mon 21 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

BLIZZARD OF OZ UK + BLACK ROSE SOCIETY Mon 21 Dec, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

TALON Mon 21 Dec, Stoke Repertory Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

THE NATURE CENTRE & SEAN MURRAY Tues 22 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE COLLECTIVE Tues 22 Dec, The Jam House, Birmingham

DAVE HILL'S SLADE Tues 22 Dec, O2 Academy, B'ham

BEN HOLDER Tues 22 Dec, Temperance, Leamington Spa

DISCIPLES OF SOUL Tues 22 Dec, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

COULD IT BE MAGIC + ULTIMATE BOYBANDS Tues 22 Dec, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

BLACK HILLS + THE ILLUSION + SIMON DAVIES Tues 22 Dec, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

THE SWAPS Wed 23 Dec, Temperance, Leamington Spa

DEFINITELY MIGHTBE Wed 23 Dec, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

ONJAH Wed 23 Dec, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

THE MOTEL SIX Wed 23 Dec, LOOP, Shrewsbury

MUTLEY Thurs 24 Dec, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

THE HIGH TONES Sat 26 Dec, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

JUNCTION 77 Sat 26 Dec, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

BLOKE Sat 26 Dec, The Station, Cannock

WEST COAST EAGLES Sun 27 Dec, Jo Jo Jims, Birmingham

THE ALL FAB BEATLE Sun 27 Dec, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

BRIDIE & THE BOOTLEGGERS Sun 27 Dec, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

FLASH - A TRIBUTE TO QUEEN Sun 27 Dec, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

ROXY MAGIC Sun 27 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

ZIPSTYLE + DANDELION CURSE + CROOKED HEAD + THE MISSED Sun 27 Dec, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

THE FREDDIE & QUEEN EXPERIENCE Sun 27 Dec, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

BON GIOVI Sun 27 Dec, The Station, Cannock

FOREVER TEENA Mon 28 Dec, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

DRONGOS FOR EUROPE + VOMIT Mon 28 Dec, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

MOSHTALGIA Mon 28 Dec, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

MOSTLY AUTUMN Mon 28 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

DIRTY DC + SEX PISSED DOLLS + DRESSED TO KILL + BLIZZARD REBORN Mon 28 Dec, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

FOO FIGHTERS GB Mon 28 Dec, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

GREG MURRAY & THE SEVEN WONDERS Mon 28 Dec, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

COZY POWELL BIRTHDAY BASH VI Tues 29 Dec, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

THE EMINEM SHOW Tues 29 Dec, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

JOY DIVERSION Tues 29 Dec, The Artisan Tap, Stoke-on-Trent

VEHICLE Wed 30 Dec, Jo Jo Jims, Birmingham

TRU GROOVE Thurs 31 Dec, The Jam House, Birmingham

MIDNIGHT CITY SOUL BAND Thurs 31 Dec, Jo Jo Jims, Birmingham

SABBOTAGE Thurs 31 Dec, The Victoria, Birmingham

SKA TRAIN Thurs 31 Dec, Temperance, Leamington Spa

KILLERSTREAM Thurs 31 Dec, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

THE STRAIGHTHEADS Thurs 31 Dec, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

THE O.B. BAND Thurs 31 Dec, The Red Lion, Evesham

THE SUPERSKAS Thurs 31 Dec, The Robin, Bilston

THUNDER HAMMER Thurs 31 Dec, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

BRITPOP UNITED Thurs 31 Dec, The Station, Cannock

DIRTY MONKEYS Thurs 31 Dec, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

Classical Music

SING CAROLS WITH THE CITY ORGANIST Featuring Ben Lamb (conductor), Jeremy Nicholas (presenter), Thomas Trotter (organ) & Lichfield Cathedral Choir, Mon 21 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

ARMONICO CONSORT: CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring Christopher Monks (musical director) & Christopher Allsop (organ). Programme includes works by Chilcott, Grüber, Rutter & more..., Mon 21 Dec, Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon

EX CATHEDRA: CHRISTMAS MUSIC BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor) & Nicholas Wearne (organ). Seasonal music with a sprinkling of carols and readings, Mon 21 - Tues 22 Dec, St Paul's Church, Birmingham

GREENMATTHEWS' GAUDETE Featuring Chris Green (guitar & early strings), Sophie Matthews (bagpipes & early woodwind), Emily Baines (early woodwind) & Richard Heacock (violin). Programme includes Christmas carols, winter folk songs, toe-tapping tunes and weird and wonderful instruments, Tues 22 Dec, The Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

ARMONICO CONSORT: CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring Christopher Monks (musical director). Programme includes works by Chilcott, Grüber, Rutter & more..., Tues 22 Dec, Great Malvern Priory

LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL CHOIR: CHRISTMAS BY CANDLELIGHT Featuring Staffordshire Brass. Programme includes cherished seasonal favourites with inspiring choral works, Tues 22 Dec, Lichfield Cathedral

THE MUSIC OF ZIMMER VS. WILLIAMS Featuring Anthony Inglis (conductor) & London Concert Orchestra. Programme includes a selection of film scores by the legendary composers, Wed 30 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Comedy

TOM DAVIS, LINDSEY SANTORO, SUZI RUFFELL, PETER RETHINASAMY & JEN NOLAN Mon 21 Dec, Birmingham Town Hall

CHRISTMAS COMEDY SPECIAL Mon 21 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ALI WOODS, JO ENRIGHT, MARLON DAVIES & AURIE STYLA Wed 23 Dec, The Rep, Birmingham

SUNDAY NIGHT COMEDY Sun 27 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham

FAMILY COMEDY SHOW WITH MICHAEL LEGGE, JAMES COOK & PAUL F TAYLOR Mon 28 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham

PHIL NICHOL, LINDSEY SANTORO, TOUSSAINT DOUGLASS & ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 31 Dec, The Glee Club, Birmingham

PROJECT MAYHEM COMEDY Thurs 31 Dec, The Wellington, Birmingham

WILL DUGGAN (PICTURED) & COMICS TBC Thurs 31 Dec, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent



Theatre

MEAN GIRLS Meet The Plastics in this award-winning musical starring Jennifer Ellison, Emily Lane and Vivian Panka, until Sat 2 Jan, The Alexandra, Birmingham

MIDDLEMARCH PARTS 1 & 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

PETER PAN Joe Murphy directs a faithful retelling of JM Barrie's much-loved children's story, until Sun 17 Jan, The Rep, Birmingham

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

TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS Operation Moonlight present a festive farce in which three actors play over 30 parts, Mon 21 Dec, The Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS Operation Moonlight present a festive farce in which three actors play over 30 parts, Wed 23 Dec, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

Pantomime

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST Polka Dot Pantomimes present a new version of the classic fairytale, until Thurs 31 Dec, The Old Rep, Birmingham

ROBIN HOOD THE PANTOMIME Presented by Tread The Boards Theatre Company, until Thurs 31 Dec, Rother Street Arts House, Stratford-upon-Avon

DICK WHITTINGTON Family pantomime starring Liam Burton as Dick, Matthew Dye as Dame Sarah, Tim Churchill as King Ra, Lucy Wainwright as Alice Fitzwarren, Patrick Buckley as Alderman and Catherine O'Reilly as Fairy Bowbells, until Thurs 31 Dec, Mitchell Arts Centre, Stoke-on-Trent

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Ice Skating by the Lake - Alderford Lake, North Shropshire

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THE BEAR AND THE PIANO Puppetry and music combine in a new stage production that brings to life David Litchfield's popular children's book, until Sun 10 Jan, The Other Place, Stratford-upon-Avon

ROBYN & THE BOOK MONSTER The Babbling Vagabonds present a new festive adventure boasting playful storytelling, puppetry, shadow play and 'a monstrously good story', Mon 21 - Thurs 24 Dec, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

SANTA'S BEST EVER CHRISTMAS Brand-new interactive musical adventure for youngsters aged between two and eight, Tues 22 Dec, The Civic, Stourport

DEAR SANTA LIVE A perfect introduction to festive theatre for younger audiences. A post-show opportunity to receive a present from Santa in his grotto also features, Tues 22 - Wed 23 Dec, Dudley Town Hall

Dance

XMAS ON THE DANCEFLOOR Strictly star Gorka Márquez is joined by a cast of dancers and singers in a show that brings iconic Christmas hits to life, Mon 21 Dec, Symphony Hall, B'ham

Light Entertainment

DES COLEMAN'S HOLLYWOOD STEP INTO CHRISTMAS Feelgood concert spectacular that promises to have audiences singing along from start to finish..., Mon 21 Dec, Dudley Town Hall

A SWINGIN' CHRISTMAS Festive swing show with a modern twist, Tues 22 Dec, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

THE D-DAY DARLINGS: A CHRISTMAS TO REMEMBER Show featuring a collection of festive favourites, including White Christmas, Winter Wonderland, Jingle Bells and It's The Most Wonderful Time Of The Year, Wed 23 Dec, Halesowen Town Hall

HOME ALONE IN CONCERT Watch the holiday favourite on a large screen while the film's soundtrack is performed by a live orchestra, Wed 23 Dec, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE GLENN MILLER ORCHESTRA Show bringing the 1940s to life and celebrating the golden age of swing, Sun 27 Dec, Symphony Hall, B'ham

THE ALLURE SPEAKEASY - A NEW YEAR'S EVE CELEBRATION Featuring award-winning stars from the worlds of drag and variety, Thurs 31 Dec, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

Events

TELFORD FESTIVE GARDENS Follow the illuminated route through a series of seasonal scenes. Music, storytelling and plenty of Christmas cheer all add to the experience, until Mon 21 December

THE POLAR EXPRESS™ TRAIN RIDE Experience the magic of the much-loved Christmas story, until Wed 23 Dec, Moor Street Station, B'ham

MEET FATHER CHRISTMAS Say hello to Father Christmas within a decorated seasonal setting, until Wed 23 Dec, Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

ICE SKATING BY THE LAKE Get your skates on and enjoy Alderford Lake's real ice rink, until Wed 23 Dec, Alderford Lake, Ellesmere, Shrops

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WINTER FUNLAND Enjoy unlimited funfair rides, skate on the gigantic ice rink, visit the circus and more, until Sun 3 Jan, NEC, Birmingham

SANTA PAWS Bring the whole family - including any four-legged companions - to meet Santa and his elf, Mon 21 Dec, Hartlebury Castle, Worcester



SANTA'S GROTTO AFTER HOURS Meet Santa and discover more about his reindeer helpers, Mon 21 Dec, Dudley Zoo & Castle

THE ELF EXPRESS Join in with the elves' Christmas capers and discover plenty of surprises along the way, Wed 23 - Thurs 24 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY SKATE Get your skates on for some Christmas Eve fun! Thurs 24 Dec, Telford Ice Rink, Shropshire

FESTIVE BEWDLEY SHUTTLE Festive shuttle service between Kidderminster and Bewdley, Thurs 24 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

SANTA'S STEAM SPECIALS Step aboard a 'magical' steam train from Kidderminster Station and journey into 'a world of festive wonder', Thurs 24 Dec, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

TOY COLLECTORS FAIR Explore more than 500 stalls selling thousands of old and new collectable toys and models, Sun 27 Dec, NEC, B'ham

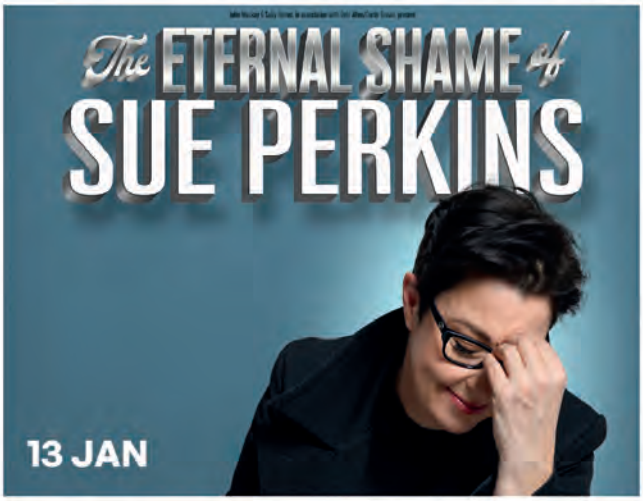
FESTIVE LIGHTS The annual festive lights display returns, Sun 27 - Tues 29 Dec, Biddulph Grange Garden, Staffordshire

TWIXMAS Extend the festive fun! Sun 27 - Thurs 31 Dec, Drayton Manor Resort, Staffordshire

BELGRADE













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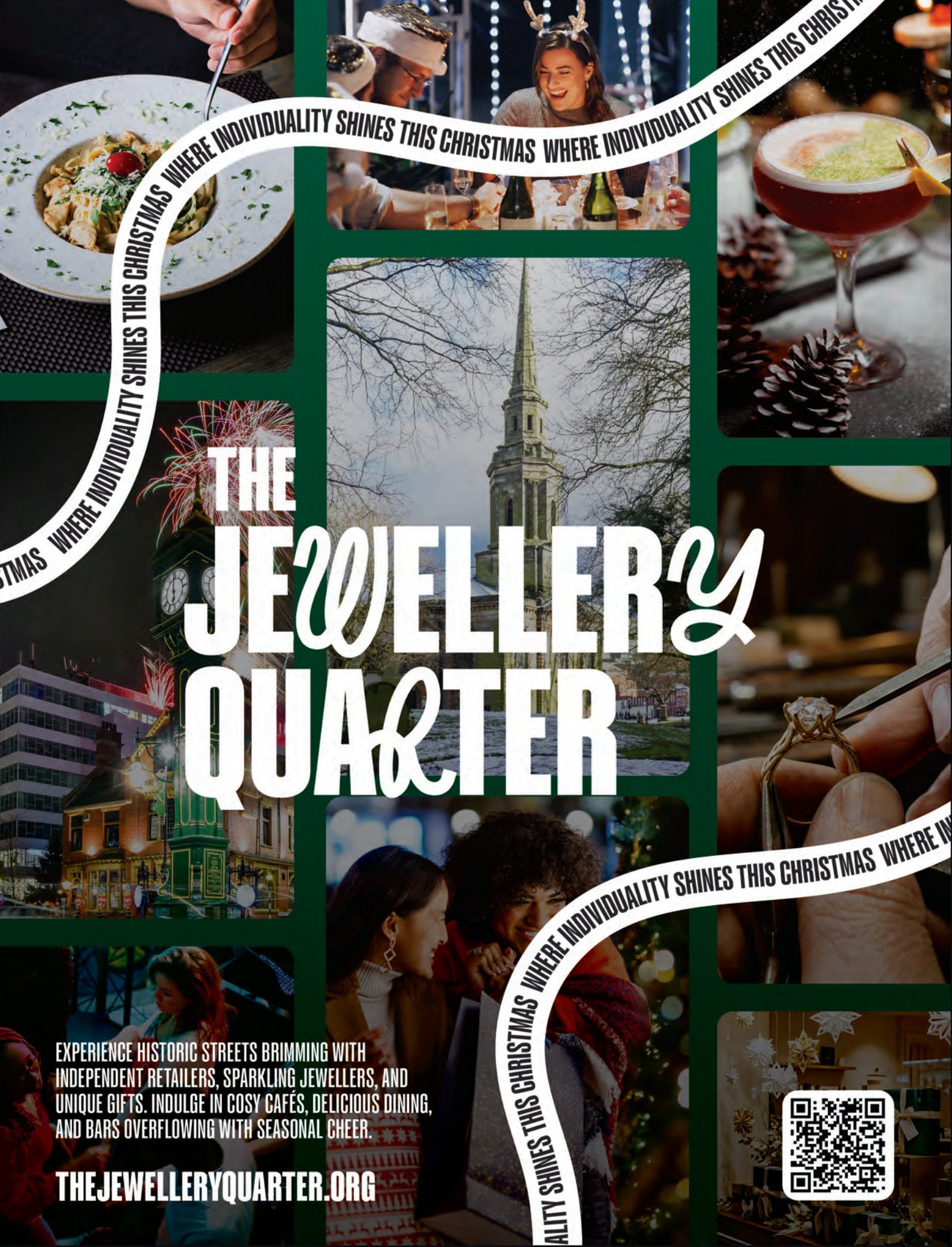
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