

Worcestershire

ISSUE 446 MARCH 2024

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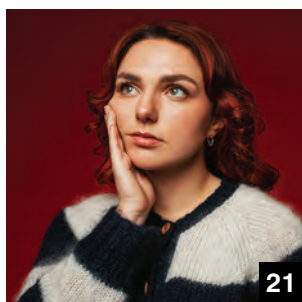
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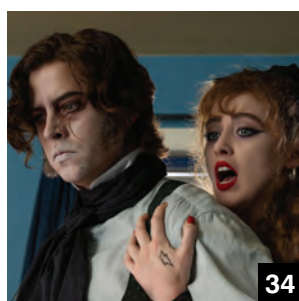
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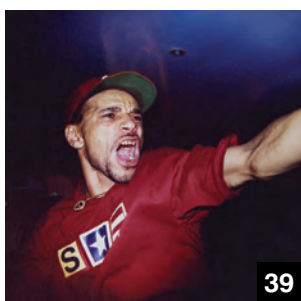
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## What's On

MEDIA GROUP

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## Easter activities reimagine the streets of Coventry

Visitors to the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum in Coventry can explore the city via a programme of creative arts and immersive experiences this Easter holiday (Saturday 23 March to Saturday 6 April, excluding Sundays).

Taking inspiration from two of its permanent exhibitions - History Gallery and Godiva Gallery - the venue will be 'crafting through two weeks of exciting activities and learning new skills as we reimagine Coventry street scenes and people of Coventry from the past, present and future'. More information is available on the website: [theherbert.org](http://theherbert.org)

## StratFest is back... finally!

Popular music & food event StratFest will return to Stratford-upon-Avon for the first time in eight years this summer. Last held in 2016 and this year taking place at the Stratford Park Hotel & Golf Club on Saturday 1 June, the festival will feature DJs, local bands and singers, fairground rides, a selection of activities for kids and a wide variety of street food. To find out more about StratFest, keep an eye on Stratford Park Hotel & Golf Club's Facebook and Instagram.

## Brum Rocks! Want to appear in a rock concert?

Amateur musicians and singers are being given the chance to participate in free workshops and events across Birmingham and the Black Country ahead of performing in a ticketed rock concert in the summer. The opportunity comes courtesy of Misfits Music Foundation's Brum Rocks project, which will culminate in a concert at Birmingham's Forum venue on Sunday 14 July. To find out more about the initiative and how to enter, visit [brumrocks.com](http://brumrocks.com)



## New Steps musical to debut at The Alexandra

A brand-new show featuring the music of pop band Steps is coming to the Midlands in the autumn. Titled Here & Now, the production will stop off at Birmingham theatre The Alexandra from Saturday 9 to Sunday 24 November.

Commenting on the news, Steps said: "We've searched for the perfect story for our music, and we've found it in the aisle of a seaside superstore, where four friends set out on their own Summer of Love." For more information and to book tickets, visit [atgtickets.com/birmingham](http://atgtickets.com/birmingham)



## Torvill & Dean to get their skates on one last time

Jayne Torvill & Christopher Dean will head out on tour next spring - before hanging up their skates for good. The Midlands-born legends - who famously won a Gold medal for their performance to Ravel's Bolero at the 1984 Winter Olympics - will be stopping off at Birmingham's Resorts World Arena from Friday 25 to Sunday 27 April 2025 as part of their Torvill & Dean: Our Last Dance tour. Commenting on the news, Jayne and Christopher said: "Whilst we will continue to work together off the ice, this will be the final time we will skate together following our 50-year partnership. But not without celebrating one final time with all of our incredible fans across the UK, who have supported us constantly over many years. We promise to put on an amazing live show - and we really hope to see you there!" For further information and to book tickets, visit [resortsworldarena.co.uk](http://resortsworldarena.co.uk)

## Three-day play project for teens at Warwick theatre

Warwick's Bridge House Theatre is inviting young people between the ages of 14 and 18 to apply to take part in its latest three-day play project. The initiative runs from Friday 22 to Monday 25 March and will see participants rehearsing and performing Woyzeck, a play with adult themes written by Georg Büchner in 1836. To find out more about the project and how to apply, visit [bridgehousetheatre.co.uk](http://bridgehousetheatre.co.uk)

## Birmingham Royal Ballet announces 2024/5 season

Birmingham Royal Ballet's (BRB) programme of shows for its 2024/25 season will include an autumn presentation of Sir Frederick Ashton's La Fille mal gardée. Other shows featuring in BRB's later-year line-up include Sir Peter Wright's much-loved version of The Nutcracker and the world premiere of Luna. A two-act ballet in six movements, Luna is the final production in the company's Birmingham Trilogy (the previous two being City Of A Thousand Trades and Black Sabbath The Ballet). Early 2025 will see BRB once again presenting one of its most popular works: Sir David Bintley's Cinderella. To check out the whole programme and book tickets, visit [brb.org.uk](http://brb.org.uk)



## Back with a bang

The UK's largest celebration of science, technology, engineering & maths (STEM) for young people is returning to Birmingham's NEC venue this summer.

Taking place from Wednesday 19 to Friday 21 June, the Big Bang Fair provides young people with the opportunity to meet STEM professionals from some of the UK's top employers.

The event will also feature live shows, career panels and a wide range of hands-on activities. Further information is available by visiting the website: [thebigbang.org.uk](http://thebigbang.org.uk)

## Comedy stars come to Coventry

The resident improv troupe from London's famous Comedy Store are this month bringing an evening of improvised songs and games to the Albany Theatre in Coventry.

The Comedy Store Players visit the venue on Thursday 28 March. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit [albanytheatre.co.uk](http://albanytheatre.co.uk)



## Sounds of the 60s with DJ Tony

Veteran DJ Tony Blackburn is visiting Birmingham Town Hall this month (Thursday 7 March) with a live version of his BBC Radio Two show, Sounds Of The 60s. He will then make another Midlands stop-off, at Malvern's Forum Theatre, later in the tour (Thursday 18 July).

For further information and to purchase tickets, visit the website [ticketmaster.co.uk](http://ticketmaster.co.uk)



## Circus spectacular as Cirque return after six long years

Cirque du Soleil are returning to the UK for the first time in six years, with their latest tour, which is starting mid-March, coming to an end at Utilita Arena in Birmingham next month (Thursday 25 - Sunday 28 April).

The world-renowned company will be performing the critically acclaimed OVO, which they describe as 'a colourful intrusion into a new day in the life of insects'. For further information and book tickets, visit [utilitaarenabham.co.uk](http://utilitaarenabham.co.uk)

## Going for gold at Cheltenham

One of the most important events in the racing calendar is celebrating its centenary this month.

Taking place at Cheltenham Racecourse on Friday 15 March, the Gold Cup Steeplechase is the climax of four fantastic days of racing action at the Cheltenham Festival.

The race takes place over a distance of three miles, two furlongs and 70 yards (5,294 metres), with 22 fences to be jumped.

As well as the racing, the festival also offers shopping, hospitality and plenty of live music.



## From Strictly to Scarlett for Ellie Leach

Reigning Strictly Come Dancing champion Ellie Leach will visit Malvern's Festival Theatre next month.

The former Coronation Street star stops off at the venue with touring show Cluedo 2, in which she's making her stage acting debut, playing the character of Miss Scarlett.

The tour coincides with the 75th anniversary of the world-famous boardgame on which the brand-new play is based. Cluedo 2 shows in Malvern from Tuesday 30 April to Saturday 4 May.

To find out more and book tickets, visit [malvern-theatres.co.uk](http://malvern-theatres.co.uk)

## Sculpture park opens at Warwickshire venue

A major new sculpture park - featuring work by eight contemporary artists - is opening in the grounds of Compton Verney Art Gallery & Park this month (Thursday 21 March). The sculpture park is just one of several new attractions at the popular Warwickshire venue. Other March highlights include the opening of several exhibitions and special family-friendly art-related drop-in sessions (taking place during the Easter holiday). To find out more about everything that's happening at the venue over the next few weeks, visit [comptonverney.org.uk](http://comptonverney.org.uk)



Louise Bourgeois SPIDER, 1986 installed at Storm King Art Center, Mountainville, NY in 2007. Christopher Burke

## Rock stars Heart to bring Royal Flush tour to Utilita

Veteran American rock band Heart will visit Birmingham's Utilita Arena in the summer as part of their first UK tour in eight years. The Rock & Roll Hall of Fame inductees play the venue on Wednesday 3 July and will be joined by special guests Squeeze, who are celebrating their 50th anniversary. For ticket information, visit [utilitaarenabham.co.uk](http://utilitaarenabham.co.uk)

## Coventry concert for Birmingham music group

Birmingham Contemporary Music Group (BCMG) is presenting two concerts for Midlands audiences this month, one of which takes place in Coventry. The city's cathedral is the venue for a Thursday 7 March performance by the Group's wind trio, who will be playing pieces by Sir Harrison Birtwistle, Melinda Maxwell and Brian Ferneyhough. BCMG then return to Birmingham's Brindleyplace on Sunday the 24th to present their annual outdoor cherry blossom concert. The event will feature a programme of music 'reflecting on nature and the energy of the incoming spring'. To find out more and purchase tickets, visit [bcmg.org.uk](http://bcmg.org.uk)

06 [whatsonlive.co.uk](http://whatsonlive.co.uk)



## JLS's Aston Merrygold to follow the yellow brick road

JLS star Aston Merrygold will play the Tin Man in *The Wizard Of Oz* when a critically acclaimed stage version of the classic MGM musical visits Birmingham Hippodrome this summer (Tuesday 11 - Sunday 16 June).

Aston will be joined in the show by *Strictly Come Dancing*'s Craig Revel Horwood, who will take the role of the Wicked Witch of the West. For more information and to book tickets, visit [birminghamhippodrome.com](http://birminghamhippodrome.com)

## Compton Verney summer return for ALSO Festival

Indie folk band Stornoway and comedian Sara Pascoe are among the performers who will be contributing to this year's ALSO Festival.



Taking place at Warwickshire's Compton Verney from Friday 12 to Sunday 14 July, the 'magical and immersive' event features not only musicians and comedians but also bestselling authors, celebrated scientists and experts in a variety of fields. More information and tickets are available at [also-festival.com](http://also-festival.com)

## Drama society set to stage Me And My Girl

Worcester Operatic & Dramatic Society will next month present classic comedy *Me And My Girl* at the city's Swan Theatre (Tuesday 16 - Saturday 20 April). Noel Gay's 1930s-set musical, revised by Stephen Fry in the 1980s, features a host of well-known numbers, including *The Sun Has Got His Hat On* and *The Lambeth Walk*. Tickets to see the production can be booked online at [worcestertheatres.co.uk](http://worcestertheatres.co.uk)

## Rustival makes its debut at British Motor Museum

The British Motor Museum in Gaydon, Warwickshire, is this month launching a family-friendly show for the 2024 season. Taking place on Saturday 9 March, Rustival is an all-new classic/young-timer car & vehicle show hosted by YouTubers Ian & Carly from HubNut, Matt from Furious Driving and Steph from idriveclassic. The show will feature hundreds of display cars, talks by motoring YouTubers, and an 'ask the experts' feature in which visitors can access professional automotive guidance free of charge. Rustival, HubNut, Furious Driving and idriveclassic merchandise will also be available to buy. More information about the show can be found at [britishmotormuseum.co.uk](http://britishmotormuseum.co.uk)



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## Ben Portsmouth: This Is Elvis

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## Women In (E)Motion: Black Voices, Agaama & Emily Saunders

09 Mar | Symphony Hall



## The Musical Box 2024

09 Mar | Symphony Hall



## Sasha Velour: The Big Reveal

12 Mar | Symphony Hall



## Dirty Dancing Live In Concert

16 Mar | Symphony Hall



## Just My Imagination: The Music Of The Temptations

17 Mar | Symphony Hall



## The Circus of Horrors: Dr Hazes Cabaret of Curiosities

19 Mar | Symphony Hall



## Tchaikovsky Classics with Birmingham Royal Ballet

28 Mar | Symphony Hall



## Good Friday St John Passion with Ex Cathedra

29 Mar | Symphony Hall



## Karl Jenkins' 80th Birthday Concert

30 Mar | Symphony Hall



# bmusic.co.uk

There's something for everyone this March!

## After hours at Compton

Compton Verney's popular After Hours event is returning this spring. The popular Warwickshire venue will be staying open late on Friday 3 May to present a programme of entertainment that will include Bird Raves & DJ sets, Q&As with prominent artists whose work is on display in Compton's exhibitions, and explorations into body and landscape through movement, sculpture and sound. To find out more, visit [comptonverney.org.uk](http://comptonverney.org.uk)

## Music Museum curator is a Tourism Superstar!

Coventry Music Museum founder & curator Pete Chambers is through to the finals of Visit England's Tourism Superstar competition. The annual contest, which 'champions those in the tourism industry who provide an unforgettable visitor experience', is won by the entrant who receives the highest number of public votes. The 2024 winner will be announced during English Tourism Week (Friday 15 - Sunday 24 March). Fingers crossed music-loving Pete ends up topping the charts!

## Moseley Folk Festival unveils line-up for 2024

Belle & Sebastian (pictured), Levellers, Dexys, Flogging Molly and CMAT will be among the big-name acts headlining this year's Moseley Folk & Arts Festival (Friday 30 August - Sunday 1 September). The Birmingham-based event will also showcase performances by, among others, Lisa O'Neill, Dublin's folk/metal quartet The Scratch, siblings The Staves, prolific troubadour Beans On Toast, Tuareg songwriter Mdou Moctar, and local folk-album chart-topper Katherine Priddy. Further information about this year's festival is available at [moseleyfolk.co.uk](http://moseleyfolk.co.uk), where you can also purchase tickets.



08 [whatsonlive.co.uk](http://whatsonlive.co.uk)



## Science festival set to lift the lid on life in the lab

If you've ever wondered what happens on a day-to-day basis in a science laboratory, an evening event at Coventry's Tin Music & Arts venue on Thursday 7 March provides the perfect opportunity to find out. Presented as part of Resonate Festival of Science & Technology 2024, Behind The

Scenes With Science Technicians lifts the lid on the everyday life of a lab technician. A related event - The Resonate Festival Of Science and Technology - Day Out! - takes place on Sunday the 10th but is already sold out... To find out more about the Resonate programme, visit [resonatefestival.co.uk](http://resonatefestival.co.uk)

## Turner Prize winner's tropical fruit in Coventry

A Turner Prize-winning artist's sculpture of a tropical fruit has been installed outside Coventry's Warwick Arts Centre. Veronica Ryan's iconic Breadfruit joins 25 other artworks in the University of Warwick's sculpture park. Standing at around three feet in height, the newly cast bronze sculpture is described as 'a powerful visual representation of cultural identity, history, and the interconnectedness of communities to Warwick's diverse campus'. To find out more, visit [warwick.ac.uk](http://warwick.ac.uk)

## Prices frozen at Severn Valley Railway

Severn Valley Railway has announced that it has frozen most of its regular fares at the same levels as last year. Day tickets are now on sale throughout the service train calendar until October half term. Freedom Of The Line tickets give the best value of all, allowing unlimited journeys throughout the day along the full length of the line. For more information on Severn Valley Railway's ticket types and Unlimited Pass prices, visit [svr.co.uk](http://svr.co.uk)

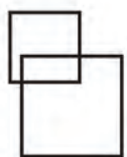
## Charity swim-relay challenge in Worcester

National charity Level Water, which provides one-to-one swimming lessons for children with disabilities, has announced a brand-new series of 24-hour swim relays across six open-water venues - one of which is Watersedge in Worcester. The first event of its kind, the Swim Relays challenge teams of up to eight to keep swimming for 24 hours, with each individual in the team swimming for an hour at a time. The event visits Watersedge on Saturday 28 & Sunday 29 September. For more information and to sign up, visit [levelwater.org](http://levelwater.org)

## Springtime comedy in the castle courtyard

Thirteen of the UK's most highly rated comedians - including Simon Amstell, Rory Bremner and Nina Conti - will be bringing a weekend of laughter to Warwick Castle's courtyard later in the spring. The much-loved comics are stopping off at the venue to take part in the second Comedy At The Castle event (Friday 24 - Sunday 26 May). To find out more and check ticket availability, visit [closeupcomedy.com/castle](http://closeupcomedy.com/castle)





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# GLASS ACT

**A new production of Tennessee Williams' semi-autobiographical  
The Glass Menagerie is this month visiting the Coventry Belgrade**



## Director Atri Banerjee's highly acclaimed production of Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie* visits the Coventry Belgrade this month. Actress Geraldine Somerville talks to What's On about returning to a play in which she first appeared some 35 years ago...

Actress Geraldine Somerville - best known from the Harry Potter movies, the film Gosford Park and as Robbie Coltrane's long-suffering sidekick DS Jane Penhaligon in hit television series *Cracker* - is delighted when I tell her she's made my job easier.

"Oh good! I'm glad I've helped somebody already today," she laughs, before I explain that her latest role gives me an instant angle for our chat. She's playing matriarch Amanda Wingfield in Tennessee Williams' classic domestic drama, *The Glass Menagerie* - the semi-autobiographical tale of a family on the verge of meltdown that kickstarted his playwrighting career. It's also the play that launched Geraldine's acting career, as she played the role of the daughter Laura in her first professional gig after leaving acting school in 1989.

To top it off, the latest version of the play, directed by Atri Banerjee, premiered at the Royal Exchange in Manchester, the same theatre where Geraldine made that debut 35 years ago. She giggles again when I suggest that her life has come full circle so she can now retire.

"I did think that, funnily enough!" she laughs. "It did cross my mind that maybe this is the end!"

If this *was* her final curtain call - and it's evidently not - then there'd be few better ways to bow out than returning to the incredible world that Tennessee Williams created, she admits.

"When I got that job back in 1989, I was cock-a-hoop because it was my first job after leaving drama school - wonderful theatre, wonderful part, wonderful play. But I probably didn't appreciate quite how wonderful the play is and what an amazing writer Tennessee Williams is. So I came back to it going 'Wow, oh my gawd!'"

The deep-south accent she adopts for those last words could almost be Amanda, the overbearing Southern Belle she plays in the show but who Geraldine admits she understands and appreciates so much more now that she herself is a mother (and not just to a certain kid magician!).

"My original take on Amanda was that she was stuck in the past, but then you see she's a woman who has survived on her own in America during the Depression, bringing up two children in a huge city where she's unable to work - because women couldn't - and with a daughter with a disability and no support. So she can't have been just a flighty

little Southern Belle - she must have had some grit to survive that and to have got to where she is.

"I think the challenges with Amanda are that she's the mother of all mothers - in every respect - but because she's so vocal, and around a lot in the play, you don't want to be annoying and irritating; you've got to find a way into the character so that she's appealing in some way. That's the eternal challenge of playing this part. And you can play her in many different ways."

And as Geraldine points out, Amanda has rather a lot to say for herself...

"Yes, yes, yes! Laura's a joy to play because she does so much observation; she's just quietly there, soaking it all in. Amanda is the engine in a way; she drives the energy and the pace of the play, and that's quite a responsibility. And oh my God, all those flipping lines!"

Like Shakespeare, Tennessee Williams' beautifully written work isn't the sort of script you can adlib your way through when the brain freezes, Geraldine admits.

"He was a poet and his dialogue is so poetic. There's so much of a rhythm and a rhyme to it, so you really do need to get it right. You can't just generalise your way through or give an appropriation - not that I would, being the very professional actress that I am! That said, I *have* been known to come out with some gobbledegook now and again, which is funny because it throws the rhythm out of balance."

Despite the challenge of such a wordy script, Geraldine had no hesitation in saying yes when offered the chance to reprise the role that she first played when the new production debuted in 2022.

"There aren't many acting roles in my age group, particularly in great classic plays like this, so it's a great opportunity. I couldn't say no!"

Better yet, Atri Banerjee's production (and Geraldine's performance) earned rave reviews, not least for offering an innovative new take on the original text - something the actress herself says was apparent from the off.

"I think what was - and is - really joyous about the production, and the design and the way Atri directs, is that it has a very dreamlike quality, because it's a play of memory, and you can interpret that in so many different ways."

The staging is "quite stark and pared back,

almost ethereal" according to Geraldine, who admits the lack of props meant the actors - as well as their characters - were effectively "floating around in the ether of [narrator] Tom's memory".

"That was really interesting and different and fresh and new, but it had its challenges, I have to be honest.

"When I did the production back in 1989, we had props and it looked quite authentically 1937 - which is when it's set - but we don't have any of that, so it's challenging. As an actor you have to really use the text to tell the story - I mean really, really use it - because it isn't visually going to be delivered to the audience. You're trying to contextualise time and place, because they are very important in order to have an understanding of the characters."

The challenge is clearly something she's relishing though - not least because the new production is much more physical, leaning heavily on movement and symbolism to tell the story.

"It was a new territory for me as an actor. I haven't done plays for a long time because I've been busy with my children, so yes, it was really interesting, and I'm very interested in that kind of work - I like physical stuff.

"It's a more abstract - or expressionistic, maybe that's the word - version of the play, which I hope connects with the audience."

One thing that definitely has connected with an audience - or at least the BAFTA-voting one - is *Gorka*, a short movie Geraldine recently made alongside David Baddiel. The film was nominated for Best British Short Film at the 2024 BAFTA Film Awards, which were due to take place a few days after we spoke. Had she got her gladrags ready?

"Don't even get me started! I've just rustled up something of my own. The whole thing is crazy."

'Rustled up'? What, so you made it?

"No, no, no! Just something I had at home - shall we call it 'vintage'? I do many other things, but sewing definitely isn't one of them!"

.....

**The Glass Menagerie shows at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, from Saturday 16 to Saturday 23 March and Malvern Theatres, Worcestershire, from Tues 26 - Sat 30 March**



# LABOUR OF LOVE

The Old Joint Stock's theatre manager, James Edge, talks about bringing exciting new productions to the Birmingham pub venue...

Birmingham's Old Joint Stock Theatre will bring a tale of family, friendship and the desire for freedom to the stage this spring in a brand-new production of *The Mad Ones*.

The musical, which opened off-Broadway in 2017 under the former title of *The Unauthorized Autobiography Of Samantha Brown*, centres on the character of 18-year-old Sam as she reaches a crossroads in her young life.

Sitting in her car, keys in hand, she is trying to decide whether to take the safe route and stay home, or start the engine, take off and reach for the unknown. She hears the voice of her best friend, Kelly, urging her to go, while her mother and boyfriend press her to stay... The story then moves forward from that scenario.

"There are a lot of flashbacks, and Kelly is there talking to Sam throughout the show," explains producer and Old Joint Stock Theatre manager James Edge (pictured). "The basis of the story is Sam making a decision about whether she wants to stay with this overbearing mother and do what her mother wants her to do, or take a risk for the first time in her life, see what the future holds and drive off. It's a really beautiful piece."

James is always keen to bring new work to Birmingham audiences and feels *The Mad Ones* is an ideal production for his venue.

"A big thing when producing shows for the Old Joint Stock is that you've got a 70 to 80 capacity, so there are limitations. You can't get massive bands in there; you can't get huge casts. *The Mad Ones* is a cast of four, with two or three band members, and I thought it would be the perfect show for our space.

"You can relate to every character in the show: the person who wants to stay; the one who wants to take the risk; even the mother, because she was a young, free spirit once, but the way her life turned out wasn't the way she wanted it to.

"There's definitely something for everyone. If you're a lover of musical theatre, if you're a lover of intimate storytelling, this is the show to come and see. It's simple and stripped-back, but it hits you in the heart. It's an absolutely gorgeous piece - a really pure, beautiful story with great songs."

James took over as theatre manager at the Old Joint Stock in February last year. A former actor, he also runs the theatre website *West End Best Friend*. And his experience on stage has helped him hunt out lesser-known productions to showcase.

"Before running theatres, I was an actor for eight years, mainly doing musical theatre. When training at drama school, you spend a lot of time looking for songs for your rep, so you get to know a lot of the less-well-known writers. You start following their journey and seeing the shows they make. I also hear about new shows because of *West End Best Friend*, and I always try to listen to new cast recordings when they come out.

"The Old Joint Stock has really forged a name for itself with high-quality fringe theatre, especially musical theatre. When I took over, we did a musical called *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*, and that went down really well, so I've been looking for the next right thing. I love the thought of producing shows that people haven't really heard of yet, but which will become their next favourite show."

James ran *The Town & Gown Theatre* in Cambridge before taking over the helm at the Old Joint Stock, back in his home city.

"When I was an actor, I performed in about four or five shows at the Old Joint Stock, and some of my favourite experiences were at this theatre. I think it's a hidden gem. We'd just had Covid, it was slowly trying to build its audiences back up, and they were looking for a manager. I heard about that and thought, that's the role for me.

"The Old Joint Stock has so much potential, and it's such a gorgeous building. I have visions for its future. You look at the London pub theatres and what they can achieve, and we can do that here in Birmingham. We are a receiving house, but also we've just produced four in-house productions between August and December of last year. I'd love to get to the point where most of the year we are staging our own in-house productions of new work and unknown work."

James has two colleagues on the team at the Old Joint Stock: theatre supervisors Liam Alexandru and Emily Lloyd.

"We are working rigorously to get the theatre on the map, get audiences through the door, and do bigger and bigger projects each time. We're doing the musical *First Date* in August - it's on Broadway, and I don't think it's had a live production here in the UK yet. We're doing that for three weeks. And going forward, I'd love us to be doing productions for four weeks, then five weeks, and running for a few months at a time and maybe even in rep.

"We'll also start looking for sister venues where we can take Old Joint Stock Theatre



productions around the UK - I'd love to take *The Mad Ones* out on the road."

Producing in-house shows is a lot of work for three people, but James believes the benefits pay off.

"With your big, standard theatres, you have a big team to do all the different tasks, but with fringe theatre you just don't have that budget. You're selling to small audiences due to capacity limitations, so you do it all.

"So when you take on producing a show, you do absolutely everything. You find the show, you sort out the licensing, you do the casting yourself, you get the director on board, you do marketing - you organise everything. Every single bit of prop, costume and set, you make, source, beg, steal or borrow yourself. It's a real labour of love compared with a visiting show, but there is something very special about an in-house production.

"Fringe theatre is unique. When people come to fringe theatre and watch the show, there's something about that smaller space. The audience energy dictates the production, and that's the magic of fringe theatre. You find that as soon as people have been once or twice, they just keep coming back."

.....  
**The Mad Ones plays at the Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham, from Wednesday 10 to Saturday 20 April. For information about all upcoming productions at the venue, visit [oldjointstock.co.uk](http://oldjointstock.co.uk)**

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Friday 3 May at 12 noon

Martin Kasík piano

Smetana | Dvořák | Chopin

Friday 3 May at 7pm

Guarneri Piano Trio

Suk | Smetana | Dvořák

Saturday 4 May at 11am

Coffee Concert

Kukul String Quartet

Schulhoff | Sylvie Bodorová  
Smetana | Dvořák

Saturday 4 May at 7pm

Martinů String Quartet

Vilém Veverka oboe

Martin Kasík piano

Mozart | Sylvie Bodorová  
Dvořák

Sunday 5 May at 12 noon

Simon Wallfisch baritone

Iain Farrington piano

Mahler | Suk | Haas | Ullmann  
Korngold | Janáček | Dvořák

Sunday 5 May at 7pm

Martinů String Quartet

Vilém Veverka oboe

Martin Kasík piano

Martinů | Haas | Klein  
Smetana | Dvořák

Monday 6 May at 12.30pm

Ben Goldscheider horn

Richard Uttley horn

Kalivoda | Kofron | Mahler  
Janáček | Punto | Beethoven

Monday 6 May at 7pm

Martinů String Quartet

Simon Wallfisch baritone

Gemma Rosefield cello

Krásá | Tauský  
Sylvie Bodorová | Schubert

Classical music from across the region...



## Ex Cathedra: Good Friday St John Passion

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Fri 29 March

A favourite at Eastertime, Bach's St John Passion - a retelling of Christ's betrayal and death - continues to be one of classical music's most profound experiences. Performed by Ex Cathedra under the direction of founder & conductor Jeffrey

Skidmore, the work is 300 years old in 2024. To mark the occasion, the performance will incorporate chorale preludes, motets, congregational hymns and readings, the intention being to offer 'a richer experience of the Good Friday service as Bach knew it'.

## Ensemble Molière

St Mary's Church, Warwick, Tues 19 March

Comprising five hugely talented female musicians and a unique line-up of instruments, Ensemble Molière are inspired by the music of the French Baroque, performing memorable and creative programmes from the repertoire of the 17th and 18th centuries. Selected as the first ever BBC Radio Three New Generation Baroque Ensemble - for two years, from October 2021 - the group here rounds off Leamington Music's Early Music Series 'in the court of the Sun King, Louis XIV', presenting a programme entitled The King's Playlist.



## Armonico Consort: Love Handels

The Court House, Warwick, Fri 22 March

Founded by organist & conductor Christopher Monks in 2001, Armonico are one of the largest organisations of their kind in the UK. Using authentic period instruments, the baroque consort regularly perform with some of the best solo musicians in the world.

This latest concert sees them presenting a programme of 'the most beautiful arias and duets from the Baroque period, woven together with poems and stories exploring love through the centuries'.

## Milos Karadaglic

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 9 March

Miloš Karadaglic left his home country of Montenegro as a teenager to pursue his passion for classical guitar.

After studying at the prestigious Royal Academy of Music in London, he secured an exclusive contract with Deutsche Grammophon in 2010. Solo performances with international orchestras have followed, as have numerous studio albums... Milos is joined for this Coventry concert by Arcangelo Chamber Orchestra. The programme features music by, among other composers, Vivaldi, Bach, Handel and Purcell.



## Eblana String Trio and Emma Halnan


Routh Hall, Bromsgrove, Fri 22 March

The Eblana Trio (pictured) make a welcome return to Bromsgrove, this time in the company of former BBC Young Musician finalist Emma Halnan. As well as flute quartets by Mozart and Viotti, Emma will be playing two works by David Matthews - one of which, Dance For Emma, he actually wrote for her.


The programme also includes Jean Cras' acclaimed String Trio, composed in 1926.



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Live music from across the region...

## MG Boulter

The Tin Music & Arts, Coventry, Sat 30 March

Although well established on the UK music scene, MG Boulter prefers to steer clear of labelling himself.

"I never really think of my music as sitting in one genre or another," he told the website pennyblackmusic. "I was described as Americana, but this changed to folk as the trends changed. I can see myself in both camps, but I like to use instrumentation that doesn't always fit with either of those genres: clarinet, vibraphones, synthesisers..."

"I'm most comfortable with 'singer-songwriter' because that is essentially what I see myself as. I write songs, I play guitar, and in the studio I can make those songs whatever I want them to be."



## Dub Pistols

Queens Hall, Nuneaton, Sat 30 March

London electronic-music band Dub Pistols boast a sound that takes in dub, punk, jungle, ska, breakbeat, hip-hop and a whole lot more. Celebrating their silver jubilee a couple of years ago, the notorious party rockers have embraced plenty of changes across the years, both in terms of their personnel and their musical direction... They visit the Midlands 12 months after releasing their ninth and most recent album, Frontline.



## The Coral

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 9 March

Influential five-piece The Coral exploded onto the music scene in the early noughties with a self-titled debut album that brilliantly combined psychedelia with dub, disco groove with pop and ragtime with Egyptian

reggae. Now, almost 22 years later, two of the band, singer James Skelly and keyboardist Nick Power, are touring The Making Of The Debut Album - a special show in celebration of that first storming release.

An intimate evening of award-winning music and cosy conversation awaits...

## Nine Below Zero

Huntingdon Hall, Worcester, Fri 8 March

Forty-plus years after first offering a rhythm & blues alternative to the punk-pop of the mainstream, south Londoners Nine Below Zero are still going strong. And so, too, are founding members Dennis Greaves (guitar & vocals) and Mark Feltham (harmonica & vocals), who've been performing together as a duo for almost 10 years. The pair's Huntingdon Hall appearance this month comes in support of their brand-new acoustic album, DenMark.



## Ivy Gold

Temperance, Leamington Spa, Mon 18 March

Contemporary blues rock is the favoured genre of international five-piece Ivy Gold, whose frontwoman, Manou (pictured), feels it's the perfect kind of music into which to pour all of her experiences, thoughts and feelings... The band are visiting Leamington this month in support of latest album Broken Silence.

## Lottery Winners

Kasbah, Coventry, Thurs 28 March

Indie pop quartet The Lottery Winners provide a melodramatic blend of momentous melodies and insightful lyrics. Citing inspiration from 'all the painfully miserable' groups - think The Smiths, The Cure and Joy Division - the band have released five albums to date, the latest being last year's chart-topping Anxiety Replacement Therapy.

# BUGG'S LIFE



## **Singer-songwriter Jake Bugg is returning to the region to play headline and support-act shows ahead of the release of a much-anticipated sixth album. What's On caught up with him to find out about the new record, live gigs and supporting rock royalty...**

If you want a reminder of how quick time flies, how about this: precocious singer-songwriter Jake Bugg, who performed at Glastonbury at the age of 17 and had a number one album the following year, has just turned 30. In the interim, he's released four more albums, toured the world, supported the Rolling Stones and even recorded the soundtrack to a documentary about football superstar Ronaldinho. It's been a whirlwind 13 years for the boy from a Nottingham council estate, a background that keeps him grounded as well as amiably matter-of-fact during our chat.

**It's been a while since your last album, Saturday Night, Sunday Morning, and the Ronaldinho soundtrack. How are things coming with the next one?**

I did the soundtrack, and I've been writing ever since then, really. I was in the studio all of last year and the record's pretty much there - we'll be playing a few new songs from it on the upcoming tour. I'm really happy to have a new record pretty much ready to go, although it's always a funny one - you're excited about it but you're worried at the same time.

**Tell us a bit about how the album has come together.**

I've been working with these guys at Metrophonic, and they've been great and done the whole record, really - it's been a great experience. It's just picking up a guitar and jamming around and seeing what comes out - it might be a riff, it might be a few chords or a melody - and just going from there.

I didn't do too much sitting at home on the acoustic with the laptop because I spent two years doing that for the soundtrack during Covid, so I wanted to get into the studio.

**And play with other people?**

Yeah, exactly. I love playing and writing on my own, but it's good to go and work with other people. You learn new things, and you come up with stuff you probably would never have done on your own.

**What can fans expect from the new album? Saturday Night Sunday Morning took you in a poppier direction - does the new one continue in that vein?**

I'd say this one has gone back the other way -

it's a lot more gritty, more energetic, more uptempo... definitely more on the rock side than pop side this time, which I think is a good place for me. Obviously there'll be some traditional kind of Jake Bugg things in there as well. I like to think the fans will be quite happy with this one; it seems a bit more like something I would do. I really like the songs, and I just hope other people can relate to them like I can - that's always the interesting part.

**The Your Town shows are set to feature two sets - one solo acoustic and one with a full band. How do you choose which songs appear in which section? Is the new material best suited to a full band, to make it more palatable to audiences hearing it for the first time, or do you like the idea of leading people in with an acoustic rendition?**

With these shows the acoustic section of it is more of a nod back to how I grew up playing. I used to play shows just me and my guitar, kinda half an hour every now and then, so we're playing some older songs from that period. I think when you're playing brand-new songs, you want them to have the biggest impact they can have, so I do them with a band. There's obviously a few songs on this new record that are slower - not every song's uptempo with a full band - so maybe there's an argument to sneak a new ballad one into the acoustic set. So that's an option, too.

**So audiences will get a few brand-new songs and, by the sounds of it, a few very old ones?**

Yeah, pretty much. We'll give people a flavour of everything, really. It's nice to mix it up and do stuff we haven't done for a while - and stuff that we've never played before as well.

**And at venues you've not played before, since many aren't on the traditional touring map...**

Yeah, it's something we realised last year when we were playing festivals and going to places we wouldn't usually go. The reception and appreciation from the audience was fantastic, so we thought why don't we go to some of these places on the tour, as we hadn't really done some of them before.

**There's a gap in the middle of the tour when you'll be opening shows for Liam Gallagher and John Squire. Does that mean you knew about their unexpected partnership before everyone else?**

Oddly enough, I didn't! It was by some miracle that the dates worked out in between mine. It's a pure coincidence but one I'm quite happy with. To go out on the road with those guys will just be a great experience. I love my guitar, so getting to see John play each night will be a great inspiration.

**You weren't even born when the Stone Roses were in their pomp, but it sounds like you're a fan?**

Absolutely. I actually supported the Roses when they did their comeback around the 2012 Olympics and played a small show in the Village Underground in East London. It was great to support them - but more than that, I got to watch them in a 500-capacity venue, which was amazing. They were really on it that night.

**Playing on the same stage as such a legendary act and then having a number-one album all at the age of 18 was obviously an amazing experience, but you've said before that you suffered a lot from insecurity and imposter syndrome. Have you got a bit more relaxed about that as you've got older?**

I'm a bit more relaxed in general, I think. It's always a funny one when you see your mates doing the graft and going to work while you're getting to travel to all these lovely places and just play shows every night...

**...with Liam Gallagher...**

Yeah, exactly! A lot of our mates grew up listening to Liam, so it does feel quite surreal. But yeah, it's fine - you've just got to get on with it. The music keeps me sane!

.....

**Jake Bugg plays headline shows at Keele University, Staffordshire, on Friday 8 March and Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, on Sunday 28 April. He supports Liam Gallagher and John Squire at Civic Hall at the Halls, Wolverhampton, on Thursday 14 March.**

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Comedy previews from across the region...

### Sophie McCartney

Victoria Hall, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, Fri 15 March; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Thurs 18 April

Award-winning comedian Sophie McCartney has entered the perilous world of parenting and thinks it's high time she told her audience all about it. "Why did no one tell me what to really expect after I was expecting?" she questions. "Will my belly button ever go back to 'normal'? Why do you need a degree in collapsing travel cots? And do I have what it takes to stop my current cereal eaters from becoming future serial killers?"

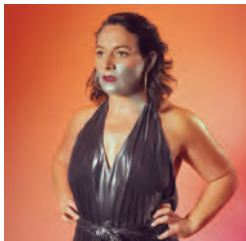


These and many more questions will hopefully be answered in latest show Tired & Tested, during which Sophie makes her way through subjects including mating, birthing, body changes, school WhatsApp groups, overbearing nutjob love, and still not being able to handle her booze on a night out...

### Jessica Fostekew

The Glee Club, Birmingham, Tues 19 March; Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton, Thurs 16 May

"I exist in real life but am also a comedian, actor and writer," says Jessica Fostekew. "Since 2008 I've been throwing this job around like you would a walnut in a sock."



Realising herself to be a feminist "the very first time somebody said: You're really funny for a woman", Jessica gets her comedy inspiration from her life, her family and, er, witchcraft - although reassuringly reveals that the latter source provides only around one per cent of her material! "I'm not a comedian in order to abuse people or to get laid," Jessica wrote in the Huffington Post. "I want to make people laugh. I'm there to be judged on my jokes. I've had everything shouted at me, from "My tits are better than yours" to "When's the raffle?" but it's never been meant to hurt me."



### Matt Chorley Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham, Wed 13 March

There can surely be no better time than a probable general election year for Times Radio presenter and Have I Got News For You regular Matt Chorley to hit the road with a brand-new touring show. This latest offering sees Matt draw on two decades of reporting from Westminster - and two centuries of

history - to deliver 'a hilarious guide to winning and losing at the polls'. In the process, he'll be focus-grouping the audience and compiling his own manifesto - one that he firmly believes is guaranteed to get him the keys to No 10!

### Tom Houghton

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Thurs 14 March

In an age where tradition and progress are wrestling against each other, what are the parts of ourselves that need shedding, and what is it worth holding on to?



That's the question which will be posed by Tom Houghton when he visits Coventry mid-month. Tom's star is very much in the ascendant right now, thanks to a break-out year that saw him become a social-media hit courtesy of multiple viral videos. He's also appeared in Netflix's The Circle, hosted Very British Problems: Live and the Bad Manors podcast, and pretty much looks set for a fantastic future on the UK comedy circuit.

### Adam Kay

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Mon 25 March; Victoria Hall, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, Thurs 3 October

After watching an Adam Kay performance, Stephen Fry declared, "This made me very, very happy." Numerous sell-out years at the Edinburgh Fringe and tens of millions of YouTube hits later, former obstetrician and gynaecologist Adam is this month visiting the Midlands with brand-new offering Undoctored, a follow-on from previous smash-hit stage show This Is Going To Hurt.



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Tue 18 – Thu 20 June  
Resorts World Arena

Discover more at: [amplify.co.uk](http://amplify.co.uk)

Comedy previews from across the region...

## Leigh Francis

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Fri 1 March;  
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Sun 31 March

Funnyman Leigh Francis - best known as comedy creation Keith Lemon - is bringing to life his various characters in a 'live' environment for the very first time. Leigh is promising an evening awash with hilarious sketches and bucketloads of audience interaction - not to mention, of course, close encounters with not only Keith Lemon but Bear & Avid Merrion, 'David Dickinson', 'Ant & Dec' and Myrtle.



## Jo Caulfield

Number 8 Pershore, Fri 8 March; Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Sat 9 March;  
Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, North Shropshire, Fri 19 April; Lichfield Garrick, Fri 17 May

"I always question where my comedy's coming from," says Jo Caulfield, who's appeared on much-loved TV shows *Mock The Week* and *Have I Got News For You*. "Is it coming from a good place and is it a worthwhile target? I'm rude, I swear and can be very harsh, but I'm not that crude. I tend not to do graphic sex stuff, because it doesn't make me laugh. I always say I don't do fluids, because I don't find that funny. I also think it's quite childish. I don't think people are shocked by that kind of humour anymore. When comics think that they're being shocking, I just want to say, 'We're not shocked; we're just bored and find it distasteful.'"



## Ania Magliano

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry,  
Fri 15 March

Describing herself as a triple threat (bisexual, Gen Z, bad at cooking), Ania Magliano is currently going down a storm on the UK comedy circuit. And not just with appreciative audiences either; critics have also been waxing lyrical about her, describing the Cambridge University graduate as everything from artfully accomplished to profound, modern, incisive and deadpan hilarious.

Her latest offering, *I Can't Believe You've Done This* - nominated for an award at the Edinburgh Fringe and featuring an imaginative blend of the frivolous and the serious - covers everything from bad haircuts and dating experiences, to breast-reduction surgery and trauma.



## Alasdair Beckett-King

The Old Rep, Birmingham, Wed 27 March;  
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Thurs 25 April

When, as a stand-up comedian, you find that no less a laughter merchant than Stewart Lee is hailing you a five-star example of 'clockwork comedy perfection', it's reasonable to assume that you must be doing plenty right. And Alasdair Beckett-King most definitely is. Lee's glowing recommendation is no stand-alone tribute, with critics and audience members alike routinely praising the self-described hedge-wizard and cat burglar...

Alasdair - who also describes himself as England's most Scottish-looking man - visits the Midlands this month and next with latest touring show *Nevermore* - an offering in which he's promising to unravel some of life's shallowest mysteries...

## Iain Stirling

Crewe Lyceum Theatre, Sat 23 March;  
The Alexandra, Birmingham, Sun 24 March

"To help convince my father that comedy is a real job," says Iain Stirling, "I've dressed up smart and gone along to numerous posh parties where I didn't win the following things: Bafta Best Children's Presenter 2011, Chortle Best Newcomer 2011, Loaded Lafta Rising Star 2011, and a good few more!" Iain's self-deprecating style of humour has proved hugely popular since he burst onto the scene in 2009, when he finished runner-up to Joe Lycett as Chortle Student Comedian Of The Year at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. The ensuing years have seen him enjoy considerable success as a children's television presenter and, most famously, as the narrator on the hit TV series *Love Island*. Jokes include: "When Jesus went to heaven, was that not essentially 'moving back in with your parents'?"



# A DREAM COME TRUE

Shawna Hamic talks about playing fun and sassy  
Ursula the Sea Witch in hit touring musical Unfortunate...





**Musical parody Unfortunate tells the previously untold story of Ursula the Sea Witch - the underwater baddie in hit Disney movie The Little Mermaid. Described as a tell-all tale of sex, sorcery and suckers, the show is rated 16-plus and is currently touring the UK - stopping off at two Midlands theatres along the way. Shawna Hamic - best known from award-winning Netflix series Orange Is The New Black - plays Ursula. She recently spoke to What's On about starring as her favourite Disney villain...**

Unfortunate is a theatre success story. First staged at Edinburgh Festival in 2019, the quirky musical has gone from strength to strength. When it toured five years ago, it played small-scale venues - including Birmingham Hippodrome's Patrick Studio - but now the production has been expanded and re-imagined as a full-scale musical.

Inspired by Disney's *The Little Mermaid*, *Unfortunate: The Untold Story Of Ursula The Sea Witch* puts Ursula in the driving seat, telling her saga - and it's a very different fairytale from the one people are used to!

The show stars actress Shawna Hamic as Ursula, performing alongside River Medway as Ariel. Probably best known to readers as prison guard 'Ginger' Copeland in the hit Netflix series *Orange Is The New Black*, Shawna couldn't resist the opportunity to play the sea witch.

"When I was first approached about it, I was really excited because Ursula has always been my favourite Disney villain," she says. "She's the bad guy, and who doesn't love the bad guy? But also, I loved the fact that she represented something that I was in real life - a big girl who was powerful and yet fun and sassy. While we think of villains as bad people, it didn't seem like she was *that* bad. Just to get a chance to portray my favourite villain is a dream come true."

By putting Ursula in the centre of the narrative, *Unfortunate* allows audiences to understand her past and her motivation.

"The story is told through her point of view - she's the narrator as well as the lead character. She speaks to the audience and wants to really show her side of the situation made famous by the Disney movie. She wants it to be what really happened from her perspective, not just seen through the eyes of the heroine that you know.

"So it's the things that happened to her and caused her to be the way she is, and why she reacted the way she did. What caused her to really step into herself as a magical being. It's a love story - she gets the tragedy that happens to lots of people in life, and it makes her more recognisable in everyday life. We

are shaped by the situations that we live through - and that can be true for our favourite 'octowoman' as well.

"We like to cast people as the villain, to see them only one way, and now we get to see Ursula as fully formed. We see her as a kid, we see her as a teenager, we see her on the cusp of greatness, then we see her as everyone recognises her. It's very much like *Wicked* - that same exploration of why she is the way she is. When we know that, we can accept that she's not just the villain."

In encouraging audiences to see beyond their preconceptions of Ursula, Shawna hopes the show will also inspire them to think a bit more about other people - and themselves.

"As a person who is large, as a fat woman, I want to be seen as more than just the funny woman or the sidekick that's sassy. I feel the same about Ursula being a villain - she's the one-dimensional bad guy who everyone has to hate. I don't think anyone is fully good or fully bad; I feel like, in life, we each have different levels and extremes within us. Exploring Ursula's story specifically allows us to explore the stories of the people around us. It may give us an opportunity to see someone in a different light who we have cast as one-dimensional in our mind. While that seems deep for a panto-comedy-musical, I feel it's part of what we try and explore.

"I think *Unfortunate* is a show that also allows you to look at yourself and rejoice in who you are completely. We want you to leave celebrating who you are, knowing that you are perfect the way you are, even if society doesn't want you to believe that. The way you look, who you love, how you see the world - you are unique, and unique is important and should be celebrated."

Written by Robyn Grant and Daniel Foxx with music by Tim Gilvin, *Unfortunate* may be inspired by *The Little Mermaid* but it's no children's cartoon. The production carries an age recommendation of 16-plus - and there's an important reason for that, says Shawna.

"Ours is an adult show - there are adult themes and adult language. And it seems that however much we warn people, there

are still people who bring their children to the show. So we have five and six-year-olds and seven-year-olds and 12-year-olds in the audience! I come out and use some pretty blue language right off, and then there are adult visuals and themes. So you might have to have some awkward conversations with your children that you didn't want to have yet, if you bring them to this show."

Shawna is no stranger to the stage, having been in US productions of *Les Misérables*, *1776*, *Kinky Boots* and *The Last Ship*, but this is her first UK theatre tour.

"I've been to London many times because I would come with my best friend and see theatre in the West End. We would spend a week or two weeks, so I've explored all of the touristy things of London, but I've never had the chance to be in London for a length of time, let alone explore the rest of the UK. So it's a really exciting adventure that I'm on, and what a great way to do it - working here, rather than exploring it by myself!

"I'm excited about getting to see and meet the people in all of the different tour locations. I want to see what resonates with everyone in their own towns and what makes them proud to live where they live. I want to see places that I've read about for my whole life or seen on TV and film but never visited."

With a seven-month tour in the UK, there are a couple of home comforts Shawna admits to missing.

"This is going to seem so silly, but any time someone comes over, I ask them to bring some gum and also to buy a Sprite or a 7up from the airport. You guys have a sugar tax, so you use artificial sweeteners in your drinks, and I can't have them - they make me ill - so the weirdest thing is that I ask people to bring me soda from the US!"

.....

**Unfortunate shows at Birmingham Hippodrome from Thursday 11 to Saturday 13 April and at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Thursday 11 to Sunday 14 July**



**Wicked** Birmingham Hippodrome, Tues 5 March - Sunday 7 April

Offering evidence that you simply can't please all of the people all of the time, Wizard Of Oz spin-off Wicked had to dodge its fair share of slings and arrows when it opened in London in 2006 (three years after debuting in the US).

The proof of the pudding, however, is most definitely in the eating, and 18 years after its West End premiere, Wicked is still going strong. Based on novelist Gregory Maguire's revisionist exploration of Frank L Baum's famous tale, the show basically tells the story of The Wizard

Of Oz from the perspective of two sorcery students, one of whom will become Glinda The Good, the other the Wicked Witch of the West. If you've seen the show before, chances are you'll be eager to catch it again when it visits the Midlands this month. If, on the other hand, Oz is a land to which you've yet to travel, then follow the yellow brick road to the Birmingham Hippodrome box office just as fast as your ruby slippers will carry you...



**Madagascar The Musical**

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Thurs 14 - Sun 17 March; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Thurs 16 - Sun 19 May; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Thurs 30 May - Sun 2 June

The smell of the greasepaint and roar of the crowd has tempted the furry cast of Madagascar the movie to forsake New York's Central Park Zoo in favour of treading the boards on a UK theatre tour.

The blockbuster DreamWorks film comes to life at venues across the region over the next few months, with Alex the Lion, Marty the Zebra, Melman the Giraffe and Gloria the

Hippo all present and correct in a show that producers promise will send your kids home positively wild (which may or may not be a good thing!). CBBC and Strictly Come Dancing favourite Karim Zeroual stars.

**Peak Stuff**

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Thurs 21 & Fri 22 March

Award-winning theatre company ThickSkin here collaborate with up-and-coming playwright Billie Collins to contemplate the question: in an age of retail therapy, climate crisis and click & collect, how does our 'stuff' define us?

Presenting three fast-paced stories about consumer culture, Peak Stuff is one of the works chosen to be part of the Writers' Guild of Great Britain's New Play Commission Scheme. The initiative was created in response to the decline in new-play commissioning following the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Ben And Imo**

Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, until Sat 6 April

Legendary composer Benjamin Britten's struggle to write an opera in time for the 1953 coronation of Queen Elizabeth II provides the subject matter for Ben And Imo.

Receiving its premiere in Stratford, the play focuses on the timely arrival in Britten's life of the inspirational Imogen Holst, the daughter of composer Gustav and an accomplished musician in her own right... Originally written by Mark Ravenhill for radio, the new production is directed by Erica Whyman.



**WICKED**

Tue 5 Mar - Sun 7 Apr

Audio Described Performance, CAP

UniSlam 2024

Fri 15 - Sun 17 Mar

REWRITES

**NEL'S PLACE**

BY SHEEP SOUP

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MEHEK

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UNFORTUNATE

THE UNTOLD STORY OF URSULA THE SEA WITCH

THE MUSICAL PARODY

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JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR

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Cosi fan tutte

Mozart

Fri 10 May

WNO Welsh National Opera

Death in Venice

Britten

Sat 11 May



## Bonnie & Clyde

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 5 - Sat 9 March; Birmingham Hippodrome, Tues 3 - Sat 7 September

This award-winning musical tells the Great Depression-era story of Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow, two small-town nobodies destined to become one of America's most notorious couples.

The production stars Catherine Tyldesley - best known from her time in Coronation Street and on Strictly Come Dancing - as Clyde's sister-in-law, Blanche.

"If you want to go on a real emotional adrenaline high, this is the show for you," says Catherine. "I think you would come out having been on a real journey with the highs and lows of the characters. And you'll learn a lot; and you'll surprise yourself in terms of judgement of the characters as well."

## The Haunting Of Blaine Manor

Albany Theatre, Coventry, Fri 29 & Sat 30 March; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Thurs 18 & Fri 19 July

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

## Minority Report

The Rep, Birmingham, Fri 22 March - Sat 6 April

Widely known thanks to the 2002 Tom Cruise film version, Philip K Dick's 1956 novella is here adapted for the stage.

Set in a near future, the story focuses on the character of Dame Julia Anderton, a neuroscientist who has created a programme which monitors people's thoughts and

detains them before they commit a crime. But when Julia herself is accused of 'pre-murder', she becomes convinced that not everything is quite as it seems...

"We commissioned this project several years ago," says the show's producer, Simon Friend, "but with its prescient central theme of personal technological surveillance, it has only become more alarmingly relevant to the world in which we live, despite the original story having been written in 1956."

## My Life With Oscar

Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham, Wed 20 & Thurs 21 March

Described as a tragicomic, true-life *Sunset Boulevard* - and critically acclaimed at last summer's Edinburgh Festival - *My Life With Oscar* finds actor & filmmaker Nick Cohen re-living and attempting to exorcise his desperate Hollywood years. Starting life in a dysfunctional wannabe family in Croydon, Nick chases his dream of winning an Oscar all the way to Tinseltown, where a film-producer family friend promises to teach him the secrets of bagging an Academy Award. Needless to say, not everything goes entirely according to Nick's plan...

## Boy Out The City

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Mon 25 - Thurs 28 March

Moving to the countryside during lockdown came at a price for Declan Bennett. When his boyfriend left on a six-month work placement abroad, Declan found himself with plenty of time on his hands; time in which to ruminate

on his previous life experiences. And not everything that he recalled made for a comfortable memory...

Taking audiences on an often-turbulent journey through his earlier years - and in the process bringing them face-to-face with challenging issues such as toxic masculinity, homophobia and men's mental health - *Boy Out The City* is Coventry-reared Declan's debut play.

## And Then There Were None

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Tues 5 - Sat 9 March

Lucy Bailey directs this new version of Agatha Christie's 1943 adaptation of her own novel - a book which the legendary author admitted had been her most difficult to write. The storyline follows the fortunes of a group of strangers who, having been lured to a solitary mansion off the coast of Devon, find that their eccentric millionaire host has mysteriously disappeared.

The plot then thickens in a truly shocking way when one of the 10 guests meets with an untimely demise...



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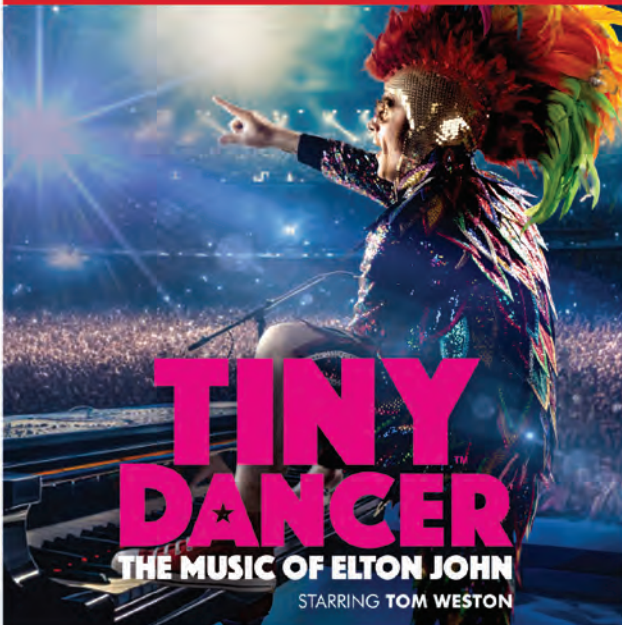


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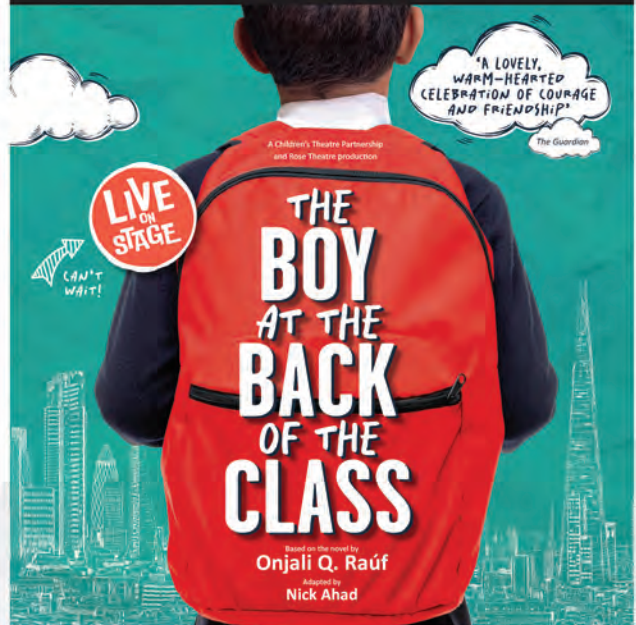
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## Theatre previews from around the region



## The Mousetrap

Crewe Lyceum Theatre, Mon 25 - Sat 30 March; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Mon 3 - Sat 8 June; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 25 - Sat 29 June

Not only has everybody heard of Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap*, everybody's seen the show as well - haven't they?... Okay, maybe not, but as the production recently celebrated its 70th consecutive year in the West End, it's fair to say its capacity to put bums on seats is absolutely beyond question. Not surprisingly the world's longest-running show, its touring version here makes a welcome return to the Midlands, with *EastEnders*' Todd Carty and *Only Fools And Horses*' Gwyneth Strong top-billing.

## Farm Boy

Lichfield Garrick, until Sun 10 March; Tittensor Village Hall, Thurs 14 March; Armitage with Handsacre Village Hall, Fri 15 March; Abbots Bromley Village Hall, Sat 16 March; Barton-under-Needwood Village Hall, Sun 17 March; New Oscott Village, Tues 19 March; Marchington Woodlands Village Hall, Wed 20 March; Alstonefield Village Hall, Thurs 21 March; Burntwood Memorial Hall, Fri 22 March; Denstone Village Hall, Sat 23 March; Weston Village Hall, Sun 24 March

For anybody who loved *War Horse* - whether as a book, a film, a stage production or all three - this new adaptation of Michael Morpurgo's compelling follow-up novel is surely a must-see work of theatre. Presented by Lichfield Garrick, the family-friendly production revisits *War Horse*'s main characters of Albert and Joey the horse via the story of a teenager who regularly visits his grandfather on his farm in rural Devon... A moving account of the changing face of the English countryside, *Farm Boy* was written by Morpurgo as a response to the many post-*War Horse* enquiries he received from readers wanting to know what happened to Joey. Morpurgo has also stated that of all the books he's written, *Farm Boy* is his favourite... If ever there was a good reason to check out the stage version...

## Waiting Room

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Wed 6 March; Old Joint Stock Theatre, Fri 22 & Sat 23 March

Laughter may well be the best medicine, but it's definitely been in short supply for anybody needing to use a hospital accident & emergency department in recent times. Acutely aware of this, Thomas Levi, Rebecca Morris and Chris Stevenson - aka Elemental Theatre Company - have here set out to

provide their audience with a serious dose of the chuckles, transporting them to the medical mayhem of an A&E waiting room that's positively awash with eccentric staff and peculiar patients.

Sections of the show have been developed verbatim through interviews and discussions with junior doctors and paramedic staff, a strategy which has allowed Thomas, Rebecca and Chris to deep-dive into the day-to-day lives not only of NHS key workers but also the often-difficult patients they encounter.

## Wanted

Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham, Thurs 14 & Fri 15 March; The Albany Theatre, Coventry, Wed 27 March

Powerful drama presented with a smattering of humour and plenty of heart is the tried-and-tested formula in which Gazebo

Theatre place their trust when producing new work for the stage. This currently touring production from the highly rated company explores the stories of some truly extraordinary women: Irena Sendler, who rescued more than 2,500 children from the Warsaw ghetto during the Nazi occupation; Olive Morris, a British Black Panther and avid activist for women and squatters' rights; Phoolan Devi, India's fearsome Bandit Queen and politician; and Dr James Barry, a woman very much ahead of her time.

The play is directed by Tonia Daley-Campbell and features Alexia McIntosh, who was nominated for an Olivier Award for *Six The Musical*.



## Ladies Down Under

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Fri 8 - Sat 30 March

Amanda Whittington enjoyed such a big hit with her play *Ladies Day* that she decided to write a sequel - and this is it. When Hull-based fish-factory colleagues Pearl, Jan, Shelley and Linda hit the jackpot at Royal Ascot, they decide to head off for the adventure of a lifetime *Down Under*. But once they're there, it becomes blindingly obvious that each of them is on a very different journey...

## The Hound Of The Baskervilles

Prince of Wales Theatre, Cannock, Sun 24 March

Sherlock Holmes is one of literature's most enduring characters, *The Hound Of The Baskervilles* his most famous adventure. Yet no matter how many actors don the deerstalker and solve the mystery of the moors-roaming mutt, audiences never seem to tire of the story, and it remains a hugely popular choice for both stage and screen adaptation... Former *Dr Who* star Colin Baker here takes on the role of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's legendary sleuth.

## Self-Raising

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Tues 12 & Wed 13 March

After a life spent championing stories by Deaf and disabled artists, Jenny Sealey - the award-winning artistic director of Graeae theatre company - takes to the stage to tell her own story, a 'blisteringly honest' account of growing up deaf in a family with secrets.

# WICKED WITCHES

Hit musical *Wicked* reimagines the story of *The Wizard Of Oz* from the perspective of Elphaba (who becomes known as the Wicked Witch of the West) and Glinda, the Good Witch. Twenty years on from its first-ever staging, the show is once again touring the UK. What's On caught up with Laura Pick (Elphaba) and Sarah O'Connor (Glinda) to find out why the musical remains so Popular...





**Wicked has become a huge hit around the world. What makes the story so special?**

**Laura:** It means so much to so many people. I think no matter who you are, where you're from, or what your life experience is, there's something in this show for everyone. It's about this beautiful, strong friendship between two women - I think we as women can relate to it.

**Sarah:** Whoever goes to see it will find something different from their perspective. There's not just one 'lesson' or one storyline; you can pull from it what you want and what connects and resonates with you most, be it a love story, finding who you are, wanting to better yourself in a community, or becoming a better person. It's a well-rounded musical - it's great!

**Have either of you played these characters before?**

**L:** I have. I was stand-by Elphaba at the Apollo Victoria Theatre in London for two years, and then I took over the role for about six months in total. I said during our rehearsal process that I've been on a completely different journey with the story this time. It feels brand new again.

**S:** It's my first time! I'm loving it. It's quite a beast, but it's been very exciting with Laura having done it before. She knows it, and feels like a really strong anchor for me to play against, but she's also been really open to finding a new journey for Elphaba and Glinda together.

**Have you enjoyed working together to build the characters' relationship?**

**L:** The funny thing is, during the show, other than moments on stage, we don't see each other. We have to make the effort to pop into each other's rooms, or go for a coffee. The special thing about Elphaba and Glinda is that you can find ways to communicate just with a look. Sarah had cut her arm one day on a very sharp sequin - I noticed it. Within five seconds, we'd communicated just with our eyes: 'Are you okay?' 'Yeah, I'm okay, I know about it!'

**S:** ...While we were singing a duet! We've had many conversations with our eyes - it's hilarious. Laura will be in my life forever. It's an absolutely amazing connection that we've got, and we feel very lucky to be working with each other. We're having the best time, and we know we have each other.

**L:** It's been lovely seeing feedback from fans or reviews, where people are saying that the chemistry between us is so strong.

**S:** You can tell we're friends off stage as well.

**L:** That's what she thinks!

**Getting hurt by a sequin might be the most showbiz injury of all time!**

**S:** You're telling me! That was my wand... it's really dangerous stuff, you know!

**For a lot of musical theatre performers, these roles are on their 'bucket list'. Was that the case for you?**

**S:** Yes, and I think that comes with the weight of the role. It's so important to get it right and deliver it as best we can. We know how lucky we are - we work hard. You have to have talent, and you have to have a really good work ethic and audition... but there is an element of luck. I auditioned for Elphaba for years! It just wasn't sitting right. Then I found my inner comedy, and I thought 'Maybe I'm a Glinda,' and it made way more sense. When I met Laura, I thought 'You're the kind of person who needs to play Elphaba.' Her vocals are ridiculous!

**L:** I wouldn't even dream about playing Glinda! It's a completely different beast. We both understand how challenging each other's roles are. Sarah makes it sound so easy.

**The show is full of amazing songs, but Defying Gravity (sung by Elphaba) and Popular (by Glinda) are huge. When preparing to sing, did you look back at iconic performances, or did you try to distance yourself?**

**L:** I still do! I still spend time on YouTube...

**S:** I've watched a lot of both Elphaba and Glinda - every country, every language, every version - but you cannot use those for your own version. It wouldn't be your natural progression in the role. I've watched them all, but I didn't go anywhere near them when I was choosing what I wanted to do with Glinda.

**L:** There's a lot of previous Elphabas all over the world that add riffs, but if it doesn't benefit the storytelling, why would we be doing this beautiful riff on the word 'and'? You listen and think 'I like the way that they've phrased that, I like the way they've put that sentence together.' And don't get me wrong, I'm sure we've been listening to the

soundtrack on repeat from age 13.

**S:** Yeah... I could sing all the parts.

**L:** I wonder whether we could put on a two-woman show?

**S:** I reckon we could.

**Laura, can you tell us what it's like when you're actually defying gravity on stage?**

**L:** Flying is great. I love it! It was definitely nerve-wracking the first few times, but now it's just part of my day. You mentioned Popular and Defying Gravity being two of the most iconic songs, and we're actually both on stage for the whole time during those, so we get to share that moment.

**S:** Well, while you're singing those notes, I don't think you're worrying about how high you are!

**Sarah, do you see any of yourself in Glinda, or are you very different people?**

**S:** There are little elements... I'm definitely a lot more like 'Act Two Glinda' than 'Act One Glinda'. I wasn't born with a silver spoon in my mouth, I don't just say things that I'm thinking, and I'm not going to climb up the ladder any way I can... I think I'm answering my own question here - no, we're not similar! I can be on the spot and witty sometimes, but generally no. In Act Two, she's a lot more grounded and grown-up, so I can connect with her there. She's probably the furthest I've ever been from a character - but that's why I love her. When I come out of the stage door, people don't even know it's me.

**Are you excited about the new Wicked film, which is coming out in November?**

**L:** We'd better be invited!

**S:** If we don't get a private screening, I'll be livid.

**L:** I want to be invited to the real deal - the premiere in London.

**S:** I would love if the whole touring production could rent a cinema for the day, and go together, and enjoy it as a team. That would be cool - and we can all dress up!

**L:** We could just go after work in our costumes! The film is going to be so different from the musical - I'm excited.

.....  
**Wicked shows at Birmingham Hippodrome from Tuesday 5 March to Sunday 7 April**

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## Theatre for younger audiences



## Zog And The Flying Doctors

Worcester Swan Theatre, Tues 19 - Thurs 21 March; Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Tues 26 - Thurs 28 March; Crewe Lyceum Theatre, Fri 14 - Sun 16 June

Freckle Productions' adaptation of Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler's much-loved book finds everybody's favourite dragon (that's Zog!) providing an air-ambulance service with the assistance of his 'flying doctor' crew, Princess Pearl and Sir Gadabout. But Pearl's uncle, the king, doesn't believe that princesses should be doctors, and before too long Pearl finds herself locked up in the castle and forced to wear a crown and a 'silly frilly dress'. Needless to say, help is soon at hand...

## Claytime

Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham, Sat 16 & Sun 17 March; Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Thurs 28 & Fri 29 March

"Come to a place where the earth's natural material meets with children's imaginations," say Indefinite Articles theatre company, in talking about currently touring production Claytime. "It's a world of fabulous forms, amazing animals and morphing monsters!"

Interactive play with clay is a guarantee in this lively show for children aged three to six, with the award-winning ensemble further advising "It's messy fun, so don't wear your party clothes!"

## Jurassic Live

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sun 24 - Tues 26 March; The Halls, Wolverhampton, Fri 24 & Sun 26 May

Jurassic Live's promoters are hailing this prehistoric extravaganza 'a roarsome adventure' not to be missed. Featuring professional puppeteers and impressively realistic dinosaurs, the production follows a team of dino rangers as they search for a missing baby dinosaur... Highlights of the show include the UK's only flying Pterodactyl and the country's biggest Tyrannosaurus Rex.

## Awful Auntie

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Thurs 28 - Sun 31 March; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Thurs 17 - Sat 19 October

Frights, fights and friendships are the order of the day in this lively adaptation of David Walliams' much-loved story. At the centre of the tale is a young girl named Stella. The sole heir to Saxby Hall, she finds herself in danger of losing both her inheritance and her life

when she comes up against her thoroughly unpleasant Aunt Alberta...

## Along Came A Magpie

Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton, Wed 27 March

Puppetry, plants, and pots aplenty feature in this intimate work of theatre for youngsters aged two to six. Telling the tale of a gardener who finds her potting shed turned upside-down by a visiting magpie, the show takes audiences on a playful and heart-warming journey as the pair set about navigating the intricacies of friendship...

## Dear Zoo

Crewe Lyceum Theatre, Sat 2 & Sun 3 March; Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Thurs 14 & Fri 15 March; Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Fri 29 & Sat 30 March; Birmingham Hippodrome, Thurs 11 - Tues 16 April; Lichfield Garrick, Sat 20 & Sun 21 April

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



## Dogs Don't Do Ballet

Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-upon-Trent, Sat 23 - Mon 25 March

Little Angel

Theatre make a welcome return with a show about a dog named Biff who thinks he's a ballerina. The production is based on the same-named book by Anna Kemp and brings together 'beautiful puppets, well-loved ballet music and dazzling comedy'.



## Peppa Pig's Fun Day Out!

Crewe Lyceum Theatre, Wed 20 & Thurs 21 March; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Sat 25 & Sun 26 May; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Wed 31 July & Thurs 1 August; Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Wed 28 & Thurs 29 August; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Wed 18 & Thurs 19 September; Palace Theatre, Redditch, Wed 25 & Thurs 26 September; Malvern Forum Theatre, Wed 16 & Thurs 17 October

If you've taken your little ones to any of the previous Peppa Pig stage shows - and enjoyed the experience of watching them having a fantastic time - you'll be in no doubt that this latest production is well worth catching.

The show sees Peppa, along with her family and friends, enjoying a fun-packed day at the zoo and the beach.

Parents are advised to prepare their children for all manner of cracking capers, including singing and dancing with colourful scarecrows, feeding penguins, building big sandcastles, and swimming in the sea! Looks like an oinktastic time is going to be had by all!



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# COMING UP THIS SPRING



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**THE BUGLE LIVE 2024**  
SUNDAY 10 MARCH



**LA VOIX**  
THURSDAY 14 MARCH



**PAUL RILEY**  
SATURDAY 16 MARCH



**SONGS OF INNOCENCE  
AND OF EXPERIENCE**  
SATURDAY 16 MARCH



**ALASDAIR BECKETT-KING**  
WEDNESDAY 27 MARCH



**REGINALD D. HUNTER**  
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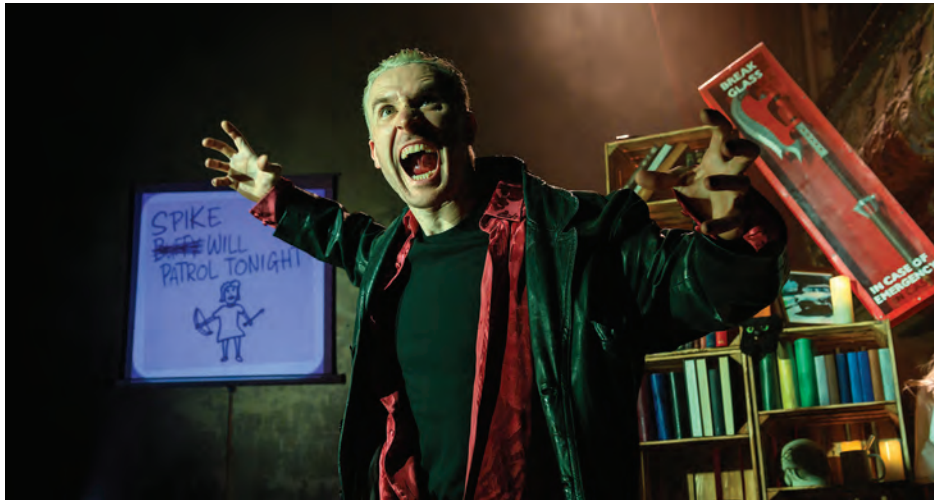
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## Light entertainment from around the region

**Buffy Revamped**

Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Sun 10 March;  
The Alexandra, Birmingham, Tues 26 March

Calling to mind the work of ensembles such as the Reduced Shakespeare Company, *Buffy Revamped* is a fast-paced new production that wings its way through all 144 episodes of hit 1990s television series *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*. Not only that, but it does so in an admirably concise 70 minutes.

The one-man production is presented by Brendan Murphy, whose central character of Spike is a fella who, as you might imagine, knows a thing or several about the now-cult US TV show... *Buffy Revamped* scored a big hit in Edinburgh, so if you're a fan of the series yourself, a fun evening out is pretty much guaranteed.

**I'm Sorry I Haven't A Clue**

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,  
Tues 26 March

One-time Young Ones favourite Adrian Edmondson has called it "the most ridiculous, most surreal, most incomprehensibly funny show on any medium," while *The Radio Times* confidently described it as "indisputably the greatest radio comedy of all time."

Having garnered plenty more similarly effusive praise across its 52 years and 70-plus series, *I'm Sorry I Haven't A Clue* continues to strike chords with BBC Radio Four listeners throughout the country.

The comedy panel game has been touring to theatres since 2007 and here makes a welcome return to the Midlands region. This particular evening of inspired nonsense sees host Jack Dee joined by pianist Colin Sell and a 'star-studded' cast of as-yet-unannounced (at the time of writing) comedians.

**The Great Baldini**

Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs, Wed 6  
March; Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Sat 9  
March

Those unfamiliar with *The Great Baldini* are advised to imagine an amalgamation of arch Bond villain Ernst Blofeld and legendary

magician/comedian Tommy Cooper. The self-proclaimed - presumably with his tongue firmly in his cheek - 'emperor of illusion, prince of prestidigitation and maharajah of mystery' is stopping off in the region this month to present 'a cabaret of magical illusions'.

Bristol-based Baldini comes complete with a host of five-star reviews and is a firm family favourite, so be sure to check him out before he vanishes in a puff of smoke...

**Jerry Sadowitz**

Dudley Town Hall, Thurs 28 March;  
Huntingdon Hall, Worcester, Sat 6 April

American-born Scottish comedian & magician Jerry Sadowitz comes with a big fat health warning; he is most definitely not for the fainthearted!

A man who's not averse to hurling his underwear at female members of the audience, Sadowitz is about as far away from political correctness as it's possible to get. On-stage antics have included stamping on a blow-up doll of Linda McCartney not long after she'd died, spitting in the face of a drunken heckler, and pouring scorn on Jimmy Savile just days after the DJ had passed away (although history does of course show that Jerry was singing from the correct hymn sheet regarding the Jim'll Fix It star).

**The Bugle Live**

Old Rep, Birmingham, Sun 10 March;  
Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 16 March

Fans of long-running podcast *The Bugle* - it was launched in 2007 and has run for 600-plus episodes - here get the chance to sample its magic live on stage.

Presented by Andy Zaltzman - perhaps best known to BBC Radio Four listeners as the host of *The News Quiz* - the show sees co-hosts and guests delivering 'freshly hewn topical satire, as well as probable and certifiable lies and other assorted high-grade nonsense'.

**Sasha Velour:  
The Big Reveal Live Show**

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Tues 12 March

The gender-fluid Sasha Velour - the season-nine winner of *RuPaul's Drag Race* back in 2017 - stops off in Birmingham in support of recently published book *The Big Reveal: An Illustrated Manifesto Of Drag*. Offering an immersive evening of storytelling and live art, the show features 'iconic new performances' by Sasha and an appearance by a special guest star.



# BEAUTIFUL BALLET

**English Youth Ballet principal dancer Lindsey Fraser talks about the company and its production of *The Sleeping Beauty*...**



## **Founded by Janet Lewis in 1998, English Youth Ballet offers young people who are interested in dance the opportunity to perform classical ballet alongside professional dancers and tutors. Ahead of the company's performances of *The Sleeping Beauty* at Stoke's Regent Theatre next month, What's On spoke to Lindsey Fraser, who will be taking to the stage in the title role...**

Many a young person would love to be a ballet dancer, performing centre stage in extravagant costumes. For such children, the opportunities presented by English Youth Ballet are surely a dream come true.

EYB has recently celebrated its 25th anniversary. The organisation provides young dancers with the chance to perform classical ballet on stage at major regional theatres in the UK, and to be taught and mentored by professional dancers.

Lindsey Fraser, who performs as a principal dancer with the company, began her journey as a child with a passion for dance.

"I first started going to ballet when I was two-and-a-half years old," she recalls. "My mum started taking me to baby ballet, because I had too much energy at home - I was zooming around a lot! I've been in ballet ever since. I started doing professional training when I was 11 years old, at Tring Park School of Performing Arts. It was quite full-on but very good. We would start at half eight and finish at half six."

Lindsey will be appearing on stage in the lead role of *Aurora* - the *Sleeping Beauty* - at the Regent Theatre in Stoke-on-Trent next month.

"It's based on the fairytale, and the production that we do is very classical. All the children have their own parts. *Aurora* is a great role - it's quite challenging!

"The production sticks to the original tale pretty much. *Aurora* pricks her finger on the spindle and goes to sleep for 100 years; the prince comes along and wakes her up... It's a great one for the families to come and see."

Lindsey started dancing professionally when she was 19. Ballet has always been a big part of her life, and the art of dance has always fascinated and inspired her.

"I was two, so I don't really remember, but my mum says that *Cats*, the musical, was on TV. I pointed at it and said: 'I'd like to do that.' As I was growing up, I was inspired by one of the dancers at the Royal Ballet in London: Mariamela Núñez. She's my biggest inspiration."

Although she's been a dancer for as long as she can remember, Lindsey has been able to pursue other interests - one of which provides quite a contrast to her day job.

'Alongside ballet, I've also done a Maths & Physics Bachelors degree with the Open University. I've loved maths since school, so eventually, when I hang up my pointe shoes, I'm looking to have a career in accountancy. We'll see what the future brings. It will be difficult to think of a career that doesn't involve ballet, but that's definitely another interest of mine.'

After performing *The Sleeping Beauty* in Stoke, the company moves to Nottingham, where it will present a production of *Giselle* with a different group of young dancers.

"It's the first time I'm going to be performing *Giselle* with English Youth Ballet, so that's exciting. We also have *Swan Lake* - I think I'll probably be *Black Swan* again, which is quite challenging but a fabulous role. Each role is demanding in its own way. It's really great to have that variety; it keeps things exciting."

Anyone from age eight to 18 can apply to join the EYB company, as long as they have a little bit of ballet experience - applicants who have at least Grade 1 are encouraged. There's an audition day, which is an experience in itself, with auditions split into Juniors (ages eight to 11) and Seniors (ages 12 to 18).

According to Lindsey, Janet Lewis - the company's founder & director - maintains that the overall experience of performing is the most important thing.

"She is really strong on performance - that's the aim of the production. We do look at technique and offer help with that, but the main part of it is the performance. She wants children to enjoy it!"

Not only will the young dancers become part of a high-quality production, they will also be given the space to make friends and enhance their love of the art form.

"We adapt the choreography to them and their standard. We want them to learn something from the experience as well, but they're on stage doing the choreography, so

we want them to look great."

Rehearsals take place during the month before each performance and are scheduled so that they don't interfere with school hours.

"We rehearse with the children for around 10 days, at weekends - unless it's during the summer holidays, when we might spend five days with them."

Each production's final performance takes place in a regional theatre which is large enough to accommodate the number of people on stage and the scale of the show. The chosen dancers will come from an 80 to 100-mile radius around the theatre.

"We have a lot of rehearsals and then one weekend of shows in each place. The principal dancers rehearse during the week, and then, at the weekend, we travel to wherever we're performing, to rehearse and teach the children. We get to know them and see how they improve and grow. In the end, we're on the stage dancing with them, which is really lovely - it all comes together."

Auditions for the performances in Stoke-on-Trent took place in January, but there are plenty more opportunities for young dancers to audition this year. Children based in the Midlands can apply to perform in *Giselle* at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, with auditions taking place on Monday 17 June.

In the meantime, why not get along to EYB's performances of *The Sleeping Beauty* at the Regent Theatre next month... It's the perfect opportunity to see what's in store for any aspiring ballet dancers - and to enjoy the company's performance of a classic tale.

.....

**The *Sleeping Beauty* shows at the Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, on Friday 12 & Saturday 13 April. *Giselle* shows at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, on Friday 6 & Saturday 7 September. For more information about performances and auditions, visit [englishyouthballet.co.uk](http://englishyouthballet.co.uk)**

THE OLD JOINT STOCK PRESENTS



# BOTTOMS UP

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NEW ACTS MONTHLY



## Dance previews from across the region



## Sao Paulo Dance Company

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Fri 15 & Sat 16 March

It's 'Brazilian sunshine time' in Wolverhampton mid-month, courtesy of a triple bill from first-time visitors São Paulo Dance Company. The talented ensemble have produced more than 100 classical and contemporary works since forming 16 years ago, in the process touring to nearly 20 countries and performing in front of 900,000-plus people.

"São Paulo is a dance company with a very special Brazilian accent," explains Artistic Director Inês Bogéa. "We have the passion for dance,

we have the energy of Brazil, and we love to share that with audiences around the world.

"In the programme that we're presenting here, the choreographers are trying to reflect on stage what we are all feeling in this moment of our lives. They create a unique world through the movements, the connections with the music, and the images that they evoke..."

"We are open to sharing ideas and sensations, and we aim to meet people and understand different ways of looking at our world and our time. So we are looking forward to showing audiences a little bit of our culture, and through the dance we will all feel the energy of Brazil."

## Diversity

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Wed 20 & Thurs 21 March; The Halls Wolverhampton, Sat 6 April

With numerous sell-out tours under their belt, it's fair to say Diversity have made the most of their Susan Boyle-beating success on Britain's Got Talent 15 years ago.

The London-based street-dance crew are this month and next visiting the Midlands region with latest offering Supernova. Extremely well received on its mammoth 66-date tour across 40 towns and cities, the production differs somewhat from previous Diversity shows in the sense that it follows a storyline.

The group is using the tour to support anti-poverty charity the Trussell Trust, with audience members being invited to bring along food donations to the shows.



## A Midsummer Night's Dream

Albany Theatre, Coventry, Thurs 21 March

Having earned an enviable reputation for presenting innovative and magical productions, it's reasonable to assume that Ballet Theatre UK will once again be striking all the right notes with this currently touring dance version of the classic Shakespeare comedy... Expect impressive choreography - set to the iconic Mendelssohn score - and a wardrobe's worth of beautiful costumes.

## 40/40 By Katherina Radeva

The Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome, Fri 8 & Sat 9 March

Award-winning performance maker and visual artist Katherina Radeva describes her critically acclaimed 40/40 show as an inspiring, insightful and moving celebration of her 40 years as a woman, a migrant and an artist... The production takes its audience on a journey through Kat's life, from long-ago days spent dancing at her parents' student parties, through her experience of being body-shamed as a teenage rhythm gymnast, to the present day, when she defines herself as a creative who refuses to be categorised.



# INTO THE FUTURE



## David Haig's new play, *Minority Report* - adapted from Phillip K Dick's 1956 sci-fi thriller - promises audiences 'an electrifying ride into the future' when it opens at Birmingham Rep late this month. What's On recently caught up with the Yes, Prime Minister, Killing Eve and Thin Blue Line actor to find out more...

When actor & writer David Haig agreed to adapt Philip K Dick's classic 1956 sci-fi novella, *The Minority Report*, for the theatre, he knew it would be a challenge - but it was the demands of staging a futuristic story which made the project so compelling.

"Simon Friend, the producer, rang me up," recalls David. "He was a fan of *Pressure*, my last play, and said: 'How would it interest you writing a sci-fi thriller based on *Minority Report*?'"

"Immediately my response internally was, 'What? How can I do this, and is it me? Me, whose plays have been about the First World War and Second World War, and with conventional structures?'"

"Then I thought that was the very reason to do it. How incredibly exciting to go off-piste and just write exactly what came into my head on the basis of this short story written in the 1950s."

And he was given carte-blanche to go as off-piste as he chose.

"The Philip K Dick Estate have been incredibly generous and said that, as long as you use the title and the basic premise of *PreCrime* - ie, that you can anticipate murder and get criminals off the streets before they've even committed the crime - you have complete freedom to write exactly what you want. And I've taken them at their word!"

David is not the first person to adapt the novella - Steven Spielberg turned it into a 2002 blockbuster movie starring Tom Cruise. But the playwright has taken a very different approach and made a fundamental change: his lead character is female.

"I thought it would be really exciting to get as far away from the original story in that sense, but also from the film, which in fact I hadn't seen when I wrote the first draft of the adaptation. So it felt right to write an exciting part for a middle-aged woman in a sci-fi thriller. It's unlikely, it's unexpected, and that's what's interesting about it."

"The principle of the play is that the head of *PreCrime*, Julia Anderton, sees her own name on the list as the next pre-murderer - ie, it has been predicted that she will murder - and it's the last thing in the world that she, as head of the whole organisation, expects."

"Then the play is 80 minutes of real time

from that moment. It's always through her point of view, and it's her run from potential incarceration and criminalisation. Will she kill? Won't she? Will she be proved innocent? Won't she?"

"Not only is it a sci-fi thriller, the play is an interesting portrait of a woman who has to change her mind on a very important premise. Yes, it's a sci-fi thriller, but also it's a conventional play with a story and a journey."

David's previous dramas include *My Boy Jack*, *The Good Samaritan* and the aforementioned *Pressure* - but adapting a futuristic tale set in 2050 is a very different prospect.

"The challenges of writing sci-fi for the stage are writing stage directions like 'the van chases the car at 40 miles an hour, the two collide, there is an explosion of metal and the car bursts into flames....'"

"That was the freedom that I adopted when I was writing it. You just write anything that comes into your head, and then the director, Max Webster, and the incredible design team that we've got say, 'That's possible, that's not possible, that's possible, that's not possible.' And so we work towards a solution in that way."

David has also found the notion of writing about a future world fascinating.

"When *Blade Runner* was filmed, which is also based on a Philip K Dick story, he turned down literally ten to 15 applications for screenplays before he agreed to one. And the one he agreed to was because they created the tone of his world right, and the tone of his world was some bits very dilapidated and old-fashioned, and some bits very modern and futuristic."

"You have to get a mixture, so that people feel comfortable in the world they're in but at the same time think: 'Wow, that's new, and that might already have happened. and that could be about to happen....'"

And the unnerving part of writing about a possible future is that some of it has already come true.

"The whole premise of predicting crime is very close to us. What has struck me is that each time I've done a new draft of this play, it's been because the whole obsession with,

the fear of, the respect for artificial intelligence (AI) has raced forward as I've been writing it.

"I'd already written a draft before Covid, and by the time the lockdowns had finished, AI was rattling forward and I was already out of date, so I've had to keep up with those developments. This prediction of how the brain behaves and in what ways it pre-empted stuff and predicts stuff is already there. It doesn't actually feel so outlandish."

David is also well known as an actor, playing Inspector Grim in television's *The Thin Blue Line* and appearing in series as diverse as *Downton Abbey*, *Killing Eve* and the 2013 re-make of *Yes, Prime Minister*. He's no stranger to acting in films either, having appeared in hit movies *Four Weddings And A Funeral* and *Two Weeks Notice*. He grew up in Rugby and knows Birmingham well, having worked at *The Rep* more than 40 years ago.

"My wife Julia was born in Coventry, and we met in Birmingham. She was working, at the time, for a very good community theatre company called *Second City*, and then we went on to work together at *Birmingham Rep*. "This was in the era of Clive Perry, back in the late 1970s and early 80s, and I loved my time there."

"I've been back very regularly over the years and have a loyalty to the city. I'm very excited that the show is coming to *The Rep*, and I'm looking forward to seeing how it fits into that environment."

And David encourages everyone, not just sci-fi fans, to see *Minority Report*.

"People who have an open mind to the whole concept of how much our society is watched and monitored - and how much our thoughts are probed, and how much science is racing ahead of any safety - as well as people who just want a straight adventure story, will be excited by it."

.....

**Co-produced by Birmingham Rep, Nottingham Playhouse and Lyric Hammersmith Theatre in association with Simon Friend, *Minority Report* shows at The Rep, Birmingham, from Friday 22 March to Saturday 6 April**

## Film highlights in March...

### **Dune: Part II** CERT tbc (166 mins)

Starring **Timothée Chalamet, Zendaya, Florence Pugh, Austin Butler, Rebecca Ferguson, Josh Brolin**  
Directed by **Denis Villeneuve**

One of the most high-profile sci-fi movies of the mid-1980s - and directed by David Lynch - Dune actually began life as a novel, written by Frank Herbert back in the 1960s...

This latest cinematic incarnation - the second film of a two-part adaptation - explores the mythic journey of Paul Atreides, the heir to a noble house, as he follows a path of revenge against the conspirators who destroyed his family.

Facing a choice between the love of his life and the fate of the known universe, he endeavours to prevent a terrible future which only he can foresee...

**Released Fri 1 March**



### **Lisa Frankenstein**

CERT 15 (101 mins)

Starring **Kathryn Newton, Liza Soberano, Jenna Davis, Trina LaFargue, Paola Adino, Joshua Montes** Directed by **Zelda Williams**

Described by its publicity as a coming-of-age love story, Lisa Frankenstein follows the adventures of a misunderstood teenager and her handsome high-school crush - who just happens to be a corpse.

After a set of playfully horrific circumstances

bring him back to life, the pair embark on a murderous journey to find love and happiness - and a few missing body parts along the way...

Robin Williams' daughter, Zelda, is the woman at the helm of a film that aims to pay homage to the hugely popular horror comedies of the 1980s. Sadly, its inability to merge the two genres with any real sense of focus or conviction has seen it dig its own grave with many critics.

**Released Fri 1 March**

### **Imaginary** CERT tbc (104 mins)

Starring **DeWanda Wise, Tom Payne, Veronica Falcón, Betty Buckley, Alix Angelis, Dance DiLiegro** Directed by **Jeff Wadlow**

Are imaginary friends really just creations of a child's mind, or is something far more sinister at play?

That's the question being asked in this original horror from Blumhouse, the production company behind Five Nights At Freddy's and M3GAN.

When Jessica moves back into her childhood home with her family, her youngest stepdaughter, Alice, develops a disconcerting attachment to a stuffed toy bear named Chauncey which she finds in the basement. As Alice's behaviour becomes increasingly concerning, Jessica decides to intervene - only to realise that there's way more to Chauncey than meets the eye...

**Released Fri 8 March**





**Kung Fu Panda 4** CERT PG (94 mins)

With the voices of **Jack Black, Awkwafina, Viola Davis, Dustin Hoffman, James Hone, Bryan Cranston**  
 Directed by **Mike Mitchell** and **Stephanie Stine**

Launched in 2008 with a film that went on to earn an Academy Award nomination, the Kung Fu Panda franchise is big, big business, having so far made more than \$1.8billion at the global box office.

Jack Black once again voices the character of Po Ping - the Kung Fu Panda of the title - for an adventure that sees powerful sorceress and tiny shapeshifting lizard The Chameleon doing her very best to re-summon all the master villains whom Po has previously vanquished to the spirit realm... Veteran British actors Ian McShane and Gary Oldman lend their voices to villainous snow leopard Tai Lung and power-hungry peacock Lord Shen respectively.

**Released Fri 29 March**

**Drive-Away Dolls**

CERT 15 (104 mins)

Starring **Margaret Qualley, Geraldine Viswanathan, Beanie Feldstein, Joey Slotnick, CJ Wilson, Colman Domingo**  
 Directed by **Ethan Coen**

With uninhibited free spirit Jamie bemoaning yet another breakup with a girlfriend, and demure pal Marian seriously needing to loosen up, what better way to make a fresh start than by heading out on an impromptu road trip? But when the pair cross paths with a group of inept criminals, things soon start to go horribly wrong... The first film Ethan Coen has directed without the collaboration of brother Joel (excluding a documentary about Jerry Lee Lewis), Drive-Away Dolls hits cinema screens 17 years after it was first announced as a 'lesbian road movie' entitled Drive-Away Dykes. Apparently, it's the first in a planned lesbian B-movie trilogy from Coen, with second film Honey Don't slated to go into production this very month.

**Released Fri 15 March**



**Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire** CERT tbc

Starring **Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, Paul Rudd, Finn Wolfhard, McKenna Grace, Carrie Coon**  
 Directed by **Gil Kenan**



A bit like superhero movies, Ghostbusters films just keep on coming - although nowhere near as relentlessly. This latest addition to the franchise sees the Spengler family return to where it all started - the iconic New York City firehouse - to team up with the original Ghostbusters, who've developed a top-secret research lab to take the business of busting ghosts to the next level. But when the discovery of an ancient artefact unleashes an evil force, Ghostbusters both new and old must join forces to protect their home and save the world from a second Ice Age.

**Released Fri 22 March**

**Immaculate** CERT tbc (99 mins)

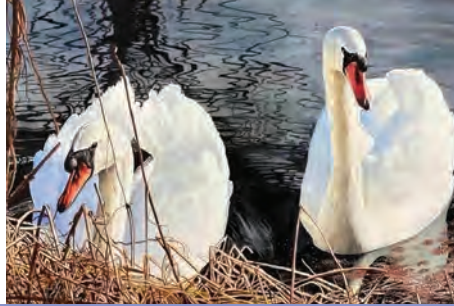
Starring **Sydney Sweeney, Simona Tabasco, Alvaro Morte, Benedetta Porcaroli, Giampiero Judica, Giorgio Colangeli**  
 Directed by **Michael Mohan**

Given that recent superhero release Madame Web - in which she co-starred with Fifty Shades Of Grey's Dakota Johnson - received a sound spanking from the critics, Sydney Sweeney will be hoping that this Black Narcissus-inspired psychological horror movie puts her otherwise-promising career firmly back on track.

The Euphoria and White Lotus star plays a woman of devout faith who, having taken up a new role in a prestigious convent in the picturesque Italian countryside, finds that the warmth with which she is greeted is soon replaced by a shocking nightmare of seriously epic proportions...

**Released Fri 22 March**





# INTERNATIONAL WATERCOLOUR MASTERS

prestigious exhibition returns to the Midlands



## The International Watercolour Masters, a 10-day festival featuring visiting artists from around the world, returns to Shropshire’s Lilleshall Hall in May. The event has been organised and hosted since 2018 by local watercolour master David Poxon, who here explains what visitors to this year’s show can expect to see...

David Poxon’s work in watercolour has taken him around the world.

Since 2018, he has also been gathering expert painters to Shropshire, his home county, on a regular basis for the International Watercolour Masters (IWM) event, which he hosts.

The idea for the Lilleshall Hall-located get-together was born in a Shanghai hotel bar, following David’s attendance at a prestigious art show.

“I was having a couple of drinks,” he explains, “and one of the big watercolour stars from Argentina - his name is Alvaro Castagnet - asked me what my plans were for the following year.” David was already planning to exhibit his own work at Weston Park, near Telford. “I told him all about it, and the venue, and he said ‘That sounds great - but with me in it, it would be fantastic!’ He’s not shy!”

Before he had left the bar, David’s initially modest exhibition had grown even further, as more watercolour masters showed an interest in joining him. “I left Shanghai thinking ‘What have I done? I’ve invited all these people to be in a show - so I’d better organise it!’”

Fortunately, in a previous incarnation, David worked in the music industry, a fact which meant he had the necessary skills to plan a large-scale event. The show was an incredible success, with nearly 17,000 visitors in a single month. “It was a prototype. It became obvious to me that I had a great format, but I needed a much bigger venue, and I needed to expand it.”

In his hunt for a more spacious location, David discovered Lilleshall Hall, again situated in the countryside around his home. “Lilleshall is the UK’s national sports & conference centre, so Britain’s elite athletes are always wandering around the place. I thought, now it can be the home of the world’s elite watercolour painters as well!”

“When you walk in the hall, there’s this beautiful atmosphere, with ambient light, a nice bit of jazzy music, and everybody starts floating around. There’s nothing like it in the world - and it’s coming here!”

Watercolour became known as ‘the English style’ of painting thanks to the 17th and 18th-century artists who developed it - including Midlanders David Cox and Walter Langley.

“They used to go on what is now known as The Grand Tour. They would get a sleeping

bag and a bag of equipment, and wander all over Europe - Italy, Switzerland - gathering information and subjects to bring back to their studios to paint. Just like when we go somewhere, we might take photographs, they would do quick sketches.”

Watercolour has since become one of the most popular painting disciplines in the world. “It’s the easiest to start, but the hardest to master. It’s like dealing with a wild animal - you never can quite tame it.”

The artists featured in the show have certainly mastered the craft, however. “The tonal depth, the definition, skill and detail, emotion, drama - there’s everything in these paintings.”

While painting might appear to be a solitary activity, IWM 2024 is very much a group effort. David compares it to playing in a football team: “No one in the team is more important than the team itself. That’s the kind of philosophy that I try to have with this show.”

The event has gained a reputation around the world for its organisation, venue, and top-class presentation, as well as the unique presence of the artists themselves. Multiple live demonstrations are scheduled each day, with attendees able to watch a master at work. “There’ll be a sit-down audience, and each side of the stage will have giant monitor screens which capture what the artists are doing. The audience will be able to follow every brush stroke - and they will be amazed. Last time, you could hear a pin drop. People were sitting there with their mouths open in complete awe at what they were seeing.”

There are also workshops with different artists: “So if anyone wants to spend some real quality time under a master’s tuition, they can book in on the IWM website.”

As well as the activities taking place on site, the event will find an audience much further afield - in a bid to reach fans of watercolour who can’t attend the event in person, the 10-day festival is being filmed. “This is the equivalent of Glastonbury - but for watercolour!”

There will be interviews with artists, a tour of the exhibition, and plenty more besides. “I’ve made a little series called Watercolour Basics - five-minute modules, without any jargon, aimed at people who want to get started painting.”

IWM tickets should be bought in advance - there’s a limited capacity, in the interest of audience comfort - and all of the 150-plus

paintings are for sale.

In addition to IWM events, Lilleshall Hall’s cafe, restaurant and Italian Gardens will be open as well. “It’s not just for people who may be interested in painting - we want everybody to come along. This is something completely different, and the atmosphere is very therapeutic.”

Alongside paintings from global masters, IWM also hosts a watercolour competition, which this year brought in nearly 3,000 entries from people all around the world.

“People say ‘It’s not the winning that’s important, it’s the taking part,’ but actually, winning is nice! When you do win something, and you get the acceptance of your peers, it gives you a good boost, and it enthruses you to do more.”

Judging the competition was no mean feat. David collected 20 masters and four industry professionals to judge the entries remotely.

“The amazing thing was, when all the results were in, the same 10 people had got the most votes from all these judges. You could see the pattern. These are judges from China to North America, to Brazil, to Europe, and they were all voting independently.”

In addition, the top 200 entries will be given their moment in the spotlight, broadcast on a giant screen in the main exhibition arena.

David has been blown away by the skill exhibited by his fellow masters. “The artists in the show have taken it to a new dimension. The watercolour paintings at IWM 2024 are all museum quality.”

The International Watercolour Masters 2024 offers visitors the chance to enjoy fantastic artwork, insightful workshops and fascinating demonstrations in a beautiful setting. Whether you’re an established or aspiring artist, a fan of watercolour, or just somebody who wants to see true artistic skill in practice, this is definitely an event not to be missed.

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**International Watercolour Masters 2024 runs at Lilleshall Hall, Shropshire, TF10 9AT, from Wednesday 15 to Friday 24 May. The exhibition is open daily from 10am - 4pm and admission is by advanced ticket only. Prices cost £10 each and group discounts are available. For more information, and to purchase tickets, visit: [IWM2024.com](http://IWM2024.com)**



## Drawing Attention: Emerging Artists In Dialogue

Wolverhampton Art Gallery, until Mon 6 May

This thought-provoking British Museum touring exhibition features art produced by some of the most promising up-and-coming names in the field of contemporary drawing.

Their work is displayed alongside art by numerous celebrated creatives, including Mary Delany, Edouard Manet, Barbara Hepworth, Andy Warhol and Yinka Shonibare. The exhibition showcases a wide range of techniques and practices, with artists illustrating the ways in which drawing - often considered a quiet or private medium - can be used to challenge social norms, explore identity and protest injustice.

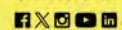


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Images: Ikon Gallery. Photo by Tom Jones.





## Tatiana Wolska: Leisure As Resistance

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, Sat 9 March - Sun 2 June

Resourcefulness ingrained in her during a childhood spent in communist Poland - where recycling became a necessity due to the scarcity of goods - has had a significant impact on Tatiana Wolska's output as an artist. Tatiana describes herself as a 'junk collector', using her artistic talents to breathe new life into discarded plastic bottles, salvaged timber, rusty nails and foam from old mattresses.

This first solo exhibition in the UK showcases some of her signature recycled bottle sculptures and several new commissions, including scrap-wood sculptures, large-scale drawings, a makeshift hut and a mural. Members of the general public viewing her art will be invited to engage in community activities such as reading groups, knitting clubs, repair cafés and meditation-through-drawing sessions.

## Landscape And Imagination: From Gardens To Land Art

Compton Verney, Warwickshire, Thurs 21 March - Sun 16 June

Works by celebrated artists including JMW Turner, Nicolas Poussin and Anya Gallaccio feature in this brand-new exhibition at Compton Verney, a show which explores the question of how art might work together with nature to reverse the decline of the UK's green spaces. An accompanying selection of playful interactive activities in the exhibition galleries will provide families with the opportunity to imagine their own colourful and fantastical landscapes.

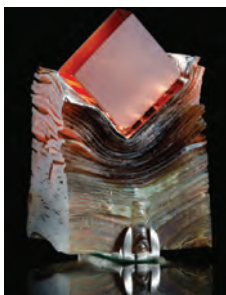


Image: JMW Turner, c1827-8, The Lake, Petworth, Sunset

## Contemporary Pâte de Verre: The Material Of Time

Stourbridge Glass Museum, until Sun 23 June

This unique exhibition of internationally acclaimed Pâte de Verre glass artists is the result of a collaboration between Stourbridge Glass Museum and the Contemporary Pâte de Verre Association. The Association works to support new investigations into Pâte de Verre and what the 5,000-year-old glass technique can do 'in sculpture and new narratives for our rapidly changing world'. The show is based on the same-named 2022 book (The Material Of Time) by Dr Max Stewart and Tone Orvik.



## After The End Of History: Contemporary Working-Class Photography 1989 - 2024

Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry, Fri 29 March - Sunday 16 June

The challenges, beauty and diversity of contemporary working-class life - as depicted by working-class artists using the medium of photography - are explored in this fascinating new exhibition, curated by acclaimed photographer, writer & broadcaster Johnny Pitts. A Hayward Gallery Touring show, the collection features work from 1989 onwards in order to mark the 35th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall (which happened on 9 November of that year) and the symbolic end of Communism.



Photo: Goldite taken by Eddie Ocheere

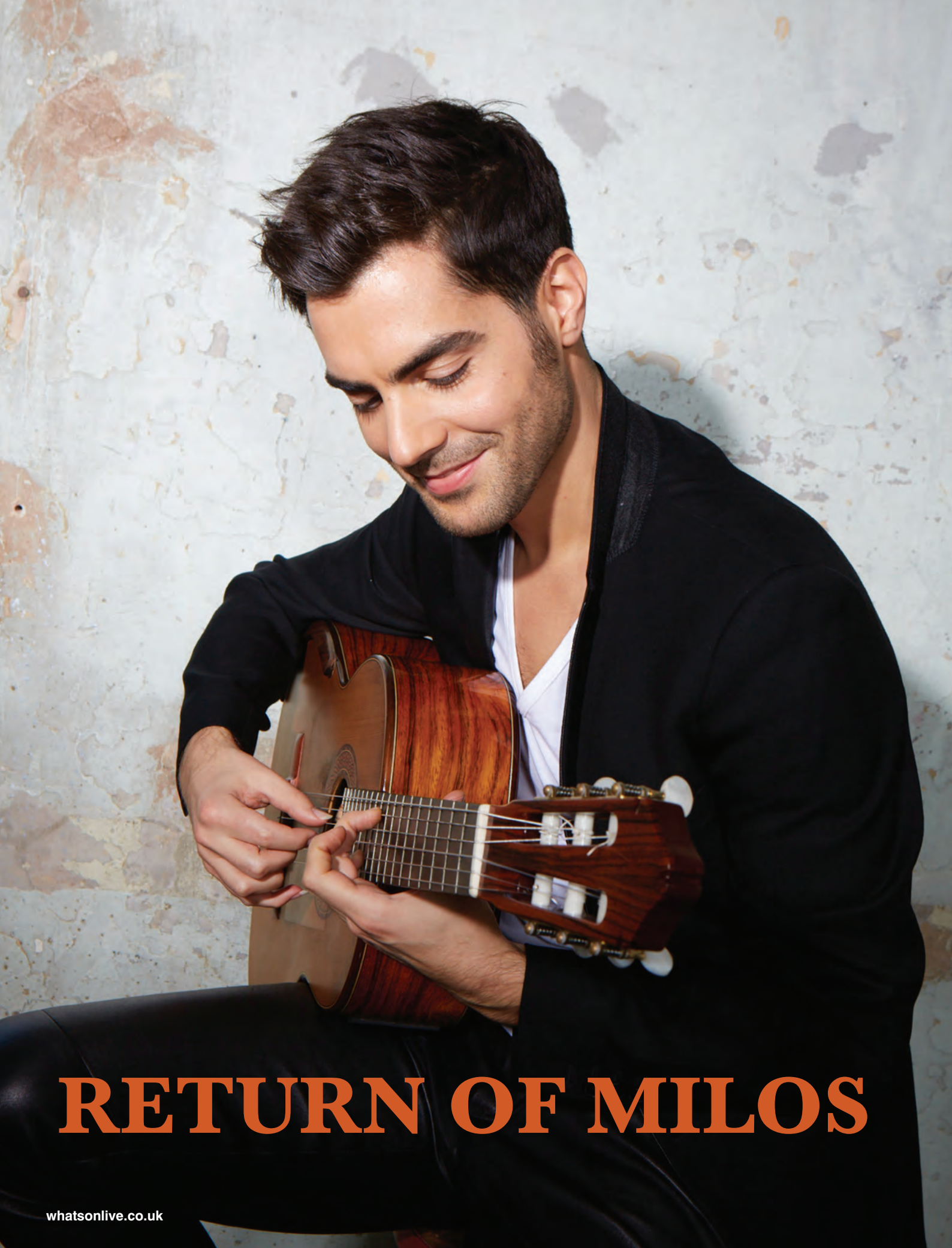
## Victorian Radicals

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, until Thurs 31 October

Birmingham's impressive collection of Pre-Raphaelite art is here being displayed in the city for the first time in more than five years. Taking the subtitle 'From The Pre-Raphaelites To The Arts & Crafts Movement', Victorian Radicals features vibrant paintings and exquisite drawings presented alongside jewellery, glass, textiles and metalwork. The show provides visitors with the chance to discover the story of the Pre-Raphaelites - Britain's first modern art movement - and learn about their influence on artists and makers well into the 20th century.



Image: The Last Of England, 1852 - 1855. Artist: Ford Madox Brown



# RETURN OF MILOS

Described by BBC Music Magazine as 'one of the six best classical guitarists of the last 100 years', Montenegro-born Milos Karadaglic this month makes a welcome return to Warwick Arts Centre, where he'll be joined by the Arcangelo Chamber Orchestra to present a programme of Baroque classics...

**Is your most recent album, Baroque, a bit of a reset for you, Milos?**

I tend not to look at things in this way, because I always see music as one thing. I have changed through the years, and so has the world around me. I feel that it has never been more important to really be true to yourself. That's the only way that we, as artists, are going to be able to survive and stay relevant in a world that is constantly changing around us. So in many ways, yes, it's a bit of a reset if you want to look at it like that; but for me, it's just a natural return to the core values of who I am as a musician.

**There are some interesting choices within Baroque - can you tell us a bit more about the selection process?**

Baroque is the treasure trove of the pieces that I have loved over the years; pieces that have been played by so many of my heroes and colleagues, and works that I have enjoyed as a listener. I wanted to see how I could tackle the subject of Baroque music from that perspective; not looking at it from the perspective of the classical guitar, where the view on Baroque is limited to just a handful of composers. It was a big process to make the selection because some pieces work and some pieces don't work for the guitar. But the one thing that makes them all come together is the variety of styles and influences. Each piece on the album is a little bit like a Baroque pearl. Each one is slightly different, and each one has its own beauty. And yet, at the same time, all together as an album they make just one perfect whole. I have very rarely enjoyed the process of making an album as much as I have this one - working with Jonathan Cohen and Arcangelo

and arranging the works together with Michael Lewin. I feel really proud of this one.

**Many of the pieces were written for other instruments. Did that present challenges in terms of translating them to guitar? And if so, how did you get over them?**

There were many challenges. There were pieces that I would work on until the very end, and then I would realise that a phrase wouldn't work simply because of the limitations of the guitar compared to the keyboard, or the fact that I don't have a bow like you have on the violin or on the cello. Whenever you are dealing with transcriptions, it's so important to know that the main moral guide in any transcription should be that you should only be doing it if it adds another layer of expression, another layer of quality and another idea to what is already there from the composer. The moment it becomes a compromise, an ego trip, rather than something that serves the music and the purpose of why it's done, I've always been very conscious of that throughout my career. It only makes sense if it stays true to the message.

**Which are your favourite tracks on the album?**

It was tremendous fun to play the Vivaldi concerto movements that were written for four solo violins. But also, all my life I've been drawn to pieces that are lyrical and that wake up your inner heartstring: pieces like the Rameau, Handel and Couperin. Finding a way to make the guitar sing, and finding a way to make the string become a voice, is what always gives me the most pleasure - and that is always what I love sharing the most

with my audience in concert. Rameau's The Arts And The Hours and Handel's Menuet are two such pieces on the album.

**What are your plans for the year ahead?**

I'm touring Baroque in the UK, America, and in the summer at festivals. And at the same time, I'm very much thinking about the next album and the next cycle. That's never easy, because so much consideration and thought goes into that. It's a process that always lasts for many months before that journey becomes clear. Right now, I'm in the middle of exactly that.

**You've played Warwick Arts Centre before. Any memories of previous appearances there?**

Yes, of course. How could I forget?! Coventry was a huge open-air festival organised by the BBC, and that's always really special because you get to play in front of a very wide audience. That's something I love doing very much because guitar is that perfect instrument that bridges the gap between classical and mainstream. It really is always very special. I have been to Warwick Arts Centre numerous times with orchestras and solo, and every time I played there, there was something I remembered. I also love coming here as I have close friends that live nearby, and seeing them every time makes it feel very, very memorable.

.....  
**Milos Karadaglic performs at Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, on Saturday 9 March.**



# BANGED UP!

There's plenty to see and do at Birmingham's West Midlands Police Museum



## West Midlands Police Museum offers a unique day out in the heart of Birmingham. From visitors with an interest in local history, to budding detectives (of all ages) and fans of the macabre, the venue has something to suit all tastes. Intrigued to find out more, we took a visit to The Lock Up to check out 'life on both sides of the bars'...

Birmingham's West Midlands Police Museum is an unassuming red brick building, situated on the city's Steelhouse Lane and only five minutes walk from Snow Hill Station. The popular visitor attraction will soon celebrate its second birthday, after opening its doors in April 2022.

The building was a fully functional 'Lock Up' from 1891 until 2016 - a place to hold people after they had been arrested. In most cases, prisoners would spend less than 24 hours in the building before being sent to trial in the courts next door. Intriguingly, this journey was made through a tunnel between the two buildings, which can still be seen in the museum's basement.

Visitors spend a moment behind bars in the entrance 'lock up' and check in at the erstwhile charge desk - now a reception desk - before making their way to the main prison block. Unlike the blue Police Box on display from Coventry - which is a hit with visiting Doctor Who fans - the museum really does seem bigger on the inside.

Metal grille balconies give access to the cells on each floor. From any point in the main building, it's possible to see all the way down to the basement and up to the glass roof. This is actually a 130-year-old security feature, allowing police officers to see and hear trouble arising - even two floors away.

Unsurprisingly, the open feeling doesn't extend to the cells. Many lack windows, and in their original form were lit only by a candle in a recess high up the wall. On busy nights, multiple prisoners could occupy one cell - an unsettling thought for those free to wander in and out of cells as they please.

When safer prison conditions were implemented in the early 21st century, four cells were kept in their existing condition - honouring the building's Grade II listed status and providing a glimpse of its former life. Each cell now hosts an exhibit, covering anything from early police bicycles, to corporal punishment, and stories of people who were detained there.

The museum is run by a tight-knit team of staff and a large bank of volunteers, which includes serving and retired police officers. It's supported by both the Heritage Fund and

West Midlands Police and promises 'a unique perspective of life on both sides of the bars'.

Real care has been taken to maintain this balance, and the staff do everything they can to ensure that visitors have a grand day out.

Engagement Officer Archie creates bespoke programmes for visiting schools and the museum boasts a huge amount of educational material, designated space for sessions, and an enthusiastic team to deliver them. School visits can even include sleepovers, where pupils bunk down in cells.

There is a forensic trail in the basement, where visitors solve a crime by collecting clues, fingerprints and plaster casts of footprints. On occasion, crime scenes feature Camilla - a full-size mannequin donated (and named) by the hospital next door.

As well as catering for younger visitors, the museum also offers popular murder-mystery nights, giving would-be detectives the chance to catch a murderer by interviewing suspects dotted around the cells. There's also a host of after-hours talks, events and activities to suit visitors with darker tastes.

Fans of true crime can hear 'stories of murder and mayhem' and see some of the more ghoulish items in the museum's collection at a bespoke event called The Macabre Museum on Sunday 14 April. Not for the faint-hearted and limited to visitors over 18 years old, the event provides an opportunity to see the most notorious items in the venue's archives.

There are also regular after-dark ghost-hunting tours of the building, which feature spooky stories of strange sightings and mysteries from around the West Midlands and the Lock Up itself.

Talks by visiting West Midlands Police officers and experts in related history complete the programme. Previous talks have included deep dives into the history of the real Peaky Blinders - a moniker that was never used by the police. The talk was hosted by well-known local historian Professor Carl Chinn, who has a family connection to one of the gang members.

In addition to events and activities, the museum houses an impressive archive of records and artefacts, including some of the

country's first prisoner 'mug shots', dating back to the mid-19th century. Photography was a luxury commodity at the time, and the collection's photos are often the only remaining images of these people. Members of the public investigating their family history occasionally approach the museum to check these records, and the staff are happy to oblige - although searching through them is no mean feat.

Some of the archive's items, ledgers, photographs and historic uniforms are on permanent display. To see more of the collection, visitors can book a behind-the-scenes tour. These are generally scheduled during Birmingham Heritage Week in September.

Each month at the museum is themed to celebrate a different facet of the police force and its history. In March, the focus is on diversity within the police, while April marks the 50th anniversary of the West Midlands Police forming. The museum will be celebrating the occasion throughout the month, and the build-up to the anniversary is already in full swing - check out the website and social media for updates.

Although currently a gem hidden in plain sight, word is spreading about this fascinating building and the stories locked within. Tickets to visit cost £10 for adults and £6 for under-16s (with other concessions available).

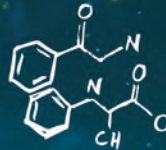
West Midlands Police Museum offers an interactive journey into local history while celebrating revolutionary officers of the last 130 years. It's also perfect for those with an interest in the techniques and technology the police have used to crack down on crime. And for anyone keen to see a life-size police horse, solve a murder, or dive into the past, the museum is a real treat.

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**West Midlands Police Museum at The Lock Up on Steelhouse Lane is open Wednesday to Sunday, and during the school holidays. Visit [museum.west-midlands.police.uk](http://museum.west-midlands.police.uk) for more information.**



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Events previews from around the region



**YONEX All England Open Badminton Championships**

Utilita Arena Birmingham, Tues 12 - Sun 17 March

The world's oldest and most prestigious badminton tournament (it was first held in 1899), the YONEX All England Open Badminton Championships returns to Utilita Arena (for the 31st time) this month.

The tournament comprises 155 matches and 50 hours of live badminton, contested in front of a global audience of more than 350 million people.



**Get crafting at the NEC...** NEC, Birmingham, Thurs 14 - Sun 17 March

Crafting fanatics will be descending in droves on the NEC this month when Creative Craft Show, Sewing For Pleasure and Fashion And Embroidery make a welcome return to the venue. With all three shows available to enjoy for the price of one, visitors can check out a variety of workshops and demonstrations

presented by creatives in a wide range of disciplines, including crochet, ceramics, goldwork and glass fusion, to name but a few. There's also a new-for-2024 all-day 'masterclass' workshop to sample, which comes complete with lunch and refreshments as well as all the required materials and tools.

**Homebuilding & Renovating Show**

NEC, Birmingham, Thurs 21 - Sun 24 March

Celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2024, the Homebuilding & Renovating Show brings together designers, experts, builders and suppliers to help you create the home of your dreams.

Visitors can discover all the latest products, join a seminar or masterclass, and check out an architect's opinion on everything from small plots to big builds.

For people keen to maximise the efficiency of their home, the show also features the Home Energy Academy, which includes all-new theatre sessions, and contributions from eco-energy-focused experts in the show's Advice Centre.



**Monster Jam Ramped Up**

Utilita Arena Birmingham, Fri 29 - Sun 31 March

World-class drivers showing off crazy skills and all-out racing in 12,000-pound Monster Jam trucks are among the mouthwatering attractions featured in adrenaline-charged motorsport event Monster Jam Ramped Up. A fierce head-to-head battle for the Event Championship will see the trucks take on numerous fan-favourite stunts, including sky wheelies, big-air jumps and backflips.

The show also features Monstergon, a multi-sided metal ramp which is making its debut in Birmingham.





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[rafmuseum.org/midlands](http://rafmuseum.org/midlands)  
 01902 376 200



Lysander Avenue, Cosford,  
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The Royal Air Force Museum is incorporated by Royal Charter (RC000922) and is a charity registered in England and Wales (1197541)



Events previews from around the region



**Space, Race And Fly** RAF Museum Midlands, Cosford, Sat 23 March - Sun 7 April

Family-friendly STEM-based events are all the rage at RAF Museum Midlands this Easter! Attractions include a time-travelling science show - A Volatile History Of Chemistry (23 & 24 March and 2 & 3 April) and the interactive

Apollo 11 Academy - Space Race show (29 - 31 March). The Shropshire Astronomical Society will be hosting special stargazing evenings on 23, 24 & 27 March, and there's a 3D film about space flight to enjoy from 4 to 7 April in an immersive mobile planetarium.



**Countrytastic** Three Counties Showground, Malvern, Thurs 28 March

An educational event aimed at the under-11s, Countrytastic provides families with a great opportunity to learn about food, farming and the countryside. Show highlights include a host of both indoor and outdoor activities, including

animal meet-and-greets, arts & crafts, cookery workshops and tractor rides. This year's theme is Farming Heroes, with organisers encouraging visitors to come dressed as their favourite superhero.

**Feed The Need For Speed**

British Motor Museum, Gaydon, Warwickshire, Sat 23 March - Sun 14 April

It's all about speed at the British Motor Museum this Easter, with the popular Midlands attraction inviting visitors to explore some of Britain's fastest cars and take part in a number of associated activities. Highlights include a fastest car trail, a workshop where you can make your very own fast car, and daily racing-driver tours. The latter attraction provides youngsters with the chance to join energetic racing-driver characters for an interactive journey through the museum collections, learning about the venue's greatest speed machines along the way. A traditional Easter Egg hunt is also available to enjoy.



**AGBO Rally**

Weston Park, Shropshire, Sun 17 March

With Weston Park having been its home since 1997, the annual AGBO Rally makes a welcome return to the venue this month. The event will see 80 rally cars from all vintages and eras take on the stages around Weston - including the iconic watersplash! The event is also home to two championships in 2024: the AWMMC Heart of England Stage Rally Championship and the HRCR Mini Sports Cup.



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## What's On recommends: Places to visit in the Midlands



## Severn Valley Railway

Kidderminster: Station Dr, Kidderminster, DY10 1QX; Bridgnorth: 2 Hollybush Rd, Bridgnorth, WV16 4AX Website: [svr.co.uk](http://svr.co.uk)

Operating mainly steam-hauled passenger trains between Bridgnorth, Bewdley and Kidderminster, this much-loved railway transports visitors on a route of about 16 miles along the beautiful Severn Valley. The journey includes a stop-off at the Engine House Visitor Centre at Highley, where passengers can check out massive locomotives, enjoy themed exhibitions of unique railway vehicles and meet Gordon the Blue Engine.

Those starting their journey at Bridgnorth will also have the option of stop-offs at Bewdley and Kidderminster, the latter of which boasts a railway museum.

**PRICES:** Freedom Of The Line adult tickets £25, child (four - 15-year-olds) £16.50, Small Family Saver (one adult and up to two children) £52, Large Family Saver (two adults and up to four children) £77.

## Legoland Discovery Centre Birmingham

Utilita Arena Birmingham, King Edwards Road, Birmingham, B1 2AA Website: [legolanddiscoverycentre.com/birmingham](http://legolanddiscoverycentre.com/birmingham)

Legoland Discovery Centre is a great place to get creative with your little ones.

The venue houses a city builder area, a duplo farm, two rides - Kingdom's Quest and Merlin's Apprentice Ride - and a 4D cinema. Perhaps the most impressive attraction at the centre is Lego Miniland. Built from more than 1.5 million Lego bricks, Miniland is a replica of Birmingham. The model includes Lego constructions of Bullring, the BT Tower, The Mailbox and the Library of Birmingham.

**PRICES:** Standard Play Session tickets start from £20, Anytime Entry ticket £30, adults and pre-schoolers £12 (online only).



## The Bear Grylls Adventure

Birmingham International Railway Station, Exhibition Way, Marston Green, B40 1PA Website: [beargryllsadventure.com](http://beargryllsadventure.com)

Celebrity adventurer Bear Grylls has certainly pulled out all the stops with this popular visitor attraction, with activities including high ropes, indoor archery and climbing, escape rooms, axe-throwing and a Royal Marines-inspired assault course.

The more-courageous visitor can check out Cage Snorkel and Shark Dive, where they can 'take the plunge' with blacktip reef sharks and tropical fish.

Fancy experiencing the thrill of free-falling at 12,000ft without having to jump out of a plane? Then iFly is for you! The weightless adventure takes place in a wind tunnel and comprises two one-minute flights to get the adrenaline pumping.

**PRICES:** Activities start from £20pp with online advance tickets.



## Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

Millennium Point, Curzon St, Birmingham, B4 7XG Website: [birminghammuseums.org.uk/thinktank](http://birminghammuseums.org.uk/thinktank)

Located in Birmingham city centre, Thinktank offers a great day out for visitors of all ages.

From steam engines and talking robots through to gurgling guts and a chocolate-wrapping machine, the venue features more than 200 hands-on science & technology displays.


Highlights include MiniBrum - an interactive mini city for under-eights - a 4k planetarium and a science garden.

**PRICES:** Adults from £15.50, children (three - 15-year-olds) from £7.50, concessions £12.50, under-threes go free.

MOTION  
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What's On recommends: Places to visit in the Midlands



## Roundhouse Birmingham

1 Sheepcote St, Birmingham, B16 8AE  
 Website: [roundhousebirmingham.org.uk](http://roundhousebirmingham.org.uk)

A unique Grade II listed building at the heart of Birmingham's canal network, The Roundhouse is a hub from which to explore the city. The venue is looked after by Roundhouse Birmingham, who are dedicated to sharing stories of the city's industrial heritage in new and imaginative ways.

Attractions include walks, cycle tours, boat trips and a range of kayak and paddleboarding tours. For those wanting to 'go it alone', there are pay-as-you-feel local audio tours or printed trails from which to choose.

**PRICES:** The Roundhouse Visitor Centre and Display Space are free to enter, kayak tours range from £24.50 - £50, kayak taster sessions are £8 - £10 and walking tours range from £8 - £14.

## Stratford Butterfly Farm

Swan's Nest Lane, Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 7LS  
 Website: [butterflyfarm.co.uk](http://butterflyfarm.co.uk)

Set in a large greenhouse landscaped with waterfalls, ponds and tropical plants, Stratford Butterfly Farm is home to hundreds of the world's most spectacular butterflies.

The popular venue features a 'discovery zone' - inhabited by giant silkmoths and their cocoons - and the Minibeast Metropolis - home to snakes, reptiles, amphibians and other invertebrates.

The Butterfly Farm's connections to the rainforests of Belize and the Maya civilisation are also in evidence, with more than 30 replicated ancient Maya artefacts on display throughout the attraction.

**PRICES:** £8.95 adult, £8.45 students and seniors, £7.95 children aged three to 16.



## Compton Verney Art Gallery & Park

Warwickshire, CV35 9HZ Website: [comptonverney.org.uk](http://comptonverney.org.uk)

Compton Verney is widely considered to be an art gallery of international standing. The Georgian house is set in more than 120 acres of Grade II listed classical parkland, created in the 18th century by eminent landscape architect Lancelot 'Capability' Brown.

Although the original estate was split up and sold a century ago, the 'pleasure grounds' still clearly reflect the sweeping grassland, ornamental lakes and Cedars of Lebanon for which Brown is famous.

**PRICES:** Adults £19.80, 19 - 25-year-olds £10, under-18s free.

## Coventry Transport Museum

Millennium Place, Hales St, Coventry, CV1 1JD  
 Website: [transport-museum.com](http://transport-museum.com)

This popular museum not only houses the largest publicly owned collection of British vehicles on the planet, it also tells the story of a city which changed the world through transport.

There are 14 fully accessible galleries to enjoy at the venue, featuring, among other attractions, pioneering bicycles, transport champions, innovative, memorable and luxurious vehicles from the last 200 years, and the world's two fastest cars.

**PRICES:** Adults from £14, concessions (senior & student) from £10.50, junior (five - 16-year-olds) from £7, under-fours and essential carers free.



# THE HUMAN HEART

A brand-new choreographed production gives voice to an unspoken and overlooked love story



Two internationally renowned kathak choreographers and dancers will come together at Birmingham Hippodrome next month to present a brand-new work.

Birmingham-born Aakash Odedra and New Delhi-based Aditi Mangaldas have joined forces to create and perform *Mehek*, a work which explores the power of love, memory, desire, attraction and resilience.

The show focuses on the often taboo subject of love between an older woman and a younger man. In doing so - explains the project's dramaturg, Karthika Nair - it takes a look at society's expectations in terms of an 'acceptable' relationship, and also celebrates the courage of those who defy societal norms: "The story explores both the immense strength that one can derive from love and also the challenges that are faced by people who are willing and brave enough to not abide by certain societal preconceptions about who can love and who can be loved.

"We are so used to older men courting, marrying and raising families with younger women, including some very famous men. I think history is ripe with examples. Aditi has been exploring these questions about the double standards we often find in society's expectations of men as opposed to those that it has for women.

"She mentions that women get slotted very easily into roles. So first, you're the daughter, then you're the suitable lover, then you become the wife, and then you become the mother. The idea that a woman could be multiple things is something that we grapple about.

"Love is not an exception in terms of how it's viewed in society. It's maybe heightened because it comes with an added explosive element, which is feminine desire, which is what all societies try to police. And the idea that an independent woman who is older, and therefore has seen the world and is not necessarily cowed by any kind of influence, should express desire is probably a very frightening thing for many people."

The title *Mehek* is derived from the Hindi word for fragrance. The team have been researching ideas of memory and love through Western and South Asian literature and also through the importance of our senses.

"Some of my other early tasks as a dramaturg were to dissect the notion of love and see

what the intersections of memory were," says Karthika. "So, for instance, in the first workshops in Delhi, we worked round the idea of objects or sounds associated with love. What would be the fragrance that one associates with love or a loved one? What would be a memory that one associates with love? And what would be the places associated with love?

"These questions were to stimulate the senses and see what the responses would be in movement terms. For instance, how do you describe the fragrance of love in just movement terms?

"It's not a linear narrative necessarily, but there is a story. And with any dance piece, anyone should be able to access it without knowing the back story or having to read the programme notes. So I think my job has been to ensure that, even if it's abstract, the emotional connections are comprehensible to the audience. The narrative is always true to itself, and my role is just to make sure that all of the ingredients which go into making the piece are coherent."

As part of the research and development of the show, the team worked with Leicester-based creative dance company Moving Together in *Mehek Live*, a community-engagement project during which they listened to the experiences and views of older people. Workshops exploring dance, music, memory and story-sharing have so far involved more than 450 people in venues including care homes and community centres.

"It was humbling and moving, because we got to explore so many questions with them. One of the questions I asked was: 'When love ends, what remains? What do you give, and what do you take back?' And I remember one woman saying that even when love ends, it never ends.

"I think they felt heard, and that is wonderful because we often don't have time for older people, especially for their memories. These workshops gave a platform for memories. They could bring their memories and know they are treasured.

"Not every project comes with these echoes. For me, it was one of the big takeaways. It was wonderful that the company facilitated those weeks and continues to do so. They are on at it even now, so there are all these homes and community centres where *Mehek* is still alive."

Karthika believes the production and the themes it explores are accessible to people of all backgrounds.

"I don't think one needs cultural shorthands to unpack the story; it's really identifiable. There is a certain amount of kathak vocabulary, but much of it is also universal. When you hold a hand in front of your face, it symbolises a mirror, and that's very clearly so in kathak, but I think that becomes very clear to anyone who is watching. And Aakash and Aditi are extraordinary performers. They perform to people all over the world who have never even heard the word kathak or know anything about the code and language of South Asian dance."

Born in Kerala and now living in France, Karthika is a writer, academic and dance enabler who has worked with companies across the globe. Co-founder (with Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui) of Antwerp-based dance company Eastman, she has also worked with numerous internationally renowned dancers and choreographers, including Akram Khan, Carlos Pons Guerra and Shobana Jayasingh. *Mehek*, she says, is a rare chance for audiences to see two of the international stars of South Asian dance performing together.

"This is a duet by two extraordinary performers who are both very conversant in different techniques. Aditi has been dancing for close to 50 years - since she was a child - but in the last decade or so, her work has also encompassed the contemporary. Aakash has always inhabited these various spheres. So what audiences can expect is performers who are hypnotic, powerful dancers.

"I guess one thing we would like through this piece is to gently remind ourselves that we needn't be judgmental; that we can just let ourselves be happy that others are happy; that who you love is a personal thing. And also that we should be so lucky, whatever our age, to find someone to love us or to find someone to love. Life is short; it's horribly unpredictable. Love, for all the messiness that it brings, is also salvation."

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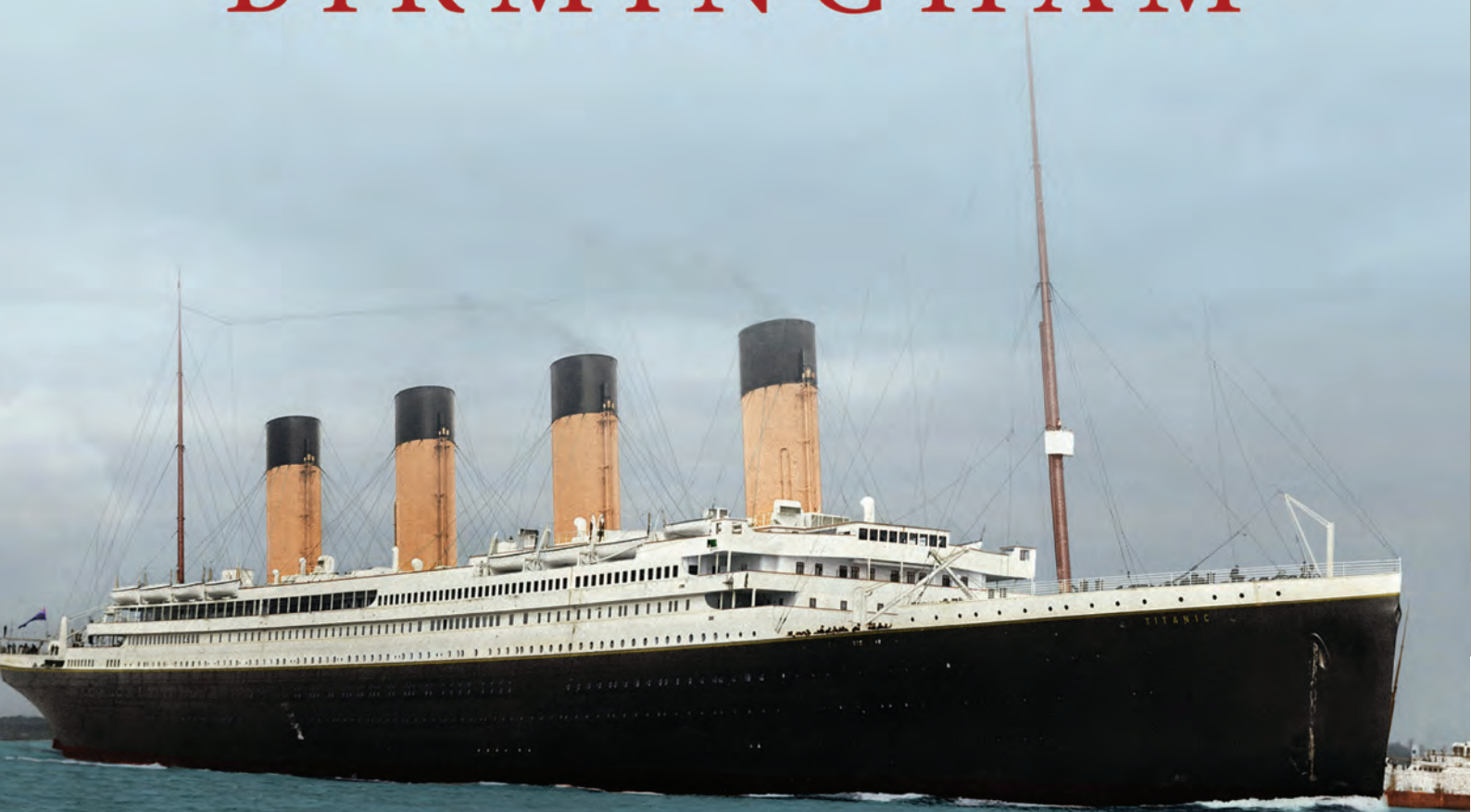
**Aakash Odedra Company and Aditi Mangaldas Dance Company present *Mehek* at Birmingham Hippodrome on Tuesday 9 April**

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# TITANIC

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Your week-  
by-week  
listings guide  
March 2024

# the list



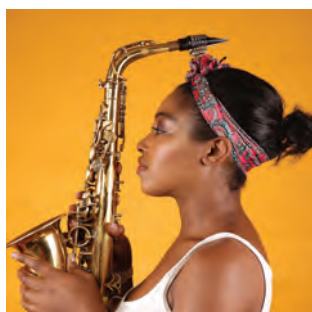
Image credit: Pamela Raith

A Midsummer Night's Dream at Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon - until Sat 30 March

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

## What's On

Fri 1 - Sun 10 March



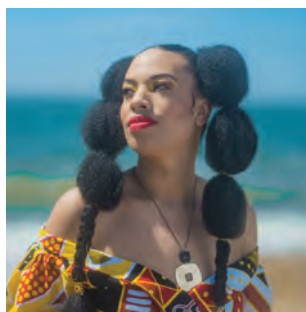
Camilla George -  
Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry  
**Fri 1 March**

Mon 11 - Sun 17 March



As She Like It -  
Belgrade Theatre, Coventry  
**Sat 16 March**

Mon 18 - Sun 24 March



Lady Nade -  
Temperance, Leamington Spa  
**Sat 23 March**

Mon 25 - Sun 31 March



Hans Rey: Mishaps & Mayhem -  
Huntingdon Hall, Worcester  
**Thurs 28 March**

## VISUAL ARTS IN THE MIDLANDS

### Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

**VICTORIAN RADICALS** Exhibition presenting works by 19th-century artists, designers & makers, from the Pre-Raphaelites to the arts & crafts movement, until Thurs 31 Oct

### Compton Verney, Warwickshire

**SENSING VESUVIUS** A range of creative works from students at Kineton High School, in response to the collection's evocative painting, *Vesuvius Erupting at Night*, Thurs 21 Mar - Tues 30 Apr

**A SPIRIT INSIDE** A selection of works from The Women's Art Collection and The Ingram Collection, exploring how women and non-binary artists have grappled with the notion and sense of 'spirit', Thurs 21 Mar - Sun 1 Sep

### REUNITED: THE LAMENTATION

**ALTERPIECE** After 30 years of its central panel being housed in the National Gallery of Scotland's collection, this is the chance to see a rare masterpiece, reunited, Thurs 21 Mar - Fri 28 Feb 2025

**THE TAOTIE** Exhibition of new work from Gayle Chong Kwan, following an 18-month residency at Compton Verney, in response to the venue's collection of Neolithic Chinese bronzes, Thurs 21 Mar - Tues 31 Mar 2026

### Herbert Museum & Art Gallery, Coventry

#### CASE: COVENTRY ART SOCIETIES

**EXHIBITION** A new, varied exhibition showcasing work by members of art societies and groups in Coventry & Warwickshire. Includes paintings, sculpture, ceramics and more, from until Sun 3 Mar

**WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR** Renowned exhibition on loan from the Natural History Museum, until Mon 1 Apr

### Mead Gallery, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

#### PHANTOM SCULPTURE: COVENTRY

**BIENNIAL** Exhibition bringing together sculptures by some of the most important artists working today, and putting them into conversation with key works by older artists. The show reopened last month with new works added, from artists including Kira Freijji, Barbara Hepworth and Kim Lim, until Sun 10 Mar

### Rugby Art Gallery

**REDDING AROUND RUGBY** Temporary display featuring photographs of local companies, shops, transport

and buildings taken by Rodney H Huntingford of Redding Photographers, until Sat 6 Apr

**QUENTIN BLAKE: BOOK COVERS** Exhibition showcasing 60 of Quentin's book covers, from the 1960s to the present day, and featuring first editions alongside reproductions of his original artwork, until Sat 11 May

**A QUESTION OF TIME** Compilation of work from final-year students studying Fine Art at Coventry University. Students work will be displayed in rotation, Tues 12 Mar - Sat 7 Sept

### Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum

**OPEN 2024** Showcase for artists living and working in the West Midlands. An independent panel will select artworks for exhibition and the winner of the Open 2024 Award, until Sun 12 May

### Nuneaton Museum & Art Gallery

**RACHEL SHIRLEY: THE SHORES OF INFANT SEA** Exhibition of Shirley's illustrations from her children's books, until Sun 17 Mar

**JEUDIS: DIFFERENT BUT THE SAME** Exhibition showcasing the varied approaches and artistry of the Jeudis textile artist group, until Sat 23 Mar

**WELCOME TO THE MINI MUSEUM** In-situ art project, where visitors are invited to create their own art and exhibits, to be displayed in the museum, until Sat 23 Mar

### Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

**AOTEAROA: MĀORI MYTHS AND LEGENDS OF NEW ZEALAND** Spotlight exhibition exploring the vibrant, resilient culture of the Māori people, the myths and legends originating in their country, and the impact of colonialism upon it, until Sun 9 June

**DAME LAURA KNIGHT: I PAINT TODAY** Exhibition celebrating the work of the first female artist to be welcomed into the Royal Academy and who frequently took inspiration from the landscape of Worcestershire and the Malvern Hills, until Sun 30 June

### Elsewhere:

**HIDDEN VOICES** Exhibition exploring the stories of the women who made Shakespeare, using objects from the museum's collection, Sat 16 Mar - Sun 3 Nov, Shakespeare's New Place, Stratford-upon-Avon



Camilla George - Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

## Gigs

**FIZZ + MAYA DELILAH** Fri 1 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**POTTER PAYPER** Fri 1 Mar, O2 Institute, B'ham

**ALESTORM + KORPIKLAANI + HEIDEVOLK** Fri 1 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**LUCINDA WILLIAMS** Fri 1 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

**RICK ASTLEY + BELINDA CARLISLE** Fri 1 Mar, Resorts World Arena, Birmingham

**ANTARCTIC MONKEYS** Fri 1 Mar, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**CAMILLA GEORGE** Fri 1 Mar, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**STILLMARILLION** Fri 1 Mar, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**THE 4 ROSSIS - STATUS QUO TRIBUTE** Fri 1 Mar, Marris Bar, Worcester

**CROONERS** Fri 1 Mar, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**TOTAL REX** Fri 1 Mar, 45Live, Kidderminster

**ELVANA** Sat 2 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**NEWDAD** Sat 2 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**PULSE + HAZE + GUTTER PUPPY + DUNEBUG + VIOLENT GIANTS** Sat 2 Mar, O2 Institute, B'ham

**THE LANCASHIRE HOTPOTS + PANTOGOGO**

Sat 2 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**EDITORS + WINGS OF DESIRE** Sat 2 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**NOUVELLE VAGUE + DEAD CHIC** Sat 2 Mar, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**GREEN HANDS** Sat 2 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**STRIP SEARCH TRAMP + THE ROLLOCKS + GRAIL GUARD** Sat 2 Mar, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

**ULTIMATE COLDPLAY** Sat 2 Mar, hmv Empire, Coventry

**WIZARD OF OZ - OZZY OSBOURNE TRIBUTE** Sat 2 Mar, Arches Venue, Coventry

**GENESIS VISIBLE TOUCH** Sat 2 Mar, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**NOW I'M HERE - QUEEN TRIBUTE** Sat 2 Mar, The Benn Hall, Rugby

**THE CHRISTIANS** Sat 2 Mar, Regal, Tenbury Wells

**THE LEYLINES + WILSWOOD BUOYS** Sat 2 Mar, Marris Bar, Worcester

**WILD BOYS** Sat 2 Mar, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**THE HITMEN** Sat 2 Mar, 45Live, Kidderminster

**NICK HARPER** Sat 2 Mar, West Malvern Social Club

**THE BLACKHEART**

**ORCHESTRA** Sat 2 Mar, Malvern Cube

**SIMON AND GARFUNKEL THROUGH THE YEARS** Sat 2 Mar, The Wulfrun at The Halls, Wolverhampton

**86TVS** Sun 3 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**THE STEVE GIBBONS BAND LIVE** Sun 3 Mar, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

**CROWBAR + VOIDLURKER + INHUMAN NATURE** Sun 3 Mar, The Asylum, Birmingham

**JA RULE + KERI HILSON + LLOYD + MYA** Sun 3 Mar, Utilita Arena, Birmingham

**X AMBASSADORS + FIEVES** Sun 3 Mar, XOYO, Digbeth, B'ham

**SKA TRAIN FT JON READ** Sun 3 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**EARL OKIN** Sun 3 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**FAIRPORT CONVENTION** Sun 3 Mar, Stratford Playhouse

**THE BON JOVI EXPERIENCE** Sun 3 Mar, Albany Theatre, Coventry

**NICK PARKER AND THE FALSE ALARMS + ABDOUJAPAROV** Sun 3 Mar, Marris Bar, Worcester

**KNOCKED LOOSE + DEAFHEAVEN + HEADBUSSA** Mon 4 Mar,

O2 Institute, B'ham

**IRELAND THE SHOW** Mon 4 Mar, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**POLARIS + SILENT PLANET + THORNHILL + PALEDUSK** Tues 5 Mar, O2 Institute, B'ham

**RACHAEL MCSHANE AND THE CARTOGRAPHERS** Tues 5 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**LUST FOR LIFE + FIFTEEN LIONS** Wed 6 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**THEO KATZMAN** Wed 6 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

**THE PRETENDERS** Wed 6 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**JAMES ARTHUR + DEAN LEWIS** Wed 6 Mar, Utilita Arena Birmingham

**GRACE PETRIE** Wed 6 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**THE UNDERCOVER HIPPIE** Wed 6 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**RUBY TURNER** Wed 6 Mar, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**RACHAEL MCSHANE & THE CARTOGRAPHERS** Wed 6 Mar, The Fleece Inn, Bretforton, Nr Evesham

**THE STORY OF THE DUBLINERS** Wed 6 Mar, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**DANIEL KEMISH** Wed 6 Mar, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

**GREG PUCIATO + TRACE AMOUNT** Thurs 7 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**MOTHER MOTHER + CRAWLERS** Thurs 7 Mar, O2 Institute, B'ham

**BASKERY** Thurs 7 Mar, Kitchen Garden, B'ham

**THE ELO EXPERIENCE** Thurs 7 Mar, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

**MILES HUNT** Thurs 7 Mar, Stratford Playhouse

**SLINKY MACHINE** Thurs 7 Mar, Marris Bar, Worcester

**HELLO AGAIN - THE NEIL DIAMOND SONGBOOK** Thurs 7 Mar, Malvern Theatres

**OVERDRAMATICS + ROCK DOVE** Thurs 7 Mar, 45Live, Kidderminster

**TOBY MARRIOTT + WHEN TIGERS USED TO SMOKE + EDEN SAM** Fri 8 Mar, The Night Owl, B'ham

**CAST** Fri 8 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**THE APPEARANCE + TOM HEWITT + RIBBONS FOR ROSE + DELUSIONAL POETRY + LOTUS EYES** Fri 8 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**BRAINSTORM** Fri 8 Mar, O2 Academy, B'ham

**LUCA SIMIAN + DOWNFALL 77 + RED BY NIGHT + THE ACHILLES + THE TYSMS** Fri 8 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**10CC + PAUL CANNING** Fri 8 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**JASON DERULO + AFRO B** Fri 8 Mar, Utilita Arena Birmingham

**MCGOLDRICK, MCCUSKER, DOYLE** Fri 8 Mar, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

**REBECCA DOWNES** Fri 8 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**BLUSH PUPPY** Fri 8 Mar, hmv Empire, Coventry

**THE GEORGE HARRISON STORY** Fri 8 Mar, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

**ABSOLUTE BOWIE** Fri 8 Mar, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**GEORGE MICHAEL & TINA TURNER TRIBUTE CONCERT** Fri 8 Mar, The Benn Hall, Rugby

**HOTROX + HANZ** Fri 8 Mar, Regal, Tenbury Wells

**BORROWED TIME + PIZZA TRAMP + LEAD SHOT HAZARD** Fri 8 Mar, Marris Bar, Worcester

**DENNIS GREAVES AND MARK FELTHAM** Fri 8 Mar, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**MELVIN HANCOX BAND** Fri 8 Mar, 45Live, Kidderminster

**SHADOWING HANK** Fri 8 Mar, Rose Theatre, Kidderminster

**BLACK VOICES + AGAAMA + EMILY SAUNDERS** Sat 9 Mar, Jennifer Blackwell Performance Space,

Symphony Hall, B'ham

**THE MUSICAL BOX** Sat 9 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**BEN PORTSMOUTH: THIS IS ELVIS** Sat 9 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

**BIG COUNTRY + THE ICICLE WORKS** Sat 9 Mar, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**LAUREN SOUTH AND FRIENDS** Sat 9 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**ALL 4 INDIE + BRITPOP UNITED** Sat 9 Mar, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

**EMO FESTIVAL** Sat 9 Mar, hmv Empire, Coventry

**THE SOUNDS OF SIMON - SIMON AND GARFUNKEL TRIBUTE** Sat 9 Mar, The Henrician, Evesham

**BULLETTYOYS + GARDEN OF EDEN + ALPHA SISTA** Sat 9 Mar, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**THE FUREYS** Sat 9 Mar, The Benn Hall, Rugby

**THE MUMFORD & SONS STORY** Sat 9 Mar, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**THE INTERPRETERS** Sat 9 Mar, 45Live, Kidderminster

**MARTIN SIMPSON** Sat 9 Mar, West Malvern Social Club

**CULTURE SHOCK + BLYTH POWER** Sat 9 Mar, Malvern Cube

**GIANT ROCKS + ANDREW CUSHIN** Sun 10 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**FORT HOPE** Sun 10 Mar, Dead Wax, Birmingham

**UNZANE** Sun 10 Mar, The Flapper, B'ham

**THE CARPENTERS STORY** Sun 10 Mar, The Alexandra, Birmingham

**EASY 3** Sun 10 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**HANNAH JAMES AND TOBY KUHN** Sun 10 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**MICHAEL MCGOLDRICK, JOHN MCCUSKER AND JOHN DOYLE** Sun 10 Mar, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**THE GEORGE HARRISON STORY** Sun 10 Mar, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

## Classical Music

**OLIVER HANCOCK ORGAN RECITAL** Fri 1 Mar, St Mary's Church, Warwick

**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM CHOIR: REFLECTIONS - MUSIC FOR LENT** Featuring Adrian Lucas (conductor). Programme includes works by Haydn, Bach & Albinoni, Sat 2 Mar, Lichfield Cathedral

**FORDANTE: RETURN TO THE MOVIES** Programme features a mix of popular classics, original music & hits from the big screen, Sat 2 Mar, Pershore Abbey

**LONDON CONCERTANTE: A NIGHT AT THE OPERA BY CANDLELIGHT** Programme includes works by Puccini, Mozart, Verdi, Bizet & more... Sat 2 Mar, Worcester Cathedral

**BARNARDO'S NATIONAL CHORAL COMPETITION** Featuring Douglas Coombes (conductor), alongside 22 competing school choirs, Tues 5 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**ADELPHI QUARTET** Featuring Maxime Michaluk & Esther Agustí Matabosch (violins), Adam Newman (viola) & Nepomuk Braun (cello). Programme includes works by Haydn, Purcell & Britten, Wed 6 Mar, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

**BIRMINGHAM CONTEMPORARY MUSIC GROUP: LIGHT, AIR, SPACE** Featuring Anthony Robb (flutes), Melinda Maxwell (oboe and aulos) & Mark O'Brein (clarinets). Programme includes works by J Harvey, B Fernyhough, M Maxwell & more... Thurs 7 Mar, Coventry Cathedral

**BIRMINGHAM BACH CHOIR: BACH, ST MATTHEW PASSION** Featuring Paul Spicer (conductor), Thomas Hobbs (evangelist), Henry Waddington (Christus), Sophie Bevan (soprano), Lawrence Zazzo (countertenor), Ed Lyon (tenor) & Stephan Loges (bass), Sat 9 Mar, Lichfield Cathedral

**UNIVERSITY WIND BAND & CHAMBER CHOIRS** Featuring Angus Winton, Patrick Sharman, Jonathan Quinton & Jessica Duckworth (conductors). Programme includes works by Ellerby, Crausaz, Saint-Saëns, Rutter, Tallis & more... Sat 9 Mar, Elgar Concert Hall, Bramall Music Building, Birmingham

**WARWICKSHIRE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA** Featuring Roger Coull (conductor). Programme includes works by Shostakovich, Smetana & Elgar, Sat 9 Mar, All Saints Church, Leamington Spa

**MILÓŠ KARADAGLIĆ IN CONCERT** Also featuring Johnny Cohen (conductor) & the Arcangelo Chamber Orchestra. Programme includes works by Vivaldi, Marcello, Boccherini, Bach, Handel & more...

Sat 9 Mar, Butterworth Hall, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**WORCESTER PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA** Featuring Dexter Drown (conductor) & Louise Braithwaite (cor anglais). Programme includes works by Debussy, Watkins, Dvořák & Delius, Sat 9 Mar, Pershore Abbey

**UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA & CHORUS: REVERIE AND REFLECTION** Featuring Tom Newall & Suzzie Vango (conductors), Kishor Subramaniam (violin), Imogen Russell (soprano), Themba Mvula (baritone) & Julian Metzger (cello). Programme includes works by Ravel, Berlioz, Parry & Coleridge, Sun 10 Mar, Butterworth Hall, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**SYMPHONY & STRING ORCHESTRAS** Featuring Daniele Rosina, Raya Arunachalam and Conrad Geake (conductors). Programme includes works by Borodin, Tchaikovsky, Ginastera, Corelli, Barber & Elgar, Sun 10 Mar, Elgar Concert Hall, Bramall Music Building, Birmingham

**ENSEMBLE 360: MUSIC IN THE ROUND** Programme includes works by Brahms, Martinů & Dohnányi, Sun 10 Mar, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

## Comedy

**STEPHEN BAILEY** Fri 1 Mar, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

**SEANN WALSH, NABIL ABDULRASHID, TAL DAVIES & WAYNE BEESE** Fri 1 Mar, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

**THE SCUMMY MUMMIES** Fri 1 Mar, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury



**MICKY P KERR, BEN NORRIS, KATE BARRON & COMIC TBC** Fri 1 - Sat 2 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**CHRIS MCCAUSLAND** Fri 1 - Sat 2 Mar, Stratford Playhouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

**PETER BRUSH, JOSH HOWIE, DARIUS DAVIES & COMIC TBC** Sat 2 Mar, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham

**RICHARD BLACKWOOD** Sun 3 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**VIDURA BR** Sun 3 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**SUKH OJLA, NOREEN KHAN & COMICS TBC** Sun 3 Mar, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**TANYALEE DAVIS** Tues 5 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**IAN STONE, NINA GILLIGAN, TOM TAYLOR & FREDDY QUINN** Wed 6 Mar, Herbert's Yard, Birmingham

**TOM STADE** Thurs 7 Mar, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**SCUMMY MUMMIES** Thurs 7 Mar, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**CHRIS KENT** Fri 8 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**LINDSEY SANTORO, THANYIA MOORE, ELLIOT STEEL, COLIN HOULT (ANNA MANN) & ALEX EGAN** Fri 8 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**RAW COMEDY** Fri 8 Mar, Ecgwins Club, Evesham

**PETER RETHINASAMY, CHRIS KEHOE, SCOTT BENNETT & JON PEARSON** Sat 9 Mar, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham

**LINDSEY SANTORO, THANYIA MOORE, ELLIOT STEEL & COLIN HOULT (ANNA MANN)** Sat 9 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**MARK NELSON** Sat 9 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**BIG DEAL COMEDY** Sat 9 Mar, Old Joint Stock, Birmingham

**COUNT ARTHUR STRONG** Sat 9 Mar, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

**JO CAULFIELD** Sat 9 Mar, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

**TIM VINE** Sat 9 Mar, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**MELANIE BRACEWELL** Sun 10 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham



## Theatre

**THE BAR BY THE EDGE OF TIME** Frozen Light present a multi-sensory spectacular for audiences with profound and multiple learning disabilities, until Fri 1 Mar, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

**THE WIZARD OF OZ** SOSage Factory present an amateur version of L Frank Baum's classic tale, until Sat 2 Mar, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**AN OFFICER AND A GENTLEMAN THE MUSICAL** A timeless story of love, courage and redemption, based on the award-winning 1980s movie of the same name, until Sat 2 Mar, The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

**EDUCATING RITA** Amateur version of the Willy Russell classic, until Sat 2 Mar, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

**CINDERELLA** RBC's Vocal & Operatic Studies Department present Massenet's Cendrillon, based on the

story of Cinderella, until Sat 2 Mar, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

**COMPANY** Music Theatre Warwick present an amateur staging of Stephen Sondheim's dark comedy, until Sat 2 Mar, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**FARM BOY** A Lichfield Garrick production of Michael Morpurgo's compelling sequel to War Horse, until Sun 10 Mar, Lichfield Garrick

**LETTICE & LOVAGE** The Nonentities present an amateur version of Peter Shaffer's satirical play concerning a tour guide who loves to embellish history... until Sat 2 Mar, The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster

**TRANSLATIONS** Amateur version of Brian Friel's modern classic - a powerful account of nationhood, until Sat 2 Mar, Loft Theatre, Leamington Spa

**BLACK IS THE COLOR OF MY VOICE** Apphia Campbell's acclaimed play, inspired by the life of Nina Simone, follows a successful singer and civil rights activist as she seeks redemption after the untimely death of her father, until Sat 2 Mar, The Rep, Birmingham

**SIX THE MUSICAL** Smash-hit musical in which the six wives of Henry VIII take to the stage to tell their stories by fusing historical heartbreak and 21st-century girl power, until Sun 3 Mar, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**BHANGRA NATION** A 'brash, intoxicating and joyous musical comedy celebrating traditions we inherit and those we create', until Sat 16 Mar, The Rep, Birmingham

**A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM** Mathew Baynton (Horrible Histories/Ghosts) stars as Bottom in Shakespeare's captivating comedy, until Sat 30 Mar, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

**VICTORIAN GOTHIC - AN EVENING OF EERIE DEEDS** Don't Go Into The Cellar present an anthology stage show based on a trio of nineteenth century chillers, Fri 1 Mar, West Midlands Police Museum, Birmingham

**STRANGER SINGS!** Award-winning parody musical providing an irreverent twist on the hit Netflix series, Fri 1 - Sat 2 Mar, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

**JACK & THE BEANSTALK - P\*SSSED UP PANTO** Adult panto that's not for the faint-hearted. Age restriction 16-plus, Fri 1 - Sat 2 Mar, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**QUEER MY THROAT** Generation Q Collective's new gig theatre show - a loud and proud journey through history, 'climaxing in queer joy', Sat 2 Mar, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

**BOUNCERS** John Godber's 'hilarious, vulgar, frenetic and highly physical play', set in a Yorkshire disco in the

1980s, Mon 4 - Tues 5 Mar, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

**TWELVE ANGRY MEN** Reginald Rose's gripping courtroom thriller stars Jason Merrells (Emmerdale), Gray O'Brien & Tristan Gemmill (Coronation Street), Michael Greco (EastEnders), Ben Nealon (Soldier Soldier) and Gary Webster (Minder), Mon 4 - Sat 9 Mar, Malvern Theatres

**WICKED** Award-winning musical telling the untold story of the witches of Oz, Tues 5 Mar - Sun 7 Apr., Birmingham Hippodrome

**AND THEN THERE WERE NONE** Lucy Bailey directs a new version of Agatha Christie's bestselling crime novel, Tues 5 - Sat 9 Mar, The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

**BONNIE & CLYDE** Catherine Tyldesley (Coronation Street) stars as Blanche Barrow in an award-winning show about America's notorious folk heroes, Tues 5 - Sat 9 Mar, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**CRACKING BY SHÔN DALE-JONES** A thought-provoking solo performance about loving in the face of hatred, Wed 6 Mar, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

**THE SORCERER** Birmingham Savoyards present one of Gilbert & Sullivan's lesser-known operas, Wed 6 - Fri 8 Mar, The Old Rep, B'ham

**FRANKENSTEIN** All & Sundry Limited present Nick Dear's version of Mary Shelley's gothic horror, Wed 6 - Sat 9 Mar, Crescent Theatre, B'ham

**SCIENCE FICTION BY GASLIGHT** Don't Go Into The Cellar's Jonathan Goodwin explores the literary origins of Steampunk, with dramatic retellings of classic Victorian science fiction, Thurs 7 Mar, Lapworth Museum, University of Birmingham

**THE LIGHT HOUSE** A real-life story about falling in love and staying in love, even when the lights go out and you're lost in the dark, Thurs 7 - Fri 8 Mar, Old Joint Stock Theatre, B'ham

**ROBIN AND THE SHERWOOD HOODIES** Warwick School present a musical comedy exploring the truth behind the legend of Robin Hood, Thurs 7 - Fri 8 Mar, Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

**ELECTRA** The Drama Collective Society from the University of Warwick present a timeless Greek tragedy which dives into the turbulent universe of familial antagonism and unwavering justice, Thurs 7 - Sat 9 Mar, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**HANNAH WALKER: GAMBLE** A bittersweet multimedia show about addiction and its effects on families, friends and communities, Fri 8 Mar, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

**BOY ON THE ROOF** Fully masked theatre company Vamos present their latest production - the story of an

unlikely friendship in which acceptance, understanding and love find their way to centre stage, Fri 8 - Sat 9 Mar, Swan Theatre, Worcester



**ADULT PANTO TOUR: ALICE IN WONDERLAND** A brand-new adventure down the rabbit hole, starring Bailey J Mills, Sophia Stardust and Lucy Fernandes, Sat 9 Mar, The Old Rep, Birmingham

**BRIGHT. YOUNG. THINGS** KRYPT Junior Group present an amateur version of Georgia Christou's funny and thought-provoking play, Sat 9 - Sun 10 Mar, The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster

**THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES** Colin Baker (Doctor Who) and Terry Molloy (The Archers) join forces to play the world's greatest detective and his faithful associate in a new production of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's classic thriller, Sun 10 Mar, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**ADULT PANTO TOUR: ALICE IN WONDERLAND** A brand-new adventure down the rabbit hole, starring Bailey J Mills, Sophia Stardust and Lucy Fernandes, Sun 10 Mar, The Civic, Stourport

## Kids Theatre

**SPOT'S BIRTHDAY PARTY** New interactive production based on Eric Hill's children's book, Thurs 7 - Fri 8 Mar, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

## Dance

**THE SLEEPING BEAUTY** Birmingham Royal Ballet present Sir Peter Wright's production of the much-loved fairytale, with Tchaikovsky's magical score played live by the Royal Ballet Sinfonia, until Sat 2 Mar, Birmingham Hippodrome

**ASIAN SPRING: A CELEBRATION OF DANCE** Join hundreds of local dancers for an afternoon of Kathak and Bhangra, showcasing the rich tapestry of South Asian culture through dance, Sun 3 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

**40/40 BY KATHERINA RADEVA** Solo dance performance showcasing the joys and sorrows of 40 years - from

childhood parties and rhythm gymnastics through to defiant divorce and dancing for the joy of it, Fri 8 - Sat 9 Mar, The Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

## Light Entertainment

**TALES TILL RAMADAN** One-woman show in which Eleanor Martin goes in search of sincerity via a collection of Muslim heritage stories from Rumi, Uzbekistan, Iraq, Palestine and Pakistan, until Sat 2 Mar, The Rep, Birmingham

**DOES MY FANNY LOOK BIG IN THIS?** Eleanor May Blackburn's solo show tackles sex education, validates sexual anxiety, and deals with sexual trauma while answering questions you've always been a little too embarrassed to ask, Fri 1 Mar, Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

**FOOTBALL CLICHÉS LIVE** Join the adjudication panel of Adam Hurrey, Charlie Eccleshare and David Walker for 'the most pedantic footballing night of all time', Fri 1 Mar, The Old Rep, Birmingham

**PSYCHIC SALLY** Evening of mediumship, Fri 1 Mar, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**ASTON VILLA LEGENDS** Paul Merson, Andy Townsend, Dion Dublin and Dean Saunders discuss all things football... Mon 4 Mar, The Alexandra, Birmingham

**IRELAND THE SHOW** Featuring an all-star cast of singers and performers, accompanied by the Keltic Storm Band and world champion Gael Force Irish dancers from Kerry, Mayo and Clare, Mon 4 Mar, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**GANG SHOW 2024** Beavers, cubs, scouts, explorers, network members and leaders from across the city come together for a performance of song, dance and comedy sketches, Wed 6 - Sat 9 Mar, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

**PROFESSOR BRIAN COX: HORIZONS** The Guinness World Record holder presents 'a celebration of our civilisation, our music, art, philosophy and science', Sat 9 Mar, Civic Hall, The Halls, Wolverhampton

**DARK SIDE OF THE MOON** Celebrating the 50th anniversary of Pink Floyd's iconic album, Sat 9 Mar, Coventry Cathedral

**THE BUGLE LIVE 2024** Live version of the long-running podcast in which Andy Zaltman chairs an evening of 'freshly hewn topical satire, as well as probable and certifiable lies and other assorted high-grade nonsense', Sun 10 Mar, The Old Rep, Birmingham

**ENSEMBLE 360: THE CHIMPANZEES OF HAPPY TOWN** Family concert telling the much-loved story of Chutney the Chimp. Lucy Drever narrates, Sun 10 Mar, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

## Talks & Spoken Word

**JUMPROV!** The UK's first Black and Brown Improv group present a performance made up entirely on the spot, Sat 2 Mar, Birmingham Hippodrome

**BEN FOGLE: WILD** Brand-new show in which the adventurer shares true stories of his encounters with people and animals, Tues 5 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

**BRIAN BILSTON AND HENRY NORMAL** An evening of poetry from 'the Banksy of poetry' (Bilston) and the founder of Manchester Poetry Festival (Normal), Thurs 7 Mar, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry



**THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SERIAL KILLERS** Join expert forensics lecturer Jennifer Rees to explore one of forensic psychology's most troubling topics, Fri 8 Mar, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**SIMON ARMITAGE** Part of the Poet Laureate's 10-year tour of the UK's libraries. On this occasion he'll be joined by Amelie Simon - Worcestershire's Young Poet Laureate, Sat 9 Mar, The Hive, Worcester

## Events

**FREDDO'S TREASURE TROVE** Discover all of Freddo's treasures and learn what it takes to become a pirate on the seven seas, until Sun 17 Mar, Cadbury World, Bourneville, B'ham

**WONDERWORLD - A MAGICAL FANTASY ADVENTURE** Puzzle-based adventure tailored for children over six and adults alike, until Fri 22 Mar, Magic Alley, Stratford-upon-Avon

**WHAT UNIVERSITY? & WHAT CAREER? LIVE** Meet representatives from many of the UK's top unis and employers to find out about apprenticeships and higher education opportunities, Fri 1 - Sat 2 Mar, NEC, Birmingham

**THE NATIONAL WEDDING SHOW** Featuring a host of exhibitors who can help to plan your special day, Fri



*Bouncers - The Albany Theatre, Coventry*

1 - Sun 3 Mar, NEC, Birmingham

**FUSION FESTIVAL** Featuring 18 acts over three days, Fri 1 - Sun 3 Mar, The Civic, Stourport

**LET'S WATCH AND MAKE: HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON** Free, guided craft activity, followed by a screening of the film, Sat 2 Mar, Coventry Cathedral

**OUTSIDE(R) ZINE FEST** Range of Zine workshops exploring different genres and making techniques, Sat 2 Mar, Coventry Cathedral

**VINTAGE AFTERNOON TEA** Travel in style in 'a luxurious vintage carriage' and indulge in 'a delectable spread' presented on traditional vintage chinaware, Sat 2 Mar, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

**BEYOND THE MASK: POISON, POLICE, AND PUNISHMENT OF THE 18TH & 19TH CENTURIES** A retired Coventry West Midlands Police officer takes a look at some 18th & 19th century arsenic poisoning cases, Sat 2 Mar, West Midlands Police Museum, B'ham

**THE NATIONAL EQUINE SHOW** Featuring hundreds of brands and activities, Sat 2 - Sun 3 Mar, NEC, Birmingham

**GO DIVING SHOW** Showcasing new diving equipment, idyllic holiday destinations and comprehensive training resources, Sat 2 - Sun 3 Mar, NAEC Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

**MIDLANDS GARDEN RAIL SHOW** Featuring a diverse range of layouts, Sat 2 - Sun 3 Mar, Warwickshire Event Centre, Leamington Spa

**TUDOR WOMEN GUIDED TOUR AT BLAKESLEY HALL** Mark International Women's Day by learning about Tudor women, Sun 3 Mar, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

**BEHIND THE SCENES WITH SCIENCE TECHNICIANS** Uncover the day-to-day workings of a lab, Thurs 7 Mar, The Tin Music and Arts, Coventry

**WORLD BOOK DAY: MINI MUSEUM**

**ENGINEERS ON TOUR AT THE HERBERT** Experiment with a variety of building materials and have a go at the train-themed construction challenges, Thurs 7 Mar, Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry

**WORLD BOOK DAY: THE TIGER WHO CAME TO TEA** Sensory storytelling experience, Thurs 7 Mar, Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry

**SPRING MAKERS MARKET** Featuring an array of local independent traders selling handcrafted items, Thurs 7 Mar, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**WORLD BOOK DAY** Join local author Ruth Goddard in the second-hand bookshop for a series of storytelling sessions to celebrate World Book Day, Thurs 7 - Sun 10 Mar, Hanbury Hall, Droitwich Spa

**CRUFTS** The famous annual dog show makes a welcome return, Thurs 7 - Sun 10 Mar, NEC, Birmingham

**VINTAGE AFTERNOON TEA** Travel in style in 'a luxurious vintage carriage' and indulge in 'a delectable spread' presented on traditional vintage chinaware, Sat 9 Mar, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

**RUSTIVAL** All-new car & vehicle show hosted by YouTubers Ian and Carly from HubNut, Matt from Furious Driving and Steph from idriveaclassic, Sat 9 Mar, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

**HCW WRESTLING** Live professional wrestling and family entertainment, Sat 9 Mar, The Civic, Stourport

**THE RESONATE FESTIVAL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY - DAY OUT** All-ages fun exploring science, technology and engineering, Sun 10 Mar, Warwick University Campus

**MOTHER'S DAY LUNCH** Treat Mum and your loved ones this Mother's day with Sunday lunch on the Severn Valley Railway, Sun 10 Mar, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

# Les Misérables

SCHOOL EDITION



**10 - 13 April 2024**

Bridgehouse Theatre, Warwick

Book tickets



[www.bridgehousetheatre.co.uk](http://www.bridgehousetheatre.co.uk)



Ne-Yo - Resorts World Arena, Birmingham

### Gigs

**TRUE FOXES** Mon 11 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**DAMIEN DEMPSEY** Tues 12 Mar, O2 Institute, B'ham

**SOUTH ARCADE** Tues 12 Mar, O2 Academy, B'ham

**STIFF LITTLE FINGERS** Tues 12 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**CHRIS WOOD** Tues 12 Mar, Kitchen Garden, B'ham

**MUTUAL BENEFIT + ODETTA HARTMAN** Wed 13 Mar, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

**WILL DOWNING & MAYS** Wed 13 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**ECHO AND THE BUNNYMEN** Wed 13 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**BONFIRE RADICALS + ROB PETERS & HANNAH BROWN** Wed 13 Mar, Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

**TONY HADLEY** Wed 13 Mar, Symphony Hall, B'ham



**TOM ODELL + SOFIA ISELLA** Wed 13 Mar, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

**WILLE & THE BANDITS + WILLE EDWARDS** Thurs 14 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**DIZZY LIZZY** Thurs 14 Mar, Actress & Bishop, B'ham

**KRYSTHLA + KING ABYSS + MONETOPIA** Thurs 14 Mar, Devil's Dog, Birmingham

**DEAD POET SOCIETY + READY THE PRINCE** Thurs 14 Mar, O2 Institute, B'ham

**LEAVES EYES + NORTHTALE + METALITE + CATALYST CRIME** Thurs 14 Mar, The Asylum, Birmingham

**MILLICENT CHAPANDA** Thurs 14 Mar, Jennifer Blackwell Performance Space, Symphony Hall, B'ham

**MAIR THOMAS** Thurs 14 Mar, Bromsgrove Folk Club

**LIAM GALLAGHER AND JOHN SQUIRE** Thurs 14 Mar, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

**NE-YO + MARIO** Thurs 14 - Fri 15 Mar, Resorts World Arena, Birmingham

**THE LONGEST JOHNS + COLM R. MCGUINNESS** Fri 15 Mar, O2 Institute, B'ham

**FILTER** Fri 15 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**FASTLOVE - A TRIBUTE TO GEORGE MICHAEL** Fri 15 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**TRIO NOBLE-SLAVIK-CLARVIS** Fri 15 Mar, 1000 Trades, Birmingham

**HOWLIN RIC AND THE ROCKETEERS** Fri 15 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**GO YOUR OWN WAY - FLEETWOOD MAC TRIBUTE** Fri 15 Mar, Stratford Playhouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

**BAD BOY CHILLER CREW** Fri 15 Mar, hmv Empire, Coventry

**THE ROOTERS + FRAXURE + KYLE BOSWELL** Fri 15 Mar, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**CREEDENCE CLEARWATER REVIEW** Fri 15 Mar, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**THIS IS QUEEN** Fri 15 Mar, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**UNCLE WORMWOOD + THE PHILLBILLY ONE MAN BAND** Fri 15 Mar, Paradiddles Cafe, Worcester

**WHITE TYGER** Fri 15 Mar, 45Live, Kidderminster

**A CELEBRATION OF SIMON & GARFUNKEL** Fri 15 Mar, Civic, Stourport

**OMD + WALT DISCO** Fri 15 Mar, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

**LAID - JAMES TRIBUTE BAND** Sat 16 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**RED RUM CLUB** Sat 16 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**FEEDER** Sat 16 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**PRAIRIE** Sat 16 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**SKINDRED** Sat 16 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**CATTLE DECAPITATION** Sat 16 Mar, O2 Academy, B'ham

**JANET KAY & CARROLL THOMPSON** Sat 16 Mar, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**MCHALES PERMANENT BREW** Sat 16 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**CLOUDBASE** Sat 16 Mar, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

**NEARLY DAN - STEELY DAN TRIBUTE** Sat 16 Mar, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**HEADQUARTERS OF GROOVE** Sat 16 Mar, Marrs Bar, Worcester

**PURPLE ZEPPELIN** Sat 16 Mar, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**THE ULTIMATE COMMITMENTS & BLUES BROTHERS EXPERIENCE** Sat 16 Mar, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**CHRIS WOOD** Sat 16 Mar, West Malvern Social Club

**THE STRANGLERS** Sat 16 Mar, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

**BUZZARD BUZZARD BUZZARD** Sun 17 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**SAM SWEENEY** Sun 17 Mar, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

**JUST MY IMAGINATION: THE MUSIC OF THE TEMPTATIONS** Sun 17 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**JUSTIN HAYWARD** Sun 17 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

**ANNA PANCALDI** Sun 17 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**DESENSITISED** Sun 17 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**THE DRIFTERS** Sun 17 Mar, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

### Classical Music

**THOMAS TROTTER ORGAN CONCERT FOR INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY** Programme features works by women composers including Wallen, Price, Tralleferne & Demessieux, Mon 11 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

**CHINA SHENZHEN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA** Featuring Tamsin Waley-Cohen (violin), Jiapeng Nie (cello) and Daye Lin (conductor). Programme includes works by Tan Dun, Saint-Saëns, Chausson & Respighi, Mon 11 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**AFGHAN YOUTH ORCHESTRA: BREAKING THE SILENCE** Programme includes Afghan traditional folk music plus Indian & western classical, Tues 12 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

**LUNCHTIME CONCERT** Featuring Harriet Mackenzie (violin - pictured) and Gabriel Francis-Dehqani (cello). Programme includes works by JS Bach alongside a world premier by Mackenzie, Thurs 14 Mar, Ensemble Room, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry



**LUNCHTIME RECITAL** Featuring Mark Swinton (organ), Fri 15 Mar, St Mary's Church, Warwick

**CARDUCCI QUARTET** Featuring Matthew Denton & Michelle Fleming (violins), Eoin Schmidt-Martin (viola) & Emma Denton (cello). Programme includes works by Haydn, Ravel & Mendelssohn, Fri 15 Mar, Royal Pump Rooms, Leamington Spa

**BBC PHILHARMONIC: ELGAR'S CELLO CONCERTO** Featuring Ben Gernon (conductor) & István Várdai (cello). Programme includes works by Haydn, Elgar & Beethoven, Fri 15 Mar, Malvern Theatres

**BIRMINGHAM FESTIVAL CHORAL SOCIETY: BACH, B MINOR MASS** Featuring David Wynne (conductor), Emilia Morton (soprano), Martha McLorinan (mezzo soprano), Jack Granby (tenor), Andrew Tipple (bass) & Kevin Gill (organ). Sat 16 Mar, Lichfield Cathedral

**WYRE FOREST SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: A NIGHT AT THE OPERA** Featuring Tony Bridgewater (conductor), Gillian Pendrous (leader) & the Kidderminster Male Voice Choir, Sat 16 Mar, Stourport Civic Hall



Echo And The Bunnymen - O2 Academy, Birmingham

**COLLEGIUM WARWICK: SPRING CONCERT** Featuring Oliver Hancock (conductor). Programme includes works by Stanford, Haydn & Dyson, Sat 16 Mar, St Mary's Church, Warwick

**HEREFORD CHORAL SOCIETY: MATHIAS AND DVOŘÁK** Featuring Geraint Bowen (conductor) & the Hereford Sinfonia. Programme includes This Worlde's Joie by Mathias & Dvořák's Te Deum, Sat 16 Mar, Hereford Cathedral

**WORCESTER FESTIVAL CHORAL SOCIETY** Featuring Samuel Hudson (conductor), Susanna Fairbairn (soprano), Samantha Price (mezzo-soprano), Gwylm Bowen (tenor) & Dominic Sedgwick (baritone). Programme includes Beethoven's Mass in C & Richard Blackford's Mirror of Perfection, Sat 16 Mar, Worcester Cathedral



**LEAMINGTON CHAMBER ORCHESTRA** Featuring Zoe Beyers (violin) and Richard Laing (conductor). Programme includes works by Beach, Mendelssohn & Beethoven, Sun 17 Mar, Holy Trinity Church, Leamington Spa

## Comedy

**RHOD GILBERT** Tues 12 Mar, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**PHIL ELLIS** Wed 13 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, LAURA LEXX & DANA ALEXANDER** Thurs 14 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**TOM HOUGHTON** Thurs 14 Mar, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**COUNT ARTHUR STRONG** Thurs 14 Mar, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

**DANIEL FOXF** Fri 15 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**RUSSELL KANE** Fri 15 Mar, Lichfield Garrick

**GEOFF NORCOTT** Fri 15 Mar, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry



**ANIA MAGLIANO** Fri 15 Mar, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**COUNT ARTHUR STRONG** Fri 15 Palace Theatre, Redditch

**JASON PATTERSON, LAURA LEXX, ALEX KEALY & DANA ALEXANDER** Fri 15 - Sat 16 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**PAUL RILEY** Sat 16 Mar, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

**ROB AUTON** Sat 16 Mar, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

**COUNT ARTHUR STRONG** Sat 16 Mar, Malvern Theatres

**DOM JOLY** Sat 16 Mar, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**LLOYD GRIFFITH** Sun 17 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**JOE WELLS** Sun 17 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**MARK WATSON** Sun 17 Mar, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

## Theatre

**SELF-RAISING** Jenny Sealey's 'blisteringly honest and laugh-out-loud' one-woman show about growing up deaf in a family with secrets, Tues 12 - Wed 13 Mar, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**CRAZY FOR YOU** Amateur version presented by Knowle Musical Society, Tues 12 - Sat 16 Mar, Artrix, Bromsgrove

**OH WHAT A LOVELY WAR** Joan Littlewood's epic musical about the folly of war, Tues 12 - Sat 16 Mar, Malvern Theatres



**COLDER THAN HERE** Amateur version of Laura Wade's funny and moving play about family loss, acceptance and finding the strength to move on, Tues 12 - Sat 16 Mar, The Bear Pit Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

**MATILDA THE MUSICAL JR** Amateur version of Roald Dahl's famous story about an extraordinary young girl with exceptional powers, Wed 13 - Sat 16 Mar, Talisman Theatre & Arts Centre, Kenilworth

**WANTED** Gazebo Theatre present a powerful drama exploring the stories of five extraordinary women, Thurs 14 - Fri 15 Mar, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

**INDIGO GIANT** A haunting new drama inspired by Dinabandhu Mitra's trail-blazing Indigo Mirror - a play that shook colonial India, Thurs 14 - Sat 16 Mar, The Rep, Birmingham

**DAD'S ARMY** Amateur production based on the classic 1970s BBC TV

comedy series, Thurs 14 - Sat 16 Mar, The Regal, Tenbury Wells

**MADAGASCAR THE MUSICAL** Karim Zeroual (CBBC & Strictly Come Dancing) stars as King Julien in a stage show based on the Dreamworks adventure film for younger audiences, Thurs 14 - Sun 17 Mar, The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

**AS SHE LIKES IT** A darkly comedic explosion of multimedia, verbatim, cabaret and drag, inspired by the story of #MeToo pioneer Patricia Douglas, Sat 16 Mar, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry



**THE MAYDES METAMORPHOSIS** An anonymous Elizabethan comedy presented by Edward's Boys, Fri 15 Mar, Playbox Theatre, The Dream Factory, Warwick

**SIX - TEEN EDITION** The wives of Henry VIII retell their stories of love, loss and their infamous ex... Amateur version, Sat 16 Mar, The Benn Hall, Rugby

**THE GLASS MENAGERIE** Atri Banerjee's acclaimed production of Tennessee Williams' semi-autobiographical masterpiece, starring Geraldine Somerville (Gosford Park), Sat 16 - Sat 23 Mar, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

**DIRTY GREAT LOVE STORY** A verse romcom from Kate Bonna & Richard Marsh - a variation on the archetypal boy-meets-girl story, Sat 16 - Sat 23 Mar, Criterion Theatre, Coventry

**AUSTEN'S WOMEN: LADY SUSAN** One-woman show starring Rebecca Vaughan and based on Jane Austen's first full-length work, Sun 17 Mar, Swan Theatre, Worcester

## Kids Theatre

**DEAR ZOO** Interactive children's theatre based on Rod Campbell's much-loved lift-the-flap book, Thurs 14 - Fri 15 Mar, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

## Dance

**GIOVANNI: LET ME ENTERTAIN YOU** The Strictly favourite is joined by a cast of professional dancers and West End performers for a show of 'non-stop action', Tues 12 Mar, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**SAO PAULO DANCE COMPANY** The Brazilian dance company fuse classical ballet and Latin American

dance in a programme of three works, Fri 15 - Sat 16 Mar, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

## Light Entertainment

**VAMPIRES ROCK** Steve Steinman's 'musical sensation', fusing narrative, comedy, horror and rock anthems, Mon 11 Mar, The Alexandra, B'ham

**QUEENZ - THE SHOW WITH BALLS** Dazzling divas deliver 'a night of fun and fabulousness' with live vocals and a setlist of party pop anthems, Tues 12 Mar, The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

**ANTIQUES AND A LITTLE BIT OF NONSENSE** Join TV personalities Philip Serrell, Charlie Ross and Christina Trevanion as they share tales from the sales room, television and beyond... Tues 12 Mar, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

**SASHA VELOUR THE BIG REVEAL LIVE SHOW** An immersive evening of drag, storytelling and live art. A special guest star and post-show book signings also feature, Tues 12 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**ROB BRYDON: A NIGHT OF SONGS & LAUGHTER** Join Rob as he shares his personal musical journey - from South Wales to Hollywood and back, Wed 13 Mar, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**LA VOIX: THE RED AMBITION TOUR** 'Britain's funniest redhead' swings into town with her most ambitious show to date, Thurs 14 Mar, The Old Rep, Birmingham

**DANIEL MARTINEZ FLAMENCO COMPANY: ANDALUCIA** Classical music meets the passion and fire of flamenco in a musical representation of the eight regions of Andalusia, Fri 15 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

**DR JOHN COOPER CLARKE** An evening with the 'original people's poet', Fri 15 Mar, The Wulfrun at The Halls, Wolverhampton

**SC-FI SPECTACULAR - THE MUSIC OF JOHN WILLIAMS & STAR WARS** Performed by the International Film Orchestra, Sat 16 Mar, Coventry Cathedral

**AN EVENING OF BURLESQUE** An evening of 'sparkling entertainment fusing stylish cabaret, comedy, music, circus and burlesque', Sat 16 Mar, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

## Talks & Spoken Word

**HANS REY: MISHAPS & MAYHEM** Untold stories and legendary tales from the



mountain-bike pioneer, adventurer & former trials champion, Wed 13 Mar, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

**STEVEN BARTLETT PRESENTS: THE BUSINESS & LIFE SPEAKING TOUR** Learn how to cultivate the mindset and strategy required to overcome challenges, stay focused, and turn your dreams into reality, Thurs 14 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**THE MAKINGS OF A MURDERER** Scottish detective David Swindle offers a unique insight into the minds of some of history's most notorious murderers, Thurs 14 Mar, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**HIT THE ODE X UNISLAM SPECIAL** Performance poetry evening featuring Safia Elhillo, Yomi Sode & Bridget Hart. Bohdan Piasecki hosts, Fri 15 Mar, The Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

**THE REAL MANHUNTER LIVE** Join former police officer Colin Sutton as he talks about his career, how policing has changed, what it's like to chase a serial killer, and how he made the step from policing to story-telling, Fri 15 Mar, Coventry Building Society Arena

**ONCE, TWICE, THREE TIMES A BOROUGH!** A local-history talk by Solihull Council's archivist and local-studies librarian, Sat 16 Mar, The Core, Solihull

**PAUL MCKENNA: SUCCESS FOR LIFE** Brand-new show in which the behavioural scientist uses the latest psychological techniques to help you move beyond your limitations, Sat 16 Mar, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

**UNISLAM 2024** Poetry festival based around the UK & Ireland National Inter-University Poetry Slam, Sun 17 Mar, The Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

## Events

**MUSEUM LATES: LONGBRIDGE LEGACIES** A special evening to celebrate the Longbridge factory, its achievements and its impact on the local community, Tues 12 Mar, British Motor Museum, Gaydon, Warwickshire

**CHELTENHAM FESTIVAL 2024** Featuring 28 races across four days, Tues 12 - Fri 15 Mar, Cheltenham Racecourse



**YONEX ALL ENGLAND OPEN BADMINTON CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024** Bringing together the best badminton players from around the world, Tues 12 - Sun

17 Mar, Utilita Arena Birmingham

**ACTION RAYZ: INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY** To celebrate International Women's Day, Action Rayz presents four short films based around the theme of women at work and work by women, Thurs 14 Mar, Coventry Cathedral

**KIDZ TO ADULTZ MIDDLE** Dedicated to children and young people with disabilities or additional needs, Thurs 14 Mar, Coventry Building Society Arena

**FASHION & EMBROIDERY** Including exclusive never-before-seen features and contributions from industry experts, Thurs 14 - Sun 17 Mar, NEC, Birmingham

**THE CREATIVE CRAFT SHOW** The UK's biggest mixed craft show, Thurs 14 - Sun 17 Mar, NEC, Birmingham

**SEWING FOR PLEASURE** Meet sewing personalities as seen on TV, chat to your favourite social-media sewing stars and marvel at catwalk displays, Thurs 14 - Sun 17 Mar, NEC, Birmingham

**GOLD CUP EXPERIENCE** Enjoy a live screening - with hospitality - of one of the most hotly anticipated jump races in the horseracing calendar, Fri 15 Mar, Worcester Racecourse

**ARNOLD SPORTS FESTIVAL UK 2024** Bodybuilding expo boasting a record-breaking prize, Fri 15 - Sun 17 Mar, NEC, Birmingham

**AI FUTURES: BRAIN AWARENESS WEEK** Join researchers from the University of Birmingham's Centre for Human Brain Health (CHBH) to celebrate Brain Awareness Week 2024, Sat 16 Mar, The Exchange, Centenary Square, Birmingham

**MIDLANDS GRAND NATIONAL** Runners and riders compete for some of the most sought-after titles in the region, Sat 16 Mar, Uttoxeter Racecourse, Staffordshire

**MAGNIFICENT 7 RIDE AGAIN** An evening of top championship boxing fights, Sat 16 Mar, Resorts World Arena, Birmingham

**THE MURDER OF JULIUS CASTERBROOK: A VICTORIAN MURDER MYSTERY** A Victorian-inspired murder-mystery night, Sat 16 Mar, West Midlands Police Museum, Birmingham

**CYANOTYPE WORKSHOP** Explore the process of Cyanotype photography, Sat 16 Mar, Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry

**GIN TRAINS** Sample a variety of gins whilst enjoying a scenic train journey, Sat 16 - Sun 17 Mar, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

**SPRING GIFT FAYRE** Featuring a whole host of suppliers selling local and hand-made goods at the Engine House, Sat 16 - Sun 17 Mar, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster



*Austen's Women - Swan Theatre, Worcester*

**MINIATURA SPRING SHOW** A show featuring workshops, advice, ideas and inspiration for dolls' house enthusiasts, Sat 16 - Sun 17 Mar, NAEC Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

**THE PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO SHOW** Check out and buy the latest cameras and accessories, learn new skills and techniques, and be inspired by top creators, Sat 16 - Tues 19 Mar, NEC, Birmingham

**PLAY UNSTOPPABLE** Design your own spirit animal, add your creation to the Lego Flower Cart and share your best moves at the Play Unstoppable Dance Party, Sat 16 Mar - Mon 6 May, Legoland Discovery Centre B'ham

**AGBO RALLY** Eighty rally cars from all vintages and eras take on the stages around Weston - including the iconic watersplash! Sun 17 Mar, Weston Park, Shropshire

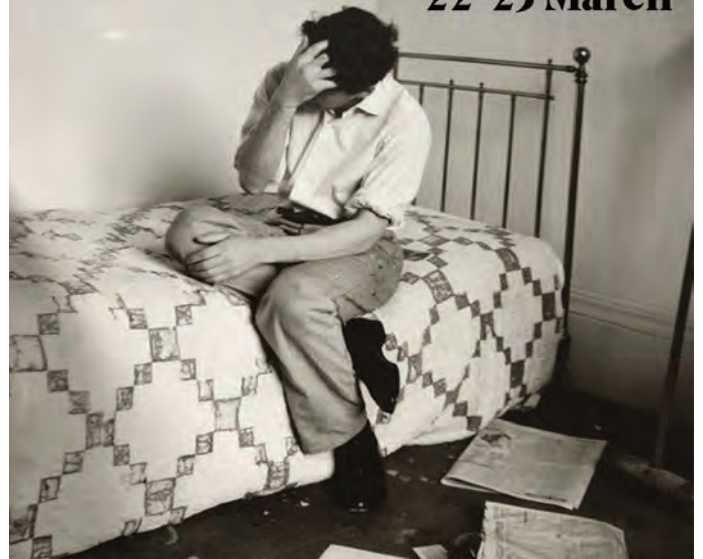
# Woyzeck

BY GEORG BUCHNER

ADAPTED BY JOHN MACKENDRICK

A project for anyone who loves theatre, aged 14+\*

22-25 March

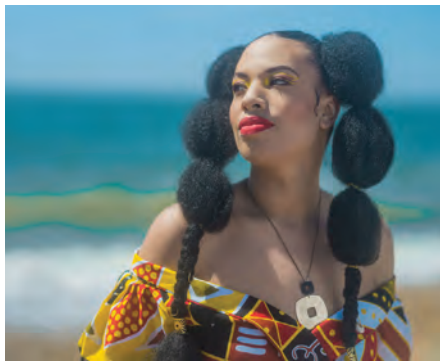


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Lady Nade - Temperance, Leamington Spa

## Gigs

**IVY GOLD** Mon 18 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**JUDAS PRIEST + SAXON + URIAH HEEP** Tues 19 Mar, Resorts World Arena, Birmingham

**IONA LANE** Tues 19 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**HANNAH JAMES AND TOBY KUHN** Tues 19 Mar, The Fleece Inn, Bretforton, Nr Evesham

**MICHAEL MCGOLDRICK, JOHN MCCUSKER AND JOHN DOYLE** Wed 20 Mar, Regal, Tenbury Wells

**THE MARY WALLOPERS** Wed 20 Mar, The Wulfrun at The Halls Wolverhampton

**LUKAS GRAHAM** Thurs 21 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**JIMMY REGAL AND THE ROYALS** Thurs 21 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**THE BROTHER GILLESPIE** Thurs 21 Mar, Stratford Playhouse

**NYE BANFIELD** Thurs 21 Mar, Marrs Bar, Worcester

**MY HEART WILL GO ON - CELINE DION TRIBUTE** Thurs 21 Mar, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**LILA + SI RILEY** Thurs 21 Mar, 45Live, Kidderminster

**GHETTS** Fri 22 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**THE SMILE** Fri 22 Mar, O2 Academy, B'ham

**FROM THE JAM** Fri 22 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

**TWOMANTING** Fri 22 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**DOLLY PARTON VS KENNY RODGERS** Fri 22 Mar, The Rialto, Coventry

**GUNS 2 ROSES** Fri 22 Mar, hmv Empire, Coventry

**KING AWESOME + FRAXURE** Fri 22 Mar, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**AUDIORAGE** Fri 22 Mar, Marrs Bar, Worcester

**JOHN ETHERIDGE AND KIT HOLMES** Fri 22 Mar, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**THE MERSEY BEATLES** Fri 22 Mar, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**THE FAUX FIGHTERS** Fri 22 Mar, 45Live, Kidderminster

**SI CRANSTOUN** Sat 23 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

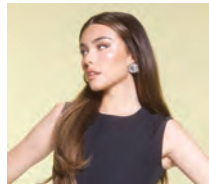
**BLEACHERS** Sat 23 Mar, O2 Institute, B'ham

**BROKEN DRUMSTICK + ROOM 11 + THE VIOLETS + SHUTUSUP! + THE ESSENTIALS** Sat 23 Mar, O2 Institute, B'ham

**THE STAIRS** Sat 23 Mar, O2 Academy, B'ham

**DODGY + CHRIS HELME** Sat 23 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**MADISON BEER (PICTURED) + JANN** Sat 23 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham



GIPTY KINGS Sat 23

Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**SIMPLE MINDS + DEL AMITRI** Sat 23 Mar, Utilita Arena B'ham

**THE GUNS N ROSES EXPERIENCE + PURE JOVI** Sat 23 Mar, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**LADY NADE + TU-KAY AND RYAN** Sat 23 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**RESURRECTION MEN + CHARLES DEXTER WARD AND THE IMAGINEERS** Sat 23 Mar, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

**ULTIMATE MADNEZZ** Sat 23 Mar, hmv Empire, Coventry

**RUSHED - TRIBUTE TO RUSH** Sat 23 Mar, Arches Venue, Coventry

**THE DUBLIN LEGENDS** Sat 23 Mar, Albany Theatre, Coventry

**KICK UP THE 80S** Sat 23 Mar, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**ION MAIDEN** Sat 23 Mar, Marrs Bar, Worcester

**A FOREIGNERS JOURNEY** Sat 23 Mar, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**THE GREATEST STAR - BARBRA STREISAND TRIBUTE SHOW** Sat 23 Mar, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**THE GASLIGHT ANTHEM** Sat 23 Mar, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

**CHANTEL MCGREGOR** Sun 24 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa



**HENRY MOODIE** Sun 24 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**STEVIE WATTS ORGAN TRIO** Sun 24 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**JUJU + DOWNDRAFT + MASSASAUGA** Sun 24 Mar, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

## Classical Music

**ENSEMBLE MOLIÈRE** Featuring Flavia Hirte (flute), Alice Earle (violin), Catriona McDermaid (bassoon), Kate Conway (viola da gamba), Satoko Doi-Luck (harpichord). Programme includes works by Charpentier, Lully, Couperin, Delalande and Marais, Tues 19 Mar, St Mary's Church, Warwick

**CBSO: FAURÉ REQUIEM** Featuring Rosanne Philippens (violin), Benjamin Appl (baritone) & Alexandre Bloch (conductor). Programme also includes works by Saint-Saëns and Ravel, Thurs 21 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**MALVERN CONCERT CLUB** Featuring Tom Poster (piano) & Elena Urioste (violin). Programme includes works by Mendelssohn, Bonis, Beach & Grieg, Thurs 21 Mar, Malvern Theatres

**BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: BAROQUE TO BROADWAY** Featuring Danielle de Niese (soprano) Niall O'Sullivan (trumpet) & Michael Seal (conductor), Fri 22 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**GRIMETHORPE COLLIERY BAND** Featuring Rex Richardson (trumpet). Programme includes works by M Arnold, Vaughan Williams, M Gould, Bernstein & more... Fri 22 Mar, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

**EBLANA STRING TRIO WITH EMMA HALNAN** Also featuring Jonathan Martindale (violin), Lucy Nolan (viola), Peggy Nolan (cello) & Emma Halnan (flute). Programme includes works by Mozart, Cras, Matthews & Viotti, Fri 22 Mar, Routh Hall, Bromsgrove School

**WORCESTER CATHEDRAL CHOIR** Programme comprises Bach's St John Passion, Fri 22 Mar, Worcester Cathedral

**ARMONICO CONSORT: LOVE HANDELS** Featuring William Towers (countertenor). Programme includes works by Handel, Vivaldi, Monteverdi & Purcell, Fri 22 Mar, The Court House, Warwick

**BIRMINGHAM CHORAL UNION: RADIANT JOY!** Featuring Colin Baines (conductor), Darren Hogg (organ) & soloists. Programme includes works by Holst, C McDowall & Handel, Sat 23 Mar, St Paul's Church, Birmingham

**LEAMINGTON SINFONIA: ITALIAN PICTURES** Featuring Joe Davies (conductor) & Edward Boothroyd (violin). Programme includes works by Tchaikovsky, Puccini, Verdi & Respighi, Sat 23 Mar, All Saints Church, Leamington Spa

**THE ELGAR CHORALE OF WORCESTER:**

**WONDEROUS MACHINE** Featuring Piers Maxim (director), Paul Trepte (organ), John Upperton (tenor), Shulah Oliver (violin) & Natasha Gale (harp). Programme includes works by Kodály, Rachmaninov, Janáček & Dvorák, Sat 23 Mar, Pershore Abbey

**MOZART: THE MAGIC FLUTE** Performed by The Merry Opera Company, Sat 23 Mar, Berkeley Castle, Gloucestershire

**CHELTENHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: SHORT RIDE TO RACHMANINOV'S DANCES** Programme includes works by Adams, Bartok & Rachmaninov, Sat 23 Mar, Princess Hall, Cheltenham

**STRATFORD SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA SPRING CONCERT** Featuring Mariatu Kanneh-Mason (soloist). Programme includes works by Mendelssohn, Saint-Saëns & Beethoven, Sun 24 Mar, Stratford Playhouse

**THE MAGGINI STRING QUARTET** Featuring Julian Leaper and Ciaran McCabe (violins), Martin Outram (viola) & Will Schofield (cello). Programme includes works by Beethoven, Ireland & Brahms, Sun 24 Mar, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**MIDLAND CONCERT ORCHESTRA: THE GREAT AMERICAN SONGBOOK** Programme includes works by Gershwin, Goodman, Henderson & Hines, Sun 24 Mar, Swan Theatre, Worcester

## Comedy

**VITTORIO ANGELONE** Tues 19 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**PAUL FOOT** Wed 20 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**ROB AUTON** Fri 22 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**KATE LUCAS, ANDY ROBINSON, NATHAN CATON, ADAM BLOOM & MARK BITTLESTONE** Fri 22 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**KATE LUCAS, ANDY ROBINSON, NATHAN CATON & ADAM BLOOM** Sat 23 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**MATT REED, DEAN COUGHLIN, BLANK PENG & RAYMOND AND MR. TIMPKINS** Sat 23 Mar, Macready Theatre, Rugby

**IAIN STIRLING** Sun 24 Mar, The Alexandra, Birmingham

## Theatre

**PETER PAN GOES WRONG** Mischief Theatre's spin on a timeless classic follows the not-entirely-competent Cornley Drama Society as they do their best to mount a production of JM Barrie's classic story, Mon 18 - Sat 23 Mar, The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

**THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME** Kidderminster Operatic & Dramatic Society present an amateur version of Victor Hugo's story, featuring songs from the Disney film version, Mon 18 - Sat 23 Mar, The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster

**CORAM SHAKESPEARE SCHOOLS FESTIVAL 2024** Evening of live theatre showcasing a series of abridged Shakespeare productions performed by local schools, Tues 19 Mar, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

**NEL'S PLACE** A new musical from Sheep Soup which examines what material things really mean to us, and how easily we can become buried by the past, Tues 19 - Wed 20 Mar; Birmingham Hippodrome

**THE BOY AT THE BACK OF THE CLASS** Onjali Q Rauf's warm-hearted tale highlighting the power of friendship and kindness in a world that doesn't always make sense, Tues 19 - Sat 23 Mar, Malvern Theatres

**DOLLY PARTON'S 9 TO 5 THE MUSICAL** Amateur production presented by Leamington & Warwick Musical Society, Tues 19 - Sat 23 Mar, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

**DIVORCED, BEHEADED, DIED: AN AUDIENCE WITH KING HENRY VIII** A one-man, one-act show in which Henry VIII recounts the events of his long reign, inviting his loyal subjects (the audience) to petition or question him on any related subject... Wed 20 Mar, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

**THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST** Sweet Sorrow Theatre Company present an amateur version of Oscar Wilde's comedy of manners, Wed 20 - Sat 23 Mar, The Bear Pit Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

**STEPPING OUT** Fairshare Theatre present an amateur version of Richard Harris' comedy, Thurs 21 Mar, The Civic, Stourport

**PEAK STUFF** Three fast-paced and funny stories about consumer culture, Thurs 21 - Fri 22 Mar, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

**THREE SISTERS** Amateur version of Chekhov's tragic play, Thurs 21 - Sat 23 Mar, Playbox Theatre, The Dream Factory, Warwick

**FIRST ENCOUNTER: ROMEO & JULIET** A 90-minute version of the world's most famous love story, Thurs 21 - Sat 30 Mar, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

**WOYZECK** A chance for theatre-makers aged 14-plus to work alongside professional practitioners and make a full-scale production of Georg Buchner's 'working class tragedy', Fri 22 - Mon 25 Mar, Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

**WAITING ROOM** Elemental theatre company present a brand-new comedy set in the Accident & Emergency department of an NHS

hospital, Fri 22 - Sat 23 Mar, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

**MINORITY REPORT** Staging of Phillip K Dick's sci-fi thriller, which challenges our beliefs about justice and free will in a real-time chase through a London of the future, Fri 22 Mar - Sat 6 Apr, The Rep, Birmingham

**LEARNING TO FLY** One-man show in which James Rowland blends theatre, comedy and music to tell the story of his remarkable friendship with the scary old lady who lived on his street, Sat 23 Mar, The Market Theatre, Ledbury, South Herefordshire

## Kids Theatre

**ZOG AND THE FLYING DOCTORS** A modern take on a classic fairytale, based on the book by Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler, Tues 19 - Thurs 21 Mar, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**JURASSIC EARTH** Meet the bravest of rangers as they introduce their herd of dinosaurs - including the world's largest walking T Rex! Sun 24 Mar, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre



**THE MAGIC BOOKMARK** Join Britain's Got Talent finalist Mama G for a brand-new family panto adventure, Sun 24 Mar, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

## Dance

**A MIDSUMMER NIGHTS DREAM** Ballet Theatre UK present a choreographed version of Shakespeare's popular comedy, Thurs 21 Mar, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

**SAMAAGAMA 2024** Embark on a cultural odyssey with Chitrakala Dance Company's student showcase, Sun 24 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

## Light Entertainment

**THE CIRCUS OF HORRORS: DR HAZES CABARET OF CURIOSITIES** Featuring sword swallows, hairculean aerialists hanging from their hair whilst suspended above the auditorium, whirlwind jugglers, twisted contortionists, voodoo acrobats, pickled people, hula-

hooping sideshow showgirls and lots more... Tues 19 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**SOLVE-ALONG-A MURDER SHE WROTE** Featuring an interactive screening of classic Murder, She Wrote episode Broadway Melody, Fri 22 Mar, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

**AN EVENING WITH RICK BUCKLER** Memories and music from The Jam's legendary drummer, Fri 22 Mar, Stratford Play House, Stratford-upon-Avon

**DREAMCOAT STARS** Concert-style performance where the stars of Joseph present hits from the musicals alongside brand-new songs and arrangements, Sat 23 Mar, Artrix, Bromsgrove

## Talks & Spoken Word

**POETRY SLAM 2024** Live final bringing to a close a poetry slam project involving schools from Worcestershire, Wed 20 Mar, Palace Theatre, Redditch

## Events

**MINI MOTORISTS** To celebrate British Science Week, this month's Mini Motorists will be 'fixing' push-along Minis, Mon 18 Mar, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

**NATIONAL HOMEBUILDING & RENOVATING SHOW** Hear from inspiring speakers live on stage, get tailored advice for your project, and see, touch and compare all the latest products, Thurs 21 - Sun 24 Mar, NEC, Birmingham

**PRACTICAL CLASSICS CLASSIC CAR & RESTORATION SHOW** Explore automotive history, from rustic gems to pristine classics, Fri 22 - Sun 24 Mar, NEC, Birmingham

**VOLUNTEER OPEN DAY** Meet the team and find out about volunteering opportunities at the museum, Sat 23 Mar, Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove

**THE SPICE TRAIN** Indulge in an evening of curry with friends while travelling on the Severn Valley Railway, Sat 23 Mar, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

**TINKER | MAKE | PLAY: EGGCELLENT EXPERIMENTS** Make eggcellent transport and find out how many eggs your machine can hold and move, Sat 23 Mar, Coventry Transport Museum

**LIVING HISTORY EVENT** The Living History UK group depict the Warwickshire Militia circa 1642, when England was on the brink of civil war, Sat 23 Mar, Tudor House Museum, Worcester

**THE NATIONAL OUTDOOR EXPO** Be inspired by some of the world's greatest outdoor enthusiasts, take part in a range of performance workshops, and get your adrenaline going via one of the many interactive features, Sat 23 - Sun 24 Mar, NEC, Birmingham

**CRAFTING STREETS OF COVENTRY** Explore Coventry through creative arts and immersive experiences, taking inspiration from the museum's permanent exhibitions, Sat 23 Mar - Sat 6 Apr, Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry

**FREE EASTER ACTIVITY - DECORATE AN EASTER EGG** A free cutting and sticking activity for little ones, Sat 23 Mar - Sat 6 Apr, Tudor House Museum, Worcester

**EASTER EGG HUNT** Make your way along the trail and find 10 fun activities for the whole family to enjoy, Sat 23 Mar - Sun 7 Apr, Charlecote Park, Warwick

**SPACE, RACE AND FLY!** A STEM-based event featuring activities, shows and more, Sat 23 Mar - Sun 7 Apr, Royal Air Force Museum Midlands, Cosford

**EASTER ADVENTURES** Make your way along the trail and find nature-inspired activities for the whole family to enjoy, Sat 23 Mar - Sun 7 Apr, Croome Park, Worcester

**EASTER ADVENTURES** Make your way along the trail and find nature-inspired activities for the whole family to enjoy, Sat 23 Mar - Sun 7 Apr, Hanbury Hall, Droitwich Spa

**SPRING SPECTACULAR** Meet and handle baby animals, including piglets, lambs and goat kids, Sat 23 Mar - Sun 7 Apr, Hatton Adventure World, Warwick

**BAGS OF FUN - WONDROUS WILDLIFE** Make a prickly hedgehog, flapping butterfly and spiral snake, Sat 23 Mar - Sun 7 Apr, Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum

**FAMILY ACTIVITIES - EASTER BUNNY DOOR HUNT** Arrive dressed in your best Easter costume and follow the trail to see if you can find all the bunny doors, Sat 23 Mar - Sun 7 Apr, The Commandery, Worcester

**EASTER ADVENTURE QUEST** Hunt for clues in the castle grounds, track down the Easter eggs and get rewarded with a tasty chocolate treat, Sat 23 Mar - Sun 14 Apr, Witley Court, Worcestershire

**EASTER EGG HUNT** Make your way along the trail and find nature-inspired activities for the whole family to enjoy, Sat 23 Mar - Sun 14 Apr, Upton House and Gardens, nr Banbury, Warwickshire

**TUCKED** Showcasing a collection of some of the UK & Europe's best car builds and highly modified show cars, Sun 24 Mar, British Motor Museum, Gaydon, Warwickshire



# WHERE LEGENDS ARE MADE



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Slash featuring Myles Kennedy And The Conspirators - Resorts World Arena, Birmingham

## Gigs

**TOBY SEBASTIAN** Mon 25 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**CHRIS SHIFLETT** Mon 25 Mar, O2 Academy, B'ham

**MICHAEL BALL** Mon 25 Mar, Symphony Hall, B'ham

**MR BEN & THE BENS** Tues 26 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**PEACE OF MIND + BITTERWOOD** Tues 26 Mar, Devil's Dog, Birmingham

**MOYA BRENNAN** Tues 26 Mar, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

**WEIRD ON PURPOSE + GENEVIEVE MILES + GINGHAM + JAZZCAT** Wed 27 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**CHEEKFACE** Wed 27 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**ACOUSTIC SESSIONS** Wed 27 Mar, The Jam House, Birmingham

**JOHN & CAROLE HOARE + CHRISTOPHER CROMPTON** Wed 27 Mar, Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

**CARA DILLON** Wed 27 Mar, Symphony Hall, B'ham

**JUSTIN HAWKINS** Wed 27 Mar, The Glee Club, B'ham

**SÉAMUS ÓG** Wed 27 Mar, Kitchen Garden, B'ham

**SEAN WEBSTER BAND** Wed 27 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**TABLE SCRAPS** Thurs 28 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**BOOTLEG BLONDIE** Thurs 28 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**LAST RESORT** Thurs 28 Mar,

Devil's Dog, Birmingham

**YOUNG ELTON** Thurs 28 Mar, The Night Owl, B'ham

**DEADLETTER** Thurs 28 Mar, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

**SYNCOLIMA** Thurs 28 Mar, Subside, Birmingham

**PENDULUM + SCARLXRD + SHOCKONE** Thurs 28 Mar, Resorts World Arena, Birmingham

**SHOWCASE** Thurs 28 Mar, Bromsgrove Folk Club

**HARRY STYLES TRIBUTE** Thurs 28 Mar, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**SHAPE OF YOU - THE MUSIC OF ED SHEERAN** Thurs 28 Mar, Malvern Theatres

**THE SCRIBES** Fri 29 Mar, The Night Owl, B'ham

**SHOWHAWK DUO** Fri 29 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**SAY SHE SHE** Fri 29 Mar, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

**LEWIS POOLE + PORTSIDE** Fri 29 Mar, The Flapper, Birmingham

**TOMMY SCOTT DUO** Fri 29 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**PETER AND THE TEST TUBE BABIES + PUNK'S NOT DEAD** Fri 29 Mar, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**THE BOHEMIANS - QUEEN TRIBUTE** Fri 29 Mar, Regal, Tenbury Wells

**DIZZY LIZZY** Fri 29 Mar, 45Live, Kidderminster

**THE LIQUID ENGINEERS - GARY NUMAN TRIBUTE** Fri 29 Mar, Marris Bar, Worcester

**PROTOJE** Sat 30 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**GRIFF** Sat 30 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**HAPPY MONDAYS + INSPIRAL CARPETS +**

**STEREO MCS** Sat 30 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**THE STEVIE WONDER CELEBRATION** Sat 30 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

**SLASH FEATURING MYLES KENNEDY AND THE CONSPIRATORS** Sat 30 Mar, Resorts World Arena, Birmingham

**FOO FIGHTERS GB + BIFFY MCCLYRO + FEEDHER** Sat 30 Mar, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

**GREG BRICE AND FRIENDS** Sat 30 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**THE LAST DAYS OF DISCO** Sat 30 Mar, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

**M G BOULTER + STYLUSBOY + DANIEL BARRIE** Sat 30 Mar, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

**U.K. SUBS + SUBHUMANS + MENACE** Sat 30 Mar, hmv Empire, Coventry

**METAL 2 THE MASSES** Sat 30 Mar, Arches Venue, Coventry

**DUB PISTOLS + THE KUBRICKS** Sat 30 Mar, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**SPLINTERING HEART** Sat 30 Mar, Marris Bar, Worcester

**BON JOVI FOREVER** Sat 30 Mar, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**THE HIVES** Sat 30 Mar, The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton

**TRAGEDY + WARD XVI** Sun 31 Mar, The Asylum, Birmingham

**MARTI PELLOW + CASEY MCQUILLEN** Sun 31 Mar, Resorts World Arena, Birmingham

**THE ANDY TAYLOR GROUP** Sun 31 Mar, Temperance, Leamington Spa

## Classical Music

**THOMAS TROTTER ORGAN CONCERT** Also featuring the Lichfield Cathedral Choir. Programme includes works by Handel, Byrd, Mozart, Elgar, Trotter & Lamb, Mon 25 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

**HEREFORD CATHEDRAL CHOIR: BACH, ST JOHN PASSION** Featuring Geraint Bowen (director), David de Winter (evangelist and tenor), William Gaunt (Christus), Zoë Brookshaw (soprano), Matthew Farrell (alto), James Geidt (bass) & Marches Baroque, Tues 26 Mar, Hereford Cathedral

**CBSO: RHAPSODY IN BLUE** Featuring Iann Volkov (conductor) & Stewart Goodyear (piano). Programme includes works by Ives, Zappa, Lewis & Gershwin, Wed 27 Mar, Symphony Hall Birmingham

**ST MARY'S GIRLS CHOIR: STABAT MATER** Wed 27 Mar, St Mary's Church, Warwick

**EX CATHEDRA: GOOD FRIDAY ST JOHN PASSION 300TH ANNIVERSARY** Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor) James Robinson (Evangelist), Themba Mvula (Jesus), Lawrence White (Pilate and Bass), Margaret Lingas and Katie Trethewey (soprano), Mercè Bruguera Abelló & Gabriella Liandu (altos), Bradley Smith (tenor) & Thomas Lowen (bass), Fri 29 Mar, Symphony Hall, B'ham

**COVENTRY CATHEDRAL CHORUS: GOOD FRIDAY CONCERT** Programme includes a selection of motets reflecting on the themes of Easter, Fri 29 Mar, Coventry Cathedral

**KARL JENKINS 80TH BIRTHDAY CONCERT** Featuring Sir Karl Jenkins (conductor), the London Concert Orchestra and the Canzonella Choir. Programme comprises selected works by Jenkins, Sat 30 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**Comedy**

**ADAM KAY** Mon 25 Mar, The Alexandra, Birmingham

**ALASDAIR BECKETT-KING** Wed 27 Mar, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

**COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, PAUL TONKINSON & COMIC TBC** Thurs 28 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**REGINALD D HUNTER** Thurs 28 Mar, Old Rep Theatre, B'ham

**BEN ROBSON, COLIN HOULT & INGRID DAHLE** Thurs 28 Mar, Stratford Playhouse

**MIKE COX, ANDREW MENSAH, JIN HAO LI & PAUL MOORE** Fri 29 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**TATTY MACLEOD** Fri 29 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**FRANKIE BOYLE** Fri 29 Mar, The Alexandra, Birmingham

**MIKE COX, ANDREW MENSAH, PAUL TONKINSON & COMIC TBC** Sat 30 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**LEIGH FRANCIS** Sun 31 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**ROUGH WORKS: NEW MATERIAL NIGHT** Sun 31 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**JUSTIN MOORHOUSE** Sun 31 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

## Theatre

**BOY OUT OF THE CITY** Coventry-born Declan Bennett's autobiographical debut addresses toxic masculinity, homophobia and men's mental health, Mon 25 - Thurs 28 Mar, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry



**ROBIN HOOD** Easter panto starring Britain's Got Talent winners Ashleigh and Sully alongside show finalists Jamie and Chuck. Dancer and choreographer Louie Spence and Easter panto tour favourites Ryan Greaves and Kate Salmon also star, Tues 26 - Thurs 28 Mar, Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

**THE GLASS MENAGERIE** Atri Banerjee's acclaimed production of Tennessee Williams' semi-autobiographical masterpiece, starring Geraldine Somerville (Gosford Park), Tues 26 - Sat 30 Mar, Malvern Theatres

**WANTED** Gazebo Theatre present a powerful drama exploring the stories of five extraordinary women, Wed 27 Mar, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

**MAYBE DICK** Comic retelling of Moby Dick, Herman Melville's classic tale of revenge and retribution, Wed 27 - Thurs 28 Mar, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

**QUARTET** The Swan Theatre Amateur Company present Ron Harwood's comedy about

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ageing musicians trying to make the most of being in a retirement home, Wed 27 - Sat 30 Mar, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**THE HAUNTING OF BLAINE MANOR** Joe O'Byrne's classic ghost story, set in what is said to be the most haunted building in England, Fri 29 - Sat 30 Mar, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

**UNDER MILK WOOD: A RADIO PLAY** Recreation of the 1954 BBC broadcast of Dylan Thomas' literary classic, Sat 30 Mar - Sat 6 Apr, The Loft Theatre, Leamington Spa

## Kids Theatre

**ZOG AND THE FLYING DOCTORS** A modern take on a classic fairytale, based on the book by Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler, Tues 26 - Thurs 28 Mar, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry



**EXCITING SCIENCE** Fun & educational show for audiences aged four-plus, Wed 27 Mar, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**TOP SECRET: THE MAGIC OF SCIENCE** 'A show to inspire and educate every budding magician and scientist', Wed 27 Mar, The Benn Hall, Rugby

**AWFUL AUNTIE LIVE ON STAGE!** Birmingham Stage Company present David Walliams' much-loved adventure featuring a small ghost, a huge owl and a very awful auntie, Thurs 28 - Sun 31 Mar, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**TROUBLE ON VOLCANO ISLAND** 'Awe-inspiring' interactive stage show packed with dino facts, Sat 30 Mar, Malvern Theatres

## Dance

**BRB: TCHAIKOVSKY CLASSICS** Featuring Birmingham Royal Ballet & Royal Ballet Sinfonia performing highlights from *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake* and *The Nutcracker*, Thurs 28 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

## Light Entertainment

**I'M SORRY I HAVEN'T GOT A CLUE** Join host Jack Dee and a star-studded cast of comedians for an evening of inspired nonsense. Colin Sell provides piano accompaniment, Tues

26 Mar, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**GRAFFITI CLASSICS - THE COMEDY STRING QUARTET** An all-singing, all-dancing musical comedy show, Tues 26 Mar, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

**BUFFY REVAMPED** The entire 144 episodes of the hit 1990s TV show as seen through the eyes of superfan Spike - a man who knows the show inside-out... Tues 26 Mar, The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

**AN AUDIENCE WITH THE MANCHESTER UNITED LEGENDS** Evening of entertainment and banter, hosted by Brian McClair and Andrew Cole, Wed 27 Mar, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

**PSYCHIC SALLY** Evening of mediumship, Thurs 28 Mar, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

**THE COMEDY STORE PLAYERS** An improvised show from the stars of *Whose Line Is It Anyway*, Thurs 28 Mar, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

**SHELL SUIT CHER: BELIEVE IN BINGO** Laugh, dance and singalong as Tracey Collins (aka Tina Turner Tea Lady) brings her brand-new weird and wonderful character to the stage, Fri 29 Mar, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

**DEEP FILL DOUBLE BILL** Comedy cabaret night in which Fatt Butcher hosts an evening of unfortunate music, outrageous laughs and supersize performances, Sat 30 - Sun 31 Mar, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

## Talks & Spoken Word

**HANS REY: MISHAPS & MAYHEM** Untold stories and legendary tales from the mountain-bike pioneer, adventurer & former trials champion, Thurs 28 Mar, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester



## Events

**TINKER | MAKE | PLAY: EGGCELLENT EXPERIMENTS** Make eggcellent transport and find out how many eggs your machine can hold and move, Mon 25 Mar, Coventry Transport Museum

**AI FUTURES: CODE MASTERS' EASTER**



Tinker / Make / Play: Eggcellent Experiments - Coventry Transport Museum

**HUNT** Pick up a self-guided trail and crack the code - get it right and you'll be led to a safety deposit box featuring a tasty surprise, Mon 25 - Thurs 28 Mar, The Exchange, Centenary Square, Birmingham

**MICLAB YOUTH CLUB** Academics from the University of Warwick's WMG Academy host a variety of engineering-inspired activities, Tues 26 - Wed 27 Mar, Coventry Transport Museum

**FAMILY SESSIONS - WONDROUS WILDLIFE FELT PUPPETS** Create your own cute animal puppets, inspired by the venue's natural-history collection, Wed 27 Mar, Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum

**BRUM HIGHLIGHTS PADDLE TOUR** See Birmingham from a different perspective, Wed 27 Mar - Mon 1 Apr, Roundhouse, Birmingham



**WORKERS OF THE ROUNDHOUSE TOURS** Pop in for a free drop-in tour and get to know the curious survivor on the canal, Wed 27 Mar - Mon 1 Apr, Roundhouse, Birmingham

**TINKER | MAKE | PLAY: EGGCELLENT EXPERIMENTS** Make eggcellent transport and find out how many eggs your machine can hold and move, Thurs 28 Mar, Coventry Transport Museum

**FAMILY SESSIONS - WONDROUS WILDLIFE - ANIMAL HABITATS** Inspired by the venue's natural-history collection, choose which animal you would like to make a home for and discover what its habitat would be, Thurs 28 Mar, Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum

**COUNTRYTASTIC** Fun-filled day of indoor and outdoor activities where

kids can learn all about farming and the countryside, Thurs 28 Mar, Three Counties Showground, Malvern



**INSOMNIA THE GAMING FESTIVAL** Immerse yourself in a world of non-stop gaming, with everything from the latest video games to retro classics, Thurs 28 Mar - Mon 1 Apr, NEC, Birmingham

**MONSTER JAM RAMPED UP** Featuring high-flying stunts and an all-star line-up of monster trucks, Fri 29 - Sun 31 Mar, Utilita Arena Birmingham

**BUSTLING BIRMINGHAM KAYAK TOUR** See Birmingham from a different perspective, Fri 29 Mar - Mon 1 Apr, The Roundhouse, Birmingham

**EXPLORE HIDDEN BIRMINGHAM KAYAK TOUR** Discover Birmingham's canals, exploring areas accessible only by water, Fri 29 Mar - Mon 1 Apr, The Roundhouse, Birmingham

**MORE CANALS THAN VENICE? WALKING TOUR** Explore and learn about canal history, Sat 30 Mar, The Roundhouse, Birmingham

**BIRMINGHAM BINGO WALKING TOUR** Walking tour 'that mixes canals and comedians; Baskerville and Brutalism; and heavyweight politicians with heavy metal', Sat 30 Mar, The Roundhouse, Birmingham

**BAVARIAN NIGHT** A night with the Bierkeller Schunklers Bavarian German Oompah Band, Sat 30 Mar, The Civic, Stourport

**TINKER | MAKE | PLAY: EGGCELLENT EXPERIMENTS** Make eggcellent transport and find out how many eggs your machine can hold and move, Sat 30 Mar, Coventry Transport Museum

Enter now at [whatsonlive.co.uk](http://whatsonlive.co.uk) to be in with a chance of bagging one of these fabulous prizes!



**Win! A family ticket to see Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler's Charlie Cook's Favourite Book!**

Little Angel Theatre bring to life Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler's Charlie Cook's Favourite Book. Featuring clever puppetry and enchanting songs, the new production visits Coventry's Warwick Arts Centre from Thursday 4 to Sunday 7 April... We have a family ticket to give away for the 1.30pm performance on Saturday the 6th.

**Competition closes Friday 22 March**



**Win! Two tickets to see 101 Dalmatians: The Musical**

Telling the story of fashionista Cruella de Vil's attempts to swipe all the Dalmatian puppies in town to create a fabulous fur coat for herself, this hit musical visits the region direct from London's West End.

We have two tickets to give away for the show when it stops off at The Alexandra, Birmingham on Tuesday 2 July.

**Competition closes Friday 21 June**



**Win! A family ticket to Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum!**

Situated in Millennium Point, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum has four floors to explore and features more than 200 hands-on displays, historical collections and natural science specimens to enjoy. The popular visitor attraction is offering a family ticket to one lucky What's On reader - date of visit to be arranged.

**Competition closes Friday 8 March**



**Win! A family ticket to see Madagascar The Musical!**

Join in the fun as Alex, Marty and friends escape from their home in New York's Central Park Zoo and embark on a journey to the madcap world of King Julien's Madagascar.

We have a family ticket (four people) to give away for the Thursday 14 March performance at The Alexandra, Birmingham.

**Competition closes Monday 4 March**

For your chance to WIN! with What's On, visit:  
**[whatsonlive.co.uk](http://whatsonlive.co.uk)**



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MARCH/APRIL/MAY 2024

SHROPSHIRE'S LARGEST LIVE MUSIC VENUE

## THE BUTTERMARKE SHREWSBURY

**HEARTBREAK**  
THE TOM PETTY SHOW



THURS 7 MARCH

**COLDPLACE**  
The World's Leading Tribute to Coldplay

"Thanks for Rying the Coldplay Bag  
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Phil Harvey (Coldplay)

FRI 8 MARCH

THE DEFINITIVE TRIBUTE TO  
GLAM ROCK

**BLOCK  
BUSTER**

GLAM 45 LIVE BAND

SAT 9 MARCH

**LAS VEGAS LIVE**  
WITH **The RAT PACK**

25th ANNIVERSARY TOUR

The Original & Longest Running Rat Pack Show!

MOTHER'S DAY - SUN 10 MARCH

**The Rolling  
Clones**

THURS 14 MARCH

**MOREMETALLICA**  
UK METALLICA TRIBUTE

FRIDAY 15 MARCH

THURS 21 MARCH

**UK PINK  
FLOYD**  
EXPERIENCE

THE AUTHENTIC TRIBUTE TO THE FLOYD

**Johnny  
2  
BAD**

FRI 22 MAR

THE UK'S NO.1 UB40 LIVE TRIBUTE BAND

**COMEDY  
HOTSPOT**  
SHREWSBURY

EASTER SPECIAL  
THURS 28 MARCH

Ryan McDonnell  
Kevin Finn  
Louie Green  
Raymond & Mr Timpkins Revue

FRI 29 MAR

**Ultimate  
blink-182**

CELEBRATING THE MUSIC OF  
**CHRIS STAPLETON**

THE STAPLETON  
SESSIONS LIVE  
BY THE SOUTHERN  
COMPANION  
+ SPECIAL GUESTS

SUN 31 MAR

THE WORLD'S NO.1 GUNS N' ROSES LIVE TRIBUTE

★★★★★

FRI 5 APRIL

**GUNS2ROSES**

A TRIBUTE TO  
**THE HUMAN  
LEAGUE**

LOVE *distr*ACTION

SAT 6 APRIL

35th  
ANNIVERSARY  
TOUR

**THE TOTAL  
STONE  
ROSES**

**OAGYSIS**

THU 11 APRIL

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"BEST NIGHT EVER"

FRI 12 APRIL

**BARRIOKE**

**HARRY  
STYLES  
HOUSE PARTY**

**TAYLOR  
SWIFT  
THE ERAS PARTY**

SUN 14 APRIL 3PM TO 7PM

CELEBRATING THE MUSIC OF  
**ROXY MUSIC & BRYAN FERRY**

**ROXY MAGIC**  
THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR

★★★★★

"WOW!" - Bryan Ferry

FRI 19 APRIL

**WHO'S NEXT**  
CELEBRATE 60 YEARS OF  
**THE WHO**

SUN 5 MAY

THE BEST  
**PINK** TRIBUTE  
IN THE WORLD

**Vicky Jackson**

TRIBUTE ARTIST  
& HER FULL LIVE BAND!

SAT 4 MAY

**Totally TINA!**  
THE ORIGINAL AWARD-WINNING TINA TURNER SPECTACULAR!

FRI 10 MAY

A CELEBRATION OF  
**BOB  
MARLEY**

SAT 11 MAY

FEATURING  
**THE  
MARLEY  
EXPERIENCE**

DOB MARLEY'S NO.1 TRIBUTE BAND

**FLEETING  
RUMOURS**

FRI 17 MAY

GREATEST HITS TOUR

**Meat Loaf**  
BAT OUT OF HELL

GREATEST HITS LIVE!

SAT 18 MAY

STARRING  
ITV'S CRAIG HALFORD

**IN THE AIR  
TONIGHT**

THE UK'S LEADING SHOW CELEBRATING THE MUSIC OF  
**Phil Collins & Genesis**

AS SEEN ON BBC AND THE KELLY CLARKSON SHOW

FRI 24 MAY



HSBC **BWF**  
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