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What's On

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Can fairy rave magic open Stratford's ancient portal?

A band of poets and adventurers are asking for help from members of the general public 'to unblock a fairy portal'. Theatre makers including the companies Slung Low, Rash Dash, and the School of Night are spending a week at the site of 'an ancient fairy portal' in Stratford-upon-Avon's Avonbank Gardens, creating and then performing a 'magical' ceremony. The fun notion behind the idea is that the world is in imbalance, with seasons altered and the seas rising, and that the portal-opening ceremony will restore the natural order of things. The participating companies will be offering visitors the chance to take part in all sorts of creative tasks. Activities include willow work, poetry classes, costume making, singing, improvisation and writing workshops. There's also the chance to dance around a bonfire at the Rash Dash Fairy Rave, as well as to enjoy the companies' nightly performances, bringing together song, dance, drama, poetry and a mechanical dolphin! The free-of-charge event takes place at the Gardens from 19 to 25 June. For more information, visit rsc.org.uk/events/fairy-portal-camp



Coventry cranks up its City of Culture bid at Godiva Festival



This year's Godiva Festival will see Coventry crank up its bid to become UK City of Culture in 2021. A host of performances in one of the festival's tents will provide visitors with a flavour of the city's arts and culture. "The time is right to really take the bid to a place that brings the whole of Coventry together," says Laura McMillan, City of Culture Trust manager, "and the Godiva Festival is definitely the right place to do that." The festival takes place in Coventry from Friday 1 to Sunday 3 July, with the Coventry's Got Culture event being held on the final day.

Moseley Folk on the BBC

BBC WM will provide coverage of Birmingham's Moseley Folk Festival this summer. The popular local radio station is championing the event under the umbrella of BBC Music, as part of what's being termed 'a one-stop shop for the festival experience'. BBC Music will also be covering a further 41 UK festivals. "Local Radio has a history of covering and championing local events that are important to communities across the country," says David Holdsworth, Controller of BBC English Regions. "Partnering with BBC Music on this project is incredibly exciting and means that audiences all over the country can enjoy the best bits of a diverse range of festivals." The Moseley Folk Festival takes place from 2 to 4 September.



Arts Centre to host one-day creativity symposium

A one-day interdisciplinary event exploring 'the use of digital, interactive and networked technologies in the creative process' is taking place at Warwick Arts Centre in Coventry this month. The Random String Symposium (10 June) brings together leading thinkers and practitioners from the worlds of visual arts, music, dance, theatre, participatory arts and contemporary crafts. In addition to the Symposium, a micro festival exploring technology in art takes place in Coventry's City Arcade and recently opened FabLab on 10 & 11 June. The event presents a programme of free, hands-on activities and installations suitable for all ages to enjoy.

Royal family to feature at Worcestershire festival

The charming and quintessentially English village of Broadway, located at the foot of Worcestershire's Cotswolds hills, hosts its fourth arts festival from the 3rd to the 19th of this month.

Debuting in 2010, the biennial event this year features talks, garden tours, music performances and a selection of art shows and masterclasses. It also includes an exhibition of photographs by Patrick Lichfield, among which are famous images of celebrities and members of the royal family, as well as examples of his work for calendars and advertisements.

Cocktails inspired by the Bard

Theatre lovers and cocktail drinkers take note: The Royal Shakespeare Company is currently hosting a series of special cocktail masterclasses at its Rooftop Restaurant bar in Stratford-upon-Avon.

The masterclasses explain how to mix the perfect drink and will also include plenty of fascinating facts about the history of cocktail-making. They follow on from the RSC's creation of Shakespeare-inspired cocktails designed to celebrate whichever plays the Company is performing on its Stratford stages. This season's cocktails include: I Am Hamlet, a mix of amarula and apricot liqueur; Mischief Maker, a mix of limoncello, gin, pineapple and lime which celebrates A Midsummer Night's Dream - A Play For The Nation; and Innogen, a bright-looking and layered cocktail which, like Cymbeline's feisty daughter after which it's named, is guaranteed to pack a punch. The 45-minute masterclass sessions can be booked Monday to Friday. To secure your place at one, contact the RSC's Rooftop Restaurant on 01789 403449.



Worcester artist makes curatorial debut at BMAG

Worcester-born artist John Stezaker makes his curatorial debut at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery this summer with a new exhibition, Turning To See: From Van Dyck To Lucian Freud.

The exhibition forms part of a national tour of Van Dyck's last and greatest self-portrait. It features paintings, drawings, photographs and sketches from artists past and present, displayed alongside new and existing work by the internationally renowned Stezaker. The artist is highly regarded for his collages, which make use of photographs, postcards and vintage movie stills.

Commenting on the exhibition, Stezaker said: "I've always been fascinated by self-portraits: the artist watching themselves watching. The necessary act of turning between the canvas and the mirror creates the figure of the painter between worlds - capturing the memory of the image as the artist turns from reflection to his work."

The exhibition shows until Sunday 4 September. For more details, visit birminghammuseums.org.uk/bmag



Be inspired in Brum



The wealth of creative talent being nurtured and developed at Birmingham City University is being celebrated this month, courtesy of the Inspired Festival.

Inspired shines a spotlight on the work of artists, actors, designers, engineers, writers and musicians who are graduating from the university and launching their careers.

The festival takes place from 11 to 26 June. For more information, visit bcu.ac.uk/inspired

Who is Capability Brown?

A new film is set to help people learn about legendary 18th century English landscape architect Lancelot 'Capability' Brown.

The five-minute animation has been commissioned by the Capability Brown Festival to celebrate this year's 300th anniversary of the Royal Gardener's birth.

Commenting on the film, which has been made by production company Cosmic Carrot, Capability Brown Festival Director Ceryl Evans said: "This new animation is a fantastic way to introduce new audiences to the life and work of Lancelot Capability Brown, showing why he's still so important today. We hope this film will specifically appeal to younger audiences who might not be too familiar with 18th century landscape architecture. And you never know - we might just inspire the next Capability Brown!"

The film is available to view on YouTube. For further details of the Capability Brown Festival 2016, visit capabilitybrown.org

Ball to support local charities

A Solihull businessman who was last year diagnosed with inoperable stomach cancer is providing the inspiration for a fundraising event for local charities.

Trevor Stokes has set himself the challenge of raising £64,000 by his birthday in October. He hopes that next month's £64K Masquerade Ball event, taking place at the St John's Hotel in Solihull on Saturday 9 July, will play a significant role in helping him achieve his target amount.

"I may fail hopelessly in raising the money," says Trevor, "but there can be no losers here, as whatever is raised goes to good causes and gives me a purpose to push onwards and upwards. All support is warmly welcomed!"

To buy tickets for the Ball, visit eventbrite.co.uk/e/64k-challenge-masquerade-ball-tickets-24720186744

First Word

Gaz Coombes at the RSC

The one-time lead singer and guitarist of alternative rock band Supergrass is this month performing solo at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon.

Songwriter and musician Gaz Coombes appears at the venue on 19 June and will be performing material from across his six-year solo career, including numbers from recent album *Matador*.

Tickets for the show are available from the RSC box office on 01789 403493.



David Bintley receives Lifetime Achievement Award



BRB's Artistic Director has received the very first What's On Lifetime Achievement Award.

The award recognises David Bintley's outstanding contribution to the arts, with BRB continuing to be one of the UK's leading ballet companies.

The Lifetime Achievement Award is the most prestigious of What's On Magazine Group's inaugural Readers' Awards, which saw thousands of votes cast across numerous regional categories.

Receiving his award, David said: "I'm absolutely delighted to receive the inaugural Lifetime Achievement Award for the What's On Readers' Awards 2016. It's a huge honour, particularly as the award was nominated and voted for by the public. This award signals the important contribution that Birmingham Royal Ballet makes to the arts scene in the Midlands. I'm very pleased to have my work, and that of Birmingham Royal Ballet, recognised in this way and am thrilled to accept the award, not just for myself but also for my colleagues at BRB"

Arcadian sways to the sounds of Latin America

Birmingham's Arcadian Centre is promising visitors a sizzling hot welcome next month when the Latin American Festival makes a welcome return.

The free one-day event on 3 July promises a real feast for the senses, courtesy of an imaginative programme of music and dance.

Cuisine, crafts and culture from numerous Latin American nations also features.

Commenting on the festival, founder and organiser Annie Bazan-De-Fisher said: "Our event embraces all cultures of the world and is a unique opportunity not only to learn about the Latin American culture but also to share a great day in a friendly and happy atmosphere. Everyone is most welcome to join in the festival, which promises to be an unforgettable event, with lovely music for the public to dance to. It's a wonderful event for all the family."



Midlands venue promises to bring a new dimension to Brum clubbing

Birmingham's biggest nightclub is opening its doors this month. The 2,500-capacity PRYZM will feature a main arena showcasing the latest light and sound technology and frequently hosting guest DJs and celebrities. The club will also have a more intimate room in which DJs will play the latest R&B chart tracks, and a disco room featuring a flashing dancefloor.

"Birmingham is a fantastic city with a vibrant scene," says Peter Cro, who's fronting PRYZM. "Our club will bring a new dimension, giving people in the city and beyond a world class club experience. We have great plans for the launch weekend, which we're keeping under wraps at present, but it promises to be a real crowd pleaser." PRYZM opens on Birmingham's Broad Street on 17 June.

Digbeth's outdoor art gallery returns

A festival which transforms the Digbeth area of Birmingham into a colourful outdoor art gallery is making a welcome return this month. City Of Colours first took place in 2014, attracting more than 8,500 people.

The 2016 version of the event is adding music stages, b-boys, spoken word performances, and dance, music and photography workshops into its mix. Commenting on the event, City Of Colours' managing director, Becci Wright, said: "The festival provides an incredible opportunity for the city's artists and performers to showcase their work, while giving younger people a chance to participate and learn new skills.

"City Of Colours is about bringing different cultures from across the city together, in one big weekend celebration of urban culture and the arts. The event is also important for Digbeth, as it supports regeneration, with increased footfall to the area and lots of beautiful artwork on display to the public all year round."

City Of Colours takes place in Birmingham's Digbeth area on Saturday 18 June.



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Stitch-Up

Connor Nolan masquerades as a medical professional in Noctium Theatre's *The Country Doctor*



In the freezing depths of the vast Russian tundra, a disgraced medical student fleeing prosecution for his crimes happens upon an isolated surgery whose small staff are awaiting the arrival of a new head doctor. What follows is a brutal, blackly comic farce that looks set to be side-splitting, gut-wrenching, heart-stopping and promises to leave people in stitches - just perhaps not in the way you might imagine.

Noctium Theatre's Co-Artistic Director Connor Nolan spoke to What's On about the company's first production, *The Country Doctor*, which runs at the Belgrade this summer.

"It's based on the writings of Mikhail Bulgakov," explains Nolan. "Timing-wise, it was sort of strange for us because I read this collection of short stories and as soon as we'd decided to make a show out of it, we found out that Sky Arts was adapting it into *A Young Doctor's Notebook* with Daniel Radcliffe. But we ploughed ahead with it anyway. Ours is a sort of expressionist adaptation which is completely inspired by the book - we're not lifting anything really."

Not for the faint-hearted, Bulgakov's visceral stories are in turn partly inspired by his real-life experiences as a doctor and feature some toe-curlingly gruesome scenarios. Like the author, Nolan seems to delight in the macabre.

"There was one story which we just loved instantly - I think it was called *The Steel Windpipe* in the original. This girl comes in and she can't breathe, so they have to perform an operation on her trachea to put a little pipe in. There's a passage that describes in very vivid detail them holding back the flesh of her neck, and then this trainee doctor gets completely freaked out and faints while he's holding her open with this hook."

Nevertheless, those without the stomach for blood and guts can rest assured that what's actually seen on stage is kept to a minimum.

"It's entirely stylised. The set comprises one table and five chairs, and then there are a few props around. We really liked the idea of keeping it as simple and minimal as possible, and then trying to create something fantastic and evoke the



descriptive nature of the book from that. It's been fun finding ways to suggest gore and horror without actually showing it, while making sure it still has the same impact."

Although the version showing at the Belgrade will differ slightly from previous incarnations, the play actually began its life almost three years ago. Since then, it's been continually cut open, hacked away at and stitched back up again to make it better, ready for performances in various small-scale spaces in Coventry and Birmingham.

"We keep going through drafts of it. It was at the Shop Front Theatre first in 2014, and then it went to the Ellen Terry Theatre. Then last year we remounted it at Birmingham Fest - we had to shorten it down to an hour for that. Now we've tried all these different versions of it, I think we've found the one we're happy with, but then in six months time, I'll probably have changed my mind."

It's not only the show that has a history in the city - its makers are all based locally as well. Originally from Shropshire, Nolan met the rest of the company at Coventry University, where they created the first draft of *The Country Doctor* for their final-year project. The three core members of the group enjoyed working together so much that they decided to make a go of things professionally.

"There's myself and Jessie Collier, who are both artistic directors and company managers, and then there's also Charles Craggs, who's our music director. We all perform as well - I play the doctor and Jessie plays a nurse. Then we try to use as many of our friends and people that we've worked

with as we can to fill the other roles. We've got a couple of graduates from the university, and we're quite pleased to be able to support them and give them something to put on their CVs as soon as they've finished their degrees."

Though Coventry is perhaps not well known for theatre, being partly in the shadow of nearby Birmingham and Stratford, for a small, emerging company, it's been an ideal place to start, with a strong, close-knit local network offering a wealth of advice and support.

"I think it can sometimes feel like it's been overshadowed, but there's all this really great work bubbling away beneath that, and there are lots of small places like Ego and Shop Front and Artspace doing fantastic ground-work at grassroots level. It's been really good for us. The year we graduated, we were able to make this a professional working company, largely because of a programme the university was running with the European Regional Development Fund, which helps get businesses off the ground. Then we were also able to tap into the Belgrade as Springboard artists, and they've been really supportive, giving us a platform and a base to build from."

Designed to nurture new talent, with an emphasis on artists and companies from backgrounds under-represented in the industry, the Belgrade's Springboard scheme provides training opportunities, office space and other forms of assistance in developing productions for the stage. Alongside Noctium, current Springboard companies include the innovative opera group *High Time* - which aims to strip the medium of elitist preconceptions and

to introduce opera to new audiences - as well as the diverse Strictly Arts Theatre, which will present two shows - *Green Leaves Fall* and *William Freeman* - as part of the Belgrade's autumn programme.

Good company to be in, then. So with all this support to get them up and running at the start of their careers, what does the future hold for the bright young things at Noctium?

"Well, we received some Arts Council funding about a month ago. Some of that's for *The Country Doctor*, but some of it's also for research and development on a new show called *Animate*, which we started working on last May. It's an object manipulation piece, bringing to life very mundane, everyday items. So far, it's the story of a banana who falls in love with some flowers. Yesterday we had our first workshop with Beka Haigh from *Frollicked*, which is a puppetry company, and we've got others lined up to help us too. We're hoping to have the piece ready by early next year."

New projects but perhaps not big new ventures far from home - at least not just yet.

"I think we like the intimacy of being a smaller company here and knowing everyone who you're going to be working with. We don't have any ambitions to go massive and be the next *Kneehigh* or anything like that, but we do hope to carry on ploughing away and doing good things in Coventry."

A performance in the real Russian wilderness will just have to wait.

.....
The Country Doctor shows on the B2 stage at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, from Wednesday 20 until Friday 22 July.

On The Edge

THE WORLD FESTIVAL OF THEATRE FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES COMES TO BIRMINGHAM



Coming to the UK for the first time ever this year, On The Edge is the 2016 World Festival of Theatre for Young Audiences, an annual gathering of the international theatre-makers who together form the ASSITEJ network. Co-organised by TYA-UK and TYA-Ireland, the week-long festival is both a chance for industry insiders to test and share ideas, and an exciting opportunity for members of the public to experience some of the finest theatre for children and teenagers from across the globe.

Executive Producer Steve Ball spoke to us about the festival's history and the exciting shows on this year's programme.



"I was chair of TYA-UK for many years, and back in 2008, I went out to the World Festival in Adelaide to lead a bid to bring it to London in 2011," Steve recalls. "Rather embarrassingly, we only secured 13% of the vote. But then two years ago when we went to Warsaw, we pitched to bring the festival to Birmingham and got 81% of the vote, so there's massive enthusiasm around the world for coming to Birmingham and engaging with the arts here."



Spanning nine different venues, located mainly in the city centre, the festival will showcase 16 different shows, each carefully chosen out of hundreds of applications.

"What we wanted first and foremost was high-quality, innovative work across a variety of different theatre genres - so we've got spoken word, conventional plays, dance theatre and multisensory work. We also wanted to make sure we represented every continent as well as the four nations of the UK and Ireland."



An easy task, then! But the hard-working team of festival directors have risen to this monumental challenge, putting together a packed and fantastically diverse festival programme, with shows ranging from Shona Reppe's award-winning investigative adventure, *The Curious Scrapbook Of*

Josephine Bean, to Pim & Theo, a politically-conscious show for teens which sees four European companies unite to create an immersive piece about culture, identity, extremism and the limits of tolerance in our society.

"Boing is a piece of physical theatre for very young children from a company in Bristol called Travelling Light. I've seen it before and it's fantastic - it's about two brothers on Christmas Eve and their inability to sleep because they're so excited.

I think *The Hamilton Complex* is going to be really interesting and challenging: that features 13 teenage girls and a bodybuilder, and it's exploring self-image and body identity."

Dealing with hard-hitting themes is perhaps not necessarily what people might expect from theatre for younger viewers, but it's something that On The Edge is proud to represent.

"I think there's very much a notion that theatre for young people will be purely about light-hearted entertainment, maybe stereotypically characterised by bringing fairytales to life, but the best theatre, whether it's for children or adults, explores ideas and challenges attitudes. Lots of the festival will be fun and entertaining, but it also tackles important issues that are relevant to the lives of children and young people today."

One issue that's vital to many kids worldwide is the experience of living with disabilities, and with 2016 designated 'Inclusivity Year' by ASSITEJ, improving access for those with mobility, sensory or learning difficulties has been a central concern.

"We want to set the best possible standard for ways in which theatre can be inclusive, not just in terms of things like wheelchair access to the buildings and having signing and captioning - which are of course important - but also in producing work that's accessible. One of the pieces at the festival called *Bliss* has been designed for



children with moderate and profound learning difficulties by a company called Replay Theatre, and they'll be performing the show at Mayfield Special School."

It's not only Replay who'll be working directly with local schools: a learning programme has been developed alongside the festival to ensure that children in Birmingham and the wider West Midlands get the most out of it throughout the week.

"We wanted to make sure that this isn't just for the delegates - it's for children as well. We've worked with 12 different schools across the region and we've twinned them with the international companies. We've had people from Shenley Academy and Small Heath School going out to Dublin to do some work with an Irish company, and we sent a dozen teachers to Paris for a workshop. Many of the companies will be visiting schools for workshops and residencies as well as performing here."

Outside of these school group projects, a handful of lucky youngsters from across the UK and Ireland will also have the chance to get hands-on and learn new skills as part of a young critics' programme.

"Twelve young people will be doing a four-day placement with us, where they'll learn how to be a theatre critic. During the festival, they'll be producing a daily newsletter with their reviews in it, and at the end they'll present a Young Critics' Award to one of the shows."

Certain shows like Bliss and Katie's Birthday Party have limited availability. On the other hand, one production that's completely free and open for everyone to take part in is Terrapin Puppet Theatre's I Think I Can, taking place in the Library of Birmingham amphitheatre.

"It's by a company from Australia who are working with local actors and a model railway enthusiasts' club to create the world of a model railway.

Members of the public will be able to choose from a selection of small characters to place around the railway, which they can then create their own stories and plays around. Over the course of the week, people will continue to add to it, and performers will enact some of the plays that people have created."

On top of all this, there'll be over 40 events for delegates, including workshops and networking opportunities, as well as special evening gatherings themed around each nation of the UK and Ireland. But just what is it about Birmingham that makes leading creatives from around the world so keen to come here?

"Many of our international delegates are excited about the proximity to Stratford-upon-Avon, so some of them will be going on an excursion to do workshops at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and to see a production of A Midsummer Night's Dream. Also, last year's festival was in Berlin, and you could spend an hour travelling on the subway from one end of the city to the other. Although Birmingham is a fairly large city, it's still quite compact, so virtually everything is within a 15-minute walk. It's got a great geographic location, being right in the middle of the UK with good transport links. It's got good quality and very affordable hotels and restaurants. It's also culturally diverse, which is a real attraction to people who are travelling from around the world, and I think it's the youngest city in Europe demographically. All of that adds up to making it a great venue."

On The Edge takes place from Saturday 2 until Saturday 9 July, at venues including Birmingham REP, mac Birmingham, Blue Orange Theatre, The Old Rep, The Patrick Centre at Birmingham Hippodrome, ACE Dance and Music, Birmingham City University, Mayfield School and the Library of Birmingham.



Look for the ★ to save 20% off the cost of your full price tickets when you book equivalent amounts for two or more participating shows at the same time. See website for further information on ticket prices and other concessions.

REVIEW: Restaurant 23, Leamington Spa
A tantalising taste of contemporary Warwickshire



Since opening its doors back in May 2006, Restaurant 23 has established itself as perhaps the go-to destination for relaxed fine-dining in Leamington Spa. Located at the heart of the town, just a short walk from the nearby Parade, the Grade II listed facility effortlessly marries 19th century elegance with the best in contemporary interior design, boasting stylish facilities which include a 40-seat restaurant and patio, two private dining rooms and a newly refurbished upstairs bar and cocktail lounge.

Poised somewhere between a Victorian townhouse and a Michelin-starred bistro, Restaurant 23's innovative approach to ingredients is best reflected in the venue's choice of seven and nine-course Tasting Menus, priced at £55 and £70 per head respectively. Dishes featured include Hay Smoked quail with truffled goat's curd and pastille, an innovative take on the classic Cornish Crab salad served with curry oil, mango, avocado and brown crab croquettes, and a delightfully named dessert of macerated Gariguettes strawberries in smoked meringue.

Though the menus are a touch on the pricey side, it's hard not to be won over by Head Chef

Peter Knibb's undoubted flare when it comes to both flavour combinations and the inventive use of seasonal produce - from the venue's award-winning Lighthorne Warwickshire lamb right through to their choice of artisan breads, homemade ice creams and locally sourced cheeses.

Choosing instead from the a la carte menu that evening, my starter of seared, diver-caught scallop and tempura squid with cucumber, parsley and ginger puree proved the perfect accompaniment to a balmy Spring evening in May. The freshness of the cucumber, parsley and ginger puree provided the ideal counterpoint to the subtle smokiness of the scallop, barely seared and beautifully light in texture - as was the tempura squid.

Menu aside for a moment, what sets Restaurant 23 apart from its nearest competitors is its understated elegance coupled with its architectural intimacy, a real rarity in restaurants today. Making maximum use of the property's original period features, high ceilings, decorative cornice work and intricate silver-patterned ceiling panels were set against a minimalist colour scheme of subdued mochas and

creams, accented with crushed satin window dressings in silver and fuchsia - a perfect marriage of the classical and contemporary and a fitting homage to the venue's regency roots.

From the table linen right through to the glassware, this was a venue which took real pride in the sophistication of its surroundings - and it showed. Opting for a main course of Loin of Lighthorne lamb, braised shoulder, wild garlic pesto, turnips and potato terrine, my expectations were high. Tender, moist and cooked just the right side of rare, this award-winning local lamb found its perfect partner in the sweet undertones of the turnip puree and earthy garlic pesto accompaniment.

Working together, element by element, flavour by flavour, the braised shoulder added further depth of flavour to the dish, as did the richness of the potato terrine. My partner's choice of Pan-fried wild brill, Jersey Royal potato, Cornish mussel ragout and sea vegetables, if a little underwhelming with regards to innovation was nevertheless beautifully presented, and yet another fine example of freshly prepared, seasonal produce cooked exceptionally well.

So often the weak link in an oth-

erwise expertly conceived menu, dessert in fact proved the stand-out success of the evening, as well as a natural platform for Gibb's signature presentational flare. My choice of Bergamot curd, bbq pineapple, toasted meringue and coconut & lime shortbread proved the perfect palate-cleanser; light, zesty and refreshing yet injected with a powerful sharpness from the undercurrents of the citrus.

Special mention too must go to the venue's extensive champagne and cocktail menu. For the intrepid diners amongst you, I recommend opting for a 'liquid dessert' such as Toblerone, a hearty blend of Baileys, Frangelico, Khalua, Honey and Cream at £8 each.

In addition to the Taster and a la carte menus, Restaurant 23 also offers a popular pre-theatre menu and a lunch menu, as well as a range of afternoon teas, starting from £19 per person (Tuesdays to Saturdays only).

An evening Snack Menu consisting of light bites and tapas-style nibbles is also available, with prices starting from £3.50 per dish. This, combined with an extensive drinks menu and stylishly refurbished bar, makes Restaurant 23 the ideal choice for that extra-special 'special' occasion.

Celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, Restaurant 23 leaves no stone unturned when it comes to quality or style. A tantalising taste of contemporary Warwickshire... with a regency twist! *Katherine Ewing*

Food:	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Service:	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Ambience:	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Overall value	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
OVERALL	■ ■ ■ ■ ■

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Food

Walkabout in Coventry

The operator of the nationwide chain of Walkabout bars has taken over an iconic venue in Coventry. Intertain Ltd has purchased the sub-lease for The Establishment bar & restaurant's grade II-listed building, which had previously been used as the city's court house and jail. The building is infamous for being the location in which Coventry and Warwickshire's last public hanging took place.

Music and food in perfect harmony at Asparafest

Music and food (particularly asparagus) make a winning combination at this family-friendly festival, here returning for a fourth year. Britpop band Dodgy headline a music programme that also includes Blackbeard's Tea Party, Roving Crows, Barney Newman, DH Lawrence & The Vaudeville Skiffle Show, Poor Boys of Worcester, Misty's Big Adventure and Fred's House. The London Veg Orchestra are taking part as well, giving it their all on impressively home-grown instruments! There's plenty of fun for the kids to enjoy too, courtesy of CBeebies stars Cook and Line. Other highlights include live cookery demonstrations from UK asparagus chef Felice Tocchini, cooking workshops, a real ale & cider festival, an asparagus-eating competition, numerous stalls, street food, morris dancing, theatre, falconry and the crowning of the asparagus king and queen. Oh, and the chance to follow in the earthy footsteps of the aforementioned London Veg Orchestra by making your own vegetable instrument. Yambourine, anyone?... Asparafest takes place at Ashdown Farm, Badsey, Nr Evesham on Saturday 4 and Sunday 5 June. For further information, visit aspara13.squarespace.com



Foodies delight at Ragley Hall

Midlands-based foodies should put a date in their diary to attend this year's Great British Food Festival. The popular event features over 50 local producers, cookery lessons, children's activities, live music and top chef demos from Great British Bake Off finalists Luis Troyano and Miranda Gore-Browne. For those wishing to show off their baking

skills, the festival hosts a Cake Off competition, while anybody feeling brave enough can take part in various Men vs Food Challenges, available both to men and women throughout the weekend. The Great British Food Festival takes place at Ragley Hall, Warwickshire on Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 June. For further information visit greatbritishfoodfestival.com

Top baker at Worcestershire festival

Great British Bake Off winner Nadiya Hussain (pictured) is certainly busy in the Midlands this month. As well as an appearance at the Birmingham Foodies Festival, she's also running a cookery masterclass at this two-day event. Organisers are hoping that 20,000 visitors will attend the festival across the weekend. This year's get-together features a kids' zone, a Best Dad In Droitwich competition for Father's Day, a junior bake-off contest, a cider masterclass, and street entertainment including performances by local singers, stilt walkers and jugglers. Droitwich Spa Food And Drink Festival takes place across the town on Saturday 18 and Sunday 19 June. For further information, visit droitwichspafestival.co.uk



Rihanna

Ricoh Arena, Coventry, Sat 25 June

Rihanna has become a modern music, entertainment and fashion icon. As an accomplished performer, she's sold 54 million albums and 210 million digital tracks world-wide, making her the top-selling digital artist of all time.

The Barbadian singer-songwriter has enjoyed a meteoric rise to stardom since bursting onto the scene with debut studio album *Music Of The Sun* in 2005. Two years later, things really took off for her, courtesy of *Good Girl Gone Bad* and its chart-topping singles *Umbrella*, *Take A Bow*, *Disturbia* and *Don't Stop The Music*.

In 2012, American magazine *Time* named her one of the world's most influential women.

Proving her international popularity, the *Rude Boy* star has amassed eight Grammys, eight American Music Awards, 23 Billboard Music Awards and two BRIT Awards. She visits Coventry as part of her *Anti World* Tour.



Kamasi Washington



O2 Institute, Birmingham, Wed 29 June

Kamasi Washington is an American jazz saxophonist, composer, production editor and band leader. He's played alongside a diverse group of musicians - Lauryn Hill, Wayne Shorter, Snoop Dogg and Flying Lotus included - and also featured on Kendrick Lamar's third studio album, *To Pimp A Butterfly*.

Kamasi's own band, *The Next Step*, is a modern spin on a big band. It includes two drummers, two upright bass players, keyboard players, three horn players, a pianist and a vocalist.

Tcha Limberger and the Kalotaseg Trio

mac, Birmingham, Thurs 30 June

One of the most renowned Gypsy violin players of his generation, Tcha Limberger is recognised as the most important figure in the folk music of the Carpathian Basin.

He opened WOMEX this year, has won Radio France's *France Musique* award and was the recent recipient of a *Songlines Music Award* for his work with the *Budapest Gypsy Orchestra*.

Ahead of his upcoming tour, Tcha states: "This music is little known and I will play it as it is meant to be played. It follows the lives of many, from baptism to the grave. It celebrates their communal existence and brings people together in the community of Kalotaszeg."



Clare Maguire

The Glee Club, Birmingham, Thurs 2 June



Singer-songwriter Clare Maguire released her debut album, *Light After Dark*, back in 2011. It peaked at number seven in the Official UK Top 40 and received the BPI Silver Sales Award in the UK.

Following her sold-out, three-date residency at *The Glee Club* last year, she returns to Birmingham in support of new album *Stranger Things Have Happened*.

Gabrielle Aplin

Kasbah, Coventry, Thurs 9 June



Multi-talented singer Gabrielle Aplin gained mainstream attention after her cover of Frankie Goes To Hollywood's *The Power Of Love* was chosen to feature on the Christmas John Lewis advert. The track charted at number one on the UK Singles Chart in December 2012. She's since released two albums, *English Rain* (2013) and *Light Up The Dark* (2015), both of which have been met with considerable critical acclaim.

Mercury Rev

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Thurs 23 June

US alt-rock legends Mercury Rev are touring their new album on the Bella Union label, *The Light In You*, which was released in September 2015. The pair play Warwick Arts Centre just weeks after their headline slot at Lunar Festival, held at Warwickshire's Umberslade Estate.



Megson

Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sat 4 June

Since releasing first album *On The Side* in 2004, husband-and-wife team Stu and Debbie Hanna have developed an enviable reputation on the English folk music circuit. The duo have been hailed as both fresh and innovative - a description that's hardly sur-

prising given that Debbie is classically trained and Stu's a former punk! Specialising in self-composed melodies which bring together intimate harmony singing and multi-instrumental acoustic playing, the pair have released numerous albums since *On The Side*, with their latest studio offering available this summer.

Cyndi Lauper

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Wed 22 June

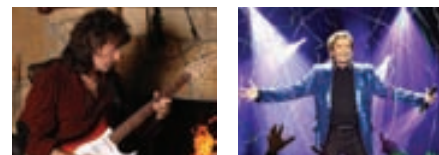


Cyndi Lauper burst onto the music scene back in the early '80s with the release of her first solo album, *She's So Unusual*, which featured hit singles *Girls Just Wanna Have Fun*, *Time After Time* and *She Bop*. Since that time, global record sales in excess of 50 million have more than cemented her place in the music industry's history books. Five years after her last UK appearances and following the phenomenal success of the award-winning Broadway musical *Kinky Boots*, for which she wrote the music and lyrics, she returns to these shores with a new tour. Her shows come in support of latest studio album *Detour*, which finds the Grammy, Emmy and Tony Award-winning singer-songwriter putting her signature spin on a dozen classic country songs.

Ritchie Blackmore's Rainbow

Genting Arena, Birmingham, Sat 25 June

Ritchie Blackmore here takes to the stage to celebrate the era-defining music of Rainbow and Deep Purple in a one-off UK tour show. With a background in classical and R'n'B, Blackmore was a founding member and driving force of Deep Purple. In 1973 he formed Rainbow, who went on to sell in excess of 28 million albums. English rock group Mostly Autumn support.



Barry Manilow

Genting Arena, Birmingham, Sat 18 June

Grammy, Tony and Emmy Award-winning musician Barry Manilow is performing concerts across the world one last time. Referring to his band of 13 musicians and singers, Manilow says, "We had a great time putting the show together. We hope to take everyone on an emotional rollercoaster. I can't wait to see everybody dancing in the aisles."

Aled Jones

Coventry Cathedral, Fri 17 June

Aled Jones has journeyed a long way since becoming a boy star back in the mid-1980s. As a 15-year-old chorister, his breathtaking rendition of *Walking In The Air* played its part in ensuring the animated version of Raymond Briggs' *The Snowman* became an annual Christmas favourite.

In the three decades which have followed, he's released no fewer than 30 albums, selling more than seven million copies along the way. He visits Coventry this month as part of a UK-wide cathedral tour.

"I'm never more at home than when performing in one of the UK's unrivalled cathedrals," says Aled. "I've been fortunate to sing in so many of these beautiful buildings over the years through my work on *Songs Of Praise*, but the idea of embarking on my biggest cathedral tour ever fills me with so much excitement and joy. I promise to give my best performances yet."



Katherine Jenkins

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Wed 15 June

Katherine Jenkins long ago displaced Lesley Garrett as Britain's best-loved soprano. And as you'd expect from a classical crossover artist, she boasts an ability to connect with a whole raft of music lovers, whether they're classical music aficionados or just fans of 'greatest hits'.

This Symphony Hall concert to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday provides the Welsh-born singer with the perfect opportunity to display her range, as she joins the London Concert Orchestra to perform a programme of suitably patriotic music.

Katherine's got plenty of form when it comes to honouring the Queen - only last month she performed at Windsor Castle in front of Her Majesty, draping herself in a Union Flag and all but stealing the show from the likes of Kylie Minogue and Beverley Knight.



Royal Philharmonic Orchestra: The Planets



Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Sat 25 June

As multimedia, multi-sensory events go, this one is positively out of this world. The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra's performance of Holst's awe-inspiring suite, *The Planets*, is accompanied by high-definition photos and moving images from NASA, using material sent back by the *Voyager*, *Mars Rover* and other space missions.

The images and films, projected onto a 24-foot screen, will form part of what promises to be a spectacular finale to a concert inspired by the subject of outer space. The programme also includes Strauss II's *Blue Danube Waltz* (as featured in 2001: *A Space Odyssey*) and John Williams' iconic *Star Wars* theme. Robert Ziegler (pictured) conducts.

Malvern Festival Chorus: Music For Shakespeare

Great Malvern Priory, Worcestershire, Sat 11 June

With its origins traceable back to 1919 - and there's the possibility that it may even have existed in some form before that - the Malvern Festival Chorus is homing in on its 100th anniversary.

Its latest concert is to mark a 400th anniversary, though - that of William Shakespeare's death.

The programme comprises Vaughan Williams's *Serenade To Music*, Finzi's *Let Us Garlands Bring* and Parry's *This England*. A selection of madrigals, songs and readings also features.

Birmingham Bach Choir: A Shakespearean Concert

CBSO Centre, Birmingham, Sat 18 June; Stratford ArtsHouse, Stratford-upon-Avon, Sat 2 July

The Birmingham Bach Choir is joined by *Truly Madly Deeply* actress Juliet Stevenson (in Birmingham) and *Game Of Thrones* and *Wolf Hall* actor Anton Lesser (in Stratford-upon-Avon) for this celebration of Shakespeare's legacy.

The concert combines varied musical works inspired by the playwright with passages from his plays and sonnets.

"We're performing a wonderfully varied programme," explains Birmingham Bach Choir's Chair, Sarah Platt. "It moves from Vaughan Williams' eerie part-songs to George Shearing's jazz-inspired *Music To Hear*, where a double bass player will add that pungent pizzicato to the mix! We're thrilled, too, that Anton and Juliet will be joining us, to add another layer of drama and enjoyment to this memorable programme."



Anton Lesser

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Festivals

Lunar Festival

Umberslade Estate, Tanworth-in-Arden,
Fri 3 - Sun 5 June

Set in the grounds of the stunning Umberslade Estate in Tanworth-in-Arden, the birthplace of Nick Drake, this fledgeling festival takes the legendary songwriter as its muse, blending dreamy escapism with experiment and discovery, all with a psychedelic sound and colour palette. Billed as 'one of the UK's most enchanting odysseys', the festival is reached through a tunnel-like tree-lined avenue, carrying visitors away from reality and into a wondrous world of guerilla archaeology and Kokedama gardening, of blacksmithing workshops and culture on wheels, of mask-making, herbal havens, think tanks and a 'Digital Funfair' - not to mention music, fantastic food and drinks and the chance to feast your ears on Nick Drake's very own record player.

From traditional folk to electro-pop and atmospheric DJ sets, the Lunar Festival line-up is certainly eclectic, but its many acts are united by a shared spirit of eccentricity. Go along and be inspired!

Line-up includes: Super Furry Animals, Mercury Rev, Television, Badly Drawn Boy, The Zombies, Os Mutantes, Matt Berry & the Maypoles, Bentley Rhythm Ace, Young Pilgrims and Martin Carthy



Acoustic Festival Of Britain

Uttoxeter Racecourse,
Staffordshire,
Fri 3 - Sun 5 June

Stripped back, unplugged and intimate performances are the focus of this relaxed, family-friendly event. Assembling a diverse array of acts from Dodgy to the Demon Barbers XL, The Acoustic Festival of Great Britain is a varied and genre-crossing affair: the only stipulation for performers is that they play acoustic sets. Comfortable and conveniently located, the festival boasts five star-rated camping infrastructure, with glamping options, seated food tents and kids play areas.

2016 line-up includes: Midge Ure, Judy Tzuke, The Blockheads, King King, Terrorvision's Tony Wright, Dodgy, The Demon Barbers XL, Blair Dunlop and T-Rextasy Unplugged.



Lichfield Blues & Jazz Festival

Lichfield City Centre,
Fri 24 - Sun 26 June

Following a successful launch last year, this recent addition to the Lichfield Arts calendar makes a welcome return in 2016. Celebrating the best in local jazz and blues talent as well as showcasing fine musicianship from further afield, the festival takes place across multiple city centre venues, including Wade Street Church, Lichfield Guildhall, the 18th century George Hotel and various pubs and cafés. Concerts can be booked individually, and in addition to the main acts, there'll also be an assortment of hands-on workshops and lively street bands to enjoy.

Line-up also includes: The Matt Schofield Band, Tim Amann Xtet, Birmingham Jazz Orchestra, Callum Roxburgh Swing Orchestra, Steve Ajao Blues Giants, Rebecca Downes Band, Steve Waterman Quartet, Fred Thelonius Baker and Zappatistas.

Download Festival

Donington Park, Leicestershire,
Fri 10 - Sun 12 June

With top billing consistently taken by some of the biggest names in rock and metal, it's not hard to see why Download Festival made it into our Readers' Awards finals. Conceived as a follow-up to Donington Park's previous Monsters Of Rock Festival, Download makes its 14th outing this year, owing its name partly to its pioneering use of technology to connect with audiences and build a community around the event. But while it's cutting edge on one hand, its genre of choice is also steeped in local history. Emerging against a backdrop of thumping, grinding machinery in the country's industrial heart, early heavy metal acts have left an unmistakable legacy in the Midlands, and as long as Download continues, they'll always have a home here.

2016 line-up includes: Black Sabbath, Iron Maiden, Rammstein, Korn, Megadeth, Deftones, Nightwish, Alien Ant Farm, Killswitch Engage, Atreyu, Billy Talent, Jane's Addiction and Disturbed.

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Wade Street Church, Lichfield
Fine jazz with a folky tinge from the **Tim Amann Xtet**

Saturday 25th June
Lichfield Guildhall
Big Band jazz from the young vibrant 19 piece **Birmingham Jazz Orchestra**
Great original swing jazz from the **Callum Roxburgh Swing Orchestra**
Panache blues from **Steve Ajeo Blues Giants**
Barn storming soulful blues from the pace setting **Rebecca Downes Band**
Wade Street Church, Lichfield
Stunning Original jazz from the all star **Steve Waterman Quartet**

Sunday 26th June
The George Hotel, Lichfield
The unbelievable bass player **Fred Thelonious Baker**
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BE Festival

Birmingham REP, Tues 21 - Sat 25 June

Uniting actors, artists, acrobats, dancers, directors, makers, musicians, friends and fabulous food from across the continent, Birmingham's BE Festival is a five-day celebration of international culture and creative collaboration, reaffirming Britain's place as part of a dynamic and constantly evolving European arts scene. All-day theatre, dance

and music events are interspersed with feedback cafés, networking lunches and delicious dinners, wrapped up with DJ sets right through until the morning. Coinciding with the EU referendum, this year's festival is politically charged, with potent pieces such as An Wei Lu Li's *Leviathan* and Art Activism with Adam Scarborough. Visitors are encouraged to get engaged and tweet their thoughts using the hashtags #BEDemocratic and #BEfest16, but it won't all be heavy-going.

From Mufti Games' Giant Battleships to design-your-own 'Karma Currency' notes, this is also a festival with a healthy sense of fun.

2016 line-up includes:

Leviathan – An Wei Lu Li (Spain): Inspired by Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan*, this large-scale visual art installation raises vital questions about individual and collective responsibility, calling attention to our disengagement with the world around us.

Quintetto/Piccole Donne – TiDA (Italy): After wowing audiences with their arts and austerity-themed Quintetto at BE 2015, TiDA return with a new full-length show about marriage and female identity. Piccole Donne opens the festival on Tuesday, with Quintetto serving as the Saturday finale.

Collective Loss of Memory – DOT504 (Czech Republic): Pulsing with energy that explodes into bouts of violence, this powerful Czech piece makes its UK premiere at BE, launching the festival alongside Piccole Donne. Recommended for viewers aged 18-plus, the show questions notions of masculinity, identity and individuality.

Hamlet - Colletivo CineticO (Italy): An irreverent, interactive take on one of Shakespeare's most iconic plays, this off-the-wall production invites audiences to choose the actor who'll play the title role each time. A truly original way to mark the Bard's 400th anniversary.

Alcester Folk Festival

The Holly Bush, Alcester,
Fri 17 - Sun 19 June

This small-scale, friendly folk festival takes place in and around The Holly Bush, an Everards pub and beautiful Grade II listed Tudor building in the heart of historic Alcester in Warwickshire. A nearby field serves as a convenient festival campsite, with visitors invited to stay all weekend until Monday. Expect intimate concerts, storytelling and sing-alongs and freshly-pulled pints of quality Midlands-brewed beer.

2016 line-up includes: John Connolly, Scolds Bridle, Paul Downes, Steve Turner, Bram Taylor, Mike Nicholson, Hector Gilchrist, Tony Barrett, Quartz, Tom Perry & Clive Brooks, Will Morgan, Jamie McCoan, Flaky Tarts, Sound Tradition, Sally Whytehead & her dulcimers, Dave & Julia Taylor, Chris King, Hils Ward, Moses and the Ref, Malc Gurnham & Gill Gilsenen, and Sharp as Razors.

Upton-upon-Severn Jazz Festival

Upton Sports Club, Alcester,
Thurs 23 - Sun 26 June

With a long history stretching back over more than 30 years, this lively festival brings

together well-established jazz and swing musicians with the brightest young talent, and open jam sessions with dynamic dance classes, all guaranteed to get toes tapping. This year's Upton Jazz Fest is set to feature over 60 concerts across nine central venues, with three marquees in the Sports Club grounds alone. The Conway Castle will be in operation for jazz river trips - there'll also be a Jazz Bus, Jazz under the Bridge and a special service in the local church.

2016 line-up includes: London Swing Orchestra, Keith Nichols' Jazz Masters of New Orleans, Sinead McCabe & New Orleans Update, Remi Harris Trio with John Hallam, Perdido Street Jazz Band, Dave Martin's Jabbo Five, Donnie Joe's American Swing, Hot Antic Jazz Band, Malcolm Hogarth & Isabel Toner and Chico Chica.



Remi Harris

Wychwood Festival

Cheltenham Racecourse, Fri 3 - Sun 5 June

With a well-earned reputation as the country's best and friendliest family festival, the award-winning Wychwood celebrates its 12th year in 2016, with a line-up of over 100 bands across four stages. This is more than just a music festival, however - what makes Wychwood so unique is the quality and diversity of entertainment on offer for kids and grown-ups alike, including comedy, workshops, spoken word poetry, arts & crafts and a fantastic children's literature festival. This year, the hugely popular CBeebies star Justin Fletcher (Something Special, Tikkabilla, Justin's House, The Tweenies) will also be putting in an appearance.

2016 line-up includes: The Waterboys, 10cc, Stereo MCs, Peter Hook & the Light, Idlewild, Kate Rusby, The Selecter, Ms Dynamite, Matt Berry & the Maypoles and The Correspondents.

Comedy line-up includes: Bill Bailey, Justin Fletcher, Gary Delaney, Tiernan Douieb, Patrick Monahan and Howard Read.

Kids' literature line-up includes: Abi Elphinstone, Ali Sparks, Chris Edge, Jo Cotterill, John Dougherty, Lyn Gardner, Philip Ardagh, Tamsyn Murray, Steve Antony and Sophia Bennett.

BIRMINGHAM

City of a thousand laughs



For a long time in terms of the comedy industry, Britain's second city has played second fiddle to London's, er, bigger fiddle?... But things are changing! People passionate about comedy are standing up on stages across the Midlands every week, and doing so with one shared aim - to make their audience laugh.

But it all had to start somewhere...

Ladywood-born Sid Field made waves in the 1940s with an act that was considered strange for its time, as he jumped between a number of impressions and characters within the same performance. Thanks to Sid, this type of act soon became the norm, slowly transforming the variety scene of the day.

Another old-school hero, and a stand-out performer of the '50s and '60s, was one-time Hall Green resident Tony Hancock. You may know Tony via his incredible TV and radio legacy, or you may just know him as 'that sculpture thing' at the top of Birmingham city centre's Corporation Street. Either way, he was a true comedy great, and his television series, Hancock's Half Hour, made for compulsive viewing for the nation's telly watchers.

It was performers like Hancock and Sid Field who provided the inspiration for subsequent generations of Birmingham comedians.

With the arrival of the '80s came a plethora of peeved performers eager to express their views, whether it be as support for local punk bands or standing on a beer



crate in the back of a pub. The transition from variety to alternative comedy spawned a handful of Birmingham-based performers, one of whom was anti-comedian Ted Chippington. Ted's main claim to fame was a hit single called *We've Got A Fuzzbox*. Later, he would go on to inspire another Midlands-based performer, Stewart Lee. The comedy scene was beginning to flourish. Week in and week out, those aforementioned beer crates became soapboxes in pubs such as the Ivy Bush on Hagley Road, *XXXX (4X) Cabaret* - where Frank Skinner cut his teeth - and the Bear Tavern in Bearwood. Whether it was 'working men's club'-style comedy or more in-the-moment mayhem that appealed, it was clear that the people of Birmingham enjoyed seeing something that was markedly different to the comedy they watched on television. And that still applies to this day.

The 1990s saw pub comedy culture on the decline. One of the few Midlands venues to flourish during this era was the GAG club, where the organiser's desire to see a mother-like character take to the stage led to Janice Connolly creating the brilliant Mrs Barbara Nice.

Meanwhile, with London's Comedy Store and infamous Tunnel Club having been open for almost a decade, and after making numerous visits to both, Mark Tughan decided to open Birmingham's Glee Club, the first purpose-built comedy venue outside the capital.

The arrival in Brum of a designated comedy

mecca meant audiences for the first time were getting a guaranteed bill of quality performers every week - and in an environment that was absolutely fit for the purpose. Established comics such as Jack Dee and Lee Evans, who were regularly touring theatres across the UK, suddenly had a Birmingham base at which they could try out material and hone their sets.

The Glee's success provided plenty of inspiration and Birmingham's comedy scene continued to grow. Jongleurs brought in more mainstream stand-up and the better pub comedy nights enjoyed a real renaissance. Out of all of this came the comedians you still watch in arenas and on TV today.

As the Glee Club grew in popularity, the UK comedy circuit grew in numbers, becoming a fully formed union of comedians and venues. Each week, hundreds of comedians set out on the road to earn an honest crust, or just to get a look in at some of the UK's most talked-about clubs.

By the 2000s, comedy was very much on the up, with small pub nights such as GAG, Comedy Kav (Moseley) and Comedy Junction (Sutton Coldfield) all providing quality line-ups. With the help of TV, local lads Jasper Carrott, Frank Skinner and Lenny Henry had become staples of the comedy world, but there were plenty of lesser-known but nonetheless well-established Midlands acts who were also making a splash at venues across the UK. Among them were Andy Robinson, John Simmit,

Shazia Mirza, Natalie Haynes, James Cook, Jo Enright, Andy White and Karen Bayley.

Most recently, Joe Lycett has been flying the flag for Birmingham's up-and-coming generation of comedians. Joe started out playing pub nights in Birmingham and performing at the Glee, where he presented his first ever 10 minutes of comedy in 2010.

Birmingham-based acts continue to make their mark on the UK comedy scene. Honourable mentions must go to Jack Kirwan, Craig Deeley, Freddie Farrell, Mickey Sharma, Lindsey Santoro, Jay Handley and Josh Pugh. And come October, Birmingham will once again host its long-running comedy festival, an event which annually attracts some of the world's best comedians.

It can sometimes feel like comedy is packaged and sold everywhere these days, whether it be in adverts or on social media, but let's not forget its origins - and in particular the journey that Birmingham's very own brand of live comedy has undertaken.

It's time to step out of the shadows and show why England's second city is very much its first city when it comes to comedy.

“ It was performers like Hancock and Sid Field who provided the inspiration for subsequent generations of Birmingham comedians. ”

Glenn Wool

The Comedy Loft, Birmingham,
Fri 17 - Sat 18 June

Glenn Wool manages to be smart, sophisticated and silly all in the space of a single evening. And it's perhaps this chameleon-like quality more than any other which has so endeared him to the great British public.

Canadian Glenn is a shaggy beast of a man whose act sees him cleverly putting his own unique spin on the big stories of the day.

He touches base with a wide variety of political, religious and social subjects, intelligently processing the material to create nuggets of pure comedy gold, quite often delivered in a style that's engagingly surreal.



Six of the best...

Paul McCaffrey

Henry Tudor House,
Shrewsbury,
Wed 8 June

"I'd always valued getting a laugh," says Paul McCaffrey, "so it

was a real revelation when I discovered that it was possible to make a living out of it. I think my parents thought it was just a passing phase!"

Paul made a significant splash when he landed on the UK comedy circuit a few years back, winning both The London Paper and Latitude Festival new act competitions. He's since become a regular contributor to all manner of television comedy shows, and a well-known face at the Edinburgh Festival. Jokes include: "My friend got a personal trainer a year before his wedding. I thought: 'Bloody hell, how long's the aisle going to be?'"



Alistair Barrie: No More Stage Three

Foxlowe Arts Centre, Staffs, Thurs 2 June;
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sun 19 June

Alistair Barrie's talent is much in evidence in this touring show, not least because he manages to make it accessible, enjoyable and funny despite the fact that it includes plenty of material about his wife's grade three breast cancer.

Describing himself as a post-alternative comedian, the delightfully self-deprecating Alistair is bringing the show to the Midlands having toured it to great acclaim across the world. Indeed, it was voted one of the 10 best shows at the Edinburgh Fringe last summer.



Hilarity Charity Gala

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Mon 6 June

This returning Central Youth Theatre (CYT) fundraiser is once

again compered by Daniel Kitson.

The show brings together Wolverhampton's very own Pappy's with 8 Out Of 10 Cats star Joe Lycett and Have I Got News For You contributor Nish Kumar. Aishling Bea also stars. Other comedians will be added to the line-up in the days leading up to the show.

It's the third event of its kind to be organised by CYT, Wolverhampton's leading youth theatre since 1983.





Enrych In Stitches

The Glee Club, Birmingham, Thurs 9 June

Former Goodies star Graeme Garden is the man behind this fundraising show, the financial beneficiary of which is Enrych, a 30-year-old organisation that supports disabled people to enjoy leisure and learning opportunities and lead full and active lives.

Marcus Brigstocke, Francesca Martinez, Angela Barnes and Phill Jupitus are the comedians offering their services free of charge.

Peddling a line in dark, intelligent comedy, the award-winning Brigstocke boasts a style all his own and is one of the most inventive talents on the comedy circuit. Jupitus is equally high profile. His memorable surname helps, of course (it's an anglicised version of original surname Šeputis), as does his capacity to branch out beyond the confines of the stand-up world - he's also a performance poet, cartoonist, podcaster and actor.

Francesca Martinez, meanwhile, is perhaps best known for her appearance alongside Ricky Gervais and Kate Winslet in a first-series episode of Gervais's popular comedy, Extras. In the show, she played a character with cerebral palsy, which Francesca herself has - although she prefers to refer to herself as 'wobbly'. When Angela Barnes's inspirational dad died in 2008, it proved to be the catalyst for her to finally follow his advice and hurl herself into the challenging world of stand-up. And if her early-career success is anything to go by, she's certainly made the right decision. A BBC New Comedy Awards winner, Angela is a self-confessed Radio Four nerd who looks to have a bright future in the UK comedy arena.

Comedy At Ludlow Festival

Various venues around Ludlow, South Shropshire, Sat 18 June - Sun 3 July

"Growing up, I didn't actually know anyone who performed comedy for a living," says Birmingham-born Jo Enright, one of the comedians appearing at this month's Ludlow Fringe Festival, "although I knew plenty of really funny people. When I started playing the circuit, there were only a handful of women working at it full-time. That said, the handful did include Hattie Hayridge, Jo Brand and Linda Smith - so the bar was set very high!"

Jo is joined at this year's Fringe by fellow laughter merchants Alex Kealy, Eleanor Conway, Tom Binna, Addy Van Der Borgh, Ellie Taylor and Brennan Reece. There's also a Tommy Cooper tribute show, Just Like That!, starring John Hewer as the fez-wearing funnyman. For further information, visit ludlowfringe.co.uk



Matt Forde

Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon, Fri 10 June

Nottingham-born Matt Forde is this month returning to the Midlands to try out his material for the Edinburgh Festival. A one-time advisor to New Labour, it will come as no surprise to find that he's focusing on politics in his new show, explaining why it's 'great/awful that we're in/out of the EU/UK/NATO/whatever the hell happens next'.

The satire will be interspersed with impersonations of the political great and good. He's been working on mimicking Corbyn but admits to finding the Labour leader's mixture of 'English middle class with a sort of cockney affectation' difficult to master. Away from the spotlight of live stand-up, Matt has written gags for shows like Russell Howard's Good News, 8 Out Of 10 Cats and Stand-Up For The Week. He also co-hosts talkSPORT radio show The Warm Up with fellow funnyman Jon Richardson.



Will Franken

mac, Birmingham, Thurs 30 June

When a comedian is described as 'the best alternative to psychedelic drugs', it's reasonable to assume he's quirky, oddball and emphatically off the wall. Such is the case with American purveyor of mirth Will Franken, a character comedian with a highly developed sense of the absurd. Will's calling in at mac this month en route to the Edinburgh Festival, using his Birmingham stop-off to hone his latest show. Focusing on a man who's trying to write a children's book about a character named Little Joe, it should contain plenty by way of clever, creative comedy.



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Birmingham Royal Ballet

Birmingham Hippodrome,
Thurs 16 - Sat 18 June & Wed 22 - Sat 25 June

Birmingham Royal Ballet's season of Shakespeare-inspired works to mark the 400th anniversary of the playwright's death is this month providing audiences with the opportunity to enjoy four captivating dance works.

First out of the traps is choreographer John Cranko's magnificent two-act ballet version of *The Taming Of The Shrew*, set to memorable keyboard works by Domenico Scarlatti and first performed in 1969.

It's followed by three for the price of one, courtesy of a triple bill that brings together tragedy, comedy and poetry.

Shakespeare's *Othello* is the driving force behind the opening piece, José Limón's *The Moor's Pavane*.

David Bintley's *Shakespeare Suite*, meanwhile, pays tribute to the star-crossed, bewitched, squabbling and romantic couples who are so much a part of the bard's masterworks.

The piece is set to a swinging score by Duke Ellington.

The triple bill ends with a world premiere, as Jessica Lang captures the poetry of Shakespeare's sonnets via a powerhouse solo performance.

WIN! TICKETS To enter, visit whatsonlive.co.uk



David Bintley's Shakespeare Suite

Motionhouse: Broken

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 17 June



Broken is one of two specially devised pieces produced in celebration of Motionhouse dance company's 25th anniversary.

The piece fuses athletic dance with digital imagery and original music to examine man's precarious relationship with the earth. In what's described as 'an adrenaline-fuelled spectacle', the Leamington-based ensemble use two contrasting worlds - the caves of our ancient ancestors and modern apartments of glass and steel - to question our ambivalence to the world.

Jazz Dance Company

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Tues 21 June

London Studio Centre (LSC) students here explore a selection of fairytales and folk stories via the genres of jazz dance and music theatre. The students perform as the UK-touring Jazz Dance Company. Established by LSC over two decades ago, the company's purpose is to provide talented young dancers with the experience of working as part of a creative team in a collaborative environment.



Ballet Cymru: Little Red Riding Hood...

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme,
Mon 20 June; The Courtyard, Hereford,
Wed 29 June; Lichfield Garrick, Sun 3 July



Given their widely recognised commitment to innovation, it's fitting indeed that the award-winning Ballet Cymru have taken inspiration for their latest work from one of Britain's most innovative writers, the Cardiff-born Roald Dahl.

In 1982, Dahl published *Revoltin' Rhymes*, a collection of poems reinterpreting six well-known fairytales. Two of these, *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Three Little Pigs*, are here used by Ballet Cymru as the foundation stone for their critically acclaimed production. Both dance works are based on musical scores commissioned by The Dahl Foundation.

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DANCING QUEENS

Mamma Mia! comes to Birmingham Hippodrome



In 1999, Judy Craymer's new musical featuring the songs of Abba opened at London's Prince Edward Theatre. It then transferred to the Prince of Wales, where it became the theatre's longest ever running show.

Mamma Mia! would go on to smash records worldwide, raking up eye-watering audience figures and earning billions in box office takings.

More than 17 years on, enthusiasm for the show has barely flagged - if anything, the 2008 movie adaptation has increased interest and lent the musical a whole new lease of life. Today, over 10% of the UK population has seen the show on stage, and a whopping one in four households owns the film - Amazon's best-selling DVD in history. Just what is it about the all-singing stage sensation that makes it so impossible to resist?

"I think you can't really not enjoy it," says Sam Robinson, the Black Country boy joining the current UK tour as Eddie. "It's such a happy, feel-good show that no one can go out of it feeling miserable."

"There's a strange sense of ownership about the show in the UK which we didn't find in foreign countries," adds Sara Poyzer, who's been leading the production as the fiercely independent Donna Sheridan for four years now. "We get peo-

ple coming dressed up in their own versions of the Lycra jumpsuits, and they've got a great sense of humour. Friday and Saturday nights here in Manchester have been roof-raising!"

If you're in the mood for a dance, here's where you'll get the chance: vital to the continued appeal of the stage show is the huge extent to which the audience feel involved and a part of the action. Right from the opening number, you'll be able to hear the first few tentative voices singing along. By the end of the show, there's barely a bum left on a seat.

"Watching it on a TV in your front room just isn't the same as singing along with everyone at a live show," says Coventry's Louis Stockil, who plays the puppyish Pepper, Best Man to Sky and best pal to Eddie. "I think people definitely get more of a buzz from watching it on stage, and it's great for us to see everyone singing and having a good time. That's when we know we're doing a good job."

"It's got a bit of a concert feel to it at times, which is definitely something you don't get from the film," Robinson agrees. "The songs are so iconic that everyone knows them and will sing along, and it never gets boring seeing that. It's kind of overwhelming, really."

Continued overleaf...



But there's more to Mamma Mia! than just a place to go where they play the right music. Beneath all the musical mayhem, there's a touching tale of love, loss and learning to accept yourself the way you are.

"I think people imagine they know what they're going to get and that it'll just be lots of laughs and a good night out," explains Poyzer, "but there's a kind of dark night of the soul in Act Two when Donna realises and faces the mistakes she's made in her life. There's a beautiful, relatively unknown Abba song she sings called Slipping Through My Fingers about losing a child as she grows up and prepares to get married, and when I sing that, I hear people crying in the audience. Then you've got The Winner Takes It All, and right after that there's a fantastic comedy number, so there's a lovely swing between humour and sentiment all the way through which makes it quite moving."

Set on a Greek island paradise, Mamma Mia! tells the story of single mum Donna and her 20-year-old daughter Sophie, who's getting married to her boyfriend, Sky. Formerly the lead singer of a three-piece girl group called The Dynamos, Donna led something of a crazy, carefree lifestyle back in the days of flares, Lycra and Abba in the charts. As a result, Sophie's never known who her dad is, and the truth is, Donna's not entirely sure either. After stealing a sly glimpse at her mum's old diary, sneaky Sophie identifies three possible candidates

and sends messages, masquerading as her mother, to invite them out to her own wedding. Hijinks, chaos and confusion inevitably ensue, but of course, everything works out for the best in the end.

"Although it's perhaps not at the forefront, there's undeniably a feminist streak running through the story, and I think that was important to the original creators," says Poyzer. "I know that Catherine [Johnson], the writer, was reading quite a lot of bad stuff in the right wing press badmouthing single mothers, so one of her ideas was to make a single mother the hero of a story."



For all the growing push to see women better represented on stage and screen, it's still pretty rare to find a plot centred on a woman old enough to have a grown-up daughter of her own: once you're a mum, you're more typically relegated to a supporting role

in someone else's story. Nor is Donna the only self-sufficient fortysomething female character: her former bandmates Tanya and Rosie have both chosen freewheeling lifestyles, with Tanya now travelling the world following multiple marriages, and Rosie having steered well clear of kids and marriage altogether. There's a wonderfully warm and genuine friendship between the three - another area in which women still remain woefully under-represented. According to Poyzer, the camaraderie among the cast members is just as strong off-stage as it is on.

"There's a scene we call Bedroom One, which is when the audience first hears Dancing Queen, and is when you see the Dynamos helping Donna solve the dilemma she's facing after these guys have arrived on the island and left her feeling scared and confused. It's a great moment of bonding between the three women, and every night we come off-stage in stitches. It's a real joy to perform."

Friendship is central to the plot of Mamma Mia! and not just between women. As well as the Dynamos, there's also Sophie and her two boisterous bridesmaids, Ali and Lisa. Then there's Sky and his two main men, Pepper and Eddie, the latter two together forming a kind of West Midlands double act, which Birmingham audiences will be pleased to know they make a feature of on stage. By the end of the story, even Sophie's potential dads - Sam, Bill and Harry - are getting along pretty well, agreeing to

“ *The songs are so iconic that everyone knows them and will sing along, and it never gets boring seeing that. It's kind of overwhelming, really* ”

each take on a third of dad duties: it seems all good things come in threes.

Not just about women, then, and not just for women either. While it might have a reputation as a girls' night out kind of show, in reality, audience members vary from very young children to men with grandkids of their own.

“I think it was partly the film that changed that,” says Poyzer. “We get some very young children in the matinees now, and I've seen four generations of women and girls in the audience before. Men come too - reluctantly or not - and always enjoy it. I got tweeted today by a guy who said, 'I'm an all-male, rugby-loving, meat-eating man, and you had me singing at the top of my voice last night!'”

While Donna and Sophie might officially take centre stage, the show is far more of an ensemble piece than a neat summary of the plot might lead you to imagine, and it's great to see the full cast given chance to explore the various relationships between supporting characters.

“It's good that everyone gets their moment to shine,” says Robinson. “Even though the storyline is very much about Donna and Sophie and finding the right dad, if you think about a scene like Does Your Mother Know?, none of those characters are in it.”

“It's nice to be in a show where the ensemble are used a lot, because that's not always the case,” Stockil agrees. “Having lots of people on stage can be overwhelming, but it works really well here, and I think it adds something for the audience as well.”

“I think the show itself is the star,” says Poyzer. “No single actor is the star of the show, and the expectations people come in with are more about the show as a whole than about any individual performance.”

Stockil makes an important point about new angles that supporting characters can add. Though to date, Mamma Mia! has been performed in over 440 major cities to more than 60 million people, each new person who joins the cast or crew brings a little of themselves to the production.

“Bringing in new people is like adding new ingredients to a cake,” says Stockil. “The basic structure stays the same, you're just spicing it up a bit.”

Poyzer, who's been part of the show for four years now, recognises the importance of these additions: “I always mourn the loss of a great team, and last year was really special.

Yet at the same time, I'm always quite thrilled when I hear that 95% of the cast are leaving - not because they aren't great, but because new people bring new energy and new choices. Sometimes they bring things that are trickier or better, and I have to adapt and change my performance, so it's really challenging and really joyous. Even though I've been doing it for four years, this year still feels new.”



This continued enthusiasm and willingness to help the show grow and evolve has not gone unnoticed by the younger, more recent additions to the cast.

“I've found that, particularly with Sara, they've invested in the fact that there are new performers who are going to bring different ideas, and aren't so set in their ways that they expect everyone to work around them,” says Robinson. “Everyone's been willing to workshop and find new things, and I think that's what keeps the show fresh and keeps them getting quality people in to do it for such long periods of time.”

Those who move on aren't forgotten either, and every person who's joined the team over the years has left their own indelible mark on the show.

“There's a kind of saying that once you join the island you never really leave,” says Poyzer. “I've watched countless actors and dancers come and go from the show, and I see that. I think whilst I love it I'll continue to do it, but I know that even if I stopped and I wasn't here in body any more, I'd still be here in spirit.”

After a long, international tour during which she was lucky enough to visit more than 20 different countries, Poyzer is glad to be bringing the show back home to Britain: “There's nothing like a UK audience. They are absolutely, undeniably the best. They've got just the right balance of coming for a good night out and appreciating the sentimental side of the story. Also, there are some jokes like, 'You wait 20 years for a dad and three come along at once,' which only work in certain places!”

The local lads of the cast are also looking forward to bringing the show a little closer to home on the Birmingham leg of the tour.

“I'm really looking forward to Birmingham - it's my favourite city,” says Robinson. “I'm probably biased, but I do love Birmingham anyway, and so to be there and to have all my friends and family coming will be lovely.”

After 50 productions in 16 different languages worldwide, Mamma Mia! shows no signs of stopping yet, but for those who still need persuading to be a part of the phenomenon, take some advice from one who hasn't tired of it in years.

“After over a thousand performances,” says Poyzer, “when I'm in my dressing room and I hear the drums of the overture strike up, there's always a bit of me that gets excited, and I think that's what propels me forward. I would say to anyone who's seen the film, don't think that you know Mamma Mia!, certainly not in this form. Whether or not you've seen the film, you should absolutely come and experience the stage version!”

.....

Mamma Mia! shows at Birmingham Hippodrome from Tuesday 28 June to Saturday 3 September

Chicago

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,
Mon 20 - Sat 25 June

Ex-EastEnder John Partridge stars in this new touring production of John Kander and Fred Ebb's legendary musical.

He's joined by Emmerdale's Hayley Tamaddon and X Factor winner Sam Bailey, who plays Mama Morton.

The recipient of numerous awards - most notably six Tonys, two Oliviers, one Grammy and, for its movie version, two Baftas and six Oscars - Chicago is based on real-life events in the Roaring '20s. It centres on the character of Roxie Hart, a nightclub singer who shoots her lover. Together with her cell-block rival, double-murderess Velma Kelly, Roxie fights to stay off Death Row with the help of smooth-talking lawyer Billy Flynn...

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Sid

Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham,
Fri 17 June



Leon Fleming's new 50-minute, one-man play provides a thought-provoking insight into the subject of hero worship, along the way questioning what it means to be punk. The story revolves around the character of loose cannon Craig, a man who's having a bad day and whose girlfriend thinks he's lost the plot. And why wouldn't she, given the fact that his 'best pal' is the Sex Pistols' Sid Vicious, a punk rocker who's been dead since the 1970s...

The Spinning Wheel

mac, Birmingham, Thurs 9 June

This exploration of pacifist activism, loss and legacy is presented by New York hip-hop theatre artist Baba Israel and celebrates the life of his late father - the jazz musician, stand-up comic and countercultural activist Steve Ben Israel. Baba has created the work in association with Leo Kay, the Artistic

Director of Unfinished Business.

The production skilfully uses Israel senior's extraordinary archive of writing, recordings, interviews and performance footage to present a show that brings together spoken word, video and live music by Yako 440.

Black Is The Colour Of My Voice

Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham, Thurs 9 June

Following the untimely death of her father, Mena Bordeaux goes into self-imposed isolation for three days. Alone with her thoughts, she reflects on a journey that's seen her become a renowned jazz vocalist at the forefront of the Civil Rights Movement...

Based on the life of Nina Simone, Apphia Campbell's one-woman show has enjoyed sell-out success in both Edinburgh and New York.

The Birthday Party

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry,
Tues 14 - Sat 18 June

Aside from being his best-known play, Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party* is a comedy with a real edge. Stanley is a third-rate musician with a mysterious past who lodges with deckchair attendant Petey and his wife Meg in a tatty boarding house. Into this world descend Goldberg and McCann, who want to take Stanley back to where he came

from. Except that he doesn't want to go...

The ensuing psychological torture, a birthday party and a tart called Lulu all play their part in encouraging events towards a disconcerting but hilarious climax.



Ladies In Lavender

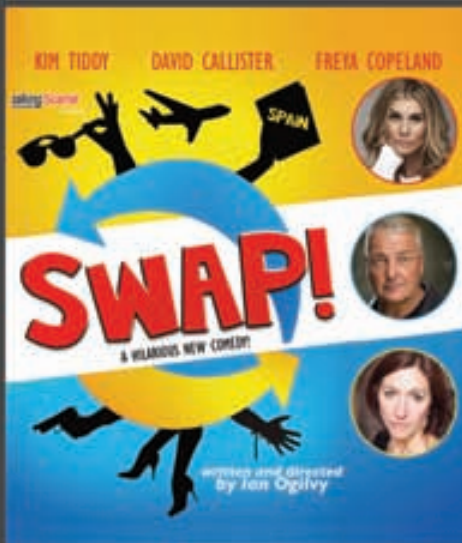
Bear Pit Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon,
Fri 17 - Sat 25 June

The Bear Pit Theatre Company is the ensemble behind this new stage version of Charles Dance's 2004 film starring Judi Dench and Maggie Smith.

The action unfolds in a close-knit fishing village in 1930s Cornwall, as the Widdington sisters, Ursula and Janet, nurse back to health a handsome young Polish violinist who's been washed ashore on a nearby beach.

The sisters soon find themselves forming an emotional attachment to their unexpected guest, but the village community is far less convinced about the stranger's merits - particularly when he befriends a Russian woman named Olga...

TUE 28 JUN - SAT 2 JUL



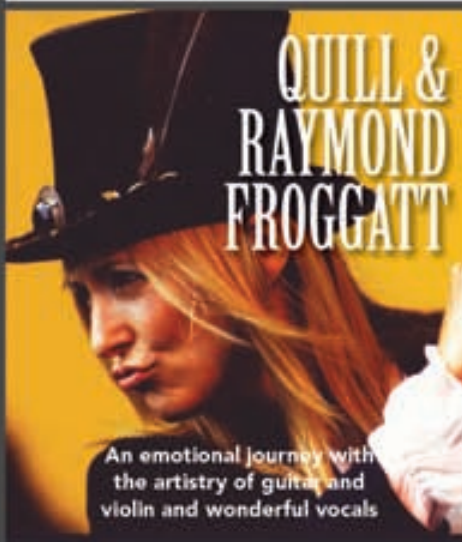
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TUE 5 - SAT 9 JUL



FRI 15 JUL



SAT 16 JUL



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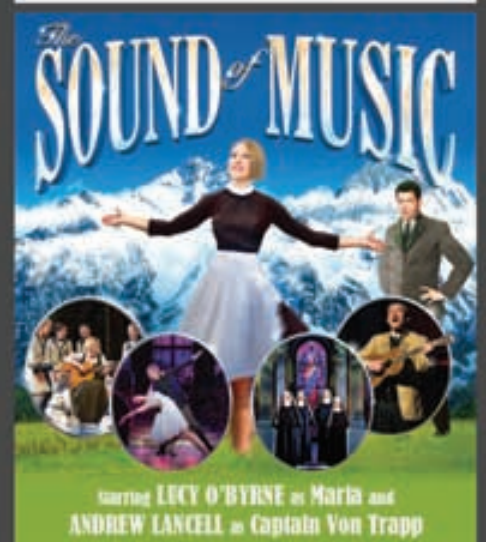
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SUN 25 SEP



TUE 4 - SAT 8 OCT



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Tom: The Story Of Tom Jones

New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, Wed 1 - Sat 4 June

Tom Jones maybe doesn't get quite as many pairs of ladies' knickers tossed in his general direction as he used to, but one thing that definitely hasn't changed is the depth, quality and resonance of his truly incredible vocal.

This new musical tells the story of the boy from the valleys who went on to conquer America and provide the inspiration for a jumpsuit-wearing Elvis Presley's Vegas choreography.

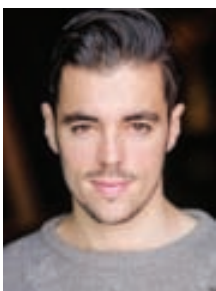
Expect all the hits, including Swinging '60s crackers like It's Not Unusual, What's New Pussycat? and Delilah.



Macbeth Gone Mental

Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham, Fri 17 June

Macbeth is one of Shakespeare's darkest and most tragic tales - but that certainly hasn't stopped the highly innovative Tap The Table Productions from presenting the play as a 'rip-roaring comedy'.



Having struck pay dirt with each of their previous three productions, the talented ensemble once again use their 'unapologetic and ridiculous performance style' to present an evening that blends physical and black comedy with moments of 'tear-jerking poignancy'. The company is performing the show in recognition of the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death.

The Mountaintop

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Fri 10 - Thurs 25 June

The title of Katori Hall's Olivier Award-winning two-hander recalls the legendary speech given by civil rights leader Martin Luther King at Mason Temple in Memphis, Tennessee, on 3



April 1968. Towards its conclusion, King spoke of having been allowed by God 'to go up to the mountain' and see the Promised Land.

"I may not get there with you," he said, "but I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the promised land." Within 24 hours, Dr King had been assassinated.

This huge Broadway hit reimagines events in the hours leading up to his death. Along the way, it adds into the mix a very real and hugely necessary dose of humour, ensuring the production is always a pleasure to watch despite its challenging subject matter.

I, Elizabeth

Lichfield Garrick, Thurs 9 - Fri 10 June; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Wed 15 June



The struggle to reconcile the desires of womanhood with the duties of sovereignty lies at the heart of Rebecca Vaughan's critically acclaimed study of Elizabeth I. Vaughan's previous work includes the well-received Dalloway, Austen's Women and Female Gothic. She's here on such fine form that one

reviewer has heralded her performance worthy of an Academy Award (assuming they were handed out for theatrical endeavours, of course).

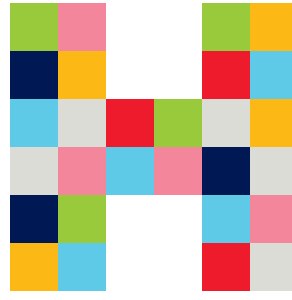
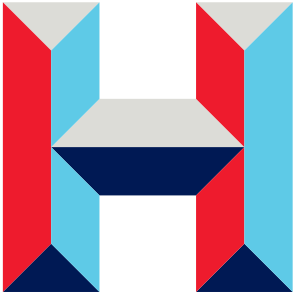
The production is directed by the Olivier Award-winning Guy Masterson and well worth a look.

Gangsta Granny

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Wed 8 - Sat 11 June; New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, Tues 28 June - Sat 2 July; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Wed 12 - Sun 16 Oct

The ever-popular Birmingham Stage Company make a welcome return with their highly acclaimed adaptation of David Walliams' best-selling book. Ben's no lover of Friday nights - and why would he be? After all, Friday nights mean having to stay at Granny's house, where he's not only bored senseless but also has to eat an unholy trinity of cabbage dishes - cabbage soup, cabbage pie and cabbage cake. But experiences can sometimes be deceptive, and Ben soon finds out that there's way more to his boring old Granny than meets the eye...





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Tongue Tied And Twisted

Arena Theatre,
Wolverhampton,
Thurs 2 June

Traditional Indian folk tales from 50 Black Country-based South Asian elders are brought together in this collaborative presentation from Black Country Touring and Creative Black Country.

The show celebrates the art of live storytelling, in the process fusing a unique blend of urban hip-hop and classical South Asian sounds.

The on-stage storyteller is Peter Chand. "Storytelling is an immediate and exciting way to engage instantly with audiences," says Peter. "What I love about Tongue Tied And Twisted is that it's steeped in the past, but very much grounded in the present." "The tradition of passing folk tales down through the generations is dying out," adds the show's producer, Dawinder Bansal, "so we knew it was important to capture this wisdom before it was too late. As the elders recalled the stories they were told as children, their eyes twinkled, knowing their voices will live on for decades to come in an online archive."



Othello

Stafford Castle, Thurs 23 June - Sat 9 July

Shakespeare's tragic tale of lost handkerchiefs, ruined reputations and mistreated wives is one of theatre's most powerful stories.

When the malevolent Iago believes himself to have been overlooked for promotion by Othello, his Machiavellian mind turns to thoughts of vengeance. Othello's willingness to be led by the nose is all grist to Iago's mill, and fatal consequences ensue...

This production marks the first time the Stafford Shakespeare Festival has staged Othello at Stafford Castle.



7 Promises

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 18 June

Random Scream theatre company was created by Brussels-based American performing artist Davis Freeman. Its aim is to focus on personal interactions and explore the way in which people's choices directly affect the communities in which they live.

Davis's latest offering turns the spotlight on 'the impending ecological disaster' facing the world, and asks why more isn't being done to avoid it. Davis and his collaborator, Jerry Killick, appear as two ecological preachers who call on their audience to turn their words into action.

"We propose seven promises for the audience to take, to create a more sustainable world," explains Davis, "and in turn we give them a free shot of vodka. It's highly successful, and good late at night to create a party."

Hamlet

Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, until Sat 13 August

Hamlet, the Prince of Denmark, is struggling to come to terms with his life. Faced with the ghost of his murdered father, he must also grapple with the indecently hasty remarriage of his widowed mother to his conniving uncle...

A masterpiece of world theatre, Shakespeare's famous play is a challenging piece to perform. The lead role is one of the largest ever written, and it's a brave actor indeed who undertakes the necessary plunge into his own psyche. So good luck on this particular occasion to Paapa Essiedu...

The cast also includes Cucumber's Cyril Nri as Polonius and James Cooney as Rosencrantz.

Blackadder: The Tudor Years

Artrix, Bromsgrove, Tues 7 - Sat 11 June

South Birmingham-based semi-professional theatrical group All & Sundry is the company behind this stage version of the hit Rowan Atkinson television comedy. The production reworks three popular episodes from Blackadder II, the Richard Curtis and Ben Elton-penned 1985 series set in Elizabethan England.

All & Sundry have previously enjoyed success with a show featuring episodes from 1989's Blackadder Goes Forth, the action of which was located in the World War One trenches.

Chaplin

Malvern Theatre, Worcestershire, Fri 10 June;
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Tues 21 - Wed 22 June; Artrix, Bromsgrove, Wed 13 July;
New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, Thurs 14 July



Silent-era movie star Charlie Chaplin died almost 40 years ago at the age of 88. Since that time and not surprisingly, his star has faded considerably. His most famous films, meanwhile - made in Hollywood during his halcyon days of the 1920s and '30s - have all but disappeared from television screens. So this new musical play offers a useful reminder of just how talented, feted and remarkable Chaplin actually was. The show follows the London-born actor from the dark streets of Victorian England to the glitz and glamour of Tinseltown in the Roaring '20s. Steven Arnold, who played Ashley Peacock in Coronation Street, dons the bowler hat and toothbrush moustache to play the first true British icon of cinema.

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Film

Gods Of Egypt

CERT 12a (127 mins)

Starring **Nikolaj Coster-Waldau, Brenton Thwaites, Chadwick Boseman, Élodie Yung, Rufus Sewell, Gerard Butler, Geoffrey Rush, Bryan Brown**

Directed by **Alex Proyas (USA/Australia)**

Gods and mortals do battle in this big-budget action-fantasy in which a lowly thief called Bek (Thwaites) teams up with the divine Horus (Coster-Waldau). They have a beef with Set (Butler), the god of the desert, who has seized the throne of Egypt and has decided to charge the dead for a passage to the afterlife, a sort of necro-visa.

Don't expect too accurate a portrait of ancient Egypt and do expect a lot of CGI. The director Alex Proyas previously brought us *The Crow* and *I, Robot*. Appropriately, he was born in Alexandria, Egypt.

Released Fri 17 June



CRITIC'S CHOICE

Film highlights released in June...

The Nice Guys CERT 15 (116 mins)

Starring **Russell Crowe, Ryan Gosling, Angourie Rice, Matt Bomer, Keith David, Kim Basinger** Directed by **Shane Black (USA)**

There's little nice in this look at the seamier side of 1970s' Los Angeles, but Russell Crowe and Ryan Gosling play the good guys who investigate the apparent suicide of a porn star. The director Shane Black previously brought us *Iron Man 3* and the inventive, violent and hilarious *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang* (he also scripted the first two *Lethal Weapon* films).

Released Fri 3 June



Race CERT PG (103 mins)

Starring **Stephan James, Jason Sudeikis, Jeremy Irons, William Hurt, Carice van Houten** Directed by **Stephen Hopkins (USA/Canada/Germany)**

In 1936 Jesse Owens won a record-breaking four gold medals at the Berlin Olympics. But being a black man from Alabama, his athletic superiority was somewhat at odds with Hitler's view of Aryan supremacy.

Released Fri 3 June

Learning To Drive

CERT 15 (90 mins)

Starring **Patricia Clarkson, Ben Kingsley, Jake Weber, Grace Gummer, Sarita Choudhury** Directed by **Isabel Coixet (USA)**

When her husband leaves her, Manhattan writer Wendy Shields (Clarkson) decides to capitalise on her independence by learning to drive. Her instructor, an Indian Sikh (Kingsley), is facing a very different nuptial prospect: an arranged marriage. They're as different as chalk and paneer, but they form a very special bond over the wheel.

Released Fri 10 June



Me Before You

CERT 12a (110 mins)

Starring **Emilia Clarke, Sam Claflin, Janet McTeer, Charles Dance, Brendan Coyle, Matthew Lewis**

Directed by **Thea Sharrock (USA)**

Adapted by Jojo Moyes from her own 2012 novel, this romantic drama explores the relationship of two very different people: Lou Clark, an unambitious waitress who ends up caring for Will Traynor, and Will himself, a high-achieving young man who's lost the use of his legs in a car crash. Ms Clarke, who portrays Miss Clark, is best known for playing Daenerys Targaryen in Game Of Thrones.

Released Fri 3 June



CRITIC'S CHOICE



Independence Day: Resurgence

CERT tbc

Starring **Liam Hemsworth, Jeff Goldblum, Bill Pullman, Judd Hirsch, Vivica A Fox, Brent Spiner, Charlotte Gainsbourg, Jessie Usher, Maika Monroe, Angelababy, Sela Ward, William Fichtner**

Directed by **Roland Emmerich (USA)**

With his brother Chris saving the world in the guise of Thor, Liam Hemsworth is now on hand to battle those pesky aliens from the original Independence Day of

1996. He plays an American pilot signed up with the Earth Space Defense [sic], a unit established by the United Nations to battle any future extraterrestrial threats. Well, before the last lot of aliens were beaten by Will Smith, they managed to send out a distress signal to their allies in deep space, who return with even more technologically-advanced weaponry. The budget is reported to be at least \$200million. In 3D.

Released Fri 24 June

Mother's Day

CERT 12a (118 mins)

Starring **Jennifer Aniston, Kate Hudson, Julia Roberts, Jason Sudeikis, Britt Robertson, Timothy Olyphant, Jack Whitehall, Jennifer Garner** Directed by **Garry Marshall (USA)**

Different narrative strands come together on this most important of Sundays as various characters cope with their moms and the demands of motherhood. The director Garry Marshall is rather into these all-star holiday specials, having previously brought us Valentine's Day and New Year's Eve, without a single decent review between them.

Released Fri 10 June



Elvis & Nixon

CERT 15 (86 mins)

Starring **Michael Shannon, Kevin Spacey, Alex Pettyfer, Johnny Knoxville, Colin Hanks, Tate Donovan** Directed by **Liza Johnson (USA)**

The most requested photo from the US National Archives is of Richard M Nixon shaking the hand of Elvis A Presley. The occasion was on 21 December 1970, in the Oval Office, and the official notes of the meeting reveal the King's interest in Communist brainwashing and a distaste for The Beatles.

Michael Shannon plays Elvis and Kevin Spacey is Nixon.

Released Fri 24 June

The Conjuring 2

CERT 15 (134 mins)

Starring **Vera Farmiga, Patrick Wilson, Frances O'Connor, Madison Wolfe, Simon McBurney, Franka Potente** Directed by **James Wan (USA)**

Paranormal experts Ed and Lorraine Warren are called to London to investigate the haunting of a council house in Enfield. It is of course a sequel to The Conjuring (2013), one of the highest-grossing horror films of all time.

Released Fri 17 June



Visual Arts

All The World's Stage

The Barber Institute, Birmingham,
Fri 10 June - Sun 25 September

Continuing this year's Shakespeare 400 celebrations, the Barber hosts its first ever exhibition of Elizabethan and Jacobean art, devised in collaboration with the National Portrait Gallery and co-curated by Masters' students from the University of Birmingham.

This major project features paintings, sculptures, miniatures and prints dating from 1590 to 1620, including portraits of Anne of Denmark, the Earls of Essex and Derby, Ben Jonson, John Fletcher and Shakespeare himself, as well as a rare first Folio and other beautiful books from the time. Focusing on the Bard's chief patrons at court, his fellow writers, friends and rivals, it aims to show how artists construct character through portraiture, as well as illuminating the world of the Court during this lively period in Britain's cultural history.



Laura Oldfield Ford: Solo Exhibition

Grand Union, Birmingham,
Fri 17 June - Fri 5 August

Known for her politically motivated work focusing on British urban areas, psychogeographic artist and writer Laura Oldfield Ford spent six weeks in residence at Grand Union in 2015, researching Digbeth through a series of walks or dérives. Shifting away from an emphasis on her own subjective engagement with spaces, this exhibition sees the artist move towards a 'sociogeographic' style, drawing on multiple voices and narratives. Using a mixture of sound, photography, drawing and painting, Oldfield Ford has created a 'cognitive map' of the area, encouraging the activation of memories and the dissemination of stories through the process of walking.



Staffordshire Open 2016

Shire Hall Gallery, Stafford, until Sun 3 July



Returning for 2016, this annual exhibition aims to promote new talent and celebrate the work of local artists, often exhibiting for the first time. Any visual artist who lives, works, studies or was born in Staffordshire is invited to submit their work for consideration, with opportunities available for art lovers of all tastes and budgets to buy and sell pieces. This year's exhibition features a diverse range of paintings, drawings, prints, photography, sculpture, film and animation.

Grayson Perry: The Vanity Of Differences

Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry,
until Sun 3 July

Turner Prize-winning artist Grayson Perry here takes his inspiration not only from his own 2012 television documentary series, *All In The Best Possible Taste*, but also from William Hogarth's *A Rake's Progress* - a series of canvases depicting eighteenth century society which the artist produced in the early 1730s.

Charting the story of class mobility and examining the influence of social class on aesthetic taste, the exhibition comprises many of the characters, incidents and objects that Perry encountered while making his BAFTA award-winning documentary series. Using these characters to weave a narrative, the artist has produced a social commentary which focuses on the minutiae of contemporary taste, in so doing paying due homage to Hogarth's collection of 18th century paintings.



Black Art In Focus

Wolverhampton Art Gallery, until 9 July

Celebrating the varied and vital work by contemporary black British artists, this exhibition brings together a diverse array of paintings and prints from the gallery's existing collection with items newly acquired through the Heritage Lottery Fund Collecting Cultures programme. Highlights include iconic works by Turner Prize winner Chris Ofili, as well as pieces by Tam Joseph, Keith Piper, Claudette Johnson, Donald Rodney and other leading figures in the Blk Art Group which emerged from Wolverhampton in the 1980s, going on to exhibit and influence artists of colour across the UK. Eugene Palmer's enigmatic painting, Duppy Shadow, is also displayed in the Georgian Gallery.

Curator Carol Thompson said: "Wolverhampton Art Gallery championed the start of the Black Art Movement in Britain, which has seen many of its local founder members go on to be incredibly influential artists on British culture. It's great that 35 years later the gallery is putting black art back in focus."



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Alison Gerard Johnson
William Shakespeare (L.1500)
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Craft Open West Midlands

Craft Open West Midlands will be the first craft open to be held at Wolverhampton Art Gallery, allowing makers in the West Midlands the chance to show their work at this prestigious venue.

The exhibition will embrace a wide range of contemporary craft practice, reflecting the vibrant talent of the regional crafts scene. Prizes will be awarded for innovation, student prize and overall winner.

For further details and to download the application form please go to: wolverhamptonart.org.uk/whats-on/craft-open/

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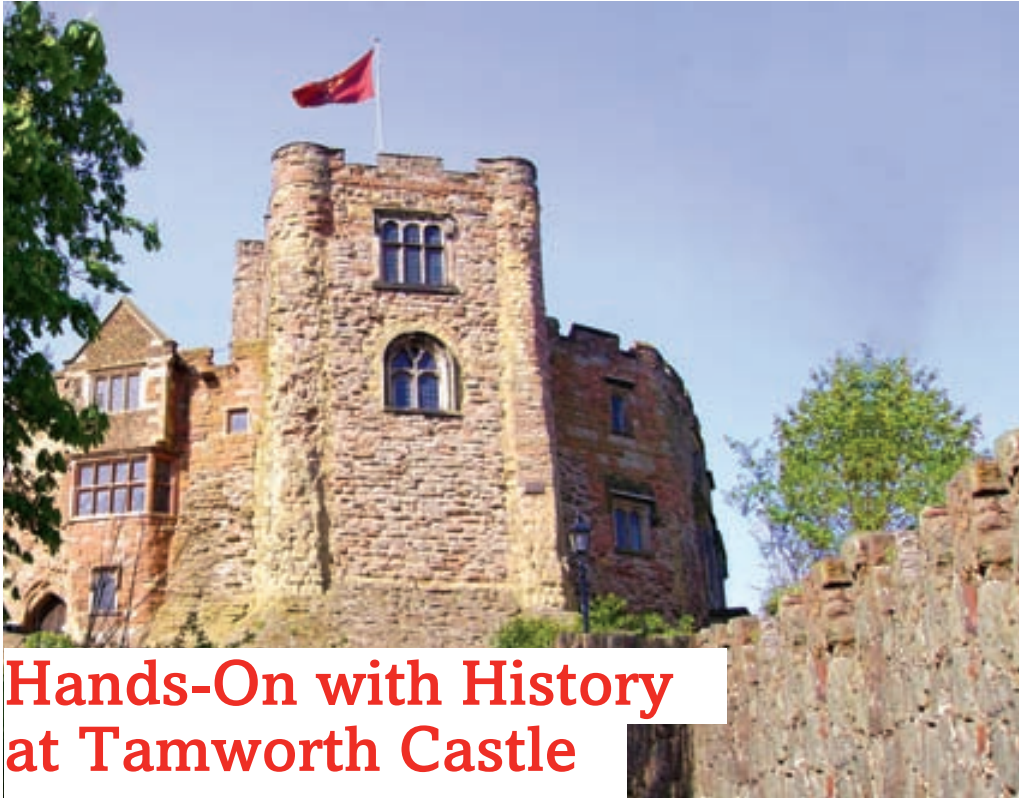
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Hands-On with History at Tamworth Castle



From Norman fort to stately home to 21st-century museum, Tamworth Castle stands as a physical record of almost a millennium's worth of history. Built as a wooden keep around 1080 by conquering Normans on the site of an established Saxon "burh", the castle gained its stone shell some 100 years later, and is today a treasure trove of fascinating facts, interesting objects and things to do for all the family.

Visitors to the castle are invited to journey through Tamworth's rich history, beginning long before the Norman settlement. Far from the unassuming place it is today, Tamworth was once a thriving market town, complete with its own mint, treasury and water mill, as well as a key stronghold for the kingdom of Mercia, which covered much of the modern-day Midlands.

Part of the Mercian Trail partnership, Tamworth Castle is currently home to unique artefacts from the Staffordshire Hoard, and offers some fascinating insights into the Anglo-Saxon era from which they date. Interactive exhibits allow kids to make their own runic messages, assemble a sword, see a model water mill in action, and get up close and personal with replica armour. Meanwhile, information boards tell stories of the 8th-century King Offa (of Offa's Dyke fame), and of Æthelflæd, daughter of King Alfred the Great and Lady of the Mercians, the only known female ruler of an Anglo-Saxon realm.

Laws set down in 1283 Tamworth Court Rolls provide a window onto crime and punishment in the medieval period. Discover the penalties for washing tripe in the river or for inviting a Vicar to your table, try out a

set of wooden stocks, dress up a knight in shining armour or try on costume from the medieval dressing up box. Watch out for the ghost of St Editha, said to haunt the castle since 1139 after Lord Robert Marmion evicted the nuns from nearby Polesworth Abbey.

Attention to detail in period-furnished rooms creates a sense of travelling through time. In the 15th century, just before the Tudor age, the castle passed into the hands of the Ferrers family, responsible for extensive alterations to the castle over the course of almost 300 years. See how and where they would have slept, dined and stored their food until the castle's eventual capture by Cromwell's forces during the English Civil War. Discover how, in the 18th century, George Townshend II began a process of further remodelling, including landscaping the castle's beautiful pleasure grounds and replacing its outdated Tudor windows. Tools, trinkets and pistols from his time are displayed in the castle's South side, where you can also enjoy a Georgian makeover, complete with hats and wigs. Elsewhere, you'll find out more about the Victorian tenants who leased the house from the Townshends before its sale to the Tamworth Corporation (later Tamworth Borough Council), including Thomas Cooke, whose textile business created practical, affordable clothing for the working class and provided hundreds of jobs for the community. In honour of her home's history, Cooke's daughter was called Æthelflæda, a fitting name for the castle's final resident.

Of course, the story doesn't end there: there's plenty more to learn about life in

Tamworth in the 19th and 20th centuries, including the work of Robert Peel and William McGregor, the North Warwickshire coalfield, the Glascoate and Gibbs & Canning potteries, health and sanitation crises and the Tamworth or 'Sandyback' pig breed. Outside, meanwhile, there's a chance to relax in the castle's extensive grounds, featuring a kids' play area, crazy golf course, bowling green, tennis courts, skate park, free outdoor gym, cycle hire, canoeing and a "planet walk", an outdoor scale model of the solar system for budding astronauts to explore.

Planning a holiday visit? Keep an eye out for special events taking place throughout the summer, including a Living History series examining historical weapons, housekeeping and toys, as well as Castle Quest, a video game-inspired, "search and collect", problem-solving adventure for older kids and teens, and the magical, character-driven Enchanted Castle, ideal for any fans of fairies, knights and dragons. Tamworth Castle may be known for its colourful St. George's Day jousts and re-enactments, but there's lots more here throughout the year to entertain kids and grown-ups of all ages.

Tamworth Castle is open Tuesday to Saturday (11.30am - 4pm) until September, then Saturday and Sunday (11.30am - 3pm) until March 2017. The castle also opens extra days for schools and bank holidays.

For a full programme of events taking place throughout 2016, visit tamworthcastle.co.uk



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Events

BBC Good Food Show Summer

NEC, Birmingham, Tues 16 - Sun 19 June

Brimming with inspiration, handy tips and sure-to-be-welcome advice on how to create the perfect summer menu, the BBC Good Food Show returns to the NEC to provide a food experience 'like no other'.

In addition to the host of celebrities who're on hand to share their knowledge, including Mary Berry, The Hairy Bikers, James Martin and Paul Hollywood, the four-day event offers visitors an abundance of demonstrations, tastings, book signings and shopping experiences to enjoy.

The BBC Good Food Kitchen and the Supertheatre also feature.

Tickets to the show also provide access to the BBC Gardeners' World Live event.



Birmingham Diamond League

Alexandra Stadium, Birmingham, Sun 5 June



There's a truly 'diamond' line-up of athletes taking part in this pre-Rio get-together, with Double Olympic, world and European champion Mo Farah leading the pack.

Farah is joined at the event by the US's Trayvon Bromell and Canada's Andre De Grasse, two of the world's best young sprinting talents. The pair will be competing against one another in the men's 200 metres. "I'm really looking forward to testing myself over this longer distance," says world indoor 60-metre champion Trayvon. "I've had some close competitions with Andre at collegiate level and especially in Beijing last summer, and it'll be good to compete against him in a 200-metre race."

Cholmondeley Power & Speed Festival

Cholmondeley Castle, Cheshire, Fri 10 - Sun 12 June

Described as the UK's 'most dynamic' motorsport get-together, the Cholmondeley Power & Speed Festival this year takes the theme of Supercars: Past, Present And Future.

Star cars to look out for as they make their way around the 3.2-mile track include the McLaren675LT, the Ferrari FXX, the 1913 Chalmers Speedster and the 2016 Aston Martin N430.

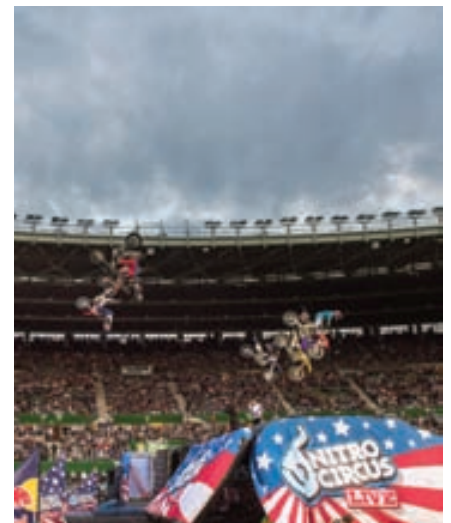
With over 150 entries in both the car and bike categories, the track action will be constant throughout all three days of the event.

Other attractions at the family-friendly show include air displays and pleasure flights, the UK's only professional wakeboard tour, a wide selection of activities for kids to enjoy, displays by over 50 car clubs, a craft beer festival with live comedy and the ever-popular military display.



Nitro Circus Live

Worcester Sixways Stadium, Fri 3 June



The organisers of Nitro Circus are eager to ensure they leave extreme sports fans in no doubt whatsoever about the high quality of entertainment they can expect at this action-packed touring show.

Record-breaking feats, 'unbelievable' tricks and 'insane' stunts are all part and parcel of 'a theatrical spectacular quite unlike anything you've seen before'.

The show also features some of the world's best extreme athletes, not to mention the sight of a host of 'ridiculous' contraptions being launched into the air off a 40-foot-high Giganta Ramp.

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Events



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Blists Hill, Ironbridge Gorge, Shropshire,
Sat 18 June

Head back in time at Blists Hill to the start of the 20th century - and from there, head four decades into the future to enjoy this special 1940s-set event! Blitz Hill presents a programme of World War Two-style entertainment, music and activities, with visitors invited to attend the event dressed in Shropshire Home Front period costume. Highlights include the chance to enjoy the

rousing songs of the Land Army Girls and Shawbury Military Wives choirs. There's also a nostalgic variety show in the style of the hugely popular BBC Workers Playtime, which toured factories and workplaces to boost the nation's wartime spirits. New for 2016 is the Taking Shelter experience. Visitors can take a pre-booked ride on the clay mine railway into Blists Hill's air raid shelter, complete with flickering lights and atmospheric wartime sounds.

Park Life! Big Weekend

Compton Verney, Warwickshire,
Sat 25 - Sun 26 June

Given that it's sited in 120 acres of Capability Brown-designed Grade II-listed parkland, Compton Verney is the ideal place in which to host this celebratory event marking the 300th anniversary of the landscape architect's birth.

Park Life! uses Georgian reenactors to provide visitors with the chance to learn more about the life and times of the inhabitants of the house, and of those who worked the land after Brown had finished his landscape project.

The focus on the Saturday is Georgian Heritage And Elegance, while the Sunday presentation examines 18th century Practicality And Rural Life.



Hot Air Literary Festival

Emma Bridgewater Factory, Hanley,
Thurs 9 - Sat 11 June

Stoke-on-Trent's Hot Air Literary Festival makes a welcome return this month, once again presenting a diverse programme of events that features contributions from authors, writers, playwrights and performers. Big names gracing the three-day festival include bestselling novelist Nick Hornby, television presenter Kirstie Allsopp, leading international ceramicist Edmund de Waal, acclaimed classic historian Mary Beard and How To Train Your Dragon author Cressida Cowell.

There's also a creative workshop based on David Walliams's book, Gangsta Granny, for children aged between 7 and 11, as well as a discussion about the challenges of adapting written work for the stage and a showcase for young writing talent.

The event's finale is hosted by ceramics manufacturer Emma Bridgewater. Along with renowned potter and judge Keith Brymer-Jones and the finalists from the BBC2 series Great British Pottery Throw Down, Emma will be discussing the opportunities that the TV programme has brought to the region.

Cosford Air Show

RAF Cosford, Staffordshire,
Sun 19 June

Regarded as one of the country's top aviation events, this annual air show attracts thousands of visitors and features spectacular flying displays, military exhibitions and static aircraft displays.

Highlights of this year's event include a 25th anniversary commemoration of the 1991 Gulf War conflict, the Great War Display Team performing in the skies over RAF Cosford, and celebrations to mark the 75th anniversary of the Air Training Corps.



Lord Mayor's Show

Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham,
Sun 12 June

This prestigious civic event this year celebrates the Queen's 90th birthday.

Three organisations for which Her Majesty is patron - the Lawn Tennis Association, The RFU and the PGA - will be making contributions to the show, offering a host of hands-on activities for visitors to enjoy.

Other attractions at the event include falconry and sheepdog displays, zumba, Tai Chi, soft archery, badminton and hula hooping taster sessions, live music, street food stalls, free craft workshops, storytelling events and the brand new Greenspaces children's play area.

The Royal Navy, Army and RAF are also in attendance, co-ordinating various activities and manning recruitment stalls.



Shrewsbury Flower Show

Friday 12th & Saturday 13th August 2016



FLOWERS, FIREWORKS & FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY

Performances by the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment Musical Ride

Friday
Evening
The Red
Hot Chilli
Pipers

Saturday
Evening
The
Christians

Floral Displays
Premier Show Jumping
Stunning Show Gardens
Household Cavalry Mounted
Regiment Musical Ride

ENTERTAINMENT TO SUIT EVERY TASTE

The Chef Gizzi Erskine and the Gardener Sarah Raven,
Red Hot Chilli Pipers, The Christians, Of One Accord
and Biddulph Male Voice Choirs, Massed Bands,
Traditional Carousel, Food and Drink,
Spectacular Fireworks Finale,
Working Steam Engine and
Schools Floral Train.

ADVANCE DAY TICKETS

Available until midnight on 11th August
Adults £24, Over 60's £22
Accompanied children
(15 yrs & under)
FREE

Celebrity
Gardener
Sarah
Raven

Why not
join as a member
and enjoy admission
to the show on both days
and an invitation to our
exclusive preview
evening?

Celebrity
Chef
Gizzi
Erskine

MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS*

Available until midnight on 11th August
Adult Single £45,
Double £80, Children
(15 yrs & under) £5
Life Member
£550

*Membership upgrades will not
be available during the show

Call us on: 01743 234050 or
visit www.shrewsburyflowershow.org.uk

Events

Artsfest

Various locations across Wolverhampton, Walsall, Lichfield and Stafford until Fri 24 June

Returning for a second year, the University of Wolverhampton's Artsfest event is already well under way and continues until late this month. A celebration of the creative and cultural arts, the festival features workshops, masterclasses, live music, theatre and dance productions, along with a whole host of other attractions. Highlights during the final weeks of the festival include Wolverhampton Grand Theatre performances of The Rocky Horror Show and Northern Ballet's version of Jane Eyre, an evening of poetry and conversation with Jo Bell and Luke Kennard, a Light House Media Centre screening of Thelma And Louise, and a Graduate Fashion Show, presenting creations by the University's Fashion & Textile students.



Three Counties Show

Malvern Showground, Fri 17 - Sun 19 June

Britain's finest breeds of cattle, sheep and pigs are all present and correct at this always-popular show - as indeed are the King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery.

A ceremonial unit of the British Army, the King's Troop's contribution to the event marks its only appearance outside London. The Troop performs in the main arena on each day of the show, with teams of six horses each pulling First World War-era field guns which are then used to fire an earth-shattering salute, most often seen at state occasions. Other main arena attractions include dog agility displays, a grand parade of livestock, and the British army's official parachute display team, The Red Devils, dropping in from altitudes of up to 10,000 feet.

The event also features numerous 'villages' catering for visitors interested in farming, equine pursuits, and hands-on sporting activities - including Quidditch matches and lessons!

Zombie Walk

Victoria Square, Birmingham City Centre, Sat 18 June

It's time to have a rummage through the dressing-up box, go crazy with the makeup and get walking in an undead way for charity...

Birmingham's eighth Zombie Walk is likely to attract in excess of 2,000 people, all of whom are certain to look like they've seen better days. Still, it's not the drained-of-blood complexion that matters, it's whether the 'walk-

ing dead' can play their part in raising £10,000 for Birmingham Children's Hospital. That said, there is a competition for best-dressed zombie that needs to be won, so maybe participants should go that extra mile with their outfits after all. Latex 'wounds' and ketchup-covered clothing at the ready...



Grand Medieval Joust

Kenilworth Castle, Sat 25 - Sun 26 June

Thundering battles involving heroic knights on horseback are the order of the day at this celebration of life and combat in medieval England.

There's also the chance for youngsters to test their strength in the field, and for visitors to sample the medieval way of life by checking out the colourful encampments.

A 'naughty' court jester ensures there's more by way of entertainment than fearless combatants prodding each other with blunt-tipped lances...

Brindleyplace Dragon Boat Race

Brindleyplace, Birmingham, Sat 18 June

This well-established annual fundraiser sees members of the city's business community competing for first place on Birmingham's Fazeley Canal. This year, the organisers have set themselves the challenge of raising in excess of £65,000 (the 2015 total) for Birmingham-based blood cancer charity Cure Leukaemia.

The one-day event features teams of 11 taking to the water, in fancy dress, in traditional Chinese longboats.

The festival also boasts plenty of entertainment away from the canal, with Brindleyplace's public squares being brought to life by traditional Chinese street entertainment and numerous family-friendly activities.

Viking Weekend

Arley Arboretum & Gardens, Nr Kidderminster, Sat 18 - Sun 19 June

Telford's Raudr Vagr Vikings group are setting up camp on the front lawn of the Arboretum to present a weekend-long Living History experience. Over the course of the two days, the reenactors will be demonstrating a variety of Viking Age crafts, skills, games and pastimes.

They'll also be engaging in numerous combat displays and chatting to visitors about all things Viking.



See **thelist** for all your events listings

A 1940s EVENING Blitz Hill

Saturday 18 June 2016
Blists Hill VICTORIAN TOWN,
IRONBRIDGE, 6pm - 9pm

Grab your
ration book,
pencil on
your stocking
seams and
get ready to
make do
and mend.



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Ironbridge
BIRTHPLACE OF INDUSTRY

The IRONBRIDGE GORGE MUSEUMS

FLYRIA
ROALD DAHL'S **DANNY**
The CHAMPION OF THE WORLD
roalddahl.com adapted for the stage by David Wood
davidwood.org.uk

Saturday 2 July
Dosthill Park at 3pm
gates open at 2.15
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www.tamworthartsandevents.co.uk

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Come and join the conversation

Your week to week
listings guide
June 2016

the list



Megson at Artix - Saturday 4 June

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

What's On

Wed 1 to Sun 5 June



Sara Pascoe at Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry
Thurs 2 June

Mon 6 to Sun 12 June



The Great British Food Festival at Ragley Hall
Sat 11 - Sun 12 June

Mon 13 to Sun 19 June



Jethro at Evesham Arts Centre
Thurs 16 - Fri 17 June

Mon 20 to Thurs 30 June



Jackie The Musical at Malvern Theatres
Tues 21 - Sat 25 June

THROUGHOUT APRIL

Visual Arts

Artrix, Bromsgrove

NEW RETROSPECTIVELY SPEAKING: NORMAN NEASOM 1930 - 2010

Redditch-born artist Norman Neasom's career spanned well over half a century, from the 1930s to his death in 2010, Wed 8 June - Sun 10 July

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

BIRMINGHAM QUR'AN One of the earliest surviving copies of the Islamic holy book, on display, until Wed 3 Aug

BIRMINGHAM MUSEUM & ART GALLERY IN 130 YEARS The story of the Museum & Art Gallery, told via a special anniversary exhibition, until Thurs 1 Sept

TURNING TO SEE: FROM VAN DYCK TO LUCIAN FREUD Van Dyck's last self-portrait, curated by Midlands-born and internationally renowned artist John Stezaker, Sat 28 May - Sun 4 Sept

Compton Verney Gallery, Warwick

SHAKESPEARE IN ART: TEMPESTS, TYRANTS AND TRAGEDY Exhibition reimagining Shakespeare's works through a unique series of multimedia encounters, until Sun 19 June

BOYDELL'S VISION Exhibition tracing the history of John Boydell's famous Shakespeare Gallery, which opened in 1789 on London's Pall Mall, until Sun 19 June

Forge Mill Needle Museum, Redditch

TANGENT TEXTILES: WARRIORS Exhibition inspired by warriors from the ancient world, until Sun 5 June

NEW SCOUR: THE HIDDEN LANDSCAPE Through the mediums of sculpture, video and sound, artists Keith Ashford and Elizabeth Turner explore Forge Mill's needle collection and its unique scouring mill, Fri 10 June - Sun 3 July, Forge Mill Needle Museum

Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry

COVENTRY OPEN 2016 The ninth Coventry Open for West Midlands and Warwickshire artists, displaying work in a wide range of media, until Sun 12 June

CECILY BROWN Brown's Be Nice To The Big Blue Sea is shown alongside a display of work by Edgar Degas. On loan from a private collector, until Sun 19 June

DEGAS' DANCERS Edgar Degas' famous painting, Two Dancers On A Stage, is displayed alongside three other works by the artist, until Sun 19 June

COURTAULDS IN COVENTRY Selection of items from the Herbert's collection relating to the Courtaulds company

and its links with Coventry, until Sun 19 June.

GRAYSON PERRY: THE VANITY OF SMALL DIFFERENCES Series of six large-scale tapestries by Turner Prize-winning artist Grayson Perry, exploring the British fascination with taste and class, until Sun 3 July

MAKING A MASTERPIECE Exploring the creative process undertaken by artist Graham Sutherland to design the monumental tapestry which hangs behind the altar of Coventry Cathedral, until Sun 3 July

KORABRA BY GAVIN JANTJES Dramatic paintings by Gavin Jantjes, on display as part of a collaboration with the Black Artists & Modernism project, until Sun 21 August.

The Hive, Worcester

NEW WORCESTER SOCIETY OF ARTISTS Exhibition of paintings by local artists, Sat 18 June - Fri 1 July

Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum

SIMON LEWTY: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF WRITING Exhibition including early works by Lewty, dating back to the 1970s, alongside his recent work, until Sun 10 July

Rugby Art Gallery & Museum

WHEN YOU FALL INTO A TRANCE New film work by internationally acclaimed artist Emily Wardill, until Sat 11 June

NEW A LIFE IN PATTERN: THE LIFE & WORKS OF SHEILA BOWNAS Exploring Sheila's life and the development of her artistic and textile design practice, Sat 25 June - Sat 3 Sept

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

ANOTHER MINIMALISM A Fruitmarket Gallery touring exhibition, curated by Melissa E Feldman. The artists use materials including glass, mirrors and coloured lights to alter the viewer's perception of space and time, until Sat 25 June

Worcester City Museum & Art Gallery

THIS GREEN EARTH Malvern-based artist Bridget Macdonald's landscapes, exhibited alongside works by great historic painters Claude Lorrain, Samuel Palmer and Peter Paul Rubens, until Sat 25 June

DIVIDED LOYALTIES Exhibition exploring Worcestershire's heroes and rebels, until Sat 29 Oct

Other VISUAL ARTS

EMBROIDERERS GUILD EXHIBITION - BROWN AT BERRINGTON Hand-crafted textiles inspired by Capability Brown's landscape design, which is Berrington's parkland, until Sun 6 Nov, Berrington Hall, Nr Leominster

NEW ANDY MCGEECHAN PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION Exhibition of large colour photos of Coventry's buildings by Andy McGeechan, Fri 17 June - Sat 16 July, Urban Coffee Company, Coventry

Gigs

OCEANS ATE ALASKA

Wed 1 June, The Rainbow Venues, Birmingham

HANKKS Wed 1 June, The Rainbow Venues, Birmingham

BOP + GEKO (14/17 YEARS ONLY) Wed 1 June, The Empire, Coventry

HANNAH JOHNSON & THE BROKEN HEARTS Wed 1 June, The Jam House, Birmingham

THIS IS THE KIT + ANDY SKELLAM Wed 1 June, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

JUMP THE SHARK + SHRINKING VIOLETS

Wed 1 June, The Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

CITY OF SOUNDS FESTIVAL Wed 1 - Sun 26 June, Adrian Boulton Hall, Birmingham

CELEBRATING CILLA Wed 1 June, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

KEITH JAMES Wed 1 June, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

IGNITE BRUM Wed 1 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

LAURA J MARTIN + SPECIAL GUESTS Wed 1 June, Ort Cafe, B'ham

ADAM GREEN & FRIENDS Wed 1 June, The Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

ATLANTIC SOUL ORCHESTRA Thurs 2 June, Birmingham Town Hall

PIG BAG Thurs 2 June, The Jam House, B'ham

MAMMAL HANDS Thurs 2 June, The Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

LUKE FRIEND Thurs 2 June, O2 Institute, Birmingham

CLARE MAGUIRE Thurs 2 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SENSER Thurs 2 June, O2 Academy, B'ham

WESTROCK Thurs 2 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

BEVERLEY KNIGHT Thurs 2 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

JOANNA GRUESOME Thurs 2 June, The Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

PILGRIMAGE WITH YOUNG PILGRIMS & TINY BEAST Fri 3 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

GYPSY BLOOD Fri 3



Bruce Springsteen - Ricoh Arena, Coventry

June, Brindley Place, B'ham

THE SONS OF PITCHES Fri 3 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

FRAN THE MAN Fri 3 June, Irish Centre, Birmingham

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN Fri 3 June, Ricoh Arena, Coventry

SUNDARA KARMA & INHEAVEN Fri 3 June, The Rainbow Venues, Birmingham

COASTS Fri 3 June, O2 Academy, Birmingham

GOODALL + RINSE + THE SURRENDERS + JUNK Fri 3 June, The Rainbow Venues, Birmingham

NOVANA Fri 3 June, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE URBAN VOODOO MACHINE Fri 3 June, The Flapper, Birmingham

BUDDY HOLLY'S WINTER DANCE PARTY Fri 3 June, Evesham Arts Centre

MILOS KARADAGLIC Fri 3 June, Forum Theatre, Malvern

SHAM 69 Fri 3 June, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

BLACK SABBATH TRIBUTE Fri 3 June, The Roadhouse, B'ham

THE RED LEMONS Fri 3 - Sat 4 June, The Jam House, Birmingham

UB42 - UB40 TRIBUTE Sat 4 June, The Empire, Coventry

LAST HOUNDS Sat 4 June, The Assembly, Leamington

SWIM WITH SHARKS & DJ ROB Sat 4 June, Irish Centre, Birmingham

BOWJANGLES Sat 4 June, Stratford Artshouse

THE RAINBOW VENUES WAREHOUSE CLOSING PARTY Sat 4 June, The Rainbow Venues, Digbeth, B'ham

FEWS (TRICKY DISCO) Sat 4 June, Kasbah, Coventry

EASTWOOD Sat 4 June, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

MEGSON Sat 4 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

JOE BROUGHTON'S CONSERVATOIRE FOLK ENSEMBLE Sat 4 June, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

HUNTER AND THE BEAR Sat 4 June, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

NELLY Sat 4 June, O2 Academy, Birmingham

BUSTED Sat 4 June, Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham

THE PARLOTONES Sat 4 June, Hare & Hounds, King's Heath, B'ham

CONGO NATTY Sat 4 June, The Rainbow Venues, Digbeth, B'ham

MUSE INC + SUPPORT FROM HUMM Sat 4 June, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

FRANK NELSON Sun 5 June, Irish Centre, Birmingham

DECADE Sun 5 June, The Rainbow Venues, Digbeth, B'ham

MOSTLY AUTUMN Sun 5 June, The Robin, Bilston

THE STAIRS LIVE Sun 5 June, The Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

Classical Music

CBSO: THE SEVEN AGES OF SHAKESPEARE Featuring Nicholas McGegan (Conductor), & the CBSO Chorus. Programme includes works by Nicolai, Arne, Sullivan, Vaughan Williams' Porter, Berlioz & Purcell, Wed 1 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

NICHOLAS MCGEGAN WITH THE CBSO BAROQUE ENSEMBLE Songs & music inspired by William Shakespeare, including Purcell, Locke, Arne & others..., Thurs 2 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CBSO SONGS FROM THE MOVIES Featuring John Altman (Conductor) & Lance Ellington (Vocalist). Fri 3 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

NICOLA BENEDETTI PLAYS MOZART Also featuring Manchester Camerata & Andrea Marcon (conductor), Sat 4 June, Malvern Theatres

THE SALVATION ARMY PRESENT SYMPHONY SOUNDS 2016 Sat 4 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Featuring Michael Seal & Julian Lloyd Webber (conductors). Programme includes works by Mozart, Haydn & Beethoven, Sat 4 June, Adrian Boult Hall, Birmingham Conservatoire

ROSS LEADBEATER'S GREAT BRITISH SONGBOOK Featuring an eclectic programme ranging from Ivor Novello to Andrew Lloyd Webber, Lionel Bart to Leslie Bricusse, with The Beatles, Take That, Coldplay & Gilbert & Sullivan, Sat 4 June, Bramall Hall, Birmingham University

SUNDAY CLASSICS Presenting a range of young stars of the future from the classical world, ranging from opera singers to violinists to harpists at the very start of their careers... Sun 5 June The Spotted Dog, Digbeth, B'ham

CHARITY SCRATCH CONCERT WITH CONSERVATOIRE ALUMNI ORCHESTRA & CHORUS Programme includes works by Faure, Parry & Shostakovich, Sun 5 June, Adrian Boult Hall, Birmingham Conservatoire

Comedy Gigs

TOM LUCY, TOM ALLEN & ANDY ROBINSON Wed 1 June, Bramall Music Building, Birmingham

HOWL Wed 1 June, The Mockingbird, Birmingham

SARA PASCOE Thurs 2 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

MANILLA ROAD COMEDY Thurs 2 June, The Victoria, Birmingham, B'ham

GLENN MOORE, GARETH RICHARDS Thurs 2 June, Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

KEITH FARNAN, RO CAMPBELL & COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 2 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SEAN PERCIVAL, JAMES COOK & JELLYBEAN MARTINEZ Fri 3 June, Katie

Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

MICKEY SHARMA, TIM CLARK, JOHN MOLONEY & PIERRE HOLLINS Fri 3 June, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

MAX & IVAN Fri 3 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

MARK STEEL Fri 3 June, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

BILL BAILEY Fri 3 June, Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham

STUART GOLDSMITH, TOM ALLEN, RO CAMPBELL & KEITH FARNAN Fri 3 - Sat 4 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

MARTIN MOR, CHRIS BETTS, ANDY WHITE & STEPHEN BAILEY Sat 4 June, Coventry Showcase

WILL-E, NINIA BENJAMIN, JOHN RYAN & JOHN SIMMIT Sat 4 June, mac, B'ham

PIERRE HOLLINS, MICKEY SHARMA, JOHN MOLONEY & TIM CLARK Sat 4 June, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

RETURN OF THE GRUMPY OLD WOMEN Sat 4 June, Bedworth Civic Hall, Warwickshire

COMEDY WITH CAKE - SUITABLE FOR ALL THE FAMILY FEATURING BARBARA NICE, MAUREEN YOUNGER & IAN CRAWFORD Sun 5 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

Theatre

THE MUSICAL OF ALL MUSICALS (THE MUSICALS!) An 'hilarious' satire where one storyline becomes five delightful musicals, until Sat 4 June, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

SHADOWLANDS Stephen Boxer, Tony Slattery & Amanda Ryan star in the stage version of William Nicholson's TV drama and subsequent film of the same name, until Sat 4 June, The REP, Birmingham

THE QUIET HOUSE Gareth Farr's highly anticipated new play explores fertility and the taboo that surrounds it, until Sat 4 June, The REP, Birmingham

BRIDESHEAD REVISITED English Touring Theatre and York Theatre Royal present the world premiere of Evelyn Waugh's classic novel, until Sat 4 June, Malvern Theatres



CATS Andrew Lloyd Webber's record-breaking musical returns, direct from the London Palladium, until Sat 4 June, Birmingham Hippodrome

ALICE IN WONDERLAND Blue Orange Arts presents its version of Lewis Carroll's classic tale, until Sat 11 June, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

DOCTOR FAUSTUS Maria Aberg returns to the RSC to direct Marlowe's notorious tale of vanity, greed & damna-

tion, until Thurs 4 Aug, The Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

THE ALCHEMIST Polly Findlay directs Ben Jonson's comedy about human folly, until Sat 6 Aug, The Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

HAMLET Simon Godwin directs Paapa Essiedu as Hamlet in Shakespeare's searing tragedy, until Sat 13 Aug, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

CYMBELINE Melly Still directs Shakespeare's rarely performed work, Sat 15 Oct, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

BELONGING WiP presents a brand new work of theatre which explores the lives of two groups of characters desperately trying to find a place to belong, Wed 1 June, mac, B'ham

CELEBRATING CILLA Sounds of the '60s review, fronted by Brenda Collins, Wed 1 June, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

RATBURGER Heartbreak Productions present the theatrical premiere of David Walliams' modern thriller, Wed 1 - Thurs 2 June, Jephson Gardens, Leamington Spa

THE WHITE SNAKE WUDS in collaboration with Codpiece present an inventive retelling of the heart-warming Chinese fable - a powerful love story which tells of the relationship between a human and an immortal snake spirit, Wed 1 - Sat 4 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

TOM: A STORY OF TOM JONES The Musical Theatre na nOg present an inspirational story of self-belief and determination, Wed 1 - Sat 4 June, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

THE GIANT'S LOO ROLL Humour, music and a touch of sparkle combine in this 'giant' of a children's musical, Thurs 2 June, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

DINOSAUR PARK Show-stopping adventure, spine-tingling theatrics and megalithic mayhem, Thurs 2 June, The Old Rep Theatre, B'ham

TEA WITH OSCAR WILDE The popular modern chat show reimagined for the Victorian age, hosted by the acclaimed wit of the era, Oscar Wilde. Thurs 2 - Fri 3 June, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

THE TROJAN WOMAN Swan Youth Theatre present Euripides' Greek tragedy, Thurs 2 - Sat 4 June, St Swithun's Church, Worcester

RIVERS UP! New touring production of Alex Jones' epic tale covering the serious subject of climate change, Thurs 2 - Sat 4 June, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

THE NEW KID The Young Rep presents Grace Barrington's drama, which centres on a new boy at school who rebels against conforming, Thurs 2 - Sat 4 June, The REP, Birmingham

KING ARTHUR AND THE INGLEWOOD Moon On A Stick uses its unique fusion of puppetry and live action to recount the popular fable, Fri 3 June, Albany Theatre, Coventry

LATE NIGHT LOVE 'An unflinching

attempt to unpick the truth from the fiction of chocolate boxes and untangle expectations of adulthood from the promise of power ballads', presented by Eggs Collective, Fri 3 June, mac, Birmingham

SING-A-LONG-A GREASE Sing-a-long screening of the classic film starring John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John, Fri 3 June, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

PONGO'S PARTY Entertainment for young audiences, featuring the voices of CBeebies' Justin Fletcher & Nicole Davis as Pongo the Pig and Molly-Moo the Cow, Fri 3 - Sat 4 June, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

THE BEST THING A Swinging '60s story of unconditional love from the UK's leading full mask theatre company, Fri 3 - Sat 4 June, Swan Theatre, Worcester



NON ZERO ONE: GROUND CONTROL A unique interactive performance, developed with support from the Unicorn Theatre, Fri 3 - Sun 5 June, mac, Birmingham

DISCONNECTED Nick Wilkes' comedy about an engineer sent to an island to disconnect an old telephone box, Fri 3 - Sat 11 June, Hall Green Little Theatre, Birmingham

THE CHRIS & PUI SHOW New stage show featuring toys and characters from the hit TV programme, Sat 4 June, The Core, Solihull

FEMINASITY Comedy sketch show where Megan Ford takes down the patriarchy with nothing but her bare hands and some fabulous wigs, Sat 4 June, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

SEARCHING FOR THE HAPPINESS New children's play which follows a young Esmeralda as she sets off on an adventure, Sat 4 June, mac, B'ham

DING DONG Cloud Cuckoo Land presents an interactive musical play about time for younger children, Sat 4 June, Albany Theatre, Coventry

TELL ME ON A SUNDAY Jodie Prenger stars in Andrew Lloyd Webber and Don Black's one-woman musical which charts the misadventures of a young English girl in New York in the heady days of the 1980s, Sat 4 June, Palace Theatre, Redditch

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST Heartbreak Productions present an outdoor performance of Oscar Wilde's tour de force, Sat 4 - Sun 5 June, Jephson Gardens, Leamington Spa

INTO THE WEST Travelling Light presents its internationally acclaimed story of grit and magic, love and loss, hope and discovery, Sun 5 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

Dance

BEING FRANK: BOOTCAMP Featuring fun and creative devising opportunities where everyone will be given the opportunity to create their own dance, until Fri 3 June, Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

PINOCCHIO Presented by Ballet Theatre UK, Thurs 2 June, The Core Theatre, Solihull



Talks

GYLES BRANDRETH - WORD POWER! Sat 4 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

TONY GARNETT: BROMSGROVE WORDS British film and television producer Tony Garnett is best known for his 13-year association with director Ken Loach and his TV docudrama *Cathy Come Home*, Sun 5 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

HEART OF A DOG (15) This documentary weaves together childhood memories, video footage and musings on a post-9/11 world and the Buddhist conception of the afterlife. Creating a collage-like visual language out of the raw materials of multimedia artist Laurie Anderson's life and art. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Wed 1 June

DEPARTURE (15) The feature debut of British filmmaker Andrew Stegall is a tender coming-of-age story about a young boy realising his sexuality at the same time as his family life is unravelling at the seams. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Thurs 2 June

MILES AHEAD (15) Don Cheadle as first-time director was praised for his approach to film biography, creating a free-flowing style in keeping with his subject's music. Ewan McGregor plays an unscrupulous journalist attempting to get the inside skinny on the reclusive trumpeter, band-leader and composer Miles Davis. Light House Media Centre, Wolverhampton, until Thurs 2 June; mac, Birmingham, Wed 1 - Thurs 2 June; Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Fri 3 June

HIGH-RISE (15) The director Ben Wheatley has garnered considerable acclaim following his films *Down Terrace*, *Kill List* and *A Field In*

England. Here, he untangles an ecosystem preserved in a luxury London tower block, where a young doctor (Tom Hiddleston) moves to the 25th floor to discover fierce dissent between the residents. June, Artrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 3 & Sun 5

OUR KIND OF TRAITOR (15) A British couple on holiday find themselves befriended by a Russian oligarch. However, Dima has an ulterior motive for his amiability, and soon the couple's holiday in the sun turns into a game of shadows. Stars Ewan McGregor & Stellan Skarsgård. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 3 - Thurs 9 June

CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY (PG) When Charlie wins a golden ticket to the most magnificent chocolate factory in the world, his life is changed forever... Stars Johnny Depp. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 4 June

RAN (12a) A 4K digital restoration of Akira Kurosawa's (*Seven Samurai*, *Ikiru*, *Rashômon*) famous interpretation of King Lear and 16th century warlord Mori Motonari; and the most expensive Japanese film ever produced on its original release in 1985. Stars Tatsuya Nakadai. Foreign language, subtitled. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sun 5 June

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

BLOOD ORANGE (15)

BREAKING THE BANK (tbc)

HOLDING THE MAN (15)

THE MEASURE OF A MAN (tbc)

ME BEFORE YOU (12A)

THE NICE GUYS (tbc)

RACE (PG)

VERSUS: THE LIFE AND FILMS OF KEN LOACH (tbc)

Events

FAMILY CRAFT ACTIVITY: MASQUERADE MASKS Make your own masquerade mask and immerse yourself into the grandeur of Aston Hall, Wed 1 June, Aston Hall, Birmingham

THE COUNTRYSIDE COMES TO TOWN Find out what goes on down on the farm and in the countryside with staff and students from Moreton Morrell Agricultural College, Wed 1 June, Coventry Transport Museum

CRAFTY KIDS WORKSHOP Come and get crafty! A family-friendly make-and-take craft activity led by a designer maker, Wed 1 - Thurs 2 June, Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

EXOTIC ANIMAL AND BIRD ENCOUNTERS WITH TREVOR HILL Wed 1 - Thurs 2 June, Hampton Court Castle, Worcestershire

DESIGN YOUR OWN THEATRE SET Create your own mini-theatre set in a box, Wed 1 - Fri 3 June, Compton Verney Gallery, Warwickshire

HALF-TERM FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT Join a host of children's entertainers

as they spread chocolate joy, Wed 1 - Sun 5 June, Cadbury World, B'ham

QUEEN VICTORIA'S BIRTHDAY Including a new parade, Wed 1 - Sun 5 June, Blists Hill, Ironbridge, Shropshire

RHINO WEEK Raising funds for rhino conservation, Wed 1 - Sun 5 June, West Midland Safari and Leisure Park, Bewdley, Worcestershire

DIG FOR VICTORY TRAIL Explore the gardens and learn more about the Dig For Victory campaign, Wed 1 - Sun 5 June, Upton House & Gardens, Warwickshire

FROM THE FIRE - STUDIO CERAMICS FROM THE MIDLAND POTTERS ASSOCIATION Wed 1 - Sun 5 June, Selly Manor, Birmingham

SHAKESPEARE OUTDOOR GAMES Discover new games such as pinecone skittles, knuckle bones, checkers with a twist and 'marvellous marbles', Wed 1 - Sun 5 June, Compton Verney Gallery, Warwickshire

MISTER MAKER Wed 1 - Sun 12 June, National Sea Life Centre, Birmingham

MAKE A TUDOR GALLEON HAT: CRAFT ACTIVITY Thurs 2 June, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

EVENING SUPPER LECTURES 2016 A two-course supper in the Barn Restaurant, accompanied by a talk on a variety of subjects and a chance to stroll in the gardens after hours, Thurs 2 June, Baddesley Clinton, Solihull

MURDER THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS Murder-mystery game that takes place at the Mad Hatters Tea/Dinner Party, Fri 3 June, Fargo Village, Coventry

TEDDY BEAR ZIPWIRE Make a cape for your teddy and watch him fly down the house to the crash zone below, Fri 3 June, Croome Park, Worcestershire

PRINT & SEW A BOOKMARK WITH THE EMBROIDER'S GUILD Head to the Temple Greenhouse to leaf-print and stitch your own bookmark, Fri 3 June, Croome Park, Worcestershire

ANIMAL MANIA Fri 3 June, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

DIGBETH FIRST FRIDAY Digbeth comes alive on the first Friday of each month with exhibitions, late-night openings, special events, culture in unexpected spaces, live music, street food and more, Fri 3 June, Digbeth, Birmingham

NITRO CIRCUS LIVE Direct from sell-out shows across the globe, 'the world's greatest action sports show' returns for its first ever UK outdoor stadium tour, Fri 3 June, Sixways Stadium, Worcester

A BATTY EVENING Discover some of the bat habitats at Spetchley, Fri 3 June, Spetchley Park Gardens, Worcester



CRAFTY COUNTRYSIDE Create crafts based on animals you can find in the Worcestershire countryside, Fri 3 June, The Elgar Birthplace Museum, Worcester

SHREWSBURY FARMERS MARKET Fri 3 June, The Square, Shrewsbury

MEDIEVAL HERALDIC SHIELD Make a shield with your own coat of arms, Fri 3 June, Weoley Castle Ruins, Birmingham

UK GAMES EXPO Fri 3 - Sun 5 June, NEC, Birmingham

THE KNITTED CHARACTER FOLK FESTIVAL Sat 4 June, The Blue Boar, Warwickshire

PHOTO DAY - IMPROVE YOUR SKILLS Talk to experienced photographers about how to improve your photos, Sat 4 June, Chedhams Yard, Stratford-upon-Avon

SWORDS AND ADMIRAL HATS CRAFT ACTIVITY Create your own 18th century sword - or a Lord Nelson-inspired hat!, Sat 4 June, Soho House, Birmingham

THE KINGMAKER'S MEDIAEVAL BANQUET Dine with the infamous Earl of Warwick in the year 1471, Sat 4 June, Warwick Castle

VINTAGE IN THE VILLAGE, FEATURING THE MOTOFEEST CAR BOOT Celebration of all things retro and vintage, taking place throughout FarGo and surrounded by a community of over 40 independent retailers, creatives and artists, Sat 4 - Sun 5 June, Fargo Village, Coventry

COVENTRY MOTOFEEST 2016 Sat 4 - Sun 5 June, Coventry City Centre

FIRST WORLD WAR WEEKEND Sat 4 - Sun 5 June, Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire

BIRMINGHAM BUS TOURS 2016 Sat 4 - Sun 5 June, Birmingham City Centre

RAF WALKS Be shown where, in 1940, a substantial part of Croome Park was requisitioned for the building of a new airfield, known as RAF Defford, Sun 5 June, Croome Park, Worcestershire

MIDLAND BONSAI SHOW Members will be staging an extensive display of their trees, which will be divided into competitive classes and judged, Sun 5 June, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

THE NATIONAL METRO & MINI SHOW Sun 5 June, British Motor Museum, Gaydon, Warwickshire

ANTIQUES & COLLECTORS FAIR Sun 5 June, National Motorcycle Museum, Solihull

THE BIG PICNIC A giant teddy bear's picnic. Bring along your favourite teddy (adults can bring theirs too!), Sun 5 June, Compton Verney Gallery

ARCHERY LESSONS WITH REALLY RURAL Sun 5 June, Croome Park, Worcestershire

BIRMINGHAM DIAMOND LEAGUE Sun 5 June, Alexander Stadium, Birmingham

CLASSIC FORD SHOW The UK's premier classic Ford event, featuring drag strip action, huge club car displays and more, Sun 5 June, Santa Pod Raceway, Northants

The BigArts Show

UNDER 16s FREE ADMISSION
£6
 EARLY BIRD TICKETS ONLINE*
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A SHOWCASE OF THE BEST BRITISH ART & CRAFT

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Don't forget we have **FREE PARKING** at our shows

Classical, blues and folk live music. Good food and The Sculptor's Rest bar.

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Folk Songs and Finzi

An afternoon with the City of Birmingham Choir

Sunday 3rd July 2016 2.30pm

Elgar Concert Hall, The Bramall, University of Birmingham,
 Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT

John Rutter

The Sprig of Thyme

Ralph Vaughan Williams

Six Studies in English Folk Song

Harold Darke

As the Leaves Fall

Cecilia McDowall

A Fancy of Folk Songs

Gerald Finzi

Requiem da Camera



Ticket prices £19 Concessions £15 plus transaction fee*

*£3 transaction fee, plus £1 (optional) postage, charged on all bookings except purchases made in person at Town Hall or Symphony Hall Box office.

Find out more about this concert at www.citychoir.org.uk

Box Office: 0121 345 0603 or online at www.tbsh.co.uk



Arley Arboretum & Gardens

Father's day
 Sunday 19th June
FREE BACON BUTTIE*
 for all dads who visit with their children, big or small!

THE VIKINGS ARE COMING TO ARLEY ARBORETUM!
 FREE with General Admission*

Saturday 18th - Sunday 19th June 11am-5pm

The Raudr Vagr Vikings will be setting up camp and re-creating the lifestyles of the Viking and Anglo-Saxon peoples. Enjoy demonstrations of Viking Age crafts, skills, games and pastimes... Plus combat displays!

Follow us on Facebook for events, news & offers!
www.arleyarboretum.co.uk

*Free bacon sandwich valid with adult admission into the Arboretum. Some events on select days only. Some features are an additional cost. Please check website for more info. E&OE. The Roger & Douglas Turner Charitable Trust, Reg. No. 1154467

Plant Hunters' Fair
 Saturday 11th June 11am-5pm

Come and speak to the specialists at our early summer plant fair surrounded by the beauty of Arley Arboretum...

Arley Arboretum & Gardens

One day only half price entry into the Plant Fair, Gardens and Arboretum
 Adults £2.50
 Children £1
 (Under 3's Free)

Follow us on Facebook for events, news & offers!
www.arleyarboretum.co.uk

*Some events on select days only. Some features are an additional cost. Please check website for more info. E&OE. The Roger & Douglas Turner Charitable Trust, Reg. No. 1154467

Gigs

HUGH MASEKELA & LARRY WILLIS Mon 6 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

NICHOLAS ALLBROOK Mon 6 June, The Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

ADAM ANT Tues 7 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

TIR NA NOG - LEO O'KELLY & SONNY CONDELL Tues 7 June, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

TOTALLY TINA Tues 7 June, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

JIM CAUSLEY Tues 7 June, Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

THE WEDDING CRASHERS Tues 7 June, The Jam House, Birmingham

SUGARHILL GANG Wed 8 June, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

BRYAN CORBETT Wed 8 June, Stratford Artshouse

WALKING ON CARS Wed 8 June, O2 Academy, Birmingham

SYLVAIN DARRIFOURCQ + IN LOVE WITH Wed 8 June, mac, Birmingham

BYE BYE BABY - THE MUSIC OF FRANKIE VALLI & THE FOUR SEASONS Wed 8 June, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

BEN SMITH Thurs 9 June, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

INTRIGUE IN TANGIERS Thurs 9 June, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

HOW SWEET IT IS - MOTOWN'S GREATEST HITS Thurs 9 June, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

LYON ESTATES + CARDINAL Thurs 9 June, The Flapper, B'ham

BEACH SLANG Thurs 9 June, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

CHARLOTTE CARPENTER Thurs 9 June, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath, Birmingham

GABRIELLE APLIN Thurs 9 June, Kasbah, Coventry

TALON - THE BEST OF EAGLES Thurs 9 June, The Core Theatre, Solihull

RICKY COOL AND THE IN CROWD Fri 10 June, The Blue Monkey Club, Birmingham

PAT BRESLIN Fri 10 June, Irish Centre, B'ham

DECLAN MCKENNA Fri 10 June, The Empire, Coventry

THE CRIBS Fri 10 June, Kasbah, Coventry

PROSE + SPECIAL GUESTS Fri 10 June, The Flapper, Birmingham

TIGRESS Fri 10 June, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THINK FLOYD Fri 10 June, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

BEN WATT BAND Fri 10 June, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath, B'ham

ALL FOLK'D UP Fri 10 June, The Core Theatre, Solihull

MAMMA MIA PARTY WITH VIVA ABBA Fri 10 June, Nailcote Hall, Berkswell

THE BORN AGAIN BEATLES Fri 10 June, The Roadhouse, B'ham

JOHN GRANT Fri 10 June, O2 Institute, B'ham

THE OTHER COVERS TRIO Fri 10 June, Marr's Bar, Worcester

CATAPULT CLUB FEAT. RUBIO Fri 10 June, O2 Academy, Birmingham

PINK - MISS UNDERSTOOD Fri 10 June, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

DRONGOS FOR EUROPE + LUCIFER STAR MACHINE + DRAGSTER Fri 10 June, The Rainbow Venues, Birmingham

JULIAN ARGUELLES' TETRA WITH PERCY PURSGLOVE Fri 10 June, Adrian Boulton Hall, Birmingham

ABBA MANIA Fri 10 June, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

ROY ORBISON & THE WILBURYS Fri 10 June, Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

POST WAR GLAMOUR GIRLS + FRAUDS (EP LAUNCH) Fri 10 June, The Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

BLAKE Fri 10 June, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

THE JENTS Fri 10 June, Brindley Place, B'ham

JAKE SIMS Sat 11 June,

O2 Academy, B'ham

PINK FLOYD'S THE WALL 'LIVE' Sat 11 June, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

U2 2 Sat 11 June, The Swan Theatre, Worcs

WILD WILY BARRETT'S FRENCH CONNECTION Sat 11 June, Evesham Arts Centre, Worcs

GREG RUSSELL & CIARAN ALGAR Sat 11 June, Kenilworth Castle

WOMEN IN ROCK + BACKSTREET THUNDER Sat 11 June, The Roadhouse, B'ham

DAVE HANSON Sat 11 June, Cafe Nero, B'ham

JACKSON - MICHAEL JACKSON TRIBUTE Sat 11 June, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

KNOXVILLE HIGHWAY Sat 11 June, Palace Theatre, Redditch

JIVE TALKIN' Sat 11 June, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

THE RIFLES Sat 11 June, Stratford Artshouse

THE ORBISON STORY Sat 11 June, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

TALON - THE BEST OF EAGLES Sat 11 June, Bedworth Civic Hall

T.REXTASY Sat 11 June, The Core Theatre, Solihull

100% APE WITH SATSANGI, SCREECH BATS, GENERAL THEORY OF DUB, BOLAPSE Sat 11 June, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

WALK OF FAME Sun 12 June, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

TONY KEARNEY Sun 12 June, Irish Centre, Birmingham

BAND OF ROGUES Sun 12 June, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

DANCING IN THE STREET, MOTOWN'S GREATEST HITS Sun 12 June, Birmingham Town Hall

HACKNEY COLLIERY BAND Sun 12 June, mac Birmingham

SENSATION - THE WHO SHOW Sun 12 June, Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

KAST OFF KINKS Sun 12 June, Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath, B'ham

Classical Music

LUNCHTIME ORGAN CONCERT WITH THOMAS TROTTER & CATRIN FINCH Programme includes works by J. Sanders, C. Franck, J.S Bach, Debussy, Elias Parish-Alvars, M. Grandjany & Handel, Mon 6 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CHAMBER ENSEMBLES Mon 6 June, The Dome, Bramall Music Building, Birmingham University

CBSO: ITALIAN SYMPHONY Featuring Walter Weller (Conductor) & Laurence Jackson (Violin) Programme includes works by Dvorak, Bruch & Mendelssohn, Wed 8 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE THREEPENNY OPERA Opera Warwick, in Collaboration with Codpiece Theatre, present a steam-punk-styled performance of Bertolt Brecht & Kurt Weill's mock-opera, Thurs 9 - Sat 11 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

LUNCHTIME PIANO & ORGAN DUET BY MATTHEW GIBSON & RICHARD COOK Fri 10 June, Worcester Cathedral

BLAKE Fri 10 June, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

BIRMINGHAM PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA Featuring Michael Lloyd (conductor BPO), Daniele Rosina (conductor - Aspire Ensemble), Di Xiao (piano). Programme includes works by Mozart, Ravel & a selection of BBC 10 pieces, Sat 11 June, Adrian Boulton Hall, Birmingham

CAPABILITY BROWN 300: A CELEBRATION OF HIS LIFE IN MUSIC Featuring Birmingham Conservatoire's Chamber Orchestra. Programme includes works by Handel, Arne, Boyce & Mudge, Fri 10 June, Birmingham Cathedral

BIRMINGHAM PROMS Free outdoor concert culminating with a spectacular firework display, Sat 11 June, The Bramall, Birmingham University

MALVERN FESTIVAL CHORUS - MUSIC FOR SHAKESPEARE Featuring works by Vaughan Williams, Finzi & Parry, Sat 11 June, Great Malvern Priory, Worcestershire

BCMG - REMEMBERING THE FUTURE Programme includes works by Judith Weir, Luke Bedford, Richard Baker, Zoe Martlew, Howard Skempton & John Woolrich, Sun 12 June, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

CITY OF SOUNDS: BGSO HALL OF FAME Featuring Birmingham Gay Symphony Orchestra, Kat Galbraith (violin) & Philip Mills (clarinet). Programme includes works by Grieg, Mozart, Dvorak, Saint-Saens, Copland & Prokofiev, Sun 12 June, Adrian Boulton Hall, Birmingham Conservatoire

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA Students from the University of Birmingham present an original interpretation of Britten's work, combining opera, musical theatre & cabaret, Sun 12, Tues 14 & Wed 15 June, The Barber Institute, Birmingham

Comedy Gigs

CHEEKY MONKEY COMEDY Tues 7 June, The Dark Horse, Birmingham

BETHANY BLACK, SUSAN MURRAY, VG LEE & MAUREEN YOUNGER Wed 8 June, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

EDDIE IZZARD Wed 8 June, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa



HOWL Wed 8 June, The Mockingbird, Birmingham

ROB ROUSE, CHRISTIAN REILLY Thurs 9 June, mac, Birmingham

ENRYCH IN STITCHES COMEDY FUNDRAISER FEATURING PHILL JUPITUS, MARCUS BRIGSTOCKE, FRANCESCA MARTINEZ & ANGELA BARNES Thurs 9 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

BOBBY DAVRO Thurs 9 June, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

ROB ROUSE, FELICITY WARD, MARK SIMMONS & THE BOY WITH TAPE ON HIS FACE Fri 10 June, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

MATT FORDE, KIERAN BOYD Fri 10 June, Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

JAMALI MADDIX, JOEL DOMMETT, DAVE TWENTYMAN & SEAN COLLINS Fri 10 - Sat 11 June, The Glee Club, B'ham

DEBORAH FRANCES Sat 11 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

ANDRE VINCENT, FELICITY WARD, MARK SIMMONS & THE BOY WITH THE TAPE ON HIS FACE Sat 11 June, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

SARA PASCOE Sun 12 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

Theatre

AFTER MISS JULIE Helen George (Call The Midwife) plays Miss Julie in Patrick Marber's erotic psychological thriller, Mon 6 - Sat 11 June, Malvern Theatre



BLACKADDER: THE TUDOR YEARS All & Sundry present a stage show based on the much-loved TV series, Tues 7 - Sat 11 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THAT'LL BE THE DAY A musical romp through the youthful days of Rock'n'Roll in the '50s, on through the Swinging '60s and into the taste-free days of the 1970s, Wed 8 June, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

I, ELIZABETH From the creators of *Dalloway & Austen's Women* comes a one-woman play which explores the struggles of Queen Elizabeth as she attempts to reconcile the desires of womanhood with the duties of sovereignty. Rebecca Vaughan stars, Guy Masterson directs, Wed 8 June, Swan Theatre, Worcester

THE TEMPEST Heartbreak Productions present an outdoor staging of Shakespeare's final play, Wed 8 - Thurs 9 June, Jephson Gardens, Leamington Spa



BEYOND CARING Darkly humorous new play by Alexander Zeldin which exposes an invisible class, Wed 8 - Sat 11 June, The REP, Birmingham

WNO - CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA/PAGLIACCI Welsh National Opera celebrates its 70th birthday with the double bill that started it all, Thurs 9 June, Birmingham Hippodrome

BOBBY DAVRO Brand new show from one of last year's *Celebrity Big Brother* finalists, Thurs 9 June, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

BLACK IS THE COLOUR OF MY VOICE Inspired by the story of Nina Simone, a successful jazz singer and civil rights activist seeking redemption after the untimely death of her father, Thurs 9 June, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham



THE SPINNING WHEEL A fusion of storytelling, projection mapping, hip hop, jazz and spoken word, Thurs 9 June, mac, Birmingham

PHANTOM OF THE OPERA Amateur production of Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical, presented by the Harlequins Drama Group, Thurs 9 - Sat 11 June, Palace Theatre, Redditch

COCKROACHED Intense drama where two actors swap roles, their production taking on a different shape every night, Thurs 9 - Sat 18 June, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

GRUMPY OLD WOMEN Three live and

rather furious females take to the stage for an orgy of middle-aged mayhem, Fri 10 June, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

CHAPLIN A heartwarming musical tale of the first true British icon of cinema. Steven Arnold (Ashley Peacock in *Coronation Street*) & Nicole Faraday (*Bad Girls*, *Emmerdale*), star, Fri 10 June, Malvern Theatre

WNO - IN PARENTHESIS British composer Iain Bell's adaptation of the epic poem by Welsh poet, writer and artist David Jones, Fri 10 June, Birmingham Hippodrome

LOVEHARD Two men (*LoveHard*) play more than 30 characters on a night of frights, blights and lack of lights... Fri 10 June, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

THE TEMPEST Heartbreak Productions present an outdoor staging of Shakespeare's final play, Fri 10 June, Hartelbury Castle, Worcestershire

MONSTERSAURUS Brand new, energetic show from the creators of *Aliens Love Underpants*. Expect spills, thrills, magic & mayhem... Sat 11 June, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

MUCH ADD ABOUT NOTHING The Lord Chamberlain's Men present an outdoor staging of Shakespeare's battle of the sexes, Sat 11 June, Packwood House, Solihull

FIRST STAGES: DING DONG Cloud Cuckoo Land presents an interactive musical play about time for younger children, Sat 11 June, The REP, Birmingham

WNO - CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA/PAGLIACCI Welsh National Opera celebrates its 70th birthday with the double bill that started it all, Sat 11 June, Birmingham Hippodrome

COOKING WITH ELVIS The Crescent Theatre Company present Lea Hall's anarchic play about child abuse, wife abuse, sex, loss and cooking, Sat 11 - Sat 18 June, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

MURDER ON THE TERRACE Heartbreak Productions present an outdoor staging of David Kerby-Kendall's part romp, part farce, Sun 12 June, Severn Bank House, Severn Stoke, Worcester

Dance

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD & THE THREE LITTLE PIGS Ballet Cymru present their versions of two poems from the pen of Roald Dahl, Sat 11 June, The Roses, Tewkesbury

Talks

CONFLICTING ACCOUNTS: WARFARE AND THE PUBLIC ARCHIVE A symposium exploring the subject of conflict and its interpretation in our national archives. Chaired by Professor Lynda Morris, Sat 11 June, mac, B'ham



Chaplin - Malvern Theatre & Artrix, Bromsgrove

AUTHORS OF A CERTAIN ERA Four novelists share their experience of getting a novel published when no longer in the first flush of youth, Sun 12 June, St John's Library, Worcester

Film

INDEPENDENT CINEMAS:

ONLY YESTERDAY (PG) It's 1982, and Taeko is 27 years old, unmarried, and has lived her whole life in Tokyo. She decides to visit her relatives in the countryside, and as the train travels through the night, memories flood back of her younger years... With the voices of Daisy Ridley & Dev Patel. mac, Birmingham, Tues 7 June

THE DIVIDE (12a) A documentary telling the story of seven individuals striving for a better life in the modern-day US and UK - where the top 0.1% owns as much wealth as the bottom 90%. By plotting these tales together, we uncover how virtually every aspect of our lives is controlled by one factor: the size of the gap between rich and poor. mac, Birmingham, Tues 7 & Thurs 9 June

DHEEPAN (15) Arguably the most highly acclaimed director working in French cinema today, Jacques Audiard invariably delivers credible and pertinent dramas that explore the world we live in. Here, he focuses on Dheepan, a Tamil Tiger fighter who flees to Paris for political asylum with a fake identity... Winner of the Palm d'Or at last year's Cannes festival. Stars Antonythasan Jesuthasan. Foreign language with subtitles. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Tues 7 & Thurs 9 June

THE QUEEN ON TOUR PART 1 With unprecedented access to the royal household, the films in this unique collection provide a valuable record of royal tours and state visits, and also include revealing portraits of the

Queen and her children. This is the seventh volume in the BFI's ongoing releases of the films produced by the UK Government's Central Office of Information, and the first to focus on official films made about the royalty. This four-hour documentary has been divided into two screenings. mac, Birmingham, Fri 10 June

WHERE TO INVADE NEXT Just in time for election season, America's political provocateur, Michael Moore, is back with his new film, confronting the most pressing issues facing America today and finding solutions in the most unlikely places. Followed by a Q&A via satellite with Michael Moore. mac, Birmingham, Fri 10 June; Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 10 June

FLORENCE FOSTER JENKINS (PG) Meryl Streep stars in the true story of Florence Foster Jenkins, a New York heiress and socialite who obsessively pursued her dream of becoming a great singer. Convinced of her own talent, the voice Florence heard in her head was beautiful, while to everyone else it was both hilarious and awful. Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Fri 10 June; Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Sat 11 - Thurs 16 June



LOVE & FRIENDSHIP (U) Kate Beckinsale plays Lady Susan Vernon who, while staying at a massive estate, sets about finding a suitable husband for her daughter. Of course, she wouldn't mind an eligible man for herself... Also stars Chloë Sevigny. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 10 - Thurs 16 June



Big Fish Little Fish Family Rave - Rainbow Venues, Digbeth

SING STREET (12a) A simple love story in which a boy starts up a band in order to impress a girl. Bono himself collaborated on the soundtrack. Stars Lucy Boynton & Maria Doyle Kennedy. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Fri 10 - Tues 14 June; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 10 - Wed 15 June

COOL HAND LUKE (15) Paul Newman's rebellious chain-gang prisoner fights the system and Oscar winner George Kennedy's fellow inmate in this 1960s

classic. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Sat 11 June

ZOOTROPOLIS (PG) Here, the leading characters are a red fox who's a con artist (Jason Bateman) and a rabbit who's a rookie cop (Ginnifer Goodwin). Together, they team up to try and uncover a conspiracy. Idris Elba is the voice of a cape buffalo, obviously. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Sat 11 June

THE IRON GIANT (PG) Nine-year-old

Hogarth Hughes befriends an alien giant robot that has fallen from outer space and landed in his small hometown. When a US Government agent is assigned to destroy the giant at all costs, it's up to Hogarth to protect him. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 11 June

EVERYBODY WANTS SOME! (15) On their last weekend before the start of school, a group of college baseball players test the waters of unsupervised adulthood... If the concept of this comedy fails to get your juices flowing, remember that director Richard Linklater's last film, *Boyhood*, was nominated for six Oscars (and won the BAFTA for best film). Stars Blake Jenner & Zoey Deutch. mac, Birmingham, Sat 11 - Wed 15 June

GABOR (PG) Directed by Sebastián Alfie, this inspiring documentary tells the remarkable story of a friendship between Sebas and Gabor, a young filmmaker and a blind cinematographer. HOME has specially commissioned an audio description for blind or partially sighted customers to accompany this screening. Foreign language, subtitled. mac, Birmingham, Sun 12 June

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

Released Fri 10 June, showing at selected cinemas

THE BOSS (tbc)

EMBRACE OF THE SERPENT (12a)

FIRE AT SEA (tbc)

LEARNING TO DRIVE (tbc)

MIRACLES FROM HEAVEN (12a)

MOTHER'S DAY (12a)

WHERE TO INVADE NEXT (tbc)

Events

DUNSTALL CASTLE OPEN DAYS Climb the spiral staircase at Dunstall to get views across the countryside, Tues 7 June, Croome Park, Worcestershire

AUTOMECHANIKA BIRMINGHAM Tues 7 - Thu 9 June, NEC, Birmingham

EARLY YEARS: GO MESSY Farmyard-inspired playtime, Wed 8 June, Coventry Transport Museum

HANDSWORTH HERITAGE WALK Admire fine Georgian and Victorian architecture, a convent designed by Augustus Pugin and a church that was built nearly 1,000 years ago, Wed 8 June, Soho House, Birmingham

GEORGIAN BIRMINGHAM & CAPABILITY BROWN BUS TOUR Guided bus tour on the Big Brum Open Top Bus, Fri 10 June, Birmingham City Centre

ROYAL GARDEN PARTY Bring a picnic and take part in a whole host of fun activities, including a live trail, Sat 11 June, Soho House, Birmingham

BAT WALK Sat 11 June, Forge Mill Needle Museum, Redditch, Worcestershire

QUEEN E'S BLOC PARTY Celebrate the

90th Birthday of Queen Elizabeth in true FarGo Style! Sat 11 June, Fargo Village, Coventry

UNPLUG AND PLAY Playday outdoors in the gardens, Sat 11 June, Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens, Birmingham

PLANT HUNTERS' FAIR Sat 11 June, Arley Arboretum, Worcestershire

BOLLYWOOD CELEBRATION Sat 11 June, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

THE WEAVER'S HOUSE OPEN DAY Step back in time to Coventry's medieval past, Sat 11 June, The Weavers House, Coventry

CARS & COFFEE BREAKFAST CLUB An opportunity for classic car and motorcycle owners to display their cars in front of the museum, Sat 11 June, Coventry Transport Museum

PIKES AND MUSKETS See the grisly work of the Barber Surgeon and learn what it takes to be a soldier, Sat 11 June, Aston Hall, Birmingham

GREAT ROYAL GARDEN PARTY Celebrating the Queen's official 90th birthday, Sat 11 June, Hall's Croft, Stratford-upon-Avon

CLASSIC AND VINTAGE COMMERCIAL SHOW Featuring over 400 pre-1997 commercial vehicles, Sat 11 - Sun 12 June, British Motor Museum, Gaydon, Warwickshire

THE GREAT BRITISH FOOD FESTIVAL Sat 11 - Sun 12 June, Ragley Hall, Warwickshire

BIRMINGHAM BUS TOURS 2016 Sat 11 - Sun 12 June, Birmingham City Centre

THE SOOTY SHOW: SOOTY IN SPACE Join Sooty, Sweep and Soo for an adventure on the space station, complete with Sooty's Turbo Rocket, Sat 11 - Sun 12 June, Cadbury World, Birmingham

FIELDS OF JOY: A MUSICAL CELEBRATION OF THE TRACTOR Musical acts, food, fashions and culture with an Eastern flavour, Sun 12 June, Coventry Transport Museum

AUSTIN HEALEY CONCOURSE EVENT See a collection of these iconic cars, Sun 12 June, Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens, Birmingham

CHURCHILL FORGE OPEN DAY Sun 12 June, Churchill Forge Mill, Worcestershire

BIRMINGHAM BUS TOURS: PEAKY BLINDERS Sun 12 June, Birmingham City Centre

BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL RECORD FAIR Sun 12 June, National Motorcycle Museum, Solihull

COIN & BANKNOTE FAIR Sun 12 June, National Motorcycle Museum, Solihull

BIG FISH LITTLE FISH FAMILY RAVE Sun 12 June, The Rainbow Venues, Digbeth, Birmingham

VIP RECORD FAIR Sun 12 June, Fargo Village, Coventry

SCALEXTRICS SUPER PRIX 2016 Budding Lewis Hamiltons can put their racing skills to the test, Sun 12 June, Wonderful World of Trains and Planes, Birmingham

Queen Tribute Band

Saturday 18th June

Back by popular demand!

Join us for another fantastic evening with Flash, the top Queen Tribute band.

Doors will open at 6.30pm with a DJ to start the evening with some great music.

Flash take the stage at 9.15pm until late

Price £24.95 includes a curry and rice dish (vegetarian option available)

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WHAT'S ON
June 2016

STRATFORD
ARTSHOUSE



Saturday 4 June, 7.30pm
Bowjangles

If you like music, song, dance and comedy you will love Bowjangles. This multi talented piece not only play their instruments superbly, they also sing, dance, leap, tumble, juggle and joke.



Thursday 16 June, 8pm
Patrick Monahan

The family's favourite funnyman is on tour across the UK with his brand new stand up show. As seen on ITV's Splash! Fake Reaction, Show Me The Funny and Celebrity Squares.

This is a well put together show and Patrick Monahan is a great comic.



Friday 24 June 7.30pm
Clare Teal and her Trio

A dazzling evening of exquisite melodies and fabulous arrangements all interspersed with Clares warm and witty story telling.

01789 207100 / stratfordartshouse.co.uk



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Image courtesy of the organisers

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Saturday 2nd - Sunday 3rd July

THE RECREATION GROUND

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touchfm
Stratford Marina

www.stratfordriverfestival.co.uk

THE CORE
theatre solihull
formerly Solihull Arts Complex

COMING SOON!



Saturday 4 June 11am & 2pm
The Chris & Pui Show
The much-loved Chris & Pui from CBeebies 'Show Me, Show Me' TV show, return with their new show for youngsters. Meet them aftershow in the Studio.
£12 adult, £10 child



Friday 24 June 8.15pm
Steve Hall
Comedian Steve Hall, plus support from Jack Barry. Steve Hall who is one third of comedy trio We Are Klang, popular at Edinburgh's Festival, and writes for Russell Howard and more.
£10



Thursday 7 July 7.30pm
A Night In Venice
Glittering Opera extravaganza from the producers of Magical Mozart and A Viennese Strauss Gala. Starring Jonathan Ansell of G4 fame with Maria Kesselman.
£21



Wednesday 20 July 7.30pm
King Pleasure & the Biscuit Boys
This Popular UK swing band are dedicated to shaking you up and swinging you into the middle of next week. They are the Kings of Swing!
£14



Saturday 23 July 7.30pm
The Neales
The Neales blend of vocals and charm appeal to all ages and all audiences. Finalists of Britain's Got Talent, the show will feature support from the talented Ella Show, as well as a meet and greet after the show!
£15

Box Office: 0121 704 6962 www.thecoretheatresolihull.co.uk



Jonny & The Baptists - Warwick Arts Centre

Gigs

IBEN FOLDS & YMUSIC
Mon 13 June, Symphony Hall, B'ham

AN EVENING WITH HAFDIS HULD Mon 13 June, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

NASHVILLE Tues 14 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

MA POLAINE'S GREAT DECLINE Tues 14 June, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

LEE JONES Tues 14 June, The Jam House, Birmingham

TIM GARLAND Tues 14 June, Adrian Boulton Hall, Birmingham

JACK PACK Wed 15 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

KATHERINE JENKINS Wed 15 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

SON OF TOWN HALL Wed 15 June, Tin Music & Arts, Coventry

LUCAS D & THE GROOVE GHETTO Wed 15 June, The Jam House, Birmingham

EXPIRE Thurs 16 June, The Rainbow Venues, Digbeth, Birmingham

THE GOOD, THE BAD & THE ELDERLY Thurs 16 June, The Fleece Inn, Bretforton, Worcs

THE BIG WOLF BAND Thurs 16 June, The Roadhouse, B'ham

IMAX Thurs 16 June, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE SLAMBOVIAN CIRCUS OF DREAMS
Thurs 16 June, The Jam House, Birmingham

KILLER WAVE PSYCH SPECIAL WITH THE CULT OF DOM KELLER Fri 17 June, The Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE ELVIS YEARS Thurs 16 June, Palace Theatre, Redditch

UB4T Fri 17 June, Irish Centre, Birmingham

ANIMALS & FRIENDS Fri 17 June, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

LIZZIE AND THE BANSHIES Fri 17 June, The Marr's Bar, Worcester

ABSOLUTE BOWIE (TRIBUTE) Fri 17 June, O2 Institute, B'ham

BRITISH SEA POWER Fri 17 June, Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

PETE CHURCHILL & MISHKA ADAMS Fri 17 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SIMPLY MORE RED Fri 17 June, Palace Theatre, Redditch

JOHN COOPER CLARKE Fri 17 June, Birmingham Town Hall

HELLS BELLS ~ AC/DC TRIBUTE Fri 17 June, The Roadhouse, B'ham

UP4 THE DOWNSTROKE Fri 17 - Sat 18 June, The Jam House, B'ham

AN EVENING WITH THE DREAMERS Sat 18 June, The Swan Theatre, Worcester

JONNY & THE BAPTISTS
Sat 18 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

PAUL MCCLURE + ASHLAND Sat 18 June, Ort Cafe, Birmingham

THE MOJO FILTERS Sat 18 June, The Rainbow Venues, Birmingham

ANGELIC UPSTARTS Sat 18 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

BARRY MANILOW Sat 18 June, Genting Arena, Birmingham

BEBE AND THE TROJANS Sat 18 June, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

ULTRA 90'S TRIBUTE BAND Sat 18 June, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

ARE YOU EXPERIENCED? Sat 18 June, The Roadhouse, B'ham

RICKY COOL AND THE IN CROWD Sun 19 June, The Brass House, Birmingham

C.W. STONEKING Sun 19 June, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

T R DALLAS Sun 19 June, Irish Centre, B'ham

MIDLAND YOUTH JAZZ ORCHESTRA WITH CLARE TEAL Sun 19 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

DESTRUCTION PARTY Sun 19 June, Adrian Boulton Hall, Birmingham

THE OFFSPRING Sun 19 June, O2 Academy, Birmingham

SHERRY BABYS Sun 19 June, Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

Classical Music

THE ATEA WIND QUINTET Programme includes works by Eugene Bozzam Jean Francaix, Olivier Truan & Arthur Bird, Mon 13 June, Adrian Boulton Hall, Birmingham Conservatoire

SHOSTAKOVICH QUARTETS II FEAT. THE LIGETI QUARTET Mon 13 June, Recital Hall, Birmingham Conservatoire

MOZART, MESSIAEN & CHOPIN Featuring Jessica Efezeybek, Tung Khng Chua & Stavroula Thoma (pianos), Mon 13 June, Adrian Boulton Hall, Birmingham Conservatoire

THE GILDAS QUARTET Part of the City Of Sounds Festival. Programme includes works by Turnage & Shostakovich, Wed 15 June, Adrian Boulton Hall, Birmingham

KATHERINE JENKINS A celebration of her Majesty the Queen's 90th birthday The London Concert Orchestra & Anthony Inglis (conductor), also feature, Wed 15 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CBSO: SIBELIUS' SECOND Programme includes works by Beethoven, Elgar & Sibelius, Thurs 16 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

LUNCHTIME ORGAN RECITAL BY PHILIP RUSHFORTH (CHESTER CATHEDRAL) Thurs 16 June, Worcester Cathedral

MURRAY PERAHIA IN RECITAL Programme includes works by Haydn, Mozart, Brahms & Beethoven, Fri 17 June, Symphony Hall, B'ham

SUMMER FESTIVAL VOICES Featuring Jack Apperley (conductor). Programme comprises Purcell's The Tempest, Fri 17 June, The Barber Institute, Birmingham

ALED JONES Fri 17 June, Coventry Cathedral

BIRMINGHAM BACH CHOIR - A SHAKESPEAREAN CONCERT Conducted by Paul Spicer, Sat 18 June, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

'RAISE THE ROOF' FUNDRAISING GALA Featuring some of Europe's most enduring classics, including a new piece by David Freeman & Te Deum by Paul Liddington Wright, Sat 18 June, Warwick Road United Reformed Church, Coventry

THE DREAM OF GERONTIUS Elgar's work is here performed by two long established Midlands choirs - the Birmingham Choral Union & Solihull-based The Chandos Choir, Sat 18 June, The Bramall, Birmingham University

CITY OF SOUNDS: RAISING THE ROOF! Featuring Sutton Coldfield Choirs, Four Oaks Cluster Choir, Sutton Coldfield Youth Voices & The Accidentals, Sat 18 June, Adrian Boulton Hall, Birmingham Conservatoire

STRATFORD CHAMBER CHOIR Programme comprises Handel Dixit Dominus and Bach Cantata No4 BWV4, Sat 18 June, Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

CBSO BEETHOVEN'S SEVENTH Featuring Kazuki Yamada Conductor & Pieter Wispelwey (Cello) Programme includes works by Weber, Elgar &

Beethoven, Sat 18 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CONCERT BY THE ENGLISH ASSOCIATION OF MALE VOICE CHOIRS Sat 18 June, Worcester Cathedral

BRANT INTERNATIONAL PIANO COMPETITION 2016 Sat 18 - Sun 19 June, The Barber Institute, Birmingham

SUNDAY CLASSICS Presenting a range of young stars of the future from the classical world, ranging from opera singers to violinists to harpists at the very start of their careers... Sun 19 June, The Spotted Dog, Digbeth, Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA: NATURE'S REALM Richard Laing conducts a programme of works by Dvorak, Bax & R Strauss, Sun 19 June, The Bramall, Birmingham University

Comedy Gigs

LOUDEEMY SOUP COMEDY NIGHT Mon 13 June, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

CHEEKY MONKEY COMEDY Tues 14 June, The Dark Horse, Birmingham

HOWL Wed 15 June, The Mockingbird, Birmingham

JAMALI MADDIX, JASPER CROMWELL-JONES Sun 15 June, Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

SOFIE HAGEN, SILKY Thurs 16 June, mac, Birmingham

DANNY MCLOUGHLIN, MIKE WILMOT & COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON Thurs 16 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

TIFF STEVENSON, JARLATH REGAN Thurs 16 June, Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

PATRICK MONAHAN Thurs 16 June, Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon



KIAN 'N' JC Thurs 16 June, O2 Academy, Birmingham

JETHRO Thurs 16 - Fri 17 June, Evesham Arts Centre, Worcs

IVO GRAHAM, TANYALEE DAVIS, DANNY MCLOUGHLIN & MIKE WILMOT Fri 17 - Sat 18 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

GLENN WOOL, DANNY WARD, MATT REED & EDDIE BRIMSON Fri 17 - Sat 18 June, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

STEVE ROYLE, JAMIE SUTHERLAND, RUSSELL HICKS & PAUL MCMULLAN Sat 18 June, Coventry Showcase

ED ACZEL Sat 18 June, Palace theatre, Redditch

Theatre

THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW Ben Freeman stars opposite X Factor finalist Diana Vickers in this new touring version of Richard O'Brien's cult classic, Mon 13 - Sat 18 June, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

MALCOLM STENT IN THE AFTERNOON Spend an afternoon in the company of Malc and be home by teatime, Tues 14 June, The Core, Solihull

THE MAGNETIC DIARIES Reaction Theatre Makers present a performance dramatised from Sarah James' award-winning collection of poems, Tues 14 June, The Hive, Worcester

THE KING AND I Amateur production of the Rodgers & Hammerstein classic, presented by Queensbridge Musical Theatre Co, Tues 14 - Sat 18 June, The Core Theatre, Solihull

DEATH AND THE MAIDEN Amateur production of Ariel Dorfman's exploration of torture, power, vulnerability, ethics and trust, Tues 14 - Sat 18 June, Swan Theatre, Worcester

OLIVER! Bromsgrove Operatic Society present an amateur staging of Lionel Bart's musical version of the Charles Dickens classic, Tues 14 - Sat 18 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE BIRTHDAY PARTY London Classic Theatre presents its version of Harold Pinter's 'cryptic thriller and macabre comedy', Tues 14 - Sat 18 June, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry



CUTTING IT Charlene James' new play explores the urgent issue of FGM in Britain and the price some girls pay to become a woman, Tues 14 - Sat 18 June, The REP, Birmingham

CALAMITY JANE BMOS Musical Theatre present an amateur production of the classic Wild West musical, Tues 14 - Sat 18 June, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

INVINCIBLE Spiky new comedy from the pen of Torben Betts. Alastair Whatley, Emily Bowker & Graeme Brookes star, Tues 14 - Sat 18 June, Malvern Theatre

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST Heartbreak Productions present an outdoor performance of Oscar Wilde's tour de force, Wed 15 June, The Hunt Field, Broadway, Worcestershire

MURDER ON THE TERRACE Heartbreak Productions present an outdoor staging of David Kerby-Kendall's part romp, part farce, Wed 15 - Thurs 16 June, Jephson Gardens, Leamington Spa

THE ROAD TO HUNTSVILLE An exploration of unconventional love, state

homicide and challenging preconceptions, written and performed by Stephanie Ridings, Wed 15 - Thurs 16 June, mac, Birmingham

SISTER ACT Amateur production presented by Three Spires & The Guildhall, Wed 15 - Sat 18 June, Albany Theatre, Coventry

CIPHERS Staging of Dawn King's provocative espionage thriller which examines versions of identity, Wed 15 - Sat 18 June, Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

A NIGHT OF DIRTY DANCING Relive the passion, indulge in the romance and celebrate one of the greatest movie soundtracks of all time, Thurs 16 June, Malvern Theatre

IDLE WOMEN OF THE WARTIME WATERWAYS A double bill to whisk you back to the days of WWII when a shortage of crews to keep the working boats going brought a new breed of boater to the canal - nicknamed the Idle Women, Thurs 16 June, Camp House Inn, Grimley Lane, Worcester

MACBETH GONE MENTAL Tap The Table productions present Shakespeare's quintessential tragedy as a rip-roaring comedy, Fri 17 June, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

SID New 50-minute one-man play by Leon Flemming which explores the true nature of hero worship and what it means to be a punk, Fri 17 June, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM Chapterhouse Theatre Company presents Shakespeare's romantic comedy, Fri 17 June, Hanbury Hall, Droitwich, Worcestershire

DUETS The Billesley Players present Peter Quilter's quartet of separate short comedic plays exploring the various stages of different relationships, Fri 17 - Sat 18 June, The Dovehouse Theatre, Solihull

BEYOND BELIEF Riverside Performing Arts present a showcase of thought-provoking plays and monologues exploring the theme of belief, Fri 17 - Sat 18 June, mac, Birmingham

LADIES IN LAVENDER Shaun McKenna's stage adaptation of the hit film screenplay by Charles Dance, Fri 17 - Sat 25 June, The Bear Pit Theatre - The United Reformed Church, Stratford-upon-Avon

THE TOMMY COOPER SHOW Featuring West End & Blood Brothers star Daniel Taylor as Tommy, Sat 18 June, The Roses, Tewkesbury

7 PROMISES Two ecological preachers (Davis Freeman & Jerry Killick) call for the audience to turn their words into action, Sat 18 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

TEENY TINY & THE WITCH WOMAN Staging of Barbara K Walker's children's story, based on an old Turkish folk tale, Sat 18 - Sun 19 June, The Dream Factory, Warwick

WUTHERING HEIGHTS Chapterhouse Theatre presents its version of Emily Bronte's classic love story, Sun 19 June, mac, Birmingham



Broken - Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

Dance

THE TAMING OF THE SHREW Birmingham Royal Ballet present Shakespeare's tale of mismatched marriage, Thurs 16 - Sat 18 June, Birmingham Hippodrome

BROKEN Motionhouse present an adrenaline-fuelled spectacle packed with trickery and illusions - a thought-provoking piece which has the capacity to leave audiences breathless as dancers contort their bodies to negotiate the cracks and craters of a place where all is not as it seems... Fri 17 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry



Talks

GYLES BRANDRETH - WORD POWER! Mon 13 June, Palace Theatre, Redditch

RUBBER SWORDPLAY Worcester Writers' Circle & Friends present a selection of their humorous stories and poems in an evening that 'will be more fun than an EU referendum debate', Mon 13 June, St Swithun's Institute, Worcester

MUTINY: SCREENING & TALK Exploring the British Caribbean experience of the First World War and its legacies, as revealed by the last surviving veterans of the British West Indies Regiment, Tues 14 June, mac, Birmingham

42 WORCESTER LIT FEST SPECIAL Writers and poets perform their work on the theme of Last Stop On The Worcester Night Train, Wed 15 June, Drummonds Bar, Worcester

SPEAKEASY LIT FEST SPECIAL Worcester's own dedicated spoken word platform from the

Worcestershire Litfest & Fringe, Thurs 16 June, The Old Rectifying House, Worcester

THE QUIET COMPERE Established poets and emerging voices perform, with 10 poets each given a 10-minute slot, Fri 17 June, The Hive, Worcester

THE ANTIPOET Featuring Paul Eccentric and Ian Newman, who together are the world's finest exponents of beatratin' rhythm 'n' views!, Sat 18 June, Cafe Bliss, Worcester Arts Workshop

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

STALKER (PG) Deep within the Zone, a bleak and devastated forbidden landscape, lies a mysterious room with the power to grant the deepest wishes of those strong enough to make the hazardous journey there. Desperate to reach it, a scientist and a writer approach the Stalker, one of the few able to navigate the Zone's menacing terrain, and begin a dangerous trek into the unknown. Directed by Andrei Tarkovsky. Foreign language, subtitled. mac, Birmingham, Tues 14 June

PURPLE RAIN (15) The late Prince's flamboyant rock musical tells the semi-autobiographical story of a young musician struggling to win respect, complete with an epic soundtrack which includes When Doves Cry. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 17 June

THE MAN WHO KNEW INFINITY (12a) This is a must for those who adored A Beautiful Mind and Good Will Hunting. Srinivasa Ramanujan (Dev Patel) is a young man who, after an impoverished childhood in Madras, managed to secure a place at Trinity College in Cambridge. He later went on to lead the field in mathematical analysis, number theory, infinite series and continued fractions. Gosh. Also stars Jeremy Irons. Wem Town Hall, North Shropshire, Tues 14 & Thurs 16 June; Artrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 17 June

OUR KIND OF TRAITOR (15) A British couple on holiday find themselves

befriended by a Russian oligarch. However, Dima has an ulterior motive for his amiability, and soon the couple's holiday in the sun turns into a game of shadows. Stars Ewan McGregor & Stellan Skarsgård. Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Fri 17 June

THE DAUGHTER (15) Christian returns to his hometown for his father's wedding. Reconnecting with childhood friends and family, he unearths a long-buried secret that threatens to shatter lives. Stars Sam Neill & Geoffrey Rush. mac, Birmingham, Fri 17 - Wed 22 June

LOVE & FRIENDSHIP (U) Kate Beckinsale plays Lady Susan Vernon who, while staying at a massive estate, sets about finding a suitable husband for her daughter. Of course, she wouldn't mind an eligible man for herself... Also stars Chloë Sevigny. mac, Birmingham, Fri 17 - Thu 23 June

SOLARIS (12a) On a space station orbiting the ocean-covered planet Solaris, cosmonaut Kris Kelvin investigates a series of mysterious and bizarre occurrences among the crew. Stars Natalya Bondarchuk. Foreign language, subtitled. mac, Birmingham, Fri 17 - Thu 23 June

A HOLOGRAM FOR THE KING (12a) Business has not been going well for Alan Clay (Tom Hanks). So the salesman heads to Saudi Arabia to pitch his latest idea to an Arab king building a massive new complex in the desert. Based on the 2012 novel by Dave Eggers. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 17 - Thu 23 June

ANATOMY OF A MURDER + LIVE JAZZLINES PERFORMANCE (12) A screening of Otto Preminger's classic courtroom drama, followed by a live jazz performance of some of Duke Ellington's best. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Sat 18 June

BILL (12a) Hopeless lute player Bill Shakespeare leaves his home to follow his dreams - a story filled with murderous kings, spies, lost loves and a plot to blow up Queen Elizabeth. From the people who brought you the CBBC TV show *Horrible Histories* comes a very funny romp about the early life of Shakespeare. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 18 June

EDDIE THE EAGLE (PG) With lashings of comedy, this is the true story of Eddie 'The Eagle' Edwards, a young Englishman who was determined to become an Olympic skier - against improbable odds. Stars Taron Egerton & Hugh Jackman. Warwick Art Centre, Coventry, Sat 18 - Mon 20 June

BREATHLESS (PG) Jean-Luc Godard's semi-improvised, groundbreaking drama about the brief love affair between a petty criminal and a young American student. Stars Jean-Paul Belmondo & Jean Seberg. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Sun 19 June

PRINCESS MONONOKE (PG) The first Studio Ghibli film to have major success outside of Japan, Princess

Mononoke is a stunning tale of a war between nature and man. Stars Yoji Matsuda. Foreign language, subtitled. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Sun 19 June

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

BANG GANG (A MODERN LOVE STORY) (18)

THE CONJURING 2 (tbc)

GODS OF EGYPT (12a)

THE KEEPING ROOM (15)

LONG WAY NORTH (tbc)

THE VIOLATORS (tbc)

WHERE YOU WERE MEANT TO BE (15)

Events

WOODCRAFT (GRASS RAKE MAKING) Produce your own traditional grass rake, Tues 14 June, Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire

HEAD GARDENER'S EVENING TOURS Wed 15 June, Packwood House, Solihull

EARLY YEARS: POPULAR TRACTOR STORIES A fantastic opportunity for children aged between one and four (and their families) to explore the tractor exhibition using action-packed stories and Makaton signs, Wed 15 June, Coventry Transport Museum

DISCOVER WEDGWOOD SILVER: THE WEDGWOOD MUSEUM OPENS ITS JEWELLERY BOX - DISCOVERY DAY Wed 15 June, Wedgwood Museum, Stoke-on-Trent

SUMMER HIGHLIGHTS GARDEN TOUR Thurs 16 June, Winterbourne House & Garden, Birmingham

EVENING SUPPER LECTURES 2016 A two-course supper in the Barn Restaurant accompanied by a talk on a variety of subjects and a chance to stroll in the gardens after hours, Thurs 16 June, Baddesley Clinton, Solihull

BBC GOOD FOOD SHOW SUMMER (see page 45 for details), Thurs 16 - Sun 19 June, NEC, Birmingham

BBC GARDENERS WORLD LIVE 2016 Thurs 16 - Sun 19 June, NEC, Birmingham

THE DAIMLER REVEALED Make the most of this rare chance to see the 1955 Daimler Regency Mk II, Fri 17 - Mon 20 June, Sunnycroft, Birmingham

BLITZ HILL Enjoy a summer evening on the home front as you travel to the 1940s with vintage entertainment, activities and characters from the World War Two era, Sat 18 June, Blists Hill, Ironbridge, Shropshire

BLACKSMITHING - TALES & CUSTOMS Hear some stories, poems and anecdotes about the legends and traditional customs associated with blacksmithing, Sat 18 June, Chedhams Yard, Stratford-upon-Avon

CREATIVE CARERS PROGRAMME: PAPER MARBLING Sat 18 June, Aston Hall,



Coventry Pride - Fargo Village, Coventry

Birmingham

ZOMBIE WALK BIRMINGHAM 2016 Sat

18 June, Birmingham City Centre

BRINDLEYPLACE DRAGONBOAT RACE

2016 Sat 18 June, Brindleyplace, Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM BUS TOURS 2016 Sat 18 -

Sun 19 June, Birmingham City Centre

COVENTRY PRIDE 2016 Sat 18 - Sun 19

June, Fargo Village, Coventry

GAY CLASSIC CAR GROUP 18 - Sun 19

June, Coventry Transport Museum

VIKING WEEKEND Raudr Vagr Vikings group from Telford recreate the lifestyles of the Vikings and Anglo-Saxons, Sat 18 - Sun 19 June, Arley Arboretum, Worcestershire

FATHER'S DAY PIE WEEKEND Sat 18 -

Sun 19 June, Bodenham Arboretum, Kidderminster, Worcestershire

LACE WARS The 18th century Jacobite

rebellions of 1745 are brought to life by re-enactment group Lace Wars, Sat 18 - Sun 19 June, Berrington Hall, Leominster

GORGEOUS GEORGIANS Sat 18 - Sun

19 June, Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire

DROITWICH SPA FOOD AND DRINK

FESTIVAL Sat 18 - Sun 19 June, Droitwich Spa, Worcestershire

CADBURY CHARACTER WEEKEND Sat 18 -

Sun 19 June, Cadbury World, Bournville

CITY OF COLOURS 2016 Sat 18 - Sun

19 June, The Custard Factory, Digbeth, Birmingham

BMW SHOW All BMWs welcome - race cars, show cars, modern, retros, classics, new minis and BMW bikes, Sun 19 June, Santa Pod Raceway, Northants

MEDIAeval FATHER'S DAY Including fire shows, beds of nails and displays of all-round derring-do, Sun 19 June, Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire

DUNSTALL CASTLE OPEN DAYS Climb the spiral staircase at Dunstall to get views across the countryside, Sun 19 June, Croome Park, Worcestershire

CLASSIC CAR DAY Sun 19 June, Coventry Transport Museum

2016 PCA BRITISH FINALS The first ever Physical Culture Association (PCA) British Finals, featuring male and female bodybuilding & fitness classes, Sun 19 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

FAMILY FUN RUN Sun 19 June, Brockhampton Estate, Herefordshire

BANBURY RUN Sun 19 June, British Motor Museum, Gaydon, Warwickshire

BIRMINGHAM ARMS FAIR Sun 19 June, National Motorcycle Museum, Solihull

BEHIND THE SCENES TOURS - CELLAR Sun 19 June, Witley Court, Worcestershire

BEHIND THE SCENES TOURS - SERVICE AREA & STABLE YARD Sun 19 June, Witley Court, Worcestershire



Medieval Fathers Day - Kenilworth Castle

THE ROSES

Live Film Take Part Support Exhibitions Festivals

What's On In Tewkesbury...



Ballet Cymru: Little Red Riding Hood
Saturday 11 June 3pm



Sensation: The Who Show
Sunday 12 June 7.30pm



The Tommy Cooper Show
Saturday 18 June 7.30pm



Andy Fairweather Low & The Low Riders
Friday 24 June 7.30pm



Chas & Dave: The Full Story
Saturday 16 July 7.30pm



Symphony To A Lost Generation
Tuesday 19 & Wednesday 20 July

Shakespeare Festival

A summer season of plays, films, workshops and exhibitions to mark the 400th anniversary of The Bard's death.



Wednesday 8 June - Friday 14 October
See website or brochure (available online) for full details

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BROMSGROVE'S THEATRE, CINEMA, LIVE MUSIC AND COMEDY VENUE

June 2016

Tues 7 - Sat 11 June

BLACKADDER: THE TUDOR YEARS
ALL & SUNDRY PRODUCTION



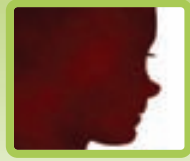
Fri 10 & Weds 29 June

THE AUDIENCE NT LIVE SCREENING
STARRING HELEN MIRREN



Tues 14 - Sat 18 June

OLIVER!
BROMSGROVE OPERATIC SOCIETY PRODUCTION



Sun 19 June

MIDLANDS YOUTH JAZZ ORCHESTRA
WITH CLARE TEAL



Fri 24 June

ROXY MAGIC
TRIBUTE TO ROXY MUSIC AND BRYAN FERRY



Sat 25 June

BARRY CRYER & COLIN SELL
PRESENT STRICTLY COME JOKING



FORTHCOMING CINEMA:

Zootropolis (PG) // High Rise (15) // The Man Who Knew Infinity (12A) // Eye In The Sky (15) // Calamity Jane (PG)

FORTHCOMING SCREENINGS:

The Audience (NT Live) // Hamlet (RSC) // Romeo & Juliet (Kenneth Branagh) // Andre Rieu's Maastricht Concert

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WHAT'S ON JUNE & JULY

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King Arthur and the Inglewood
Friday 3 June, 11am & 2.30pm

Ding Dong!
Saturday 4 June, 11.30am & 2.30pm

Fantastic Mr. Fox (PG)
Sunday 5 June, 2.30pm

The Whitney Houston Theatre Show
Saturday 11 June, 7.30pm

Sister Act
Wednesday 15 - Saturday 18 June

The Magic Faraway Tree
Saturday 25 & Sunday 26 June, 2pm

Music Makes Me
Saturday 2 July, 1pm & 5.30pm

They Call It Dance, We Call It Life
Sunday 3 & Monday 4 July

The 'Supersonic 70s Show'
Saturday 9 July, 7.30pm

Gigs

SAMANTHA BARKS Mon 20 June, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

GNARWOLVES Mon 20 June, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

MCFLY Mon 20 - Wed 22 June, O2 Academy, Birmingham

TESTAMENT Tue 21 June, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

JARED JAMES NICHOLS + BAD TOUCH + DAVE HANSON Tues 21 June, The Rainbow Venues, Birmingham

BOYSETSFIRE Tue 21 June, O2 Academy, Birmingham

TOM WALKER TRIO Wed 22 June, The Jam House, Birmingham

THE MELVINS Wed 22 June, The Rainbow Venues, Birmingham

CYNDI LAUPER Wed 22 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

HOWE GELB WITH ERIKA WENNERSTROM Wed 22 June, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

CROBOT Wed 22 June, The Rainbow Venues, Birmingham

MERCURY REV Thurs 23 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

ZZ TOP Thurs 23 June, O2 Academy, Birmingham

VIN GARbutt Thurs 23 June, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

ABSOLUTE BLONDIE Thurs 23 June, The Jam House, Birmingham

BLANK PARODY Fri 24 June, The Flapper, Birmingham

JEREMIH Fri 24 June, Kasbah, Coventry

ANDY FAIRWEATHER Fri 24 June, Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

SAUL WILLIAMS Fri 24 June, O2 Institute, Birmingham

ROXY MAGIC Fri 24 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

CHRIS GREEN & SOPHIE MATTHEWS Fri 24 June, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

CLARE TEAL AND HER TRIO Fri 24 June, Stratford Artshouse

JEFF LYNNE'S ELO Fri 24 June, Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham

GRIMES Fri 24 June, O2 Institute, Birmingham

PANIC ROOM Fri 24 June, The Marr's Bar, Worcs

TREMBLING BELLS Fri 24 June, Tin Music & Arts, Coventry

DEXY'S BOOTLEG RUNNERS Fri 24 June, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

MAETLOAF Fri 24 June, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

JEREMIH Fri 24 June, Kasbah, Coventry

FLEETWOOD BAC Fri 24 June, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

DETROIT SOUL Fri 24 - Sat 25 June, The Jam House, Birmingham

THE VOW BAND Sat 25 June, Irish Centre, Birmingham

AND FINALLY Sat 25 June, Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

THE DECADES BAND Sat 25 June, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

BRANDY LIVE Sat 25 June, O2 Academy, Birmingham

VICIOUS NATURE Sat 25 June, O2 Academy, Birmingham

FORTY SHADES OF GREEN MEETS COUNTRY ROADS Sat 25 June, Evesham Arts Centre

BRANDY Sat 25 June, O2 Academy, Birmingham

YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND: THE MUSIC OF JAMES TAYLOR AND CAROLE KING Sat 25 June, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

RIHANNA Sat 25 June, Ricoh Arena, Coventry

RITCHIE BLACKMORE'S RAINBOW Sat 25 June, Genting Arena, B'ham

ANDREW O'NEILL'S HISTORY OF HEAVY METAL Sat 25 June, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

GREEN HAZE Sat 25 June, The Marr's Bar, Worcs

KORN AGAIN + STIFF BIZKIT - FAMILY VALUES TRIBUTE Sat 25 June, The Roadhouse, Birmingham

GOLDIE Sat 25 June, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

MICK FLAVIN Sun 26 June, Irish Centre,

Birmingham

SIMPLY DYLAN Sun 26 June, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

THE SONS OF PITCHES Sun 26 June, Birmingham Town Hall

SULTANS OF STRING Mon 27 June, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

VINTAGE TROUBLE WITH SLYDIGS Mon 27 June, The Assembly, Leamington Spa

GEORGE BENSON Mon 27 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

KENNY G Tues 28 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

COLLIE BUDD Tues 28 June, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE ACOUSTIC SESSIONS Tues 28 June, The Jam House, Birmingham

THE KILKENNYS Tues 28 June, The Core Theatre, Solihull

RUSSELL WATSON Tues 28 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

HURRAY FOR THE RIFF RAFF + SPECIAL GUESTS Wed 29 June, The Rainbow Venues, Birmingham

ODDISEE & GOOD COMPNY Wed 29 June, O2 Institute, B'ham

ELEVENSES, BARNI SCOTT Wed 29 June, Palace Theatre, Redditch

KAMASI WASHINGTON Wed 29 June, O2 Institute, Birmingham

ALIBIS + SPECIAL GUESTS Wed 29 June, Ort Cafe, Birmingham

JONATHAN BYRD Wed 29 June, Kitchen Garden Cafe, Birmingham

KAMASI WASHINGTON Wed 29 June, O2 Institute, Birmingham

VIN GARbutt Thurs 30 June, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

SEAL Thurs 30 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

TCHA LIMBERGER AND THE KALOTASZEG TRIO Thurs 30 June, mac, Birmingham

JOHN BRAMWELL Thurs 30 June, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

DEL CAMINO Thurs 30 June, The Jam House, Birmingham

Classical Music

LUNCHTIME ORGAN CONCERT WITH THOMAS TROTTER Mon 20 June, Birmingham Town Hall

PIANO RECITAL BY RISING STAR, CATHY KRIER Programme includes works by Berg, Denis Schuler, Janacek, Rihm & Schubert, Mon 20 June, Birmingham Town Hall

CITY OF SOUNDS: STEREO IS KING Programme includes works by Mason Bates, Mark Norman, Steve Reich, John Cage, Chick Corea & Christopher Tyler Nickel, Mon 20 June, Adrian Boulton Hall, Birmingham Conservatoire

EX CATHEDRA: SUMMER MUSIC BY CANDLELIGHT Programme includes works by Matthews Dawn, Morley, Vaughan Williams & Gershwin, Tues 21 June, Birmingham Cathedral

LUNCHTIME ORGAN RECITAL BY RICHARD DUNSTER-SIGTERMANS Thurs 23 June, Worcester Cathedral

CITY OF SOUNDS: FROM BACH TO BERIO Programme includes works by Bach, Beethoven, Schubert, Chopin, Schumann, Liszt & Brahms, Thurs 23 June, Adrian Boulton Hall, Birmingham Conservatoire

ROMANY WOOD Featuring massed choirs from primary & prep schools throughout Birmingham. Martin Leigh conducts Shostakovich's Festive Overture op.96 (7) and Gaukroger/Carr's Romany Wood (40'), Fri 24 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE MUSICAL & AMICABLE SOCIETY: FOUR SEASONS Programme includes works by Vivaldi & Bach, Fri 24 June, Worcester Cathedral

THE PLANETS: AN HD ODYSSEY Featuring the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Northampton Bach Choir & Robert Ziegler (conductor). Programme includes works by Strauss, Bach arr. Stokowski, Beethoven, Williams & Holst, Sat 25 June, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

SOLIHULL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Programme includes works by Ravel, Sarasate, Piazzolla, De Falla & Rimsky-Korsakov. Jon Malaxetxebarria conducts, Sat 25 June, Shirley Methodist Church, Solihull

CITY OF SOUNDS: ELEGY FOR A CONCERT HALL Featuring Junior Conservatoire Choirs & Orchestras. Programme includes works by Howells, Tchaikovsky & Percy Pursglove, Sat 25 June, Adrian Boulton Hall, Birmingham Conservatoire

CITY OF SOUNDS: REQUIEM FOR A CONCERT HALL Featuring Sir Richard Armstrong (conductor), Birmingham Conservatoire Symphony Orchestra & Choir, Caroline Modiba (soprano), Victoria Simmonds (mezzo-soprano), David Butt (tenor) & Barnaby Rae (bass). Programme comprises Maya Verlaak's Carrier & Verdi's Messa di Requiem, Sun 26 June, Adrian Boulton Hall, Birmingham

TWO ORCHESTRAS: UK & USA Featurin the Young People's Symphony

Orchestra & the University of Warwick Symphony Orchestra, Sun 26 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

ORGAN RECITAL WITH DAVID HARDIE Mon 27 June, Birmingham Cathedral

RUSSELL WATSON: SONGS FROM THE HEART Tues 28 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

PRIZEWINNER RECITAL WITH JAMAL ALIYEV Also featuring Maria Tarasewicz (piano). Programme includes works by Schubert, Brahms, Franck & Chopin, Tues 28 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

LUNCHTIME ORGAN RECITAL BY RICHARD PINEL Thurs 30 June, Worcester Cathedral

Comedy Gigs

TOADALLY FREE COMEDY! Mon 20 June, The Blue Orange Theatre, B'ham

TOM WARD, PIERRE NOVELLIE Mon 20 June, Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

CHEEKY MONKEY COMEDY Tues 21 June, The Dark Horse, Birmingham

CARL DONNELLY, NAZ OSMANOGLU Mon 21 June, Stratford Artshouse, Stratford-upon-Avon

HOWL Wed 22 June, The Mockingbird, Birmingham

ZOE LYONS, CAIMH MCDONNELL Thurs 23 June, mac, Birmingham

JENNY COLLIER, JOE BOR PLUS COMIC TBC Thurs 23 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

MILTON JONES, CRAIG HILL, STEVE HARRIS PLUS COMIC TBC Thurs 23 June, The Comedy Loft, Birmingham

JEN BRISTER, BILLY KIRKWOOD, MILO MCCABE & OTIZ CANNELLONI Fri 24 June, The Comedy Loft, B'ham

RAW COMEDY Fri 24 June, Evesham Arts Centre, Worcs

AL PORTER, JAMES DOWDESWELL, JENNY COLLIER & JOE BOR Fri 24 - Sat 25 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

QUINCY, KAREN BAYLEY, CAIMH MCDONNELL & PHIL CHAPMAN Sat 25 June, Coventry Showcase

BILLY KIRKWOOD, JEN BRISTER, IVAN BRACKENBURY & IAN D MONTFORD Sat 25 June, The Comedy Loft, B'ham

BARRY CRYER & COLIN SELL Sat 25 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

ANDREW O'NEILL Sat 25 June, Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

FAT PENGUIN COMEDY Wed 29 June, The Patrick Kavanagh, Birmingham

HOWL Wed 29 June, The Mockingbird, Birmingham

WILL FRANKEN, DAVID TRENT Thurs 30 June, mac, Birmingham

OWEN O'NEILL & COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON PLUS COMEDIAN TBC Thurs 30 June, The Glee Club, Birmingham

Theatre

CHICAGO John Partridge stars as lawyer Billy Flynn in a brand new UK tour of the Kander & Ebb smash-hit musical. X Factor winner Sam Bailey stars as Mama Morton, Emmerdale favourite Hayley Tamaddon takes the lead as Roxie Hart, Mon 20 - Sat 25 June, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

MUCH ADD ABOUT NOTHING Oddsocks present a high-octane musical version of Shakespeare's witty battle of the sexes, Tues 21 - Thurs 23 June, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

JACKIE THE MUSICAL Brand new 'fun and feisty' musical featuring original choreography by Arlene Phillips, Tues 21 - Sat 25 June, Malvern Theatre



MURDER ON THE TERRACE Heartbreak Productions present an outdoor staging of David Kerby-Kendall's part romp, part farce, Wed 22 June, Parish Field, Market Bosworth, Warwickshire

RATBURGER Heartbreak Productions present the theatrical premiere of David Walliams' modern thriller, Wed 22 June, St Paul's Church, B'ham

PEPPA PIG'S SURPRISE Peppa Pig, George and their friends return with a brand new live stage show, Wed 22 June, Palace Theatre, Redditch

SWEET CHARITY Amateur production presented by Birmingham Youth Theatre, Thurs 23 - Sat 25 June, The Old Rep, Birmingham

42ND STREET Amateur production presented by Coventry Musical Theatre Society, Thurs 23 - Sat 25 June, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

TITLE OF SHOW Described as 'a love letter to musical theatre', Title Of Show follows Hunter, Jeff and their friends as they journey through the experience of self-expression, Thurs 23 - Sat 25 June, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

OLIVER! Thurs 23 - Sat 25 June, Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

BREAKNECK HAMLET American actor & author Timothy Mooney recklessly slices Shakespeare's four-hour masterpiece to create an hour-long romp, Sat 25 June, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

TEENY TINY & THE WITCH WOMAN Staging of Barbara K Walker's children's story, based on an old Turkish folk tale, Sat 25 - Sun 26 June, The Dream Factory, Warwick

VARIETY PERFORMANCE IN AID OF BIRMINGHAM CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL CHARITY Featuring Marti Webb, Mrs Barbara Nice, Chris Howard, Steve Day, CircusMASH & Phoenix Dance

Company, Sun 26 June, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

A TALE OF THE RAILWAY A story about love, family and the kindness of strangers, Sun 26 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

JUMPSTART Initiative showcasing new work by performance makers living or working in Worcestershire, Sun 26 June, Artrix, Bromsgrove

TIDDLER AND OTHER TERRIFIC TALES Scamp Theatre present a staging of one of Julian Donaldson's best-loved titles, where various tales are woven together with live music & puppetry, Mon 27 - Wed 29 June, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

KING LEAR Michael Pennington takes the lead in Shakespeare's famous tragedy, Mon 27 June - Sat 2 July, Malvern Theatre

GANGSTA GRANNY Birmingham Stage Company bring a production of David Walliams' best-selling book to the stage, Tues 28 June - Sat 2 July, New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

MAMMA MIA! The smash-hit musical visits Brum as part of its first ever UK tour, Tues 28 June - Sat 3 Sept, Birmingham Hippodrome

BILLY LIAR Amateur production presented by Blue Orange Acting, Devising and Performance students, Wed 29 June, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

THE TEMPEST Heartbreak Productions present an outdoor staging of Shakespeare's final play, Wed 29 June, St Augustine's Catholic High School, Redditch

BOA YEAR 12 MUSICAL THEATRE SHOW-CASE Evening of singing, dancing & acting from Birmingham Ormiston Academy's Musical Theatre Pathway students, Wed 29 - Thurs 30 June, The Old Rep, Birmingham

CAPTURED The story of Isaac and Sophie, of photographer and subject, of perception and reality, Wed 29 June - Sat 2 July, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

REDDITCH HAS TALENT Thurs 30 June, Palace Theatre, Redditch

MUCH ADD ABOUT NOTHING The Lord Chamberlain's Men present an outdoor staging of Shakespeare's battle of the sexes, Thurs 30 June, Hanbury Hall, Worcester

Dance

BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET: SHAKESPEARE TRIPLE BILL Featuring work from José Limón, David Bintley and Jessica Lang, Wed 22 - Sat 25 June, Birmingham Hippodrome

BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET - CLASS ON STAGE A chance to look behind the scenes and watch BRB's talented dancers in their final preparations for a performance of world-class dancing, Sat 25 June, Birmingham Hippodrome

JUST DANCE Dance extravaganza presented by JJTA Promotions, Sat 25 - Sun 26 June, Palace Theatre, Redditch



Eye In The Sky -- Artrix, Bromsgrove

THE MAGIC FARAWAY TREE Dance extravaganza based on the popular children's classics by Enid Blyton, Sat 25 - Sun 26 June, Albany Theatre, Coventry

Torres & Jan Bijvoet. Foreign language, subtitled. mac, Birmingham, Tues 21 - Thurs 23 June

EYE IN THE SKY (15) Striding across the same moral minefield as last year's Good Kill with Ethan Hawke, this British drama stars Dame Helen as a colonel forced to weigh up the consequences of a drone strike in Kenya. The target is a group of terrorists planning a major suicide attack, but then a nine-year-old girl is seen entering the kill zone... Stars Helen Mirren & Aaron Paul. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Mon 21 & Sun 26 June

MIRROR (U) As one of Tarvosky's most beloved works, Mirror is noted for its loose and non-linear narrative, similar to the stream of consciousness technique in modern literature. It unfolds as a flow of memories and dreams from a dying poet, presenting key moments from his life both with respect to his immediate family and the tumultuous Russian history of the 20th century. Foreign language, subtitled. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Thurs 23 June

MUSTANG (15) One summer, five Turkish sisters play innocently with some boys. A passing neighbour reports what she considers to be illicit behaviour to their parents, who react by virtually imprisoning them in their home to maintain their 'purity' until marriage. Stars Günes Sensoy. Foreign language, subtitled. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Thurs 23 June

THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW (15) The cult movie hits the Electric Cinema for a late-night showing, starring Tim Curry as the sexually decadent Dr Frank-N-Furter. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Fri 24 June

MONEY MONSTER (12a) 'Money Monster' is the name of a TV show that gives its viewers useful tips on how to manage their finances. However, when Kyle Budwell (Jack O'Connell) loses all his cash on a bad tip from the show's host, Lee Guest (George Clooney), he decides to take him hostage - live on-air. Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 24 - 30 June

Talks

SAVING COUNTRY HOUSES Malvern Civic Society's Ben Cowell talks about the country house, how it was saved and how continued vigilance is needed in the face of ongoing threats to its existence, Tues 28 June, Malvern Theatre

Film

INDEPENDENT LISTINGS:

GOLDEN YEARS (12a) A well-seasoned cast of British thespians star in this credit-crunch comedy. Fate, the pensions crisis and the injustice of old age contrive to force a retired couple into a life of crime. Refusing to take the loss of their pensions lying down, they decide to take back what was theirs in the first place. They decide to start robbing banks. Stars Bernard Hill & Philip Davis. Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, South Shropshire, Mon 20 June; Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Sun 26 - Wed 29 June

THE MAN WHO KNEW INFINITY (12a) Srinivasa Ramanujan is a young man who, after an impoverished childhood in Madras, managed to secure a place at Trinity College in Cambridge. He later went on to lead the field in mathematical analysis, number theory, infinite series and continued fractions. Gosh. Stars Dev Patel & Jeremy Irons. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Mon 20 - Wed 22 June

EMBRACE OF THE SERPENT A breathtaking journey through the Colombian Amazon, following the interwoven stories of two European explorers; one in the early 1900s, the other 40 years later. Stars Nilbio

CALAMITY JANE (PG) Sharpshooter Calamity Jane falls for cavalry Lt Danny Gilmartin. Stars Doris Day. Artrix, Bromsgrove, Fri 24 June

THE MEASURE OF A MAN (12a) At the age of 51 and after 20 months on unemployment, Thierry's new job in security at a supermarket soon brings him face to face with a moral dilemma. Stars Vincent Lindon. Foreign language, subtitled. mac, Birmingham, Fri 24 - Tues 28 June

MATAR A UN HOMBRE (15) Winner of the World Cinema Grand Jury Prize at Sundance in 2014 and based on real events, this psychological thriller is a portrait of an ordinary man driven to murder in defence of his family. Stars Daniel Candia. Foreign language, subtitled. mac, Birmingham, Fri 24 - Tues 28 June

ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE WEST (12) Henry Fonda trashed his nice-guy image in Sergio Leone's bravura spaghetti western, a sprawling epic that pays tribute to classic Hollywood westerns of yesteryear. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Sat 25 June

SPIRITED AWAY (12) Hayao Miyazaki's Oscar-winning classic tells the story of a 10-year-old girl who must battle ancient spirits to save her family. Stars Rumi Hiragi. Foreign language, subtitled. Electric Cinema, Birmingham, Sun 26 June

YOUTH (15) Michael Caine plays Fred Ballinger, a world famous conductor and composer who is chilling with a life-long friend, the film director Mick Boyle (Harvey Keitel), and his daughter Lena (Rachael Weisz), who also happens to be Mike's daughter-in-law. There is no driving plot as such, although unexpected things occur all the time, both imaginary and real. Stourbridge Town Hall, Mon 27 June

GOLDEN YEARS (12a) A well-seasoned cast of British thespians star in this credit-crunch comedy. Fate, the pensions crisis and the injustice of old age contrive to force a retired couple into a life of crime. Refusing to take the loss of their pensions lying down, they decide to take back what was theirs in the first place. They decide to start robbing banks. Stars Bernard Hill & Philip Davis. Wem Town Hall, North Shropshire, Tues 28 & Thurs 30 June

CEMETERY OF SPLENDOUR (tbc) Soldiers afflicted by a mysterious sleeping sickness are stationed in a temporary clinic in a former school. A nurse intuits a connection between the soldiers' malady and the ancient, mythical site on which the clinic is built. Stars Jenjira Pongpas. Foreign language, subtitled. mac, Birmingham, Tues 28 - Thu 30 June

VERSUS: THE LIFE & FILMS OF KEN LOACH (12a) A special 'pay what you can' matinee of this new documentary, a candid behind-the-scenes account of Loach's politically aware career. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, Mon 27 June; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Wed 29 - 30 June

I SAW THE LIGHT (15) Here, the London-born Tom Hiddleston takes

on the mantle of the legendary country and blues singer Hank Williams, from whose famous gospel song the film takes its title. Williams' life was tragically short-lived, but his influence was considerable, as is his musical legacy. Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, From Wed 29 June

IT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT (U) Clark Gable and Claudette Colbert star in Frank Capra's Oscar-winning screwball comedy classic. Colbert plays spoiled heiress Ellen Andrews, a pampered socialite who's eloped with pilot 'King' Westley against her father's wishes. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, From Wed 29 June

A WALK IN THE WOODS (15) It's hard to imagine Bill Bryson's 1998 memoir being turned into a film, let alone having Robert Redford play Bryson. The cuddly writer was in his mid-40s then and Redford is 79 now. The walk in the woods was actually a 2,200 mile trek along the Appalachian Trail, an amble that was somewhat complicated by the accompaniment of Bryson's disolute 'former' friend, Stephen Katz (Nick Nolte). Forest Arts Centre, Walsall, Thurs 30 June

NEW FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE:

CRAZY ABOUT TIFFANY'S (tbc)

ELVIS & NIXON (15)

THE LAST KING (tbc)

MA MA (tbc)

POOR COW (tbc)

REMAINDER (tbc)

Events

PANORAMA TOWER OPEN DAY Enjoy 360-degree views from the balcony of the tower, Tues 21 June, Croome Park, Worcestershire

EARLY YEARS: GO MESSY Farmyard-inspired playtime, Wed 22 June, Coventry Transport Museum

SKETCHING AND WATERCOLOUR COURSE WITH KAREN STONE Thurs 23 June, Spetchley Park Gardens, Worcestershire

GARDEN TOURS Fri 24 June, Witley Court, Worcestershire

THE AUTISM SHOW A national event for autism (including Asperger syndrome) offering practical support to the two million people in the UK who live and work with autism on a daily basis, Fri 24 - Sat 25 June, NEC, Birmingham

THE BRITISH CHAMPIONSHIPS The best of Britain will descend on Birmingham as they compete for the prestigious honour of being crowned British champion, as well as for a place on the British Athletics team for the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Fri 24 - Sun 26 June, Alexander Stadium, Birmingham

TWISTED BARREL BREWERY TOURS 2016 Meet the team behind Twisted Barrel Ale on this exclusive tour, learn how the brewing process works and



Grand Medieval Joust - Kenilworth Castle

sample the ales and food, Sat 25 June, Fargo Village, Coventry

JAGUAR SUPER SATURDAY Featuring up to 50 Classic Swallow/SS/Daimler and Jaguar cars, on display on Millennium Place, Sat 25 June, Coventry Transport Museum

STORYTELLING FESTIVAL Storytelling performances, storytrails, live music, dance, arts, stalls and crafts for children, Sat 25 June, Martineau Gardens, Birmingham

EXPLORE RAG RUGGING Learn a new skill and make a 'rag rug', Sat 25 June, Birmingham Back to Backs

GRAND MEDIEVAL JOUST Sat 25 - Sun 26 June, Kenilworth Castle

RETURN OF THE GARRISON Meet the stars and your favourite characters in a tribute weekend to a galaxy far, far away, Sat 25 - Sun 26 June, National Space Centre, Leicester

THE CLASSIC LAND ROVER SHOW Sat 25 - Sun 26 June, British Motor Museum, Gaydon, Warwickshire

MIDSUMMER MADNESS Watch the Tudors get into midsummer mischief as they celebrate the longest day of the year, Sat 25 - Sun 26 June, Mary Arden's Farm, Stratford-upon-Avon

BIRMINGHAM BUS TOURS 2016 Sat 25 - Sun 26 June, Birmingham City Centre

THE GRUB CLUB A two-day food and drink special. A mix of bakers, grow-

ers, grillers and brewers, Sat 25 - Sun 26 June, Fargo Village, Coventry

HERITAGE WEEKEND AT CADBURY WORLD Sat 25 - Sun 26 June, Cadbury World, Birmingham

SUMMER NATIONALS A huge variety of race cars and bikes, as well as the Fireforce Jet Car, will keep the track action-packed all day long, Sat 25 - Sun 26 June, Santa Pod Raceway, Northants

WALK FOR WHALES A five-mile sponsored walk for whale and dolphin conservation, Sun 26 June, National Sea Life Centre, Birmingham

FARM FUN SUNDAY An opportunity to meet cuddly creatures and enjoy some other rural activities, Sun 26 June, Forge Mill Needle Museum, Redditch

CITROEN CAR CLUB Citroen Car Club (West Midlands) form a display of up to 40 vehicles on Millennium Place, Sun 26 June, Coventry Transport Museum

WEDDING FAIR Sun 26 June, National Motorcycle Museum, Solihull

EARLY YEARS: POPULAR TRACTOR STORIES Opportunity for children aged between one and four and their families to explore the tractor exhibition using action-packed stories and Makaton signs, Wed 29 June, Coventry Transport Museum



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