



Birmingham

ISSUE 450 JULY 2024

# What's On

FILM | COMEDY | THEATRE | GIGS | VISUAL ARTS | EVENTS

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**13 JULY 2024**

**B:Music Symphony Hall**

**GERRY ANDERSON  
IN CONCERT  
STAND BY FOR ACTION! 2  
TUNES OF DANGER**

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## inside:

**THE PEOPLE'S POET**  
MAC celebrates the life and work of Benjamin Zephaniah



**SMASH HIT MUSICAL**  
Hamilton continues to show at Birmingham Hippodrome



**SUMMER FUN**  
places to visit and things to do in the Midlands in July





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—EXHIBITION—

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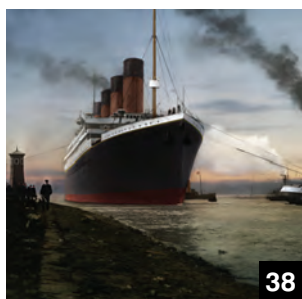
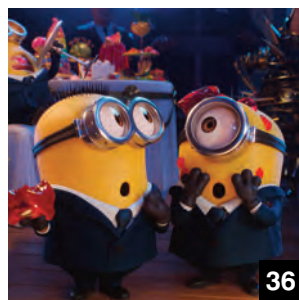
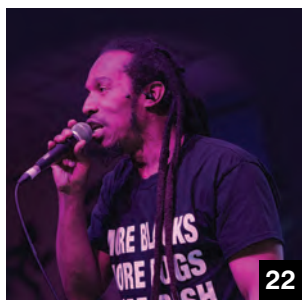
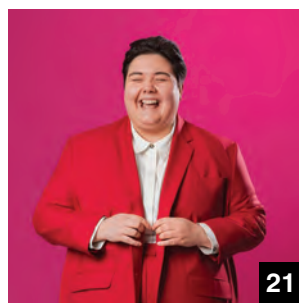
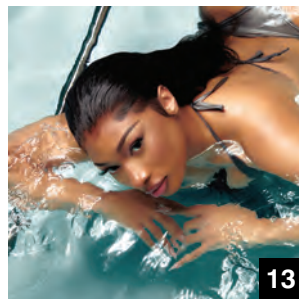
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JULY 27 - AUG 25  
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### What's On

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## City centre exhibition to celebrate the life of poet Benjamin Zephaniah

An outdoor exhibition celebrating the life of late Birmingham poet & activist Benjamin Zephaniah is available to view in the city's Victoria Square this month (Friday 5 - Wednesday 31 July).

Created with the support and acknowledgment of the Zephaniah family, the exhibition features more than 20 specially curated artworks, including large-scale archival black & white portrait photographs of Benjamin by Birmingham artist Pogus Caesar.

## Les Dennis to play Bill Bryson at The Alexandra

A stage adaptation of travel writer Bill Bryson's bestselling memoir, *Notes From A Small Island*, will make a stop-off at Birmingham theatre The Alexandra next year as part of a UK tour.

The production stars Les Dennis and shows at the venue from Tuesday 29 April to Saturday 3 May. For further information and to purchase tickets, visit [atgtickets.com](http://atgtickets.com)



## Meaning of friendship explored at Ikon Gallery

Birmingham's Ikon Gallery is to host an exhibition exploring the nature and role of friendship in contemporary life.

Showing at the venue from Wednesday 2 October to Sunday 23 February, *Friends In Love And War* features paintings, drawings, photographs, prints, textiles, film, sculpture and installation.

The exhibition is showing at Ikon as part of the venue's 60th anniversary year.

## New play to be staged at Edgbaston tennis court

Edgbaston's Archery & Lawn Tennis Society is this month previewing a new musical examining the issue of homophobia and discrimination in tennis (Saturday 20 July).

Titled *Fairlight*, the production takes place on a tennis court and intertwines songs, readings, interviews and live tennis.

Tickets are free and can be booked by visiting the Eventbrite website.

## Birmingham to host its first disability festival

Birmingham City University is this month hosting the city's first-ever disability festival. Taking place on Saturday 6 July as part of Disability Pride

Month, the free-to-attend event features interactive talks, live performances, games, sports, information stands and food stalls. To find out more about the festival, visit [tickettailor.com](http://tickettailor.com)



## A 'sensory overload' as coffee festival returns

Coffee drinkers are being promised 'a sensory overload' when Birmingham Coffee Festival returns this month, taking place at the city's New Bingley Hall from Friday 5 to Sunday 7 July.

Event highlights include 60 exhibitors, barista competitions, talks and panels with industry experts, tastings, demonstrations and a makers marketplace. Tickets are now available at [birminghamcoffeefestival.com](http://birminghamcoffeefestival.com)

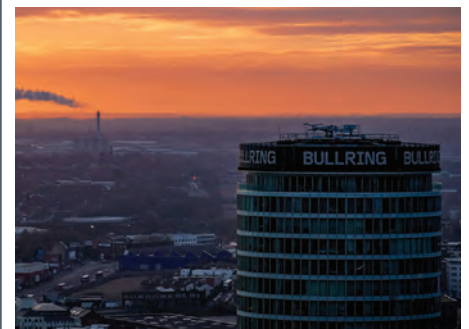


## Birmingham Heritage Week back for a 10th year

Birmingham's popular Heritage Week event will return for its 10th year in the autumn.

Running from Friday 6 to Sunday 15 September and featuring talks, tours, workshops and walks, the city-wide festival will be shining a spotlight on more historic Birmingham buildings, churches and heritage locations than ever before.

Further information is available by visiting: [birminghamheritageweek.co.uk](http://birminghamheritageweek.co.uk)



## Spine-tingling novel to be adapted for the stage

Birmingham Repertory Theatre will next year present the first-ever stage musical adaptation of Neil Gaman's spine-tingling novel, *Coraline*. Produced by the theatre in collaboration with Leeds Playhouse,

Royal Lyceum Theatre Edinburgh and Manchester's Home, the show runs at The Rep from Thursday 12 to Sunday 22 June 2025. For further information and to purchase tickets, visit [birmingham-rep.co.uk](http://birmingham-rep.co.uk)





## Fancy a cocktail?

Birmingham Cocktail Weekend (BCW) returns for its 10th year from Thursday 11 to Sunday 14 July. The popular festival will see signature cocktails being priced at £5, with each participating venue's 'special creation' being exclusively available to Birmingham Cocktail Weekend wristband wearers. A BCW wristband will also provide access to 'fantastic food offers' and a series of special events. For more information and to purchase a wristband, visit [birminghamcocktailweekend.co.uk](http://birminghamcocktailweekend.co.uk)



## It's a Small World for Jack Dee

Jack Dee will be stopping off at a number of Midlands venues next year as part of a UK tour. The popular comedian's brand-new show, Small World, will see him tackling subjects including 'Zoom protocol, what's new in the world of radiators, and the worst careers-advice office in the world'. To find out where in the region Jack will be appearing, and when, visit [jackdeecomedy.com](http://jackdeecomedy.com)



## Whip-crack-away! Carrie Hope Fletcher to star as Calamity Jane

A whip-crackin' production of hit Broadway and West End musical Calamity Jane will visit three Midlands venues next year. Starring Carrie Hope Fletcher in the title role, the production stops off at Birmingham Hippodrome (Tuesday 18 - Saturday 22 March), Stoke-on-Trent's Regent Theatre (Tuesday 17 - Saturday 21 June) and the Wolverhampton Grand (Tuesday 9 - Saturday 13 September). More information is available on the theatres' websites.



## Festival of dance under Spaghetti Junction

A festival of live dance and music, held in celebration of Birmingham's Spaghetti Junction and the communities that surround it, will take place across the weekend of Saturday 27 & Sunday 28 July. Presented by ME Dance, the free-to-attend event, located underneath Spaghetti Junction itself, will also include exhibitions, workshops, food and stalls. To find out more, visit [medancecompany.co.uk](http://medancecompany.co.uk)

## Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter Festival makes a return

Birmingham's annual Jewellery Quarter Festival returns this month (Saturday 20 July) with a 'jam-packed' line-up of entertainment. Highlights include live music, crafts, market stalls, arts & heritage tours, special events and - new for 2024 - a Jewellery Quarter-themed miniature golf course. To check out the full programme of events, visit [jewelleryquarter.net](http://jewelleryquarter.net)



## Ex Cathedra announce 2024/25 concert season

Birmingham's much-loved Ex Cathedra choir will be celebrating the 200th anniversary of composer Anton Bruckner's birth as part of its 2024/25 concert season.

As well as a performance of Bruckner's epic Mass in E Minor, the choir's programme also includes, among other attractions, Bach's Mass in B Minor, candlelit Christmas and summer concerts, and an Eastertime presentation of St Matthew Passion. Full details of the season can be found at [excathedra.co.uk](http://excathedra.co.uk)



## Festive film favourite at Symphony Hall

Birmingham's Symphony Hall will this Christmas host a special screening of much-loved festive film *Love Actually* - complete with a live orchestra playing the movie's soundtrack. Tickets for the Monday 16 December screening are available to purchase at [ticketmaster.co.uk](http://ticketmaster.co.uk)

## Craig Revel Horwood announces UK tour

Craig Revel Horwood is to release his debut solo album in the autumn, ahead of an extensive UK tour in 2025. Taking the title *Revelations: Songs Boys Don't Sing*, the album will be released on Friday 18 October. To find out more, visit [craigrevelhorwood.com](http://craigrevelhorwood.com)



## Stage version of Elf to make a Christmas return

The stage musical version of *Elf* will return to Birmingham's Resorts World Arena this Christmas.

Based on the much-loved festive-season film starring Will Ferrell, the hit show stops off at

the venue from Friday 20 to Sunday 22 December.

For further information and to book your seat, visit [elftickets.producer-tix.com](http://elftickets.producer-tix.com)

## More funding for regional environmental projects

The West Midlands Combined Authority's (WMCA) Community Environment Fund has awarded a total of more than £400,000 to nine local environment projects.

The fund was set up by the WMCA using £1million of Commonwealth Games legacy money. Its purpose is to support locally led green initiatives which are aiming to protect nature, reduce waste and prepare communities for the impact of climate change.

Recipients of the first round of grants from the fund were announced in March. To find out more, visit the website [wmca.org.uk](http://wmca.org.uk)

## New professional netball team launched in Brum

Birmingham is set to get its first professional netball team.

Taking the name Birmingham Panthers, the team will compete in the Netball Super League next season, playing at numerous venues across the West Midlands.

## Culture Club coming to Resorts World Arena

Boy George and Culture Club will visit Birmingham's Resorts World Arena this winter (Saturday 14 December) as part of a major UK & Ireland arena tour.

The tour is a celebration of their first two albums, *Kissing To Be Clever* and *Colour By Numbers*. The new show will see both landmark records being performed in their entirety. Support comes from synth-pop legends Tony Hadley and Heaven 17.

To find out more and purchase tickets, visit [ticketmaster.co.uk](http://ticketmaster.co.uk)





# B:Music

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**Anton Du Beke & Giovanni  
Pernice: Together** 12 July | Symphony Hall



**Stand By For Action! 2**

13 July | Symphony Hall



**Randy Feltface:  
First Banana** 13 July | Town Hall



**Nashville Sounds in the  
Round** 18 July | Symphony Hall



**Naseebo Lal: The Queens  
of Melody** 20 July | Symphony Hall



**Cirque**

27 July | Symphony Hall



**Curtis Stigers**

02 Aug | Town Hall



**Chris Isaak**

13 Aug | Symphony Hall



**Discos for Grown Ups**

10 Aug | Town Hall



**Sarah Millican: Late Bloomer**

30 Aug, 01 Sep & 13 Oct | Symphony Hall



**bmusic.co.uk**

There's something for  
everyone this summer!



## Funding awarded to local arts organisations

Bearwood-based arts organisations Black Country Touring, Spectra and The Parakeet have been awarded £73,569 from the Inclusive Communities Fund to create an ‘arts centre without walls’ in Smethwick. Running until December, the initiative will see free theatre shows, participatory workshops and nature-inspired events being presented in local community spaces across the borough.

## A ‘frightful night’ at the Old Joint Stock Theatre

Looking ahead to autumn, Birmingham’s Old Joint Stock Theatre is promising ‘a frightful night’ this Halloween, courtesy of a special concert event paying homage to ‘the best baddies of stage and screen’.

Titled I Screamed A Scream and taking place at the venue from Wednesday 30 October to Friday 1 November, the show features ‘dastardly delights, barbarous ballads and horrible hidden gems, performed by some of the most frighteningly talented performers in the musical theatre industry’.

Tickets are available at [designmynight.com](http://designmynight.com)

## Solihull summer of sport

Solihull’s Touchwood centre is live-screening the Wimbledon Championships tennis tournament (Monday 1 - Sunday 14 July) and the Paris Olympics (Friday 26 July - Sunday 11 August) in its Theatre Square. Commenting on the news, the venue’s marketing manager, Lucy Burnett, said: “By live-screening the events, we hope to create an electric atmosphere at Touchwood for families to experience.”

To find out more about the centre’s events programme, visit [touchwoodsolihull.co.uk](http://touchwoodsolihull.co.uk)

## Moyet in the Midlands

Alison Moyet will visit two Midlands venues next February as part of a world tour to celebrate 40 years as a solo artist.

Commenting on the tour, Alison said: “Live work really matters to me. I can’t dial in a performance. I love the physical feeling that singing gives me. It’s totally primal and euphoric.”

The former Yazoo star stops off at Stoke-on-Trent’s Victoria Hall on Tuesday 25 February and then visits Birmingham’s Symphony Hall two days later, on the 27th.

For further information and to book tickets, visit [alisonmoyetmusic.com](http://alisonmoyetmusic.com)



## Epic drone light show set to illuminate the autumn sky

An epic drone light show that’s promising to take audiences ‘on a mesmerising journey through time and space’ is coming to Birmingham’s Edgbaston Stadium in the autumn (Saturday 26 October).

Titled Evolution, the family-friendly light show is built around a narrated story which

starts with the Big Bang - the explosive birth of the universe - ‘before journeying into the remarkable origins of conscious life on Earth’.

Early-bird tickets for the show are available until Friday 19 July at [yuup.co/evolution](http://yuup.co/evolution)

## New season of events at city’s Millennium Point

Birmingham’s Millennium Point has unveiled its new season of events for the remainder of 2024.

July attractions include a screening of The Rolling Stones’ acclaimed concert movie, Shine A Light, alongside a live performance by Jimmy Regal & The Royals, on Saturday the 20th. Then, the following day, there’s a live set from international blues star Ben Toury, presented as part of the much-loved Moseley Record Fair. To check out the venue’s whole season of entertainment, visit [millenniumpoint.org.uk](http://millenniumpoint.org.uk)



volunteers, check out behind-the-scenes photographs of the renovation, and participate in numerous craft activities in the courtyard. To book a visit, go to [backtobacks@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:backtobacks@nationaltrust.org.uk)

## Ballet school marks its move to the second city

Birmingham’s Elmhurst Ballet School is presenting a run of summertime shows under the umbrella title of 20 (Friday 5 - Thursday 11 July).

Produced in association with Birmingham Royal Ballet and celebrating a range of dance styles, the shows mark the 20th anniversary of Elmhurst’s move from Surrey to the second city. More information is available at [elmhurstballetschool.org](http://elmhurstballetschool.org)



## Birthday celebrations at Brum’s Back to Backs

Birmingham’s popular Back to Backs visitor attraction is celebrating its 20th anniversary this month by hosting a free open weekend (Saturday 20 & Sunday 21 July). Visitors to the venue will be able to explore the back-to-back houses with the help of National Trust



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CAP Fri 12 Jul 7pm



Mon 15 – Sat 20 Jul  
Wed 17 Jul 7.30pm



Tue 23 – Sat 27 Jul



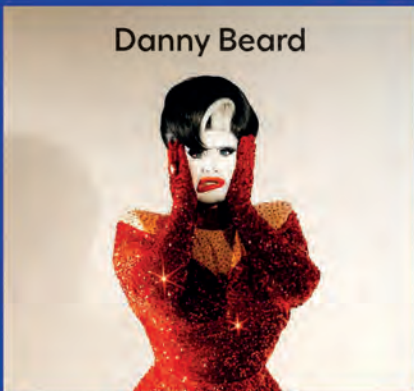
Wed 31 Jul & Thu 1 Aug



Thu 15 – Sat 17 Aug  
CAP Sat 17 Aug 2.30pm



Tue 20 – Sat 24 Aug  
Sat 24 Aug 2.30pm



Danny Beard

Fri 6 Sep



Tue 10 – Sat 14 Sep



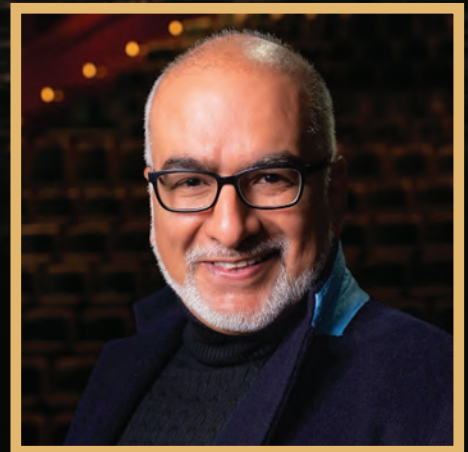
Tue 17 – Sat 21 Sep





# GOING DUTCH

**Baritone Byron Jackson talks about an innovative new production of Richard Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman***



Pictured (L-R): Byron Jackson, Bobbie-Jane Gardner, Iqbal Khan



A new production of Richard Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman* is aiming to break down barriers and increase accessibility to opera.

The show, which plays The Bradshaw Hall at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire this month, is an ethnically led production directed by the city's 2022 Commonwealth Games Opening Ceremony artistic director, Iqbal Khan.

Featuring a professional cast in the lead roles and a community chorus of more than 30 singers, the production aims to encourage people from all backgrounds to give opera a try.

In partnership with the Conservatoire, the production is presented by Persona Arts, a charitable incorporated organisation which aims to bring different communities together to perform and watch high-quality opera, classical music and choral productions.

The story tells the tale of the ghost ship of the *Flying Dutchman*, doomed to sail the high seas until the true love of another can break the dreaded curse. Premiered in 1843, it is one of Wagner's most popular works.

This particular version of the opera is a labour of love for Persona Arts' artistic director, Byron Jackson. The Birmingham baritone has not only developed the project but will also take on the role of the ill-fated Dutchman.

"The whole essence of what I'm trying to do with this production is to bring in new audiences to opera," explains Byron, who has sung with companies across the globe, including English National Opera, Opera North and the Netherlands-based De Nationale Opera.

"The *Flying Dutchman* is a piece that I always wanted to do. I did the cover for the role of the Dutchman for Longborough Festival Opera in 2018, and although I didn't perform it, the experience really gave me insight in terms of singing Wagner.

"I think Wagner and his works are often perceived as one of the elitist artforms in the opera canon, particularly in this country, but this has been because of how Wagner has been treated. His work is seen as being really intellectualised, but I believe opera should reach out to the heart, to everyone, no matter what their background."

And so the new production, which has been supported by Arts Council funding, is featuring singers from diverse areas of Birmingham and the West Midlands, some of whom have been involved in workshops since 2022.

"It's a huge undertaking because we are using a predominantly volunteer community chorus," says Byron. "But it is about bringing

people together to experience something that is outside of the preciousness of a country-house opera or one of the grand opera companies.

"It's about bringing the community to be part of the creative process in a relaxed, informal way where people can actually develop their craft."

Byron has worked with chorus director Colin Baines and a host of choirs, including Birmingham Choral Union, Junior Royal Birmingham Conservatoire Choir and Handsworth's St Mary's Church Choir. Rehearsals have taken place in different localities, including Handsworth, Small Heath and Moseley.

And this all aims to open up opera as an artform across these communities.

"What I want to see changing, and not just in Birmingham, is different audiences coming to enjoy opera. It has to move and evolve from audiences who are white, middle to upper class, generally middle-aged to the elderly, experiencing and controlling and moving the narrative forward.

"We need to get away from this tokenism of performance that 'we've got a great family of ethnicity who are fantastic musicians' but not actually supporting diverse families of musicians within our community to get to a higher level."

And Byron, who trained at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, knows only too well how alien classical music can be to a child of Jamaican heritage growing up in the inner city.

"I was brought up by my grandmother, and it was hard. We lived on the breadline, and I didn't have the opportunity for music lessons and paid activities. [What was important] was the support of others - particularly my first music and choir teacher, Bron Salway, who taught at my local primary school, Heath Mount. She passed away less than two years ago, so this production is dedicated to her memory because she was always supportive and knew the struggles I had to face.

"I should also give credit to Amanda Doyle, who was my secondary school music & drama teacher. A great teacher really can be transformative."

Byron was keen to involve Iqbal Khan in the *Flying Dutchman* project. They had first met when they worked together on Birmingham Opera Company's *Otello* in 2009.

"He was so enthusiastic; he has had a massive and long-time yearning to stage *The Flying Dutchman*. This is the first piece where he has directed me in a major role, but I had seen some of his work and been involved in his projects. We're both

Brummies, and we're both from really strong and diverse communities, him growing up in Small Heath and me being Balsall Heath born and bred. You can't get more diverse and home-grown than that to produce this work at this level. We are inbuilt in the city. This is our fabric; we are part of the tapestry of the city."

The production is sung in German with surtitles in English.

"The original languages are what the composers have set the text to, and I feel it sings better in German. And there's something rewarding and educational in singing something in its original language.

"I wanted to challenge the narrative that you need to sing in English or Latin if you are a community chorus. In terms of this production, what sets us apart from other opera companies that have used community volunteer participants, both regionally and nationally, is that we're doing it in German."

The professional cast features singers from across the Commonwealth, including Anando Mukerjee, Mari Wyn Williams, Laura Woods, Christian Joel and Gerrit Paul Groen. The production will be performed with Central England Camerata, conducted by Jack Ridley.

The performance also features a new commission, related to Wagner's classic, by Birmingham composer Bobbie-Jane Gardner which will feature a community children's choir.

Byron says the performances will be special. "Audiences can expect something unique.

The *Flying Dutchman* has a lot of elements which I think will reach out to all sections of the community. It has a very relatable story, it has great music for the chorus and the principals, and its length of two hours and 15 minutes is very amenable.

"And then, as well as the beauty of music, there's the enjoyability of our diverse community chorus. What audiences will see is a much truer representation of our communities on stage than they would usually see in the classical sector.

"It's about celebrating communities, no matter what your background is. It's about the fact that you've got people from our local communities who are wanting to produce and perform in work which will hopefully resonate with you and some aspect of your everyday life."

.....  
**The Flying Dutchman shows at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire's Bradshaw Hall from Sunday 7 to Saturday 13 July**



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Town Hall & Symphony Hall



Live music from across the city..

## Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds

Warwick Castle, Sun 21 July

Formed in 2010 by ex-Oasis star Noel - and having last year released their fourth studio album, *Council Skies*, to great critical acclaim, the High Flying Birds are widely credited with creating music that merges the melodies of The Beatles with the power of The Who. They play Warwick Castle as part of the popular visitor attraction's 'summer concerts' season. Johnny Marr and The WAEVE complete the evening's line-up.



## Calva Louise

The Asylum, Birmingham, Wed 10 July

A multicultural band, identifying as British (they came together for the first time in London) but hailing from Venezuela, France and New Zealand, Calva Louise have been making waves on the alt rock scene for a good few years now. Taking their inspiration from bands including Nine Inch Nails, Queens Of The Stone Age, System Of A Down and Muse, the metalcore trio visit Birmingham in support of fourth album *Calva Louise On Audiotree Live*.



Credit: Henry Calvert



## The Jungle Giants

Hare & Hounds, Birmingham, Fri 19 July

Nowadays widely considered to be Australian indie-rock royalty, The Jungle Giants have played sold-out shows across the globe and accumulated in excess of half

a billion streams worldwide. Determined never to stand still, the talented four-piece are constantly evolving their genre-agnostic sound, nowadays blending buoyant melodies with infectious choruses to create music which is unmistakably theirs.

## Alkaline Trio

O2 Institute, Birmingham, Wed 31 July

Sweet melodies and stark, unflinching lyrics are combined to excellent effect in the output of grungey punk rockers Alkaline Trio. The 27-year-old Chicago band visit Birmingham this month in support of 10th album *Blood, Hair, And Eyeballs*, a follow-up offering to 2018's *Is This Thing Cursed?*.

## Nils Frahm

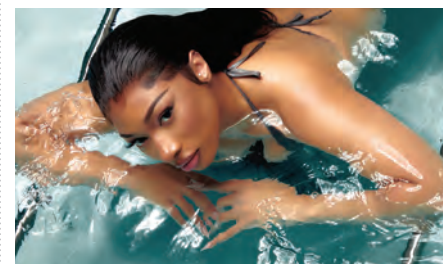
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Tues 2 July

German pianist, composer & producer Nils Frahm operates in a space somewhere between classical and electronic music, achieving a unique sound which, in harness with a captivating live-performance style, has seen him build an international reputation as a truly unique musician. "I'm interested in how human beings react in certain situations, and what music does to people's emotions," Nils told *The Quietus*. "After I've played a good concert, people leave the room happy... When people feel down and like it's all going to shit, at least we can give them some music and change their attitude, so that people don't think it's *all* shit... That's my religion."

## Megan Thee Stallion

Utilita Arena Birmingham, Tues 16 July

Rap artist and three-time Grammy Award winner Megan Thee Stallion's summertime visit to Birmingham comes some five years after she caused a significant stir with hit song *Hot Girl Summer*. Chart-topping singles have followed in the wake of her mainstream breakthrough (think 2020's *Savage*, featuring Beyoncé, and this year's *Hiss*), as has plenty of drama and controversy, most notably an incident in which rapper Tory Lanez shot her in both feet (he's now doing time for the crime). A legal battle against her record label, fake and 'sickening' AI footage, and a recently filed lawsuit accusing her of creating a 'hostile and abusive work environment' have further ensured the Texas-born singer is rarely out of the news.





# ANOTHER CONCERT FOR STRINGS

Thunderbirds Are Go at Symphony Hall!





## Jamie Anderson tells What's On about Stand By For Action! 2: Tunes Of Danger, a second concert celebrating his father Gerry's pioneering and numerous television series (think Thunderbirds, Captain Scarlet and Stingray, to name but a few), the music for which has become as iconic as the shows themselves...

In the spring of 2022, Jamie Anderson - the son of legendary TV producer Gerry, creator of Thunderbirds, Captain Scarlet, Joe 90, Stingray, UFO, et al - took an International Rescue-style risk by putting on a one-off concert of music from his father's shows at Birmingham's Symphony Hall, performed by a 55-piece orchestra.

It was a *calculated* leap of faith, of course, as not only do the Anderson shows - primarily sci-fi adventures featuring puppets - enjoy a devoted cult following, but the music, largely composed by Barry Gray, has developed a fanbase all of its own.

Not surprisingly the concert was a runaway success. So, two years later, it's back - but bigger and better than before, according to ever-affable producer, writer & director Jamie, who, as managing director of Anderson Entertainment, acts as custodian of his father's work.

"The first show was one of those complete unknowns," he says. "There had been an Anderson-related concert a long time before ours, but it was definitely unknown territory for us. It went really well, which is why we're doing it all over again."

Mindful of that last sentiment, Jamie is quick to point out that this year's concert won't be a carbon copy of the original show, which provided a chronological showcase of all his father's work. But he is just as quick to allay any fears that fans' favourites will be ditched to make room for new elements.

"We really want to elevate it from last time. It's not about more of the same - it's bigger, better, more exciting, more varied, and I think people are gonna love it."

When he talks, he gushes with the enthusiasm of one of the many fans of his father's work, even though he's at least 20 years too young to have seen any of the shows when they first aired in the 1960s and 70s.

"I don't want people to see 'different' and think 'they might not play all my favourite tunes', because they will all be there," he says, warming to the task of describing this year's approach.

"Rather than do a history of all the Anderson shows, we're looking at the different ways the composers paint a musical picture based on what's going on thematically.

"I looked across the whole catalogue and put

together a bunch of suites and medleys that are more about places across the universe and types of Anderson action. So we'll see music clustered by spies and thrills, Martian menaces, the distant reaches of space, under the sea, on land, massive machines... those kinds of things. It's another way to experience the Anderson universe - and not doing it chronologically will keep people guessing too."

Jamie says that as well as the suites and medleys, which are being arranged by Daniel Whibley, there'll be plenty of 'heavy hitters' - the big marches and opening titles - in the second half of the show. The latter will also include a couple of fan-inspired choices that didn't make the cut last time, including a tune from Anderson's only wholly live-action series.

"The two things that were most requested were the Zero X theme from the Thunderbirds Are Go movie, and - the surprise contender, which I really wasn't expecting - Avenues And Alleyways, the closing song from The Protectors, originally sung by Tony Christie."

The tune is arguably more memorable than the TV show, which starred Robert Vaughn, Nyree Dawn Porter and Space: 1999 alumnus Tony Anholt. Jamie admits that the iconic puppet and sci-fi shows almost certainly wouldn't have been as successful without Barry Gray's musical input either.

"It almost feels counter-intuitive to have music on that scale when the shows it's accompanying are so small. There's a risk that epic music with a huge orchestra, in the bombastic way that Barry did it, could further shrink the puppets and miniature models that were on camera. But because they had such grand ambitions, and wanted the visuals to look as filmic as possible, Barry's stuff works to further elevate that ambition.

"It's a perfect combination - but if you took Andy Pandy and put Barry Gray's score on it, it wouldn't work."

The 2022 concert certainly worked, and was memorable not only for the performances but also the genuine sense of fun in the auditorium; most of the orchestra were decked out in costumes from the shows, to match the cosplay on display in the audience. Comedian & impressionist Jon Culshaw added to the entertainment as the

evening's host, and he reprises his duties this year, as well as having a role in a one-off performance of a new Stingray story that will take the form of a staged radio play. It's an element of the concert that Jamie is especially excited about.

"The reason we've called the show Tunes Of Danger is because this year is Stingray's 60th anniversary, and it's a nod to an episode called Tune Of Danger.

"Obviously there's lots of action, peril and danger in the music anyway, but for the 60th anniversary year we're doing a multi-platform story called Deadly Uprising, which will be told across books, audio books, comics and at the concert, with a live, dramatic performance with a full cast and live orchestra playing along with them."

Called Deadly Concerto, the live drama's ensemble includes Solihull-born actor Mark Silk as the hero, Troy Tempest, as well as a 'top secret' guest role for Culshaw, which, Jamie assures me, isn't Lady Penelope's butler from Thunderbirds in a Marvel multiverse-style Anderson crossover.

"It's definitely not Parker - this is pure Stingray! But it'll definitely be an unexpected role."

'Expect the unexpected' is one of many Anderson catchphrases, but 'anything can happen in the next half hour' is clearly more apt for the Stingray play. Jamie admits it will be a challenge ("I wouldn't want to be conductor George Morton trying to get the actors to come in at the right moment") but is confident it will prove to be one of the highlights of the night.

"There's something about the Stingray story that people won't be expecting, and I think that 'reveal' will be a lovely moment in the room; something very special to be a part of.

"It should be really fun and a completely one-off thing. We're not going to repeat the performance, so it's really a case of be there on the night or that's it."

.....

**Stand By For Action! 2: Tunes Of Danger takes place at Birmingham's Symphony Hall on Saturday 13 July**







## Festivals coming to the region in July...

**AlderFest**

Alderford Lake, Whitchurch, Fri 5 - Sat 6 July

AlderFest returns for a third year after successful events in both 2022 and '23. Hosted by AJ & Curtis Pritchard, the event features a live-music line-up and plenty for the family to enjoy, including dance workshops, a silent disco, a fairground, roller-skating, stunt-bike performances and a 12ft Tyrannosaurus Rex.

An 'extraordinary' 120-person aquapark will be open throughout the day too.

**2024 line-up includes:** S Club (pictured), Example, Boyzlife, Atomic Kitten, Scott Mills, Ultrabeat, Flip & Fill and Artful Dodger.

**ALSO Festival**

Compton Verney, Warwickshire, Fri 12 - Sun 14 July

Returning for its 11th year, ALSO brings together performers and musicians, bestselling authors, celebrated scientists and experts in a variety of fields to create a 'magical and immersive experience.'

Set in 50 acres of landscaped and lakeside gardens, the event is billed as 'a unique opportunity to reconnect with yourself and the world around you'.

This year's theme is Heavenly Bodies.

**2024 line-up includes:** Stornoway, Sara Pascoe (pictured), Edie Bens, Jessica Winter, Miya the Sun and Jet Black Orange

**Let's Rock**

The Quarry, Shrewsbury, Sat 13 July

The UK's most iconic retro festival, Let's Rock is once again gracing the Town of Flowers with a line-up of era-defining hitmakers from the 1980s.

The family-friendly event now boasts 14 locations and expanded to Shrewsbury in 2017. Fancy dress is big here, so dig out those colourful shellsuits, leg warmers and permed wigs, then bust out your best dance moves!

**2024 line-up includes:** Squeeze (pictured), Bananarama, Martin Kemp, Go West, From The Jam, Nik Kershaw, Jason Donovan, Altered Image and XTC.

**Sandwell & Birmingham Mela**

Victoria Park, Smethwick, Sat 13 - Sun 14 July

Established in 2011, Sandwell & Birmingham Mela is the biggest South Asian music festival in Europe. Music, dance, food, and arts & crafts bring the sights, sounds and spicy aromas of South Asia to Victoria Park in Smethwick... As well as a diverse musical line-up, the festival also features a food village, a shopping bazaar, a funfair, an arts village and plenty more.

**2024 line-up includes:** Harshdeep Kaur, Sunanda Sharma, Guru Randhawa, Bilal Saeed, Karan Sehmbi (pictured), Jyotica Tangri and Sukshinder Shinda

**Penkrige Open Air**

Penkrige Sports & Recreation Centre, Penkrige, South Staffs, Fri 5 - Sun 7 July

Back for a third year, Penkrige Open Air festival presents live performances by a host of artists, bands and local talent across multiple stages. This year sees the event paying homage to the 1980s on the Friday and the 1990s on the Saturday, then hosting a Sunday Funday event to round things off. Other festival attractions include an arts & crafts market, family-friendly activities, and a selection of games and entertainment.

**2024 line-up includes:** Five (pictured), Blazin' Squad, Rozalla, Viggo Venn, Gary Davies DJ Set, Dick & Dom DJ Set, Timmy Mallett and Barrioke





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- ✿ Eric Bibb ✿ Ward Thomas
- ✿ Jacqui McShee's Pentangle
- ✿ Beth Nielsen Chapman
- ✿ Manran ✿ Mary Gauthier
- ✿ The Longest Johns
- ✿ Peatbog Faeries ✿ El Pony Pisador
- ✿ The Sentimentals & friends
- ✿ The Wandering Hearts
- ✿ Kathryn Tickell & The Darkening
- ✿ Le Vent du Nord ✿ Dream in Colors
- ✿ The Celtic Social Club ✿ Bella Hardy
- ✿ London Afrobeat Collective
- ✿ The Pleasures ✿ Suntou Susso Band
- ✿ HEISK ✿ Ranagri ✿ The Hello Darlins
- ✿ Joshua Burnell Band ✿ The Magpies
- ✿ NATI ✿ Sidiki Jobarteh Trio
- ✿ The Hunch ✿ Rosie Hood Band
- ✿ James Delarre & Saul Rose
- ✿ Lady Nade ✿ Joli Blon
- ✿ Mazula ✿ Winter Wilson
- ✿ Suntou Susso (solo)
- ✿ Anthony John Clarke
- ✿ The Lost Notes ✿ The 309s
- ✿ Roswell ✿ Patakas
- ✿ Al O'Kane ✿ Dan the Hat

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Festivals coming to the region in July..

## Nozstock: The Hidden Valley

Rowden Paddocks, Bromyard, Herefordshire,  
Thurs 18 - Sun 21 July

Indulge your curiosity at this eclectic and eccentric festival. Founded by a fun-loving family in the noughties and still overseen by Farmer Noz, the four-day bash presents a line-up of off-the-wall and generically diverse talent. Look out for arts & crafts distractions too, not to mention folk diversions, screenings, workshops and plenty more.

Festival organisers have announced that this will be the final Nozstock, so bag yourself a ticket now to experience its magic one last time.

**2024 line-up includes:** Andy C, Groove Armada DJ Set, Arrested Development (pictured), Dillinja b2b Randall & GQ, The Undercover Hippy and Boney M.



## Warwick Folk Festival

Warwick Castle, Thurs 25 - Sun 28 July

Now in its 45th year, Warwick Folk Festival boasts the very best in contemporary and traditional folk arts from the UK and beyond. As well as an extensive line-up of performers, the four-day camping event features workshops, dance performances, children's entertainment and a festival village.

**2024 line-up includes:** The Unthanks, Oysterband, Spooky Men's Chorale, Breabach, Lady Maisery, Blair Dunlop (pictured) and Melrose Quartet.



## Mostly Jazz Funk & Soul Festival

Moseley Park, Birmingham,  
Fri 12 - Sun 14 July

Created by the Midlands masterminds behind Moseley Folk & Arts Festival, Mostly Jazz Funk & Soul sees world-class artists coming together with leading lights of the local jazz community for a laidback family-

friendly event designed to celebrate Birmingham's musical heritage.

The festival is located in the picturesque surroundings of Moseley Park, a stunning woodland glade tucked away behind busy Birmingham streets, making it the ideal retreat for music-loving city dwellers.

**2024 line-up includes:** Leftfield, Kurupt FM, Mr Scruff, Yusef Dayes, Kool and The Gang, Craig Charles and Greentea Peng (pictured).



## Festival At The Edge

Hopton Court, Shropshire, Fri 19 - Sun 21 July

Combining top storytellers and folk musicians with bright new talent, Festival At The Edge returns to the Shropshire hills this month. This year taking the theme of pagan/folk horror, the event features story and music workshops, story-walks, story-rounds, wellbeing & craft workshops and circus skills.

**2024 line-up includes:** Mister Fox, Andy Harrop Smith, Tim Ralphs, Len Cabral, Ciderhouse Rebellion, Dan Walsh, The Time Bandits and Mossy Christian and Megan Wisdom and Mark Borthwick (pictured).

## Simmer Down

Handsworth Park, Birmingham, Sun 28 July

Simmer Down is one of Birmingham's most diverse festivals.

Presenting a line-up of internationally acclaimed artists and homegrown talent, the popular event pays tribute to the contribution which reggae has made to Birmingham's growing reputation as an international city of culture.

Alongside live performances, the festival also includes art workshops, participation activities, entertainment for children & young people, craft and food stalls and a licensed bar.

**2024 line-up includes:** Julian Marley (pictured), Janet Kay & Carroll Thompson, Macka B and Mad Professor.





# THIS IS WHAT THEY DO

Neil Barnes talks all things Leftfield ahead of the electronic music duo's appearance at this year's Mostly Jazz Funk & Soul Festival





## The ever-popular Mostly Jazz Funk & Soul Festival makes a welcome return this month, featuring in its impressive line-up electronic music favourites Leftfield. What's On caught up with founder member Neil Barnes to find out more about a duo who are still riding high on the success of their most recent album, This Is What We Do...

You'd think that after three hugely acclaimed albums, Leftfield's Neil Barnes would be used to praise. But even *he* was surprised by how enthusiastically their most recent collection, *This Is What We Do*, was received.

"I was really blown away by the critical reaction to the record and all the nice things people said, you know?" says Neil, humbly. "It was a real journey, that album, and to see that people could really relate to it, and could see what we were trying to do, made it all special.

"And because the album came out of ... I'd say *struggle*, but I suppose just life events, life turning, it meant a lot to me, and to Adam. I'm very proud of it actually."

And so he should be. Released at the end of 2022, and produced by Barnes with current Leftfield cohort Adam Wren, *This Is What We Do* reconfirmed them as one of the great British dance acts of the last 40 years. Featuring contributions from Fontaines DC vocalist Grian Chatten, as well as '90s collaborators Earl Sixteen and Lemn Sissay, it finds Leftfield acknowledging their past but also looking forward, combining pounding beats, rippling sequencers and sweeping synths to create an album of both light and darkness, yet consistently infused with hope. "Certain people can see what the idea behind the album was: the opportunity to dance, relax, think, sing along. I think maybe it had all the composite parts of a good Leftfield album. And put into context, [it came] out of a time of all this turbulence."

For Barnes, personally, that turbulence included a 2021 bowel cancer diagnosis which, in the run-up to major surgery, energised him to complete album demos.

"I just decided that, 'If I don't get this done now, I will probably either die, or it will never be done,'" says the producer (now in remission), who also acknowledges that the entire world was facing previously inconceivable challenges too.

"[It also] came out of a period of Covid, and maybe that's one of the other reasons why people responded to it so well ..."

Formed by Barnes with Paul Daley, Leftfield were part of a wave of acts inspired by Acid House/rave, Detroit techno and European electronica, coupled with punk's core DIY ethic, who reshaped dance music during the so-called Britpop era. Following a trickle of well-received underground releases, their debut album, *Leftism* - which included the hits *Original*, *Afro-Left* and *Release The Pressure* - exploded in 1995. Nominated for the Mercury Prize, it went on to spend a substantial 136 weeks in the UK charts, establishing the duo as crossover stars.

Looking back at their unexpected fame, Neil says: "We were just like two young kids thrown into a world that we didn't understand, that we had no preparation for. We weren't interested. We dipped our toes into going to award ceremonies and things like that, and we were just 'Wow!'"

"[Leftism was] really big, and it came as such a surprise. We were very naive and we didn't know what was happening, but the actual effect of, and success of, *Leftism* did affect our ability in the studio.

"It's such a cliché, but you have your whole life to make your first record, and then you're told you have six months to follow it up. So, second records are often very difficult things if you care about what you do, or if you find it difficult to just knock things out - which is what we just couldn't do."

Eventually overcoming their creative challenges, album number two finally arrived in 1999. Topping the UK charts, *Rhythm And Stealth* solidified their reputation as electronic music innovators. But after two LPs, numerous cool soundtrack contributions (*The Beach*, *Trainspotting* etc) and remixes (including David Bowie), by the early noughties, the duo had drifted apart.

That should have been the end of the Leftfield story, but Barnes was lured back to the stage in the 2010s, with a third Leftfield album - the Top 10 *Alternative Light Source* - appearing in 2015.

"It started off simply with an opportunity to play live again, which I wanted to do because

I just felt it was a shame just to end, to stop, and I wanted to take that forward and play live," says Barnes of Leftfield's revival, which makes the most of today's tech to allow the live band to perform and expand tracks in ways they never could in the '90s. "And then, out of that, the idea of doing a new album came. I just felt that there was more to be said. There was more to the story."

That story has continued with 2017's *Leftism 22* remix and *This Is What We Do*, along with its 2023 dub *Version Excursion* counterpart. There's also been more acclaimed live dates, with a return to Birmingham this month for Mostly Jazz Funk & Soul Festival - where they headline alongside US '70s funk pioneers *Kool & The Gang* and man of the moment *Yussef Dayes*. Then, next year, there are tentative plans to mark Leftfield's 35th anniversary, while Barnes aims to diversify by mixing musicmaking with counselling, having paused his therapy studies to complete *This Is What We Do*.

"It's something that I'm planning to get back into, as it's something I'm very interested in," he says of counselling.

Barnes discusses how his own anxieties have impacted his music (especially outside of Leftfield), how therapy has helped him, and how he'd like to help others ("some musicians have suffered from mental illness, and, as we know, there are some very sad stories..."); he even hints it may eventually become his main gig. But first, there's more study.

"I'm looking for a course that would suit me," says the 62-year-old. "I'm really interested in the power of communication, how various forms of therapy - and there's so many out there - can allow us to free ourselves and to get to the root issues of our problems."

.....

**Mostly Jazz Funk & Soul Festival, Birmingham, runs from Friday 12 to Sunday 14 July. To find out more, visit [mostlyjazz.co.uk](http://mostlyjazz.co.uk)**





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SCAN TO BOOK



Comedy previews from across the region...

## Milton Jones

Midlands Arts Centre, (MAC), Birmingham, Thurs 18 July; Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Fri 27 September; Birmingham Town Hall, Sun 6 October; Warwick Arts Centre, Sat 19 October; Crewe Lyceum Theatre, Fri 6 December; Stourbridge Town Hall, Sat 7 December

With a style of humour that's mainly based around puns and one-liners, Milton Jones has established himself as one of Britain's most in-demand funnymen.

"If my comedy's working well, I put a cartoon in people's heads that surprises them," explains Milton. "So you start off and they're thinking one thing, then you surprise them by changing the ending as you go along. It's not political or particularly edgy, it's just daft. It's a sort of verbal practical joke, but some people really hate that.

I think the better the comic you are, the stronger the flavour you are."

Milton's gags include: "Militant feminists - I take my hat off to them. They don't like that," and "Recently, on a flight to America, all the way across, my wife was going, 'Why don't you get an upgrade, why don't you get an upgrade?'"

"It took a bit of time, but in the end I got a better wife."

## Richard Herring

Huntingdon Hall, Worcester, Sat 6 July; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sun 7 July

Richard Herring has developed a reputation as one of the UK's most inventive and original comedians, cleverly using real-life trials and tribulations to inform his high-quality line in comic patter.

And he's certainly not a man to shirk big or controversial subjects when it comes to his comedy shows. Previous tours have seen him ponder religion (Christ On A Bike), politics (Hitler Moustache) and genitalia (Talking Cock).

This latest offering finds him once again contemplating what's going on down his trousers, this time having been diagnosed three years ago with testicular cancer, as a result of which he's had the 'murderous gonad' removed.



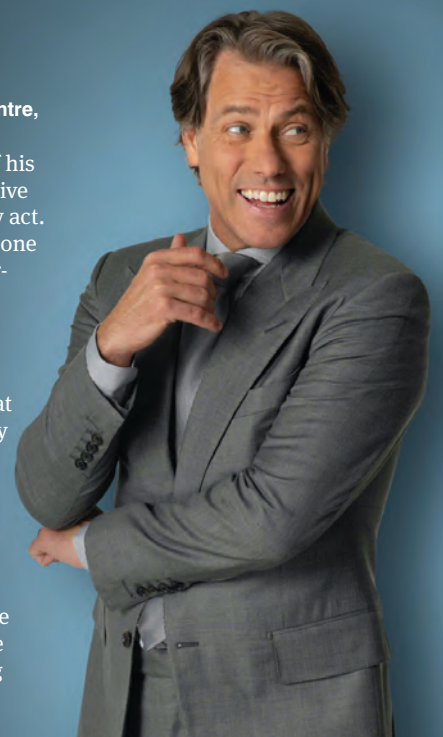
## John Bishop

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Thurs 4 & Fri 5 July; The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton, Sun 14 July; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Thurs 31 October

Evidently a fella who likes to fly by the seat of his pants, John Bishop left the comfort of a lucrative marketing job to work full time on his comedy act. It was certainly a brave decision to make, but one that has since been fully justified - the 57-year-old Liverpoolian is nowadays one of the UK's best known and most highly regarded funnymen.

Jokes include "Being an England supporter is like being the over-optimistic parents of the fat kid on sports day," and "Edinburgh is the only place you can be sunburned and get trench foot on the same day."

John stops off in the Midlands with latest touring show Back At It. The title makes reference to the fact that, 'after two years spent TV presenting, stage acting, podcast hosting, dog walking and decorating the spare room', he's finally getting back to the thing he loves the most; standing on stage and making people laugh.



## Gary Pownland

Stourbridge Town Hall, Sat 27 July; The Prince Of Wales Theatre, Cannock, Sat 31 August

"Life was tough growing up," says online sensation Gary Pownland, the alter-ego of Wolverhampton laughter merchant Jack Kirwan. "My mom and dad popped out for a loaf when I was younger, which is quite an ordinary thing, but I realised as they were leaving that they were carrying suitcases. Straight away I thought to myself, 'How much bread do they think we can eat?'"

Jack is very much enjoying his creation Gary's moment (or several) in the sun, but his own career in comedy hasn't always been plain sailing. "I've done my share of driving up to Newcastle for a 20 quid gig, getting back at 1am and needing to be up for work at five," says Jack. "And then there was the time I played Edinburgh and basically died on my arse every night for a month!"

## Randy Feltface

Birmingham Town Hall, Sat 13 July

Randy Feltface is described by his official publicity for this show as a felt-faced comedian with an axe to grind. If you've never heard of him before,



important information to know is that he's a purple puppet from Australia who is operated by a fella named Heath McIvor. He's appearing in Birmingham to present an hour of brand-new comedy, with support being provided by fellow Australian Brodi Snook.

## Sofie Hagen

Glee Club, Birmingham, Wed 10 July

Danish feminist comedian and one-time self-harming Westlife fan Sofie Hagen makes a welcome return to the Midlands with a brand-new show to



accompany a brand-new book. Both are titled Will I Ever Have Sex Again? and find their 'inspiration' in Sofie's 3,000-plus days of 'involuntary celibacy'.



# POET OF THE PEOPLE

Midlands Arts Centre is set to host a celebration of  
Birmingham-born writer & dub poet Benjamin Zephaniah





## A celebration of the life and work of the late Benjamin Zephaniah will take place at Birmingham's Midlands Arts Centre in September. What's On recently caught up with three people involved in the event - organiser Selina Brown, of The Black British Book Festival, and two Birmingham Poets Laureate: Casey Bailey and current incumbent Jasmine Gardosi...

Benjamin Zephaniah, writer, dub poet, musician and Professor of Creative Writing at London's Brunel University, grew up in the Handsworth area of Birmingham, where the seeds of his life in poetry were planted. His first book of poetry, *Pen Rhythm*, was published in 1980, with his first album, *Rasta*, hot on its heels - the beginnings of a career which crossed genres.

Zephaniah was a steadfast activist, an anti-racism and animal rights campaigner, a vegan, and a self-proclaimed anarchist. His death at 65, in December last year, was unexpected, and prompted an outpouring of tributes from admirers around the country. In his home city in September, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC) will host an event in his name, 'celebrating the power of poetry, music and art'.

The family-friendly celebration will take place at the venue's outdoor theatre and feature a line-up of guest performers. Selina Brown, the founder of The Black British Book Festival (Europe's largest Black literature festival), has been instrumental in curating the event.

"I think one thing for me that kind of speaks to Benjamin Zephaniah is how unapologetically Black he was," she says. "How unapologetic he was about equality, how unapologetic he was about his veganism, and taking care of the planet. He just stood in his truth, always. He was not afraid in any platform, whether it was through poetry, whether he was doing dub - in all of that he spoke his truth with passion, and when he spoke, people listened."

One of the ways Zephaniah has become so widely known is through his celebrated works for children - both poetry and prose - which have been passed down through generations, including to Selina's own children: "I'm a children's author myself - we actually share the same literary agent! I just feel like his poetry was what stood out for me, his Jamaican roots, his Rastafarian roots, the fact that I could feel the essence of home, of my grandma, when he spoke."

Zephaniah performed at MAC numerous times, and Selina maintains that the arts centre offers a perfect venue to celebrate his life and values.

"It's deliberately outside, in MAC's amphitheatre, because we know that Benjamin loved nature. In order to have his essence there, we're having it outside, we're having drummers, we're having workshops, we're having vegan food the whole day at the

Kiln cafe - we're really honing in on his essence. We're going to have pictures - an exhibition from his family that hasn't been displayed before. It's just a vibrant day for people to pay honour to him."

It also provides an opportunity for local artists to celebrate a Birmingham legend. "We really want to hone in on the fact that Benjamin was from Handsworth in Birmingham, and he was passionate about being a Brummie - so we want that local feel to it. We have amazing artists in the line-up; various artists who have been influenced by his work."

Two of these performers are Birmingham Poets Laureate: Casey Bailey, who was Poet Laureate until 2022, and Jasmine Gardosi, who currently holds the post. Both first felt Zephaniah's influence in school English lessons. In fact, both poets remember his *Talking Turkeys*, a playful and rhythmic poem which appeals for turkeys' right to life at Christmas.

Jasmine recalls: "A lot of poetry to me at that point existed as black ink on white paper; this was the first time I heard a poem out loud and experienced it in a three-dimensional space."

Casey thinks he knows why Zephaniah's poetry has such an immediate impact on so many: "He has this ability to write things that, on first listen, if you've never listened to poetry before, make sense to you. If you're someone who really dissects poetry and takes it really seriously, there's another layer there for you as well."

Zephaniah's legacy reaches beyond his writing to his willingness to be authentic; and his authenticity was so different to that of other famous figures in the world of poetry.

"He leaned into his difference," says Jasmine. "He hasn't ever tried to mask or simulate. I think there's a huge temptation for us to do this, whether it's a temptation to code-switch when it comes to race or accent or how we speak, or if it comes to sexuality or gender identity. I have found myself masking for many, many years of my life. What Benjamin did was, he was very gently himself."

It is perhaps not a coincidence that Birmingham has a thriving poetry and spoken-word scene.

"You can go to Poetry Jam at Symphony Hall, you can go to The Bristol Pear in Selly Oak... there are lots of different poetry nights," explains Casey. "You've got the Verve poetry

night, which runs in the Jewellery Quarter. There are just so many routes if you're a poet in Birmingham. It's one of the best places in the country for you to be a poet, because there are places for you to share your work, there are groups you can be a part of."

"Birmingham's poetry community is an exact reflection, I think, of what Benjamin stood for and nurtured and appreciated and valued," adds Jasmine. "A community of love, of support, of principle, of care, of standing up to things, of looking at power structures or infrastructures and thinking 'How can they be better?'"

Poetry is an egalitarian artform, built around human communication - whether in speech, or the written word.

"You don't need an instrument," says Jasmine. "You don't need to have a dancer's body or flexibility; you don't need to be able to sing - I can't sing! I don't think that's just what poetry is, though; I think poetry is telling a truth. It's also a playground for language... it's so many things."

While Zephaniah's legacy stretches beyond his poetry, his poems continue to have a great deal of influence.

"There's layers of inspiration," says Casey. "Lots of us either wouldn't be writing, or there wouldn't be the strength of the scene that there is, or we wouldn't feel like we have the space or the permission to write, without poets like Benjamin Zephaniah saying 'This artform is for all of us.' His biggest impact, in my opinion, is on the poets - especially from Birmingham, especially poets of African Caribbean origin in the country. We can look and see: that is an absolute poetry icon who looks like me. That means something, and that's important."

Selina shares a final thought, looking forward to the celebration. "I'm excited for everybody to be there, coming together with one aim, one mission, which is the love of Benjamin. Everybody is there to celebrate him. Hearing the artists, hearing his work being recited, everybody sharing the memories, the way he touched them - having that communion, that gathering; I think that's beautiful. I just can't wait for that to happen."

.....  
**Benjamin Zephaniah: A Celebration will be held at Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, on Sunday 1 September**





## Hamilton

Birmingham Hippodrome, until Sat 31 August

It would require a seriously strong mantelpiece to successfully support all the silverware that this breathtakingly impressive show has accumulated across the years...

Its roll-call of glittering gongs includes 11 Tonys, seven Oliviers, the Pulitzer Prize for drama and a Grammy for best musical theatre album.

Blending hip-hop, jazz, blues, rap, R&B and Broadway, Lin-Manuel Miranda's cultural phenomenon tells the story of America's Founding Father, Alexander Hamilton. An immigrant from the West Indies,

Hamilton became George Washington's right-hand man during the Revolutionary War and helped shape the foundations of modern-day America.

"People love the show for so many different things," says Sam Oladeinde, who plays Hamilton's friend and then nemesis, Aaron Burr. "Every single element of the show is a strength - the choreography, the direction, the music, the band, the performances on stage, the sound, the lighting. The show has won record numbers of awards in the UK, in America, around the world, and that's for a very good reason."

## Pretty Woman The Musical

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Mon 15 - Sat 20 July

Based on the still-adored 1990 movie that turned Julia Roberts into a superstar, the musical stage version of *Pretty Woman* has become quite a phenomenon in its own right, with record-breaking runs on Broadway and in the West End. Co-written by the film's director, the late Garry Marshall - best known as the man behind 1970s



TV hits *Happy Days*, *Laverne & Shirley* and *Mork & Mindy* - the show comes complete with original music & lyrics by pop superstar Bryan Adams (and his long-term collaborator, Jim Vallance). Two-time Tony Award winner Jerry Mitchell both choreographs and directs the production. Amber Davies, Oliver Savile and Ore Oduba take the lead roles.

## Unfortunate: The Untold Story Of Ursula

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Thurs 11 - Sun 14 July

Marketed as a tell-all tale of sex, sorcery and suckers, *Unfortunate* has a subtitle that makes it pretty clear what the show is all about.

Ursula, for those who've never come across the character before, is a villainous sea witch and the main antagonist in the 1989 animated film, *The Little Mermaid*. A Disney Diva par excellence, she's been making waves in her very own stage musical for the past five years and visits Wolverhampton this month in the form of *Orange Is The New Black's* Shawna Hamic. RuPaul's *Drag Race UK's* River Medway co-stars...



The show features strong language, partial nudity, scenes of a sexual nature and plenty of trademark filthy humour - so if you're of a decidedly delicate disposition, you may want to go swim in a different sea.





## HAMILTON

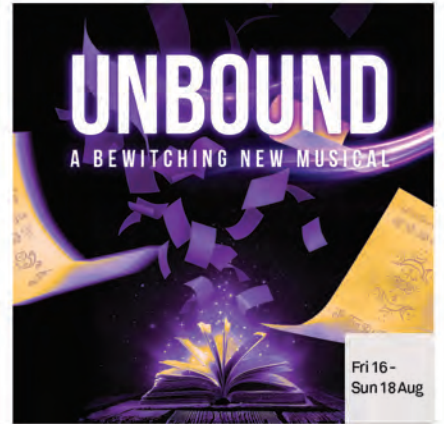
Until  
Sat 31 Aug



## My Son's a Queer,

(But what can you do?)

Thu 11 -  
Sat 13 Jul



## UNBOUND

A BEWITCHING NEW MUSICAL

Fri 16 -  
Sun 18 Aug



## A CHORUS LINE

Tue 10 -  
Sat 14 Sep



THE WEST END & BROADWAY HIT MUSICAL

## hairspray

Mon 16 -  
Sat 21 Sep



## BOTOWN

Sat 21 Sep



## BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET

La Fille  
mal gardée

Wed 25 -  
Sat 28 Sep



## four felons and a funeral

Thu 26 -  
Sat 28 Sep



## Bullring Techno Makeout Jamz

Wed 2 -  
Sat 5 Oct



## BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET

### Luna

Thu 3 -  
Sat 5 Oct



THE DISNEY CLASSIC ON STAGE

## Aladdin

Wed 9 Oct -  
Sun 3 Nov



## PLAY ON!

Wed 6 -  
Sat 9 Nov







Image credit: Manual Motion

## Player Kings

The Alexandra, Birmingham,  
Wed 10 - Sat 13 July

Here renamed, Shakespeare's Henry IV plays offer up some of his most beautifully drawn characters, including Mistress Quickly, Pistol, Justice Shallow and irrepressible comic knight Sir John Falstaff. The epic tale finds England in turmoil, the king's position weak, the Prince of Wales under the corrupting influence of Falstaff, and civil war inevitable... This highly acclaimed modern-dress production stars Sir Ian McKellen, who, perhaps surprisingly, is here playing the larger-than-life Falstaff for the very first time in his distinguished career.

## My Son's A Queer (But What Can You Do?)

Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome,  
Thurs 11 - Sat 13 July; Belgrade Theatre,  
Coventry, Mon 15 - Wed 17 July

Written & performed by 'social-media sensation' Rob Madge, this Olivier Award-nominated production is a celebration of 'the joy and chaos of raising a queer child'. Age-guidance for the show is 12-plus and comes with a rather unusual warning: Contains some swearing, a fair bit of precociousness and scenes of utter joy. May cause happiness!



## I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,  
Tues 16 - Sat 20 July

The trials and tribulations of relationships - not forgetting the associated subjects of dating, sex, weddings, babies and divorces - offer plenty of ripe subject matter for playwright/lyricist Joe DiPietro & composer Jimmy Roberts' highly regarded show.

## Sauna Boy

Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham,  
Thurs 25 - Sun 27 July

Award-winning writer & performer Dan Ireland-Reeves takes a semi-autobiographical look behind one of the world's most secretive and seductive industries: the gay sauna. "I tell the stories really candidly," Dan recently explained to festmag.com, "without getting bogged down in the disgusting

minutia of it all. I try to do it no-holds-barred. That's how I like to tell all stories, really - from a place of truth, not just pornographic titillation."

## Pericles

Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon,  
Fri 26 July - Sat 21 September

A rarely performed Shakespeare play - perhaps in part because of questions over its authorship - Pericles sees the title character fleeing for his life after learning of an incestuous relationship between King Antiochus and his daughter... This new Royal Shakespeare Company production is helmed by Tamara Harvey, who recently became the RSC's co-artistic director.

## Twelfth Night: A Cornish Tale

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, until Sun 7 July

Comedian Seann Walsh takes on the coveted role of Malvolio in this Stafford Festival Shakespeare production, the second to be performed in the Gatehouse theatre rather than outdoors in the grounds of the town's castle.

As with many Shakespeare comedies, Twelfth Night is based on a case of mistaken identity, with Viola disguising herself as a boy and causing all manner of awkward romantic shenanigans. However, the play's continuing popularity can mainly be attributed to its hilarious (well, by Shakespeare's standards anyway) comic sub-plot, in which the merciless Sir Toby Belch and his foolish companion, Sir Andrew Aguecheek, seek to humiliate the pompous Malvolio (and achieve their aim in fine style)... As the show's subtitle makes clear, this

particular version of Twelfth Night comes complete with a Cornish theme. Natalie Anderson and the Bafta-winning Molly Windsor also star.

## My Mother's Funeral: The Show

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry,  
Thurs 25 - Sat 27 July

A new play by Kelly Jones, My Mother's Funeral: The Show not only tackles the inequalities around death but also looks at the cost of turning a loved one into art...



The production is a collaborative venture, with one of the partners being Paines Plough, a London-based company whose 50th anniversary has coincided with them announcing a move to the Coventry Belgrade.

## What The Butler Saw

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Tues 2 - Sat 6 July; Malvern Theatres, Tues 9 - Sat 13 July

Joe Orton's fast-moving farce is somewhat overshadowed by two of his other plays - the scandalous black comedies Entertaining Mr Sloane and Loot - and there's a very good reason why; Orton completed What The Butler Saw just a month before he was brutally bludgeoned to death by his lover, Kenneth Halliwell, in the summer of 1967, meaning that he had no time to give the script what he called in his diary 'the final polish'... The play is here getting new life breathed into it by London Classic Theatre.





TUE 30 JUL - SUN 4 AUG '24  
THE WIZARD OF OZ



WED 28 AUG '24  
ABSOLUTE REGGAE



SUN 1 SEP '24  
THE MERSEY BEATLES



FRI 6 - SAT 7 SEP '24  
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## THE CORE OUTDOOR

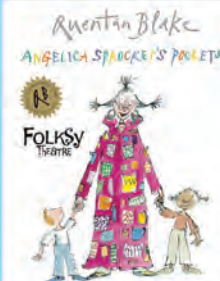
Theatre shows in Brueton Park, Solihull

Brueton Park, Warwick Rd, Solihull B91 3DL



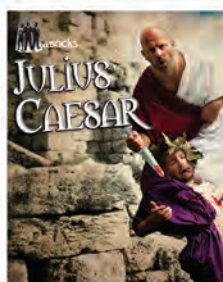
**The Gondoliers**  
Thu 1 Aug 6pm

This light-hearted operetta will whisk you away to a world filled with blissful romance, barbed satire and comedic chaos.



**Angelica Sprocket's Pockets**  
Sat 10 Aug 5pm

A fun family show based on the Quentin Blake tale, filled with live music, puppetry, and more!



**Julius Caesar**  
Tue 13 Aug 6pm

Shakespeare's famous tragedy has a new twist when it's given the Oddssocks treatment.



**The Importance of Being Earnest**  
Thu 22 Aug 6pm

Enjoy Oscar Wilde's classic comedy about manners and triviality amongst the upper class.

THE CORE  
theatre solihull

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## The Wizard Of Oz

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,  
Tues 30 July - Sun 4 August

RuPaul's Drag Race UK winner The Vivienne stars as the Wicked Witch of the West in this classic story from the imagination of L Frank Baum.

A marvellous mix of magic, mayhem and munchkins, the terrific tale tells the story of Kansas resident Dorothy Gale and her unexpected trip over the rainbow to the colourful land of Oz.

Featuring the iconic original score from the Oscar-winning MGM film - including Follow The Yellow Brick Road, We're Off To See The Wizard and of course Over The Rainbow - this hit show visits the Midlands direct from the London Palladium and includes additional songs by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice.

## The Sorcerer

The Hub at St Marys Lichfield, Sun 14 July

Charles Court Opera here presents a real treat for Gilbert & Sullivan fans on the final day of this year's Lichfield Festival...

Rarely performed and not widely known, The Sorcerer was one of G&S's very first operas. Premiering in the autumn of 1877, it focuses on the character of Alexis, a man whose obsession with the idea that everybody should fall in love leads to him enlisting a sorcerer from London to administer a love potion to the entire village in which he lives. But as each villager falls for the first person they see after partaking of the magical brew, it soon becomes apparent that love may not always be a many-splendoured thing...

## The Haunting Of Blaine Manor

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury,  
Thurs 18 & Fri 19 July

When Doctor Roy Earle, a renowned American parapsychologist famous for discrediting hauntings and exposing fake mediums, accepts an invitation to attend a seance at 'the most haunted building in England' - the Blaine Manor of the title - he finds himself, along with his companions for the evening, temporarily cut off from the outside world by a raging storm.

And as every lover of the ghost/horror genre very well knows, where there's a raging storm *and* a haunted house, there are also, inevitably, things that go bump in the night... An award-winning love letter to both the Golden Age of Hollywood and the era of Hammer Horror movies here in the UK, The

Haunting Of Blaine Manor is described by its publicity as the new Woman In Black - only scarier. That's quite a claim to make, but then there are also plenty of theatre critics and audience members who would be in absolute agreement about its quality.



## Here You Come Again: The Dolly Parton Musical

Malvern Theatres, 16 - 20 July; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Tue 10 - Sat 14 September

'Rollicking and joyous new musical' Here You Come Again features the music of Dolly Parton and centres around the character of diehard Dolly fan Kevin, who finds solace in his own imagined version of the woman herself.

"The show is very funny," says Steven Webb, who plays Kevin. "It's a really touching journey of self-discovery and self-healing, and comes with the awesome back-catalogue of Dolly Parton's songs. It's not a 'jukebox musical'; it's just me and Dolly Parton in an attic, listening to her music."

## Grease

The Alexandra, Birmingham,  
Mon 15 - Sat 20 July

Dust off your leather jackets, pull on your bobby-socks and get ready for the most fun-

filled high-octane rock'n'roll party of them all. Grease is the original high-school musical, featuring all the unforgettable songs from the hit 1978 film, including You're The One That I Want, Grease Is The Word, Summer Nights, Hopelessly Devoted To You, Sandy and Greased Lightnin'.

Leicester Curve's artistic director, Nikolai Foster, helms this latest touring version, with choreography by former Strictly judge Arlene Phillips.

## The School For Scandal

Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Tues 2 July - Fri 6 September

When Sir Peter Teazle marries a young country girl, he assumes that her innocence and naivety will ensure she's of little bother to him. But he's reckoned without his new wife's decision to take up with three of the most outrageous scandalmongers in town... Sheridan's 18th-century comedy here receives the RSC treatment, with the Company promising 'an exuberant feast of big wigs and even bigger laughs' in a show that's 'styled to the nines with period flair'.







Shropshire Horticultural Society  
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Theatre for younger audiences



**Bluey's Big Play**

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Sat 27 & Sun 28 July

Blue Heeler puppy Bluey has certainly had plenty to bark about since making her television debut six years ago. The Australian animated pre-school series in which she stars has not only developed a huge international fanbase but also picked up a prestigious Emmy award. On the back of such global success, it was only a matter of time before the popular pup's adventures made it onto the stage... This 50-minute show finds Bluey and younger sister Bingo determined to thwart their dad's plan to enjoy a quiet Sunday afternoon...

**Peppa Pig's Fun Day Out**

The Alexandra, Wed 31 July & Thurs 1 August; Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Wed 28 & Thurs 29 August; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Wed 18 & Thurs 19 September; Palace Theatre, Redditch, Wed 25 & Thurs 26 September; Malvern Theatres, Wed 16 & Thurs 17 October; Everyman Theatre, Cheltenham, Wed 30 & Thurs 31 October

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

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

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



**Horrible Histories: Rotten Royals**

Crewe Lyceum Theatre, Sun 14 July

If you love the Horrible Histories series - and why the heck wouldn't you?! - then Rotten Royals is a show that's definitely well worth catching.

Alongside providing answers to such searching questions as 'would you be wooed by Richard the Lionheart?' and 'would you be shaken or stirred by Richard III?', the show also invites its audience to clap along with crazy King Charles, move to the groove with Queen Victoria, and watch Mary Tudor knock the spots off Mary Queen of Scots...

In short, and as its publicity says, it's 'a truly horrible history of Britain - with all the nasty bits left in!'

**Charlie Cook's Favourite Book**

Palace Theatre, Redditch, Tues 16 & Wed 17 July; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Fri 27 - Sun 29 September; Stratford Playhouse, Stratford-upon-Avon, Fri 18 - Sun 20 October; Birmingham Town Hall, Sat 26 & Sun 27 October

Given the success of so many other stage adaptations of Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler's hugely popular stories (see, for example, The Gruffalo elsewhere on this page), it's a real no-brainer to mount a live version of Charlie Cook's Favourite Book. Presented via the ever-popular combination of clever puppetry and enchanting songs, the show follows Charlie's attempts to get his sister to read.



Charlie himself loves reading. For him, there's nothing better than settling down to enjoy a favourite book about a pirate... who also has a favourite book... about Goldilocks... who also has a favourite book... about a knight... who also has a favourite book...

...You get the idea?... Created for children aged between three and eight, the show is one hour in length.

**Fireman Sam: The Great Camping Adventure**

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Thurs 25 July; William Aston Hall, Wrexham, Sat 3 August; Crewe Lyceum Theatre, Sun 13 October

Now an impressive 37 years into his firefighting career, Fireman Sam is still putting out blazes in Pontypandy and lighting up children's eyes with delight.



In this brand-new adventure, perpetual troublemaker Norman Price follows two famous animal explorers into the mountains and ends up stranded in a cave. As ever, it falls to Fireman Sam to come to the rescue and save the day...

**The Gruffalo**

Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Thurs 11 & Fri 12 July; Lichfield Garrick, Tues 24 & Wed 25 September

Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler's delightful children's book is once again brought vividly to life, this time to celebrate the 25th anniversary of its publication. The Gruffalo is presented by award-winning theatre company Tall Stories, who've garnered an excellent reputation in terms of performing Donaldson & Scheffler's work. Their imaginative retelling of the much-loved story comes complete with talented cast, catchy songs and magical characters.





## Outdoor theatre productions showing across the region this summer



### Oddsocks: Julius Caesar

Bowring Park, Telford, Sun 7 July; Compton Verney, Warwickshire, Fri 12 July; Victoria Gardens, Tewkesbury, Sun 14 July; Brueton Park, Solihull, Tues 13 August

When Roman emperor Caesar is assassinated by a group of prominent senators, one of his staunchest supporters, Mark Antony, manages not only to turn the crowd against the conspirators but also to defeat them in battle... But let's avoid getting too bogged down in the whys and wherefores of Shakespeare's extremely serious tale of conspiracy and bloody murder - given that it's here being presented by zany funsters Oddsocks!

The ever-entertaining band of theatricals are promising their audiences thrills and spills aplenty, including the tearing of togas, the swishing of swords, some splendidly preposterous puppetry and the biggest battle scene ever created by five actors. In short, it's time to brace yourself for the kind of laughs you have no right to expect in a production of Julius Caesar...

### A Midsummer Night's Dream

Set in a forest, Shakespeare's best-loved comedy is a perfect play for the great outdoors... This particular version is presented by The Handlebards - a group of Shakespearean actors who carry their set, props and costumes on the back of their bikes.

**Showing at:** Spetchley Park Gardens, Worcestershire, Tues 9 July; Dudmaston Hall, Quatt, Bridgnorth, Wed 10 July

### Angela Sprocket's Pockets

Folksy Theatre present Quentin Blake's classic children's tale.

Angela Sprocket's overcoat has pockets galore, and here's your chance to find out exactly what's in them...

**Showing at:** Wightwick Manor Gardens, Wolverhampton, Sat 20 July; Martineau Gardens, Birmingham, Sun 21 July; Winwick Hall, Northamptonshire, Sun 4 August; Brueton Park, Solihull, Sat 10 August; The Dorothy Clive Garden, Market Drayton, Shropshire, Sat 17 August

### As You Like It

One of Shakespeare's best-loved comedies is here presented in the open air. What's more, it's been significantly edited and has a running time of just 80 minutes. As such, this Royal Shakespeare

Company production offers a great summertime introduction to the works of the bard...

**Showing at:** The Holloway Garden Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Thurs 18 July - Sun 1 Sept

### As You Like It

Banished by her usurping uncle to the Forest Of Arden and revelling in the naturalness of her surroundings, Rosalind - accompanied by cousin Celia and Touchstone the fool - finds a happiness she didn't know existed... The well-established Folksy Theatre present Shakespeare's timeless comedy.

**Showing at:** Martineau Gardens, Edgbaston, Birmingham, Wed 17 July; Wightwick Manor Gardens, Wolverhampton, Thurs 18 - Fri 19 July; Bolton Gate Farm, Stoke-on-Trent, Sat 20 July; Warley Woods, Smethwick, Wed 31 July; Biddulph Grange Gardens, Staffs. Fri 23 August; The Dorothy Clive Garden, Market Drayton, Sat 24 August; Whittington Castle, Shropshire, Sun 25 August

### Beauty And The Beast

Chapterhouse Theatre present a brand-new version of a much-loved family fairytale.

**Showing at:** Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre, Nuneaton, Thurs 8 August

### Charley's Aunt

The Crescent Theatre's touring summer show is a classic tale of mistaken identity featuring angry uncles and a beautiful, exotic aunt.

**Showing at:** Selly Manor, Birmingham, Wed 10 - Thurs 11 July; Harvington Hall, Nr Kidderminster, Sat 13 - Sun 14 July

### Great Expectations

High drama, mysterious goings-on and a host of much-loved characters combine in Dickens' famous family classic, here presented by the well-respected Quantum Theatre.

**Showing at:** Sandford Parks Lido, Cheltenham, Sat 6 July

### Little Women

Louisa May Alcott's much-loved coming-of-age story follows sisters Jo, Meg, Amy and Beth as they journey into adulthood. Presented by Chapterhouse Theatre Company and featuring a musical score and authentic costuming.

**Showing at:** Tuckwell Amphitheatre, Cheltenham, Wed 21 August; National Trust Erdigg Hall, Matchwiel, Wrexham, Sat 24 August

### Tell Me A Story

HandMade Theatre fuse performance, storytelling, music and puppetry in a family adventure that promises to take audiences on a trip down memory lane.

**Showing at:** Caldmore Community Garden, Walsall, Sat 20 July

### Peter And The Wolf

This Waterperry Opera presentation features two actors and Prokofiev's magical score. Suitable for all ages.

**Showing at:** Lichfield Cathedral School Gardens, Sat 13 July

### Pride And Prejudice

Step back in time with Chapterhouse Theatre's regal production of Jane Austen's romantic classic. Expect stunning period costumes, timeless wit and an original score.

**Showing at:** Powis Castle and Garden, Powys, Nr Welshpool, Sun 14 July; National Trust Erdigg Hall, Marchwiel, Wrexham, Sat 20 July; Hartlebury Castle, Worcestershire, Fri 26 July; Tuckwell Amphitheatre, Cheltenham, Tues 20 August

### Romeo And Juliet

The world's greatest love story is here given the Illyria treatment in an outdoor setting.

**Showing at:** Sandwell Valley, West Bromwich, Fri 5 July; Hanbury Hall, Droitwich, Sat 10 August; The Lenches Amphitheatre, Nr Evesham, Sun 18 August; Moseley Old Hall, Wolverhampton, Fri 30 August



### Star Crossed Fools

Midlands-based Lucid Spark Theatre fuse the whimsical and the surreal in a show inspired by the timeless tale of Romeo & Juliet.

**Showing at:** The Holloway Garden Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Sun 21 July

### The Adventures Of Doctor Dolittle

The much-admired Illyria present Hugh Lofting's timeless family musical about a physician who can speak to animals in their own languages.

**Showing at:** Hanbury Hall, Droitwich, Sat 27 July; Moseley Old Hall, Wolverhampton, Tues 13 August; Hartshill Park, Telford, Tues 20 August

### The Comedy Of Errors

Here presented by Three Inch Fools, Shakespeare's forerunner to modern farce is a superbly crafted catalogue of mistaken identity, adulterous liaisons and slapstick humour.

**Showing at:** Acton Scott Hall, South Shropshire, 26 July; Charlecote Park, Warwickshire, Fri 2 - Sat 3 August

### The Comedy Of Errors

Two sets of identical twins are separated during infancy. When their paths cross again later in life, all manner of confusions ensue... Presented by The Handlebards - a group of Shakespearean actors who carry their set, props and costumes on the back of their bikes.

**Showing at:** The Manor, Notgrove, Cheltenham, Tues 9 July; Coventry Cathedral, Tues 23 July; Bowring Park, Telford, Fri 6 September

### The Gondoliers

Romance, satire and chaos combine as Gilbert & Sullivan's lighthearted operetta is here presented by the ever-inventive Illyria theatre company.

**Showing at:** Sandwell Valley, West Bromwich, Tues 25 July; Brueton Park, Solihull, Thurs 1 August; Hanbury Hall, Droitwich, Sat 17 August; Birmingham Botanical Gardens, Fri 6 September

### The Hound Of The Baskervilles

The monstrous mutt returns to the moorlands in Illyria's cheeky but chilling adaptation of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's legendary Sherlock Holmes story ...

**Showing at:** Winterbourne Gardens, Birmingham, Sat 17 August; Hanbury Hall, Droitwich, Sat 7 September

### The Secret Diary Of Henry VIII

The Three Inch Fools tackle the question of how to keep your head in a Tudor court. Expect a madcap take on Britain's most notorious monarch - and his infamous six wives.

**Showing at:** Shrewsbury Castle, Wed 24 July

### The Tale Of Jemima Puddleduck

Quantum Theatre fuse songs, drama and action in a brand-new version of Beatrix Potter's much-loved tale.

**Showing at:** Hagley Park & Visitor Centre, Birmingham Road, Sat 6 July; Bewdley Museum, Nr Kidderminster, Sun 7 July; Shrewsbury Castle, Thurs 25 July; Forge Mill Needle Museum, Redditch, Sun 1 Sept

### The Tempest

Silhouette Youth Theatre, an associate regional theatre partner of the Royal Shakespeare Company, here present an hour-long performance of the bard's final play - a terrific tale of magic, betrayal and revenge.

**Showing at:** The Holloway Garden Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Sat 20 July

### The Three Musketeers

Worcester Repertory Company present a fast-paced version of Alexandre Dumas' famous swashbuckling adventure. Five actors play 17 characters in two different countries - all while being accompanied by a little yellow hobby horse!

**Showing at:** The Commandery Gardens, Worcester, Wed 10 - Sun 21 July



### Hamlet

Lichfield Cathedral, Tues 9 July; Coughton Court, Warwickshire, Thurs 11 July; Shrewsbury Castle, Tues 30 - Wed 31 July; Bantock House & Gardens, Wolverhampton, Fri 23 August

Faced with the ghost of his murdered father and the indecently hasty remarriage of his widowed mother to his conniving uncle, Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, finds himself struggling to make sense of life...

The world's most performed and discussed play is here staged as Shakespeare himself would have experienced it - in the open air and with an all-male cast. The production is presented by the critically acclaimed Lord Chamberlain's Men, who have 'stylishly distilled' the story down to just two hours.

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## Light entertainment from around the region



## The Scummy Mummies Podcast Live

Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham, Sat 6 July

"Our speciality is comedy for less-than-perfect parents, so that means *all* parents!" says Ellie Gibson about Scummy Mummies, her popular double act with Helen Thorn. "Our live comedy shows cover a wide range of parenting topics - from pelvic floors and play-dates to farting and fish fingers. Expect songs, sketches, stand-up and very scummy stories!"

Ellie and Helen will be joined for their afternoon show at MAC by local MP Jess Phillips, who will be talking about the ways in which she has supported and championed women and mothers.

## Accidental Influencer

Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham, Fri 19 & Sun 21 July

This lighthearted exploration of the digital age's impact on identity and success features cabaret performer and self-proclaimed internet idiot Stage Door Johnny - a man who, back in 2020 and the days of lockdown, found himself unexpectedly catapulted to social-media stardom, 'all while stuck in a flat in the West Midlands'.

## Anton Du Beke and Giovanni Pernice: Together

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Tues 9 & Wed 10 July; Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Fri 12 July

Are you in urgent need of a Strictly 'booster-jab' while waiting for the arrival of the 2024 series? Then this is most definitely the production for you.

Anton Du Beke and Giovanni Pernice, two of the hit BBC TV series' biggest and all-time best-loved professional dancers, are here joining forces to present a show that's being described as a mesmerising experience for all ages.

It was recently announced that Giovanni won't be participating in the next series of Strictly, making it even more important for his legion of fans that they catch up with him in this live touring show.

Expect 'breathtaking routines, innovative choreography, and a seamless blend of traditional and contemporary dance styles'.



## Cirque: The Greatest Show

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Thurs 4 July; Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Thurs 27 July; Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Fri 13 September

Musical theatre and jaw-dropping circus combine in this intriguing touring show. The production sees stars of the West End performing alongside 'amazing aerialists, incredible contortionists and fabulous fire jugglers' as they undertake 'thrilling feats of agility and flair'...



## Solve-Along-A-Murder-She-Wrote

Stourbridge Town Hall, Fri 19 July; Lichfield Garrick, Wed 11 - Fri 13 September

Lasting for 264 episodes across 12 seasons until the mid-1990s, Murder, She Wrote - starring English actress Angela Lansbury as amateur sleuth Jessica Fletcher - is one of the longest-running and most popular detective drama series in television history. As such, the success of this tribute-paying spin-off night out is hardly surprising.

Devised by superfan Tim Benzie, the show not only features an interactive screening of Murder She Wrote episode Broadway Malady, but also a chance to solve a crime, take part in a wholehearted singalong to the theme tune, enjoy a special quiz, and check out clips and biographies of the show's 'campy guest stars'.

## Uncanny: I Know What I Saw

Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Wed 3 July

Danny Robins, the creative force behind spooky podcast The Battersea Poltergeist and spiningling stage production 2:22 - A Ghost Story, here makes a welcome return with a chilling showcase of 'true' stories of the supernatural.

Brought to life through 'thrilling theatrical invention in a mix of projection, sound and spellbinding storytelling', the terrifying tales relate to very modern hauntings.

Danny and the team will not only be recounting the strange encounters but also debating what they think actually happened in each case.

## Rhythm Of The Dance

Albany Theatre, Coventry, Sat 6 July; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Fri 12 July; Malvern Theatres, Worcestershire, Sun 14 July

Audiences are promised an evening of fabulous flutes, flailing fiddles and inspiring dances when popular touring show Rhythm Of The Dance stops off in the Midlands this month.

Taking its fans on a two-hour trip through hundreds of years of Irish dance and music, the hit show boasts award-winning world and Irish dance champions, multiple costume changes, a state-of-the-art light & sound presentation, and performances by talented vocalists and multi-instrumentalist musicians.

If you've never before seen the production, this month's Midlands stop-offs provide a perfect opportunity to catch up with one of the most popular Irish step dance shows in the world.



## Film highlights in July...



### **Despicable Me 4** CERT U (95 mins)

With the voices of **Steve Carell, Kristen Wiig, Joey King, Will Ferrell, Sofia Vergara, Miranda Cosgrove** Directed by **Chris Renaud** and **Patrick Delage**

Given that the Despicable Me franchise is a gold-star money-making movie machine, it's hardly surprising that its producers are releasing yet another installment in the series, albeit a full seven years after the last. This one sees lead character and supervillain-turned-Anti-Villain League-agent Gru (voiced by The Office's Steve Carell) going on the run from new nemesis and French-accented supervillain Maxime Le Mal (Will Ferrell).

Maxime's femme fatale girlfriend, Valentina, is voiced by Sofia Vergara - best known for playing the character of Gloria Delgado-Pritchett in long-running US sitcom Modern Family. **Released Fri 12 July**

### **MaXXXine** CERT 18 (103 mins)

Starring **Mia Goth, Elizabeth Debicki, Moses Sumnet, Lily Collins, Halsey, Kevin Bacon** Directed by **Ti West**

In 1980s Hollywood, adult-film star and aspiring actress Maxine Minx finally gets her big break. But as a mysterious killer stalks the starlets of Hollywood, a trail of blood threatens to reveal Minx's sinister past... MaXXXine is the eagerly awaited final film in writer/director Ti West's blood-spattered X trilogy, the first movie of which saw a group of 1970s pornographers meet grisly ends at the hands of the elderly owners of a remote Texas farm. **Released Fri 5 July**



### **Fly Me To The Moon**

CERT tbc (132 mins)

Starring **Scarlett Johansson, Channing Tatum, Woody Harrelson, Christian Clemenson, Jim Rash, Ray Romano** Directed by **Greg Berlanti**

Described by its publicity as a sharp and stylish comedy-drama, Fly Me To The Moon is set against the high-stakes backdrop of NASA's historic Apollo 11 moon landing. Brought in to fix the organisation's public

image, marketing genius Kelly Jones causes sparks to fly in all directions as she wreaks havoc on launch director Cole Davis' already difficult task.

Things then get even trickier when, deeming the mission too important to fail, the White House demands that Jones stages a fake moon landing as a back-up option...

**Released Fri 12 July**



## Deadpool & Wolverine CERT tbc (127 mins)

Starring **Ryan Reynolds, Hugh Jackman, Emma Corrin, Morena Baccarin, Rob Delaney, Karan Soni**  
Directed by **Shawn Levy**

Relatively poor box-office returns for recent superhero movies have left Hollywood filmmakers wondering whether cinemagoers have finally tired of the genre. But if ever there was a movie likely to get things back on track, it's surely this latest terrific team-up.

The 34th film in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, the movie brings together two of Marvel's best-loved film stars: wisecracking mercenary Deadpool (played by Wrexham Football Club co-owner Ryan Reynolds) and the X-Men mutant with retractable claws, Wolverine (Hugh Jackman). "I'll tell you that the guiding thought in crafting the movie was audience joy," the film's director, Shawn Levy, told ScreenRant. "That was always the North Star. Yeah, it's going to be gnarly. Yeah, it's gonna be funny. That's a given. But we wanted to build a great time at the theatre for audiences, and that's our goal."

**Released Thurs 25 July**



## Twisters CERT tbc (122 mins)

Starring **Daisy Edgar-Jones, Glen Powell, Anthony Ramos, Maura Tierney, Katy O'Brian, Kiernan Shipka** Directed by **Lee Isaac Chung**

When former storm chaser Katy Carter is lured back to the open plains to test a groundbreaking new tracking system, she crosses paths with Tyler Owens, a charming and reckless social-media superstar who thrives on posting his storm-chasing adventures online.

With storm season intensifying, and with terrifying and never-before-seen phenomena unleashed, Kate, Tyler and their competing teams find themselves fighting for their lives as multiple storm systems converge...

Although this long-awaited sequel to cult

1996 disaster movie *Twister* was actually filmed in Oklahoma during its tornado season, the movie's storms were created using jet engines and giant fans.

"This is an elemental story," Director Lee Isaac Chung told *Empire*, "so I wanted us to go as practical as possible. We had jet engines blowing. We had fans so massive you'd lose your hearing without earplugs. We were pelting our cast with everything - dirt, wind, ice.

"It was tough. The unpredictability of the weather caused a lot of issues and delays. It was my choice to do this in tornado season, but honestly, I still can't believe we actually did it."

**Released Wed 17 July**



## blur: To The End

CERT tbc (181 mins)

Starring **Damon Albarn, Graham Coxon, Alex James, Dave Rowntree** Directed by **Toby L**

This new feature-length documentary follows the emotional return of 1990s Britpop superstars blur as they make a surprise return with *The Ballad Of Darren*, their first record in eight years. The film follows the unique relationship of band members Damon Albarn, Graham Coxon, Alex James and Dave Rowntree as they come together to record 10 new songs ahead of their sold-out and first-ever shows at Wembley Stadium.

"To The End is an intimate glimpse into relationships, motivation and mortality," explains the film's director, Toby L... "On the subject of capturing a band that has been so well documented, we sat down at the start of the project and agreed that the film had to tell a new story, be shot entirely on location, and, crucially, be honest. In *To The End*, that's what I hope people can see and, most importantly, feel.

**Released Fri 19 July**







## Titanic Exhibition

NEC, Birmingham,  
Sat 27 July - Sun 25 August

Visitors to this fascinating exhibition will find themselves coming face to face with objects and artefacts from one of the most famous and tragic events in 20th-century British history.

The Titanic was a passenger liner that sank in the North Atlantic Ocean on 15 April 1912 during its maiden voyage.

Using remarkable footage of the wreckage, the exhibition offers a rare chance to discover more about the crew, engineers and passengers who set sail on what was supposedly an 'unsinkable' ship.

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## Joy... Inspired By Nature

Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry, Fri 19 July - Sun 22 September

Herbert Art Gallery & Museum's free-to-enjoy summer exhibition comes complete with giant flowers, bursts of rainbow colours, and sounds and smells that awaken inner tranquillity.

Joy...Inspired By Nature sees acclaimed artists Nicola Richardson and Marianne Taviner create 'an eye-popping

wonderland that playfully reconnects us to nature'.

The exhibition features two special commissions: a scentscape by Gemma Costin and a soundscape by Ashley James Brown. Local artist Abeda Begum joins the team in crafting the final installation.

## Tereza Buskova: Hidden Mothers

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, until Sun 29 September

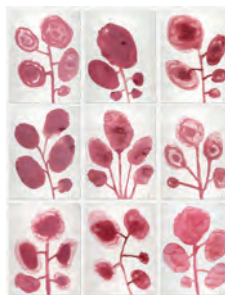
Czech multimedia artist Tereza Buskova's Hidden Mothers takes its name from a commonly used practice in Victorian-era portrait photography. When mums were having photos taken of their infants - who they needed to keep still during the necessary long exposures - they would sit nearby but cover themselves with a cloth to ensure that they didn't appear in the image themselves. In so doing, they became known as 'hidden mothers'. Tereza's exhibition aims to provide a platform from which to empower women, 'encouraging mothers to step out from the shadows and reclaim their importance in society'.



## Louise Bourgeois: Nature Study

Compton Verney, Warwickshire, Sat 6 July - Sun 6 October

Spreading seamlessly from Compton Verney's galleries into the surrounding landscape and featuring more than 40 works - including some which have rarely been seen in the UK - Nature Study brings together paintings, textile pieces, sculptures and works on paper made across Louise Bourgeois' seven-decade-long career. As well as providing an opportunity for visitors simply to revel in her output, the exhibition also explores numerous important themes in the artist's work. These include: the importance of memory; the landscape as a metaphor for the mind and body; and the cycles of time and nature.



Les Fleurs, 2009 Photo Christopher Burke, © The Easton Foundation/Licensed by DACS, UK (2)

## Claudette Johnson: Darker Than Blue

The Barber Institute, University of Birmingham, until Sun 15 September

Darker Than Blue is Claudette Johnson's first solo show in the Midlands.

The Turner Prize nominee's work often takes the human figure as its subject and in particular explores the experience of Black women - including herself.

"It's wonderful that Claudette has been nominated and recognised for her incredible work," says the Barber's director, Professor Jennifer Powell. "It is really powerful, with striking and confident line work - and her figures always hold your gaze.

"In the show there will be a sound installation by Trevor Mathison, who's a contemporary sound artist. Trevor has created a soundscape that combines aspects of the Barber experience - the echoes and sounds of the galleries - with the sound of Claudette working in the studio.

"It's the first time that Claudette and Trevor have ever worked together, and it's the first time that Claudette has had this sound aspect in an exhibition."



Image © Claudette Johnson / photo: Andy Keate

## Carlos Bunga

New Art Gallery, Walsall, Fri 5 July - Sun 27 October

Portuguese artist Carlos Bunga is best known for his large-scale and site-specific architectural installations, which he makes from materials such as tape, cardboard and household paint. For this major exhibition of his most recent art, the Barcelona-based Bunga has created a work especially for the gallery. Composed of cardboard columns and other architectural forms, the installation has been made for the venue's street-facing window box, a temporary environment alluding to the often-precarious nature of physical constructs.



# ALL ABOARD!

It's full steam ahead this summer at the Severn Valley Railway...





## The Severn Valley Railway runs steam and diesel locomotives that pull restored vintage carriages across the idyllic countryside of Shropshire and Worcestershire. This summer, The Engine House Visitor Centre - located halfway along the line at Highley - is hosting special family fun days with all the bells and whistles to make the most of the six-week school holiday. What's On takes a look at what makes the popular heritage railway such a grand day out for visitors of all ages...

Boasting a fleet of steam and diesel locomotives that pull restored vintage carriages across 16 miles of beautiful Shropshire and Worcestershire countryside, popular heritage line the Severn Valley Railway will celebrate its 60th anniversary in 2025. And one of its stations, Kidderminster, is 40 years old this very month.

The railway runs between Kidderminster and Bridgnorth, with stations at Bewdley, Arley, Highley and Hampton Loade, each with picturesque walks and other attractions nearby. On the journey, passengers are treated to an example of proper British countryside along the River Severn valley, with scenic views available to enjoy from wherever you sit in the carriage.

Life at the Severn Valley Railway is powered not only by steam and diesel, but also a body of hard-working volunteers who serve as drivers, conductors and station masters, as well as doing less glamorous but equally essential work. All along the line, the platforms are kept pristine, and otherwise forgotten practices are carefully maintained. The upkeep of the line is a labour of love, with 1,600 volunteers looking after their local station or giving their time to keep the trains running.

As Severn Valley Railway has been transporting passengers for nearly 60 years, the staff and volunteers are well tuned in to the needs of their visitors. Most trains (except for the Diesel Multiple Unit, DMU) have adapted heritage carriages, designed to accommodate wheelchairs, and there are staff and volunteers on every train and platform who are happy to assist.

The sway of the carriages, occasional hiss and whistle of steam, and the rhythm of the tracks is as much a part of the line's preserved history as the vintage carriages and period-piece platforms. The railway offers From The Window and Eye Spy booklets, to accompany the journey, with insights into how the locomotives work, the history of the railway, and points of interest to spot along the way.

From the carriages, passengers get sweeping views of wildflower meadows and gorgeous indigenous forestry. Less indigenous are the camels and rhinos at West Midlands Safari Park, who might be seen enjoying the

weather to the north-east of the line between Bewdley and Kidderminster. Whether you're blessed with sunshine or not, the railway offers a grand day out.

Just across the track from Highley station is The Engine House Visitor Centre, easily accessible with flat access all the way, and packed with interactive activities. The Engine House opens on days when the trains are running and is free to enter, making it the perfect 'mid-point' to explore for those who don't want to travel the full length of the line. For anyone whose interest in locomotion has been piqued on their journey - and those who are already firm fans of the Locos - visiting The Engine House is a must. It contains a selection of the railway's out-of-service steam locomotives, and their sheer size is awe-inspiring, which doesn't quite come across when viewing them from a station platform. 'Gordon', the blue engine, is naturally very popular among fans of Thomas the Tank Engine, and there's also the chance to step aboard the footplate of a steam locomotive, for a train driver's view. Visitors can peep inside the lush carriage of King George VI's Royal Saloon, which is worlds apart from the everyday commuter experience, and perhaps take one of the occasional guided tours inside the carriage. In the Travelling Post Office, visitors can try sorting the mail by hand, which originally would have been done while the train was travelling to its destination.

On The Engine House's upper level, the Flag & Whistle Food Stop offers tea, coffee, cake and lunch options. While taking refreshment, visitors can relax on the balcony, which provides a great view of the railway as the trains go by. There's plenty of room to have a picnic, if you prefer, and there's also an outdoor play area. Parking at The Engine House is extremely limited, and nearby Highley is at least 15 minutes walk away, meaning that the best way to reach it is by train.

The Engine House hosts free Summer Family Fun days throughout the six-week school holiday, including magic shows, mini golf, and fete games, alongside all the visitor centre's regular activities. The train journey to Highley takes around 40 minutes from Bridgnorth, and 45 minutes when starting at

Kidderminster, giving passengers enough time to marvel at the locomotives and enjoy the journey. The amount of time spent at The Engine House is flexible - visitors can stretch their legs and hop on the next train back, or make a day of it and explore everything on offer - not forgetting a picnic lunch or a visit to the Flag & Whistle.

The Railway itself also hosts events throughout the year. These include regular Dining Experiences - select from handcrafted menus featuring locally sourced ingredients as you travel the full length of the line in First Class carriages - and Footplate Experiences - try your hand at driving a locomotive. In the festive season, there are Santa Trains from Kidderminster to Arley, where there's a pantomime production to enjoy, and gifts for the children appear magically for the journey home.

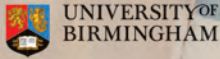
It's advisable to book tickets in advance to get the best price, and groups of 20 or more are encouraged to contact the team at Severn Valley Railway, who offer group discounts. A Freedom Of The Line ticket allows passage along the whole length of the line, stopping at any of the stations. An adult ticket costs £25 if booked in advance and £32 when purchased on the day. Travelling part of the line costs less - an adult return ticket to Highley and The Engine House is £21.50 from Kidderminster, and £14 from Bridgnorth, with child, family and other discounts available on all standard fares.

With the school summer holiday starting this month, Severn Valley Railway offers a charming, unique and exciting day out for all ages, where visitors can let off steam - along with the locomotives - and enjoy the ride. Whether you want to travel the length of the line or discover hidden gems of the English countryside, a trip along the Severn Valley Railway is just the ticket.

**The Severn Valley Railway operates its summer service from Tuesdays to Thursdays and on Saturdays & Sundays. Summer Family Fun days at The Engine House Visitor Centre run from Tuesday 23 July to Sunday 1 September. For more information and to book tickets, visit the website: [svr.co.uk](http://svr.co.uk)**



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# Claudette Johnson

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Events previews from around the region



**1940s Weekend**

Black Country Living Museum, Dudley, Sat 13 & Sun 14 July

Take a step back in time to the 1940s this month, courtesy of this special two-day event at the Black Country Living Museum. As well as finding out about the outbreak of the Second World War and the era's Dig For Victory and Make Do And Mend campaigns, visitors can also experience a celebratory street party, meet soldiers from across the Empire, welcome newly arrived evacuees to the school, learn how to train for the Home

Guard, prepare for an air raid with a resident ARP Warden and try out some 'military looks' in the museum's brand-new army & navy stores. The venue will also be holding a special event on the Saturday evening which will see the streets and houses transformed into a homefront community, complete with live music and 1940s-style entertainment.



**Get the Picture - Summer Of Design**

British Motor Museum, Gaydon, Fri 19 July - Mon 2 September

Visitors to the British Motor Museum can dive into the world of car design thanks to a range of family activities this school summer holiday. Attractions include the museum's resident car designers, Dottie & Dougie, exploring different features in car design during their daily family tours. There's also the Car

Details Garage, offering the 'creatively inclined' the chance to design their very own new vehicle. Visitors can then put what they've learned to the test via a special family trail, sketching different design features based on the cars around the museum

**Athelstan 1100**

Tamworth Castle & St Editha's Church, Staffordshire, Sat 20 - Sun 28 July

This year marks the 1,100th anniversary of the ascension of Athelstan, King of Mercia, who is considered by many historians to be the first King of England. To mark the occasion, Tamworth Castle and St Editha's Church is hosting a nine-day festival. Attractions include Anglo Saxon living history, community archaeology and art, live music, and numerous talks, lectures and demonstrations.



**Dinosaurs On the Doorstep**

Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum, Sat 13 July - Sun 8 September

Come face to face with the dinosaurs that used to roam the UK, from the small harmless herbivores to terrifying giant tyrannosaurs. Giant dinosaur skeletons, real fossil bones and original fossils from 150 million years ago, will all be on display. There will also be a dinosaur discovery camp complete with shelter and campfire, a quiet space to read up on all your favourite dinosaurs and a hands-on Dino Activity Station.





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Sun 28 Jul



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Fri 2 – Sun 4 Aug



**Flying Seagulls Circus**  
Sat 10 – Sun 11 Aug



**ZooLab Animal Explorers**  
Wed 14 – Thu 15 Aug



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Mon 26 Aug



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Events previews from around the region



**Knight School** Sudeley Castle & Gardens, Cheltenham, Wed 24 July - Thurs 29 August

Back by popular demand, Sudeley's Knight School provides children of all ages with the chance to get dressed up and enjoy some medieval-style fun, with sword-fighting,

archery and jousting all featuring among the knight-themed activities on offer. The 'school' is open every Wednesday and Thursday throughout the summer holiday.



**The Beach** Lichfield Cathedral, Staffordshire, Wed 24 July - Sun 1 September

The seaside comes to Lichfield this month with the return of the Cathedral's free-to-attend 'beach' attraction. Sand, decking and deck chairs (available 10am - 5pm) all feature, as does a programme of activities for families to enjoy. Highlights include the following: Sensory Explorers Trail and Footprint Scrapbook (available every day); Chill Out Chapel and

storytelling sessions (Wednesdays during August); Children's Champions (Tuesdays and Thursdays next month); circus skills and a magician (Tuesday 30 July and Thursday 29 August); Footstep Fridays - craft activities inspired by a small exhibition prepared by neurodivergent groups (Fridays from 26 July to 30 August).

**Summer Family Fun**

Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster, Sat 20 July - Sun 1 September

There's something for all the family to enjoy on the Severn Valley Railway this summer. Climb on board a steam or diesel locomotive and take a trip through the Severn Valley, revelling in up to 16 miles of magnificent countryside.

Trains will be running Tuesday to Thursday, and on weekends, throughout the school summer holiday.

Meanwhile, over at the Engine House in Highley, an impressive line-up of interactive exhibits and workshops awaits, all of which are free to enjoy for those who travel by train. Attractions include (on selected dates) the back-by-popular-demand and interactive Sublime Science shows. Mini golf, magic shows, fete games and a giant trainset further add to the family-friendly fun.



**Hands On History**

Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire, Sat 6 July - Sun 1 September

From sword school to junior jousting, Hands On History offers visitors the chance to find out more about Kenilworth Castle's history. The venue's other family-friendly attractions during the school summer holidays include a 'legendary joust' weekend on Saturday 20 & Sunday 21 July, and a 'spectacular' knights' tournament, taking place across the August Bank Holiday weekend (Saturday the 24th to Monday the 26th).







  
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## Get ready for take off!

**Free admission**  
 (parking charges apply)

Discover an exhilarating day out that offers a captivating journey through RAF history.

From iconic aircraft displays to immersive exhibits detailing heroic tales of bravery, it's a thrilling experience that inspires and entertains enthusiasts of all ages.

Entry is free. We're open daily from 10.00am.

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



Lysander Avenue, Cosford,  
 Shropshire, TF11 8UP

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



Events previews from around the region



**Three Counties Food & Drink Festival**

Three Counties Showground, Malvern, Sat 27 & Sun 28 July

With 160 local traders selling their delicious products alongside 'some of the UK's best street food, bars and vendors', there's certainly plenty to enjoy at Three Counties Food & Drink Festival.

From kids' cookery school and messy arts & crafts, to adult sessions in wine tasting and

BBQ skills at the fire stage, the show features something for visitors of all ages.

Celebrity guests in the 500-seat Cookery Theatre include TV chef Phil Vickery and Bake Off Winner Matty Edgell. Chris Bavin (Saturday) and Marcus Bean (Sunday) are the hosts.



**Cotswold Flower Festival**

Cotswold Farm Park, Cheltenham, Sat 20 July - Sat 31 August

Immerse yourself in a grand spectacle of hundreds of thousands of sunflowers and wildflowers at this year's Cotswold Flower Festival.

Highlights include an enchanting maize maze, clay pendant workshops and

numerous selfie stations. Four-legged friends are free to enjoy the flower fields with the family, while for those who're looking to take home a memento from their fun-filled day out, there's an opportunity to pick your own sunflowers.

**Summer at Compton Verney**

Compton Verney, Warwickshire, Fri 26 - Sun 28 July

Compton Verney is kicking off its school summer holiday programme with a jam-packed weekend of family fun.

Attractions include an outdoor giant bubble party, storyteller Kate spinning captivating yarns inspired by the venue's art exhibitions, and the chance to explore a selection of Ringworld's big, colourful and inflated structures.



**Jurassic Playground**

Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry, Sat 20 July - Sun 1 September

The Herbert's free-to-attend early-years exhibition returns for the school holiday this month.

Taking inspiration from Dippy the Diplodocus - the Natural History Museum exhibit currently on display at the venue - Jurassic Playground features specially designed artworks presented in a world of sensory spaces.

The venue is also hosting Joyful Jurassic Crafts drop-ins throughout the holiday (Saturday 27 July - Saturday 31 August). Taking a different theme each week - from rewilding to fossil making - the sessions are suitable for youngsters aged three-plus.





# UNLOCK HISTORY THIS SUMMER

Over 200  
years of  
Police history  
to discover!

Book online  
for summer  
activities and  
events!

Put your detective skills  
to the test

**Celebrating 50 Years of  
West Midlands Police**

Get hands on with  
history



West Midlands Police  
**MUSEUM**

The Lock-up, Steelhouse Lane  
Birmingham, B4 6BJ  
[www.museum.west-midlands.police.uk](http://www.museum.west-midlands.police.uk)



WE ARE

**50**



**FREE  
ENTRY**

13th July - 8th September

**OPEN**  
Tuesday - Saturday  
10am - 4pm  
Sunday  
10am - 3pm

**Worcester City  
Art Gallery & Museum**

**DINOSAURS  
ON THE DOORSTEP**

Come face to face  
with the dinosaurs that  
roamed Britain

From teeth to tailbones, jaws and  
claws, food to fossilised poo

Plus a summer of dino-themed  
family activities and events

Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum, Foregate Street  
Worcester WR1 1DT. Tel: 01905 25371

For more information visit  
[www.museumsworcestershire.org.uk](http://www.museumsworcestershire.org.uk)

MUSEUMS  
WORCESTERSHIRE



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



### The Royal Air Force Museum Midlands

Shifnal, Shropshire, TF11 8UP Website: rafmuseum.org.uk

Telling the story of aviation history and housing one of the largest collections of its kind in the UK, RAF Museum Midlands is home to more than 75 historic aircraft displayed in three wartime hangars on an active airfield.

The museum boasts a variety of exhibitions and displays. One of the most popular is a collection of aircraft from the Battle of Britain era, featuring a Hurricane and Boulton Paul Defiant - built in the West Midlands - alongside the oldest surviving Spitfire.

Virtual tours, hands-on fun'n'flight activities, an aviation-themed playground and dedicated conservation and exhibition areas further add to the venue's impressive offer.

**PRICES:** The museum is free admission, but you can pre-book a timed entry and car parking at the museum's website.

### West Midlands Police Museum

Steelhouse Lane, Birmingham, B4 6BJ Website: museum.west-midlands.police.uk

Set in a Victorian lock-up, the West Midlands Police Museum showcases more than 200 years of policing history.

The lock-up was built in 1891, and during its time housed a total of more than one million prisoners, with the cell doors closing for the final time in 2016. As well as bringing together an unrivalled collection of police artefacts, the museum also offers a range of hands-on activities, providing visitors with the opportunity to play the role of detective at a crime scene, examine evidence in a forensics lab, take their own police 'mugshot' and dress up in police uniforms from years gone by.

**PRICES:** £10 adult, £8.50 students and seniors, £6 children three - 15-year-olds, under-threes go free.



### Stratford Butterfly Farm

Swan's Nest Lane, Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 7LS Website: butterflyfarm.co.uk

Stratford Butterfly Farm is home to hundreds of the world's most spectacular butterflies. The popular venue features a 'discovery zone' - inhabited by giant silkmoths and their cocoons - and the Minibeast Metropolis - home to snakes, reptiles, amphibians and other invertebrates.

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

**PRICES:** £8.95 adult, £8.45 students and seniors, £7.95 children three - 16-year-olds, under-threes go free.

### Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

Millennium Point, Curzon Street, Birmingham, B4 7XG Website: birminghammuseums.org.uk/thinktank

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

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

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

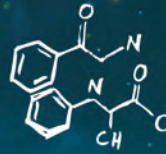
**PRICES:** Adults from £15.50, children (three - 15-year-olds) from £7.50, concessions £12.50, under-threes go free.







**thinktank**  
Birmingham science museum



# DISCOVER

Family Fun  
at Thinktank



- minibrum
  - 4k Planetarium
  - Outdoor Science Garden
- Plus lots more*



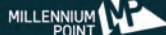
Don't miss  
**MAKERS and MACHINES**  
Creativity in the Computer Age

[birminghammuseums.org.uk/thinktank](http://birminghammuseums.org.uk/thinktank)

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ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND



Birmingham  
Museums



# thelist

Your week-  
by-week  
listings guide  
July 2024



Player Kings at The Alexandra, Birmingham - Wed 10 - Sat 13 July

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

## What's On

Mon 1 - Sun 7 July



Nils Frahm: Music For Birmingham - Symphony Hall  
**Tues 2 July**

Mon 8 - Sun 14 July



1940s Weekend - Black Country Living Museum, Dudley  
**Sat 13 - Sun 14 July**

Mon 15 - Sun 21 July



The Cosavettes - Dead Wax, Birmingham  
**Sat 20 July**

Mon 22 - Wed 31 July



Pericles - Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon  
**Fri 26 July - Sat 21 Sept**



## VISUAL ARTS IN THE MIDLANDS

### Barber Institute of Fine Arts

#### THE HIDDEN LIVES OF PLANTS

Exhibition of botanical illustrations, on tour from London's Victoria & Albert Museum, marking the first project in a new annual exhibition partnership, until Mon 10 Nov

**UNSTILL LIFE** Exhibition exploring global mobility and consumerism in still-life paintings which convey changing attitudes towards globalisation, capitalism and consumer culture over time, until Sun 26 Jan 2025

**WOMEN IN POWER: COINS FROM THE BARBER COLLECTION** Spanning nearly 2,000 years and more than 2,500 miles, the exhibition explores historical women who have appeared on coins, until Sun 26 Jan 2025

### Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

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

### Compton Verney, Warwickshire

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

#### REUNITED: THE LAMENTATION

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

**THE TAOTIE** After an 18-month residency, Gayle Chong Kwan presents an exhibition of her new work alongside the venue's renowned Chinese collection, until Tues 31 March 2026

### Coventry Music Museum

**OUR TOWN** A tribute to This Town through the eyes of a supporting artist, including memorabilia and costumes. The museum also features a new tribute to The Specials' Terry Hall.

### Ikon Gallery, Birmingham

**DION KITSON: RUE BRITANNIA** Solo exhibition dissecting British class and identity, reshaping its visual hallmarks and traditions across sculpture, installation, film and found objects, until Sun 8 Sep

**NATIONAL TREASURES: ARTEMISIA IN BIRMINGHAM & JESSE JONES: MIRROR**

**MARTYR MIRROR MOON** As part of the National Gallery in London's bicentennial celebrations, Ikon hosts Artemisia Gentileschi's masterpiece, Self Portrait As Saint Catherine Of Alexandria. Jesse Jones explores the entwined histories of Gentileschi, Saint Catherine, and the pagan philosopher Hypatia, until Sun 8 Sep

### Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum

**LEAMINGTON SPA AND THE BLACK ATLANTIC** Exhibition highlighting Leamington's historic links to exploitation and enslavement, the legacy of which is still visible in the town today, until Sun 15 Sept

### Midlands Arts Centre, Edgbaston, Birmingham

**PAULINE FARRAR: TALKING POINTS** Farrar returns to MAC with a new installation co-created with members of MAC's Women's Group - Making It Together. Their shared work touches on issues of isolation, disability, and the power of gardening as a rejuvenative tool for wellbeing, until Mon 26 Aug

**ACTS OF CREATION: ON ART AND MOTHERHOOD** Major group exhibition featuring works from over 60 modern and contemporary artist mothers, approaching motherhood as a creative enterprise, albeit one at times tempered by ambivalence, exhaustion or grief. Until Sun 29 Sept

### New Art Gallery, Walsall

**EQUAL + ABLE = NOT A LABEL** Exhibition exploring ableism through the New Art Gallery Walsall Collections, until Sun 18 May 2025

**THE MAGIC MONEY TREE** 'Epic piece of protest art' in which documentary photographer Kirsty Mackay, working collaboratively with groups and individuals across England, explores the impact of the cost-of-living crisis, until Sun 28 July

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

**NO GOING BACK** Photographic and memorabilia display by North Staffs Miners Wives, to mark the 40th anniversary of the Miners' Strike, until Sun 2 March 2025

### Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

**WALKS THROUGH WORCESTERSHIRE** Explore the county through the brushwork of one of the city's finest artists, Harry Adams, who was born in Worcester in 1868. Sat 15 June - Sun 3 Nov



Nils Frahm - Symphony Hall, Birmingham

## Gigs

**JOSH ROUSE** Mon 1 July, Kitchen Garden, B'ham

**THE ALMHOUSE ALLSTARS** Mon 1 July, Bill's Kitchen, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

**BLONDSHELL + SPIDER** Tues 2 July, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**I DONT KNOW HOW BUT THEY FOUND ME + BALANCING ACT** Tues 2 July, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**THE ACACIA STRAIN + JUDICIARY + FUMING MOUTH + GRIEF RITUAL** Tues 2 July, The Asylum, Birmingham

**NILS FRAHM** Tues 2 July, Symphony Hall, B'ham

**JAMES SAYER** Wed 3 July, The Jam House, Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

**THE SKATALITES** Wed 3 July, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

**TARA MACLEAN AND CATHERINE MACLELLAN** Wed 3 July, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

**ODYSSEY** Thurs 4 July, The Jam House, Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

**THE COMPLETE RECORDINGS OF HEZEKIAH PROCTER** Thurs 4 July, The Robin, Bilston

**KEVIN MORBY** Thurs 4 July, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

**MICHAEL STARRING BEN** Thurs 4 July, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

**LIMEHOUSE LIZZY** Thurs 4 July, Marrs Bar, Worcester

**DEATH LENS + THE HUMAN ERROR** Thurs 4 July, Drummonds, Worcester

**JEREMY SASSOON'S 'RAY CHARLES PROJECT'** Thurs 4 July, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

**JUST PRETENDING - TRIBUTE TO THE PRETENDERS** Fri 5 July, The Night Owl, B'ham

**SHIVRAJ SINGH** Fri 5 July, 1000 Trades, Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

**THE CHERRY APES** Fri 5 July, The Victoria, Birmingham

**TOMORROW'S WARRIORS + MUSIC FOR YOUTH** Fri 5 July, Centenary Square, Birmingham

**THE WEeping WILLOWS** Fri 5 July, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**FLEETWOOD MAD** Fri 5 July, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

**5 BAD BOYS** Fri 5 July, The Rialto, Coventry

**7 YEAR WAR + VINDICTIVE + INTERNAL CONFLICT + DEAD MOB** Fri 5 July, hmv Empire, Coventry

**HUNG LIKE HANRATTY + SHACKLEFORD + SEPTIC AND THE TANKS + GRAIL GUARD + LOS FATSO**

**LIBRES + CHINESE BURN** Fri 5 July, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**SWEET REVENGE** Fri 5 July, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**MILES HUNT + HATTIE WHITEHEAD** Fri 5 July, Regal, Tenbury Wells

**DREAMS OF FLEETWOOD MAC** Fri 5 July, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**GREEN HAZE - GREEN DAY TRIBUTE** Fri 5 July, 45Live, Kidderminster

**FROM GOLD TO RIO** Fri 5 July, The Robin, Bilston

**DEATH LENS** Fri 5 July, Jollees, Stoke-on-Trent

**MOMENTS OF PLEASURE - THE MUSIC OF KATE BUSH** Fri 5 July, The Station, Cannock

**THE BEAT INSTITUTE** Fri 5 July, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

**GUITAR JOURNEY** Fri 5 July, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

**ANTARCTIC MONKEYS** Fri 5 July, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

**HOT 2 TROT** Fri 5 July, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

**VOODOO SIOUX** Fri 5 July, Albert's Shed, Southwater, Telford

**DAM.G + ALEYA** Fri 5 July, Percy's Cafe Bar, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

**TRASHED + THE SCUMBAGS + MOSAIC + FRACTURES** Sat 6 July, The Sunflower Lounge,



Birmingham

**DON'T STOP QUEEN NOW** Sat 6 July, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**CLOUDS OF EVERMORE + HE SAID SHE SAID + BACKSEAT JOYRIDE + LEX + ILLUSIVE** Sat 6 July, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**JESSICA ACKERLEY AND ELI WALLACE DUO + AMY COATES TRIO** Sat 6 July, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

**THE JENNIFER BOLTON BAND** Sat 6 July, Tower Of Song, Birmingham

**BLOOD ON BLOOD + JONO WRIGHT** Sat 6 July, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**SYNTH** Sat 6 July, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

**LANTERNS ON THE LAKE** Sat 6 July, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

**GBH + OPERATION VANGUARD + THE KINGCROWS + HOT ROCKETS + THE FAUVES + UK DISSENT + ZERO TOLERANCE + TINSELTOWN REBELLION + HEADSTONE HORRORS + THE SADISTIC SLOBS + THE UNDACLASS + KID KLUMSY** Sat 6 July, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**THE STRAIGHTHEADS** Sat 6 July, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**EXPERIENCE BECK - JEFF BECK TRIBUTE** Sat 6 July, Marrs Bar, Worcester

**ETERNITY ROAD** Sat 6 July, 45Live, Kidderminster

**THE GEORGE HARRISON PROJECT** Sat 6 July, Brierley Hill Civic, Dudley

**KICK UP THE 80'S + 2ECLIPSE** Sat 6 July, Dudley Town Hall

**ALL4INDIE + BRITPOP UNITED** Sat 6 July, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

**TAKE IT EASY - THE AMERICAN CLASSIC ROCK SHOW** Sat 6 July, The Robin, Bilston

**THE GUNS N' ROSES EXPERIENCE + PURE JOVI + DRESSED TO KILL + ELECTRIC CIRCUS + BILLION DOLLAR ALICE** Sat 6 July, KK's Steel

Mill, Wolverhampton

**THE SCOTTISH SEX PISTOLS + LIZZIE AND THE BANSHREES + REPTILE HOUSE** Sat 6 July, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

**WATERLOO A TRIBUTE TO ABBA** Sat 6 July, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**HELLBENT FOREVER + BORN 2 BE BAD** Sat 6 July, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

**SWEET CAROLINE - TRIBUTE TO NEIL DIAMOND** Sat 6 July, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

**IAN HARRIS - UB40 TRIBUTE** Sat 6 July, Two Gates Club, Tamworth

**THE JAM'D** Sat 6 July, The Station, Cannock

**SETH LAKEMAN**, Sat 6 July, Lichfield Cathedral

**VOODOO SIOUX** Sat 6 July, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

**TRIERS** Sat 6 July, Albert's Shed, Southwater, Telford

**BORIS AND THE JOY** Sat 6 July, Oscars, Ludlow, South Shropshire

**THESE TOWNS + SHADOW CABINET** Sat 6 July, Percy's Cafe Bar, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

**THE NEIL DIAMOND SONGBOOK** Sun 7 July, The Alexandra, Birmingham

**THE FUGITIVES** Sun 7 July, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

**SKA TRAIN** Sun 7 July, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**THE AUSTRIAN STONES** Sun 7 July, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**RECALL THE REMAINS + 7 YEAR WAR + SECOND CITIES + OCEAN SLEEP** Sun 7 July, Drummonds, Worcester

**SETH LAKEMAN** Sun 7 July, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

**RICH PARSONS** Sun 7 July, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

**WENDY KIRKLAND** Sun 7 July, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

## Classical Music

**THE GONZAGA BAND** Featuring Faye Newton (soprano), Jamie Savan (cornett & mute cornett) & Steven Devine (harpsichord & chamber organ). Programme includes works by Monteverdi, Merula, Donati & more... Mon 1 July, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

**INSTRUMENTS OF TIME AND TRUTH** Featuring Bojan Čičić & Elizabeth MacCarthy (violin), Susanne Heinrich (viol) & Martin Perkins (harpsichord & organ). Programme includes works by Pachelbel, Baudringer, Buxtehude & Biber, Mon 1 July, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

**ROGER JUDD ORGAN RECITAL** Tues 2 July, Hereford Cathedral

**KIMBERLEY WONG HARP RECITAL** Tues 2 July, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

**THE NORTHWICK CONSORT** Programme comprises a selection of medieval music pieces, Wed 3 July, The Space at St Laurence, Ludlow, South Shropshire

**HATHOR DUO** Featuring Lucy Nolan (harp) & Meera Maharaj (flute). Programme includes works by Debussy, Ravel, Sibelius & Saint-Saëns, Thurs 4 July, Wade Street Church, Lichfield

**LICHFIELD FESTIVAL: THE FOUR SEASONS** Featuring Rachel Podger (soloist - pictured), Thurs 4 July, Lichfield Cathedral



**MUSIC FOR YOUTH: NATIONAL FESTIVAL** Programme includes orchestral, choral, jazz, funk & soul works, Thurs 4 - Sat 6 July, Symphony Hall, Town Hall & CBSO Centre, Birmingham

**PAUL CARR ORGAN RECITAL** Fri 5 July, Birmingham Cathedral

**MARK SWINTON ORGAN RECITAL** Fri 5 July, St Mary's Church, Warwick

**MOONLIGHT SONATA AND RHAPSODY IN BLUE BY CANDLELIGHT** Featuring Warren Mailley-Smith (piano), Fri 5 July, Worcester Cathedral

**GUITAR JOURNEY** Featuring

Giorgio Serci & Jonny Phillips, Fri 5 July, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

**DANNY DRIVER PIANO RECITAL** Programme includes works by Handel, Ligeti & Beethoven, Fri 5 July, St Michael's Church, Lichfield

**THE CHOIR OF WORCESTER CATHEDRAL** Featuring Samuel Hudson (director) & Nicholas Freestone (organ), Fri 5 July, St Michael's Church, Tenbury

**DAVID HARDIE ORGAN RECITAL** Fri 5 July, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

**THE BRODSKY QUARTET: THE COMPLETE SHOSTAKOVICH QUARTETS** Featuring all 15 of Shostakovich's string quartets over one weekend, Fri 5 - Sun 7 July, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

**CANDLELIGHT: TRIBUTE TO LUDOVICO EINAUDI** Featuring Nicole Reynolds (piano), Sat 6 July, Birmingham Cathedral

**SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AND INTERMEDIATE CHOIR** Programme includes works by Smetana, Britten-Rossini & Stravinsky, Sat 6 July, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

**BREWOD SINGERS: SINGING IN SUMMER** Featuring Cor Bach Male Choir. Programme includes harmonic arrangements of songs from film, theatre, pop & light traditional choir music, Sat 6 July, Jubilee Hall, Brewood, Nr Wolverhampton

**BIRMINGHAM BACH CHOIR SUMMER CONCERT** Featuring Paul Spicer (conductor), Callum Alger (organ), Ciará Preston Mykicheff (soprano) & Isaac Boulter (baritone). Programme includes works by Bednall, Bernstein, Elgar & Spicer, Sat 6 July, St Alban's Church, B'ham

**BIRMINGHAM MALE VOICE CHOIR** Sat 6 July, Holy Trinity Church, Lickey, Worcestershire

**DA CAPO CHAMBER CHOIR** Featuring Amanda Root & Michael Maloney (guest readers) & John Adams (director). Programme includes works by Rutter, Chilcott, Mäntyjärvi & Harris, Sat 6 July, St Mary's Church, Warwick

**CHELTENHAM CHORAL SOCIETY** Featuring Thomas Mottershead (director). Programme includes excerpts from works by Faure, Mozart, Schubert, Stainer & Haydn, Sat 6 July, Great Malvern Priory

**IAN RAY ORGAN RECITAL** Sat 6 July, Shrewsbury Abbey

**THOMAS HOWELL & PIOTR MAZIARZ IN CONCERT** Programme includes works by JS Bach, Couperin, Liszt & more... Sat 6 July, St Laurence's Church, Ludlow, South Shropshire

**STAFFORD CHORAL SOCIETY SUMMER CONCERT** Programme includes works by Vaughan Williams & G Holst, Sat 6 July, Polish Club, Stafford

**THE ARMED MAN: A MASS FOR PEACE** Featuring the Phoenix Singers, Midlands' Hospitals Choir, Cantores Beati & James Llewelyn Jones (conductor). Programme comprises Karl Jenkins' moving work, Sun 7 July, Birmingham Town Hall

**60 YEARS OF BROMSGROVE CONCERTS** Featuring Alastair Moseley (piano), Richard Jenkinson (conductor) & Enigma Brass. Programme includes Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue & more... Sun 7 July, Routh Hall, Bromsgrove School

**PAUL CARR: ORGAN MUSIC AT THE OPERA!** Programme includes works by Glinka, Mascagni, Rossini, Wagner & Bizet, Sun 7 July, Holy Trinity Church, Wordsley, Stourbridge

**BIRMINGHAM OPERA COMPANY: NEW YEAR** Featuring Keith Warner (director) & Alpesh Chauhan (conductor - pictured). Programme comprises New Year by Michael Tippett, Sun 7 - Sat 13 July, The Dream Tent at Smithfield, Birmingham



## Comedy

**ABHISHEK UPMANYU** Wed 3 July, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**PAUL TONKINSON, MIKE RICE, RAY BRADSHAW (PICTURED) & FREDDY QUINNE** Wed 3 July, Herberts Yard, Birmingham



**ALI WOODS, ADAM COUMAS & JAY HANDLEY** Wed 3 July, The Patrick Kavanagh, Birmingham



**CAREY MARX, GORDON SOUTHERN, PETE TECKMAN & DAVE TWENTYMAN** Thurs 4 July, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffordshire

**JAMES COOK, ALEX EGAN, HASAN AL-HABIB & DAN SMITH** Thurs 4 July, Stourbridge Town Hall

**JOHN BISHOP** Thurs 4 - Fri 5 July, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

**MORGAN REES & SHARON WANJOHI** Fri 5 July, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**IVO GRAHAM & ABI CLARKE** Fri 5 July, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

**HAYLEY ELLIS, ROB ROUSE, BILLY KIRKWOOD & COMIC TBC** Fri 5 - Sat 6 July, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**THE SCUMMY MUMMIES** Sat 6 July, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

**GEOFF NORCOTT** Sat 6 July, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

**ESTHER MANITO (PICTURED), NOREEN KHAN, SUKH OJLA, SAMIRA BANKS & SHALAKA KURUP** Sun 7 July, The Glee Club, Birmingham



**RICHARD HERRING** Sun 7 July, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

## Theatre

**TWELFTH NIGHT: A CORNISH TALE** Seann Walsh, Natalie Anderson (Emmerdale/Fool Me Once) & BAFTA winner Molly Windsor (Traces) star in a new production of Shakespeare's much-loved comedy, until Sun 7 July, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**KYOTO** Fast-paced political thriller which places audiences right at the heart of the historic 1997 Kyoto climate summit, until Sat 13 July, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

**THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR** Richard Goulding and Samantha Spiro star in a new production of Shakespeare's tale of mischief and double dealing, until Sat 7 Sept, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon



**101 DALMATIANS THE MUSICALS** Starring Kym Marsh as Cruella De Vil, Tues 2 - Sat 6 July, The Alexandra, Birmingham

**FRANKIE GOES TO BOLLYWOOD** New musical inspired by real stories of British women who have been caught in the spotlight of the biggest film industry in the world, Tues 2 - Sat 6 July, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry



**CALENDAR GIRLS** Lichfield Operatic Society present an amateur version of the hit 2003 film of the same name, Tues 2 - Sat 6 July, Lichfield Garrick

**WHAT THE BUTLER SAW** London Classic Theatre present Joe Orton's final play, Tues 2 - Sat 6 July, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

**THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL** A new production of Sheridan's biting comedy of manners, promising an 'exuberant feast of big wigs and even bigger laughs', Tues 2 July - Fri 6 Sept, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

**LEADERS OF TOMORROW, TODAY** Grand Arena Youth Theatre present Charis McRoberts' drama concerning a very young Ava Cartwright and her attempts to 'whip this country into shape', Wed 3 - Thurs 4 July, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

**WE WILL ROCK YOU** Amateur version of the hit stage show, presented by Script Youth Musical Theatre Company, Wed 3 - Sat 6 July, Highbury Theatre Centre, Sutton Coldfield

**TWELFTH NIGHT** Second Thoughts Drama Group present an amateur version of Shakespeare's tale of mistaken identity and star-crossed lovers, Wed 3 - Sat 6 July, The Bear Pitt Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

**MY FAIR LADY** Get Your Wiggle On present an amateur version of the George Bernard Shaw classic, Wed 3 - Sat 6 July, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**HENRY V** Birmingham Ormiston Academy's Year 12 draw inspiration from Guy Richie's The Gentleman to present a fresh take on the Shakespeare classic, Thurs 4 July, Old Rep, Birmingham

**AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS** Scarlet Theatre present an amateur stage version of Jules Verne's adventure story, Thurs 4 - Sat 6 July, Stoke Repertory Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

**THE ODYSSEY** Playbox Theatre's Young Production Company present a fast-paced telling of one of literature's greatest adventures, Thurs 4 - Sat 6 July, The Dream Factory, Warwick

**WHAT'S WRONG WITH BENNY HILL?**

Mark Carey's musical comedy explores the life and legacy of 'a very peculiar and brilliant comedian', Fri 5 July, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

**ROMEO AND JULIET** Illyria present an outdoor version of Shakespeare's tale of love and revenge, Fri 5 July, Sandwell Valley, West Bromwich

**AUTIN DANCE: THE GIANT WHEEL** A moving performance inspired by 'the beauty, power, and impact of people from different walks of life coming together'... Fri 5 - Sat 6 July (part of Godiva Festival), War Memorial Park, Coventry

**DREAMLAND** Hippodrome Musicals Youth Theatre present a musical riff on Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream, Fri 5 - Sat 6 July, Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

**LOVE + REBELLION FESTIVAL** Production showcasing the best of Birmingham's young talent, Fri 5 - Sun 21 July, The Rep, Birmingham

**LUCKY PIGEONS** Free outdoor event showcasing the skills of BrainFools Circus Company, Sat 6 July, Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

**HASTINGS! A NEW MUSICAL** Exclusive preview of the songs & dialogue of Wyatt & Perry's new musical, telling the daring story of the last Anglo-Saxon King of England and his dynamic relationship with William of Normandy, Sat 6 July, Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

**WILL WE IMPRESS GOOD QUEEN BESS?** Outdoor promenade event with local musicians and performers. Inspired by a lavish show which was staged by Robert Dudley at Kenilworth Castle in 1575, in a bid to win the heart of the visiting Queen Elizabeth, Sat 6 July, Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

**THE TALE OF JEMIMA PUDDLEDUCK** Quantum Theatre present an outdoor version of Beatrix Potter's much-loved tale, Sat 6 July, Hagley Park & Visitor Centre, Birmingham Road

**DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER (THE FLYING DUTCHMAN)** Persona Arts present Wagner's tale of love and redemption. Directed by Iqbal Khan, the performance features Royal Birmingham Conservatoire alumnus Byron Jackson, Birmingham Choral Union, and an 'all-star cast' of some of the Commonwealth's finest opera singers. Jack Ridley conducts, Sun 7 July, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

**JULIUS CAESAR 2024** One of the most famous political coups in history gets the Oddsocks treatment, Sun 7 July, Bowring Park, Telford

**THE TALE OF JEMIMA PUDDLEDUCK** Quantum Theatre present an outdoor version of Beatrix Potter's much-loved tale, Sun 7 July, Bewdley Museum, Nr Kidderminster

## Dance

**THE PHYSICAL FELLOWSHIP 2024: POWER** Each evening features a programme of original physical performance work from local school & youth groups, ahead of a headline show from Highly Sprung's youth group, Sprung Advance Plus, Mon 1 - Fri 5 July, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

**EXHIBITION BOA Dance Pathway** Year 12 perform dances across a range of styles, including ballet, jazz, contemporary and street - all inspired by some of the world's most famous artworks, Tues 2 - Wed 3 July, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

**ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS** Adage Dance & Fitness Studio present a production based on Lewis Carroll's sequel to Alice In Wonderland, Fri 5 - Sat 6 July, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

**RHYTHM OF THE DANCE** Music and dance combine in a choreographed journey through Ireland's history, Sat 6 July, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

**WHEN IN ROAM** A dance showcase featuring recreational classes, competition teams and GCSE dance students, Sat 6 July, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

## Light Entertainment

**UNCANNY: I KNOW WHAT I SAW** Danny Robins hosts a live investigation into the paranormal, Wed 3 July, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent



**CIRQUE: THE GREATEST SHOW** Variety spectacular combining West End and Broadway hits with performances by aerialists, contortionists and fire jugglers, Thurs 4 July, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**JAMES B PARTRIDGE: PRIMARY SCHOOL ASSEMBLY BANGERS LIVE** Join singing teacher & TV regular James for an evening of pure nostalgia as he takes audiences back in time via some joyous singalong tunes from primaryschool days, Thurs 4 - Fri 5 July, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

**DREAMBOYS** An 'immersive and seductive' dance show, strictly for audiences aged 18-plus, Fri 5 July, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**A FETE WORST THAN DEATH** Interactive murder-mystery evening during



which the audience witness scenes, question suspects and examine documentary evidence before deciding who they believe the murderer to be, Fri 5 July, Talisman Theatre, Kenilworth

**MY DEAR OLD THINGS: AN EVENING WITH HENRY BLOFELD** Join the cricket journalist & commentator as he reflects on a truly extraordinary life, sharing stories about the larger-than-life characters he's met along the way, both in the commentary box and out on tour with England, Sat 6 July, Halesowen Town Hall

**THE REAL KEN DODD, THE MAN I LOVED** Exclusive documentary film revealing the private man behind the comic genius, Sat 6 July, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

**THE IMPROV SHOW** Featuring scenes, sketches and songs made up on the spot, Sat 6 July, Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

## Talks & Spoken Word

**ROB EASTAWAY: THE BARD OF BRAINTEASERS** Rod explores the surprising and entertaining ways in which maths and numbers feature in Shakespeare's world - both in his plays and in Tudor England, Tues 2 July, Shakespeare's Schoolroom & Guildhall, Stratford-upon-Avon

**MARY BEARD: EMPEROR OF ROME** Join the renowned classicist & historian as she shines the spotlight on the rulers of the Roman Empire, Sat 6 July, Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry

**IN CONVERSATION WITH ARTHUR DARVILL** The Olivier Award-winning actor shares stories about his life and career, Sat 6 July, Bridge House Theatre, Warwick

## Events

**PLAY AND MAKE ZONE** Discover the world of STEM via a selection of crafts which you can enjoy at your own pace, until Sat 31 Aug, Coventry Transport Museum

**MUSEUM TOUR** Go behind the scenes with staff and volunteers, Mon 1 July, Lapworth Museum of Geology - Earth Sciences Building, University of Birmingham



**MARCH OF THE ELEPHANTS** Free public art trail featuring 60 elephant

sculptures, Mon 1 July - Sun 8 Sept, Lichfield, Tamworth and Sutton Coldfield

**COTSWOLD & WYVERN LABRADOR SHOW** Wed 3 July, Three Counties Showground, Malvern

**THE BISTRO EXPRESS** An afternoon dining experience featuring a two-course lunch, Wed 3 July, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

**BACK TO THE 40S SPARKLING AFTERNOON TEA** Enjoy a glass of bubbles and travel in style in a vintage carriage whilst indulging in a traditional afternoon tea, Thurs 4 July, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

**JUNKERRY'S TOGETHER APART** An immersive music art show telling stories of how we divide, unite, disconnect or belong, Thurs 4 July, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

**TWEEDY'S MASSIVE CIRCUS** A show filled with magic, mirth and mayhem, Thurs 4 - Sun 14 July, Cheltenham Racecourse

**GARDENS LATES: SUMMER SOCIAL** A rare chance to explore the glasshouses and gardens in the evening. Featuring some of Brum's 'finest musical talent', street food and drink, Fri 5 July, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

**VINTAGE AFTERNOON TEA** Travel in style in a luxurious vintage carriage and indulge in a traditional afternoon tea, Fri 5 July, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

**CAMPER JAM 2024** From the publishers of Volkswagen Camper & Commercial and VW Bus T4&5+ magazines, Fri 5 - Sun 7 July, Weston Park, Shropshire

**STONE FOOD & DRINK FESTIVAL** Featuring artisan produce, street-food stalls, live cookery demonstrations and more, Fri 5 - Sun 7 July, Westbridge Park, Stone, Staffordshire

**BIRMINGHAM BLACK COUNTRY HALF MARATHON** Point-to-point race along the canal towpaths, Sat 6 July, Wolverhampton City Centre & Brindleyplace, Birmingham

**DUDLEY CLASSIC CAR SHOW** See the best in vintage cars in Dudley town centre, Sat 6 July, Dudley Market Square

**HALESOWEN CARNIVAL & MUSIC FESTIVAL** A day of family entertainment with live music and 70-plus stalls, Sat 6 July, Highfield Park, Halesowen

**CLASSIC IBIZA** Open-air celebration of White Isle-inspired house music, Sat 6 July, Ragley Hall, Warwickshire

**WYTHALL BUSFEST@GAYDON** Display of over 100 vintage and modern buses, Sat 6 July, British Motor



Hanbury Countryside Show - Worcestershire

Museum, Gaydon, Warwickshire

**LOKI SUMMER WINE & SPIRITS FAIR 2024** Featuring more than 30 tables, each showcasing a carefully curated selection of wines and spirits, Sat 6 July, Millennium Point, Birmingham

**SUMMER CEILIDH IN THE RUINS** Three hours of live music and dancing in the cathedral ruins, Sat 6 July, Coventry Cathedral

**HANBURY COUNTRYSIDE SHOW** Showcase event for farming, countryside and rural life, Sat 6 July, Park Hall Farm, Hanbury, Redditch

**STEP BACK TO THE 1940S BIG BAND SATURDAY NIGHT SHOW** Hosted by the 20-piece Kalamazoo Dance Band alongside special guests, Sat 6 July, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

**WILD WEST WEEKEND** Join the Lonestar Living Museum and experience what it was like to live in the Old West, Sat 6 - Sun 7 July, Hoo Zoo & Dinosaur World, Telford

**TRAMPOLINE, TUMBLING & DMT INTER REGIONAL CHALLENGE CUP FINAL** Featuring trampoline gymnasts, tumblers and double-mini trampoline gymnasts, Sat 6 - Sun 7 July, Utilita Arena Birmingham

**TRUCKFEST WEST MIDLANDS** Featuring thousands of trucks, trade stands, monster-truck shows, arena stunt shows and more, Sat 6 - Sun 7 July, Three Counties Showground, Malvern

**STEP BACK TO THE 1940S** An immersive 1940s experience across the 16 miles of railway, Sat 6 - Sun 7 July, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

**HANDS ON HISTORY** Selection of activities for youngsters to enjoy, including sword school, storytelling to junior jousting, Sat 6 July - Sun 1 Sept, Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire

**HANDBUILDING IN CLAY: AN**

**INTRODUCTION** Learn the basics of pinch pots, coiling and slabbing before creating your own clay items, Sun 7 July, Coalport China Museum, Ironbridge, Shropshire

**PICNIC IN THE PARK** With live music, stalls, and a dog show, Sun 7 July, Warley Woods, Smethwick

**PRIVATE LIVES OF WESTON TOUR** Go behind the scenes to learn about the lives of key members of the Bridgeman family, whose home was once Weston Park, Sun 7 July, Weston Park, Shropshire

**BLUEY AND BINGO** Visitors can see Bluey and Bingo as part of their standard zoo admission, Sun 7 July, Dudley Zoo & Castle

**MINIATURE TRACTION ENGINES** A celebration of all things miniature traction engine, Sun 7 July, Telford Steam Railway, Shropshire

## Festivals

**GATE TO SOUTHWELL** Line-up includes The Harr, Mánran & An Dannsa Dub, Thurs 4 - Sun 7 July, Kirklington, Southwell, Nottinghamshire

**BROMSGROVE FOLK FESTIVAL** Line-up includes Martyn Joseph, Track Dogs, Granny's Attic, Thurs 4 - Sun 7 July, various venues across Bromsgrove

**ALDERFEST** Line-up includes S Club, Atomic Kitten & Scott Mills, Fri 5 - Sat 6 July, Alderford Lake, Shropshire

**NAPTON MUSIC FESTIVAL** Line-up includes Flash - Tribute to Queen, Spice Girls Experience & Sledge Hammer, Fri 5 - Sat 6 July, Napton Village Hall Grounds, Napton On The Hill, Warwickshire

**TIMBER FESTIVAL** Line-up includes Dave Haslam, Kiioto & Rozi Plain, Fri 5 - Sun 7 July, Feanedock, The National Forest, Leicestershire / Derbyshire



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For full details of the events and activities taking place throughout the celebration -  
[www.tamworthcastle.co.uk/athelstan1100](http://www.tamworthcastle.co.uk/athelstan1100)








Jillian Rossi - O2 Institute, Birmingham

### Gigs

**MAMMOTH WVH + THE DUST CODA** Mon 8 July, O2 Institute, B'ham

**THE SPOOKY MEN'S CHORALE** Mon 8 July, Kitchen Garden, B'ham

**L.A. EDWARDS + JADE JACKSON** Tues 9 July, The Asylum, B'ham

**THE WEEPING WILLOWS** Tues 9 July, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

**SEAN PAUL** Tues 9 July, Coventry Building Society Arena

**MIDWAY STILL + DEALING WITH DAMAGE** Wed 10 July, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**BEN OTTEWELL & IAN BALL + BUDDY** Wed 10 July, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**CALVA LOUISE + BOBBY WOLFGANG** Wed 10 July, The Asylum, B'ham

**LACHLAN BRYAN AND THE WILDES** Wed 10 July, Kitchen Garden, B'ham

**THE SWAPS + TOMAS DONCKER + ADAM JUREWICZ** Wed 10 July, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**THE LONGEST JOHNS** Wed 10 July, Lichfield Cathedral

**WILL POUND + DELIA STEVENS** Wed 10 July, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

**LOVE WITH JOHNNY ECHOLS** Thurs 11 July, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

**THE BLACK JEANS** Thurs 11 July, The Jam House, Birmingham

**ESORE ALLE + HEIDI ELDEST + KITTY BELLA + MANI JNX** Thurs 11 July,

The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**JON B** Thurs 11 July, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**DON BROCO** Thurs 11 July, hmv Empire, Coventry

**BUDDY HOLLY & THE CRICKETS** Thurs 11 July, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**DIZZY LIZZY** Fri 12 July, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

**MIRRORTALK** Fri 12 July, The Flapper, B'ham

**KURISU** Fri 12 July, Birmingham Black Box

**MORBID ATROCITY + BENEATH THE NOOSE + ELIMINATE THE MIDDLE CLASS** Fri 12 July, The Victoria, Birmingham

**EDGAR MACÍAS SALSEROS** Fri 12 July, Tower Of Song, B'ham

**ALASTAIR GREENE** Fri 12 July, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**CORVUS & THE MORNING STAR + STONE ANTHEM + DUKE KEATS** Fri 12 July, The Tin At The Coal Vaults, Coventry

**TOTAL STONE ROSES** Fri 12 July, hmv Empire, Coventry

**THE SPIRIT OF RUSH** Fri 12 July, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**THE BON JOVI EXPERIENCE** Fri 12 July, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

**THE GLAM ROCK SHOW** Fri 12 July, The Prince Of Wales Theatre, Cannock

**PEARL SCAM + MOOKIE** Fri 12 July, The Station, Cannock

**MAYA YOUSSEF** Fri 12 July, The Hub at St

Mary's, Lichfield

**THE JAM'D** Fri 12 July, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

**KARL PHILIPS & THE REJECTS + PACKET RACKET** Fri 12 July, Albert's Shed, Southwater, Telford

**RECALL THE REMAINS + DEAD TIDES** Fri 12 July, Percy's Cafe Bar, Whitchurch, North Shropshire

**ELECTRASY** Sat 13 July, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**MARTIN REYNOLDS** Sat 13 July, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**UNDER THE COVERS** Sat 13 July, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

**DAY FEVER** Sat 13 July, O2 Institute, B'ham

**JILLIAN ROSSI + NERIAH** Sat 13 July, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**PASADENA ROOF ORCHESTRA** Sat 13 July, Number 8, Pershore

**FLASH: A TRIBUTE TO QUEEN** Sat 13 July, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

**AWFOM + BAUDELAIRE + GIANT AND THE GEORGES + JIM HUDSON + LITTLE JUKE + OLLIE COOK + THE GOOD WATER + THE JACK CATTELL BAND** Sat 13 July, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

**THE LATHUMS** Sat 13 July, Keele University, Stoke-on-Trent

**KARL PHILLIPS & THE REJECTS + BC ALLSKAS** Sat 13 July, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

**THE REGGULITES** Sun 14 July, The Night Owl, Birmingham

**TIPPA IRIE** Sun 14 July, Tower Of Song, B'ham

**BEN DE LA COUR** Sun 14 July, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

**ZAKK DIENN** Sun 14 July, Birmingham Black Box

**EASY 3** Sun 14 July, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**JACKHAMMER** Sun 14 July, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**JLS** Sun 14 July, The Quarry, Shrewsbury

### Classical Music

**YOUTH PROMS 2024** Showcasing the musical talents of over 4500 young musicians across four days, Mon 8 - Thurs 11 July, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**FRANÇOIS CLOETE ORGAN RECITAL** Tues 9 July, Hereford Cathedral

**ADRIAN LORD PIANO RECITAL** Tues 9 July, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

**CBSO SYMPHONIC SESSIONS: SUMMER OF SPORT** Featuring Charlotte Corderoy (conductor), Amy Thomas (presenter) & Luke Swatman (tenor). Programme includes the UEFA Champions League Anthem and classic football songs alongside Rossini's William Tell Overture and Puccini's Nessun Dorma, Thurs 11 July, Hockley Social Club, B'ham

**TIM STEWARD ORGAN RECITAL** Fri 12 July, Birmingham Cathedral

**LUCY MORRELL ORGAN RECITAL** Fri 12 July, St Mary's Church, Warwick

**IMOGEN GARNER (MEZZO SOPRANO) & JOHN GOUGH (PIANO) IN CONCERT** Fri 12 July, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

**SOUTH BIRMINGHAM SINFONIA** Programme includes Franck's Symphonie in D minor and Bizet's Arlesienne Suites, Sat 13 July, Shirley Methodist Church, B'ham

**WOMBOURNE AND DISTRICT CHORAL SOCIETY: SUMMER SOLSTICE** Featuring Edward Caine (conductor). Programme includes works by Brahms, Stainer, Orlando de Lassus, Vaughan Williams, Rachmaninov & a premier of October by local musician/composer Tony Bridgewater, Sat 13 July, Beckminster Methodist Church, Wolverhampton

**A SUMMER CONCERT** Featuring Richard Tattam (soloist). Programme includes works by Albéniz, Beethoven & Mozart, Sat 13 July, Carters Lane Baptist Church, Halesowen, Birmingham

**BIRMINGHAM CONTEMPORARY MUSIC GROUP: SONATA FOR BROKEN FINGERS** Featuring Sian Edwards (conductor), Claire Booth, James Cleverton, Stephen Richardson, Lucy Schauerer & Christopher Lemmings (cast). Programme comprises Joe Cutler's Sonata for Broken Fingers, Sun 14 July, CBSO Centre, Birmingham

**BIRMINGHAM FESTIVAL CHORAL SOCIETY: OPERA IN THE AFTERNOON** Featuring Ellen Smith (mezzo soprano), Abigail Baylis (soprano), Kevin Gill (Piano) & David Wynne (conductor). Programme includes a selection of opera choruses and arias, Sun 14 July, The Ruddock

Performing Arts Centre, King Edward's School, Birmingham

### Comedy

**KATIE ARNSTEIN** Mon 8 July, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

**DESI CENTRAL FT. SUKH OJLA** Tues 9 July, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

**SOFIE HAGEN** Wed 10 July, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**DAVID EAGLE, AARON WOOD & JAY HANDLEY** Wed 10 July, The Patrick Kavanagh, Birmingham

**DOM HATTON-WOODS & DAVE TWENTYMAN** Thurs 11 July, Albert & Co, Shrewsbury

**ANDREW BIRD, MATT RICHARDSON, ANDREA HUBERT, GBEMI OLADIPO & CALEB JAMES** Fri 12 July, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**DEAN COUGHLIN** Fri 12 July, Old Post Office, Shrewsbury

**TEZ ILYAS** Fri 12 July, Henry Tudor Inn, Shrewsbury

**IGNACIO LOPEZ** Fri 12 July, Old Post Office, Shrewsbury

**THOMAS GREEN, BRENDAN DEMPSEY, ANNETTE FAGON & BARRY DODDS** Fri 12 July, Abbey Theatre, Nuneaton

**RANDY FELTFACE** Sat 13 July, Birmingham Town Hall

**PETE OTWAY, DAVID HOARE, DANI JOHNS & JACK CAMPBELL** Sat 13 July, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham

**ANDREW BIRD, MATT RICHARDSON, ANDREA HUBERT & GBEMI OLADIPO** Sat 13 July, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**JOSH JONES** Sat 13 July, The Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury

**JAMES COOK** Sat 13 July, The Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury

**FREDDY QUINNE** Sat 13 July, The Old Market Hall, Shrewsbury

**JENNY HART** Sat 13 July, Old Post Office, Shrewsbury

**MICHAEL ODEWALE** Sat 13 July, Henry Tudor Inn, Shrewsbury

**SCOTT BENNETT** Sat 13 July, Henry Tudor Inn, Shrewsbury

**ROB MULHOLLAND** Sat 13 July, Henry Tudor Inn, Shrewsbury

**LARRY DEAN & ANDREW MAXWELL** Sun 14 July, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

**HARRIET DYER** Sun 14 July, Rad Beer, Shrewsbury

**MICHELLE SHAUGHNESSY** Sun 14 July, Rad Beer, Shrewsbury

**SCOTT BENNETT** Sun 14 July, Albert & Co, Shrewsbury

**PAUL SMITH, JOSH PUGH, SCOTT BENNETT, JANINE HAROUNI, JACK GLEADOW & THANYIA MOORE** Sun 14 July, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury



## Theatre

**HOMEBIRD** Katie Arnstein's brand-new comedy about finding your place in an ever-changing world, Mon 8 July, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

**TWELFTH NIGHT** Birmingham Ormiston Academy Year 12 students present their version of Shakespeare's romantic comedy, Mon 8 July, Old Rep, Birmingham

**THE SECRET LIFE OF ENID BLYTON** Stage play in which Liz Grand portrays the famous children's author, Tues 9 July, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

**HAMLET** The Lord Chamberlain's Men fuse music, dance and theatre in an open-air version of Shakespeare's most famous tragedy, Tues 9 July, Lichfield Cathedral

**A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM** Presented by The Handlebards - a group of cycling Shakespearean actors who carry their set, props and costumes on the back of their bikes, Tues 9 July, Spetchley Park Gardens, Worcestershire

**WHAT THE BUTLER SAW** London Classic Theatre present Joe Orton's final play, Tues 9 - Sat 13 July, Malvern Theatres

**DO NOT FORGET ME** A story of hope from Stalin's war against Poland - the second play in Danny Masewicz's Polish Trilogy, Tues 9 - Sat 13 July, The Bear Pit Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

**DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER (THE FLYING DUTCHMAN)** Persona Arts present Wagner's tale of love and redemption. Directed by Iqbal Khan, the performance features Royal Birmingham Conservatoire alumnus Byron Jackson, Birmingham Choral Union, and an 'all-star cast' of some of the Commonwealth's finest opera singers. Jack Ridley conducts, Wed 10 July, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

**BROADWAY HEROES VS VILLAINS** StageScreen Musical Theatre Associates present a 'toe-tapping, show-stopping mashup' of Broadway and Disney classics, Wed 10 July, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

**A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM** Presented by The Handlebards - a group of cycling Shakespearean actors who carry their set, props and costumes on the back of their bikes, Wed 10 July, Dudmaston Hall, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

**CHARLEY'S AUNT** The Crescent Theatre's touring summer show is a classic tale of mistaken identity featuring angry uncles and a beautiful exotic aunt, Wed 10 - Thurs 11 July, Selly Manor, Birmingham

**CAN'T STOP CARRYING ON** A new play about one man's desire to carry on making Carry On films. Presented as

part of Birmingham Fest 2024, Wed 10 - Thurs 11 July, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

**PLAYER KINGS** Sir Ian McKellen stars as Sir John Falstaff in a new version of Shakespeare's Henry IV. Toheeb Jimoh stars as Hal and Richard Coyle as King Henry IV, Wed 10 - Sat 13 July, The Alexandra, Birmingham

**CHARLES DICKENS: THE HANGED MAN'S BRIDE** A tale of passion, deceit and the ethereal dance between the realms of life and death. Based on a story by Charles Dickens. Part of Birmingham Fest 2024, Wed 10 - Sun 14 July, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

**LOVESONG** Amateur version of Abi Morgan's powerful love story, which moves through 40 years of a marriage, Wed 10 - Sat 20 July, The Loft Theatre, Leamington Spa

**DEAD SIMPLE** Amateur stage version of Peter James' bestselling novel, Wed 10 - Sat 20 July, Priory Theatre, Kenilworth

**THE THREE MUSKETEERS** The Worcester Repertory Company present an outdoor version of Alexandre Dumas' swashbuckling adventure, Wed 10 - Sun 21 July, The Commandery Gardens, Worcestershire

**HAMLET** The Lord Chamberlain's Men fuse music, dance and theatre in an open-air version of Shakespeare's most famous tragedy, Thurs 11 July, Coughton Court, Warwickshire

**BRAINSTORM** Central Youth Theatre present a play about teenage brain development, told through the real-life experiences of CYT's young people, Thurs 11 - Fri 12 July, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

**MY SON'S A QUEER, (BUT WHAT CAN YOU DO?)** Rob Madge's award-winning play celebrates the joy and chaos of raising a queer child, Thurs 11 - Sat 13 July, Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

**UNFORTUNATE: THE UNTOLD STORY OF URSULA** Smash-hit parody musical in which Ursula gives her take on what really happened all those years ago under the sea. Shawna Hamic stars, Thurs 11 - Sun 14 July, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**JULIUS CAESAR 2024** One of the most famous political coups in history gets the Oddsocks treatment, Fri 12 July, Compton Verney, Warwickshire

**EDGAR ALLAN POE: THE MURDERS IN THE RUE MORGUE** An original detective story, part of Birmingham Fest 2024, Fri 12 - Sat 13 July, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

**WHISTLE AND I'LL COME TO YOU** Stage adaptation of the MR James ghost story. Part of Birmingham Fest 2024, Fri 12 - Sun 14 July, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

**DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER (THE FLYING DUTCHMAN)** Persona Arts present Wagner's tale of love and redemption. Directed by Iqbal Khan, the performance features Royal Birmingham Conservatoire alumnus Byron Jackson, Birmingham Choral Union, and an 'all-star cast' of some of the Commonwealth's finest opera singers. Jack Ridley conducts, Sat 13 July, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

**GEORGINA AND THE DRAGON** Premiere of Ian Henery's new play about female empowerment. Presented by students from the Performing Arts Department at Walsall College and students from BOA in Birmingham, Sat 13 July, The Birmingham Black Box, Harford Street, Birmingham

**THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST** Rain Or Shine Theatre Company present an outdoor version of Oscar Wilde's comic masterpiece, Sat 13 July, Leintwardine Community Centre, Leintwardine, Shropshire

**THE WARDROBE** Kidderminster Rose Young People's Theatre present an amateur version of Sam Holcroft's gripping journey through British history, Sat 13 - Sun 14 July, The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster

**AUTIN DANCE: THE GIANT WHEEL** A 'moving performance inspired by the beauty, power and impact of people from different walks of life coming together'... Sat 13 - Sun 14 July, Victoria Park, Smethwick

**CHARLEY'S AUNT** The Crescent Theatre's touring summer show is a classic tale of mistaken identity featuring angry uncles and a beautiful exotic aunt, Sat 13 - Sun 14 July, Harvington Hall, Nr Kidderminster

**RED VELVET** The Crescent Theatre Company present an amateur version of Lolita Chakrabarti's play, which in turn is based on the little-known but true story of African American actor Ira Aldridge, Sat 13 - Sat 20 July, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

**SONTATA FOR BROKEN FINGERS** Operatic thriller inspired by the remarkable life of virtuoso pianist Maria Yudina, a survivor of Stalin's purges. The production is performed by Birmingham Contemporary Music Group (BCMG) and a cast of soloists, Sun 14 July, CBSO Centre, B'ham

**PRIDE AND PREJUDICE** Chapterhouse Theatre present an outdoor version of Jane Austen's romantic classic, Sun 14 July, Powis Castle and Garden, Powys, Nr Welshpool

**THE SORCERER** Charles Court Opera present a brand-new production of Gilbert & Sullivan's rarely performed opera, Sun 14 July, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

**JULIUS CAESAR 2024** One of the most famous political coups in history gets the Oddsocks treatment, Sun 14 July, The Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury

## Kid's Theatre

**THE GRUFFALO** Musical stage adaptation of Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler's much-loved children's book, Thurs 11 - Fri 12 July, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

**SHREK THE MUSICAL JR.** Presented by Performing Stars Academy, Fri 12 July, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton upon Trent

**PETER & THE WOLF** Presented outdoors by Waterperry Opera, featuring two actors and Prokofiev's magical score. A production suitable for all ages, Sat 13 July, Lichfield Cathedral School Gardens

**HORRIBLE HISTORIES: ROTTEN ROYALS** Featuring revolting rulers and mad monarchs from Britain's barmy past, Sun 14 July, Crewe Lyceum Theatre

## Dance

**ANTON DU BEKE AND GIOVANNI PERNICE: TOGETHER** Brand-new live tour promising breathtaking routines, innovative choreography and a seamless blend of traditional and contemporary dance styles, Tues 9 - Wed 10 July, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**BALLET CYMRU: ROMEO A JULIET** Award-winning production based on Shakespeare's famous romantic comedy, Thurs 11 July, Lichfield Cathedral

**ANTON DU BEKE AND GIOVANNI PERNICE: TOGETHER** Brand-new live tour promising breathtaking routines, innovative choreography and a seamless blend of traditional and contemporary dance styles, Fri 12 July, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**RHYTHM OF THE DANCE** Music and dance combine in a choreographed journey through Ireland's history, Fri 12 July, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**A SUMMER DANCE CELEBRATION** Fusion of live dance and film celebrating the creativity, power and joy of inclusive dance. Performed by Shropshire Inclusive Dance - a cast of dancers with and without disabilities, Sat 13 July, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**RHYTHM OF THE DANCE** Music and dance combine in a choreographed journey through Ireland's history, Sun 14 July, Malvern Theatres

## Light Entertainment

**A NIGHT AT THE THEATRE** HQPA Productions present an evening of song from the world of musical theatre, Mon 8 July, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury



**SMOKE & SEDUCTION: A HISTORY OF CABARET WITH JESSICA WALKER & JOSEPH ATKINS** A journey through some of the most daring songs of the last century, with numbers by Kurt Weill, Spoliansky, Hollaender, and Kander & Ebb, Tues 9 July, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

**AARON TWITCHEN: HIMBO** Expect jokes about 'dating disasters, pop-culture and being a geriatric millennial' in a 'deeply personal and energetic stand-up hour', Wed 10 July, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham



**EVERY CONTACT LEAVES A TRACE: MY LIFE AS A CRIME SCENES INVESTIGATOR** Enter the fascinating world of crime-scene investigation as Jo Ward of BBC's *Forensics: The Real CSI* chats to Jo Durrant, Wed 10 July, Wade Street Church, Lichfield

**SHOWTIME: THE SUMMER VARIETY SHOW** Take a nostalgic trip down memory lane with Andy Eastwood, vocalists Helen Farrel & Richard Hazlewood, and singers from The D-Day Darlings, Wed 10 - Thurs 11 July, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

**JACK & GORDON ARE COSMIC TWEGHEADS** Left-field sketch-comedy in which the duo invite audiences to join them aboard their patented flying ironing board for a whirlwind tour of the universe, Thurs 11 July, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

**ELVIS LESLEY: BURNIN' LOVE BINGO** Award-winning character comedian Tracey Collins (Shell Suit Cher, Audrey Heartburn) takes audiences on a journey to bright light city, equipped with nothing more than a home-made costume, pelvic gyrations, reworked songs and a bingo habit, Fri 12 July, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

**FORBIDDEN NIGHTS** Adults-only show featuring muscles, mayhem and over 11,000 shirt rips, Fri 12 July, The Albany Theatre, Coventry

**SOME LIKE IT HOT: THE MAGIC OF THE MOVIES WITH JAMES PEARSON & LIZZIE BALL** Fri 12 July, Lichfield Cathedral

**BEYOND THE BARRICADE** The UK's longest-running musical theatre concert tour, starring principal West End performers, Fri 12 July, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

**VARIETY SHOW OF COMEDY AND MUSIC WITH ALISTAIR MCGOWAN** Featuring (mainly local) professionals, ex-professionals and talented students, Fri 12 July, St Lawrence's Church,

Ludlow, South Shropshire

**BOTTOMS UP: BURLESQUE & CABARET** Expect sultry striptease, witty wisecracks and saucy songs from a line-up of stellar acts specifically chosen to 'tease, tantalise and tickle your funny bone', Sat 13 July, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

**BEST OF BROADWAY** A celebration of some of the greatest-ever musicals, performed by the Sound Company Community Choir, soloists Louise Maguire, Chris & Nigel Passey and the 30-piece Gig Caritas Orchestra, Sat 13 July, Dudley Town Hall

**BOX OF FROGS** The Birmingham improv group present an evening of spontaneous songs, sketches and scenes, all based on audience suggestion. Part of Birmingham Fest 2024, Sun 14 July, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

## Talks & Spoken Word

**ALISON WEIR - MARY I: QUEEN OF SORROWS** Historian & writer Alison talks about her brand-new novel, Sat 13 July, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

## Events

**GAYDON GATHERING** Monthly meetup for motoring enthusiasts, Tues 9 July, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

**THE NOT FORGOTTEN FUN FEST** Afternoon of games, activities and entertainment for veterans of all ages and abilities, Wed 10 July, British Ironwork Centre, Oswestry, North Shropshire

**DISCOVER THE STORY OF HAMNET** Unique opportunity to explore the hidden stories of love, loss and Tudor healing, Thurs 11 July, Anne Hathaway's Cottage, Stratford-upon-Avon

**BARBER LATES** Wander through the galleries after hours and enjoy a night of art, film and creative activities, Thurs 11 July, Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham

**BIRMINGHAM COCKTAIL WEEKEND** The popular cocktail festival returns for its summer edition, Thurs 11 - Sun 14 July, various venues in Birmingham

**CHEESY BINGO PARTY** With music, madness, singalongs, ridiculous prizes and a few surprises, Fri 12 July, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

**FESTIVAL FIREWORKS** An explosive finish to this year's Lichfield Festival, Fri 12 July, Beacon Park, Lichfield

**ROYALS, REGALS & ROBES** Join historian & tour guide Jono Oates on a regal tour of Lichfield, Fri 12 July, St Mary's, Lichfield

**MOD OUTDOOR TERRACE PARTY** With hits from The Who, Ocean Colour Scene, The Kinks and others, Fri 12 July, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

**THE FESTIVAL OF BRILLIANT A** celebration of children's books with authors, illustrators and artists, Fri 12 - Sat 13 July, Biddulph Old Hall, Staffordshire

**BIRMINGHAM CRAFT BREW FIESTA 2024** A celebration of local and national craft brewers, Fri 12 - Sat 13 July, Custard Factory, Digbeth

**CLASSIC ANTIQUE FAIRS** Featuring 100 specialist dealers, Fri 12 - Sun 14 July, NEC, Birmingham

**OUT OF SPACE** A musical journey out of space, experienced against the cosmic backdrop of the museum's planetarium, Sat 13 July, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

**ULTRA WHITE COLLAR BOXING** Evening of boxing bouts raising money for charity, Sat 13 July, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

**TAMWORTH PRIDE** Celebrating the local LGBTQ+ community, Sat 13 July, Tamworth Castle Grounds

**1940S WEEKEND** Don your finest threads and immerse yourself in a wartime experience, Sat 13 - Sun 14 July, Black Country Living Museum, Dudley



**BRASS BAND FESTIVAL 2024** Weekend of performances from some of the region's best brass bands, Sat 13 - Sun 14 July, Coalbrookdale Museum of Iron, Ironbridge

**STEAM IN MINIATURE WEEKEND** Check out a host of miniature steam engines, Sat 13 - Sun 14 July, Blists Hill Victorian Town, Ironbridge

**MALVERN HIGHLAND PONY SHOW** Two day show for Highland Pony enthusiasts, Sat 13 - Sun 14 July, Three Counties Showground, Malvern

**LEGO® DREAMZZZ™** Awaken your imagination with a dream creature hunt, Sat 13 July - Sun 8 Sept, Legoland Discovery Centre B'ham

**DINOSAURS ON THE DOORSTEP** See giant dinosaur skeletons, touch real fossil bones and check out original fossils from 150 million years ago. Associated events - including family trail, also feature, Sat 13 July - Sun 8 Sept, Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

**BMC & LEYLAND SHOW** Celebrate the best of the British motor industry, Sun

14 July, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

**WIMBLEDON: THE MEN'S FINAL LIVE ON THE GIANT SCREEN** Sun 14 July, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

**CLASSIC MOTOR DAY** Local enthusiasts show off their classic vehicles, Sun 14 July, Apley Estate, Shropshire

**ANTIQUES & COLLECTORS FAIR** Featuring a range of stalls offering unique items from numerous eras in history, Sun 14 July, Hartlebury Castle, Worcestershire

**THE REUNION SHOW 2024** Featuring modified and retro cars from the 1980s, 90s and noughties, Sun 14 July, Staffordshire County Showground

**PRIVATE LIVES OF WESTON TOUR** Go behind the scenes to learn about the lives of key members of the Bridgeman family, whose home was once Weston Park, Sun 14 July, Weston Park, Shropshire

**BESIDE THE SEA - SUMMER FAMILY TRAIL** Holiday-themed trail around the castle, Sun 14 July - Sun 1 Sept, Hartlebury Castle, Worcestershire

## Festivals

**2000TREES FESTIVAL** Line-up includes The Gaslight Anthem, Manchester Orchestra & Kids In Glass Houses, Wed 10 - Sat 13 July, Upcote Farm, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire

**THE ROCK AND BIKE FEST** Line-up includes Showaddywaddy, Tom Jovi & Ultimate Whitesnake, Thurs 11 - Sat 13 July, Notts Derby Showground

**NOISILY FESTIVAL** Line-up includes Bart Skills, Dave Seaman b2b Quivver & Dubfire, Thurs 11 - Sun 14 July, Coney Woods, Leicestershire

**THE MOSTLY JAZZ FUNK AND SOUL FESTIVAL** Line-up includes Kool & The Gang, Nubiyann Twist & Craig Charles, Fri 12 - Sun 14 July, Moseley Park, Birmingham

**FUSE FESTIVAL** Line-up includes, Headshrinkers, Sam Redmore & The Tropical All Stars, Fri 12 - Sun 14 July, Beacon Park, Lichfield, Staffordshire

**ALSO FESTIVAL** Line-up includes Stornoway, Sara Pascoe & The Fontanas, Fri 12 - Sun 14 July, Park Farm, Warwickshire

**LET'S ROCK SHREWSBURY** Line-up includes Squeeze, Bananarama & Jason Donovan, Sat 13 July, The Quarry, Shrewsbury

**BLACK COUNTRY MUSICOM FESTIVAL** Featuring music, comedy and family entertainment, Sat 13 - Sun 14 July, Himley Hall, Dudley

**SANDWELL & BIRMINGHAM MELA** The biggest South Asian music festival in Europe, Sat 13 - Sun 14 July, Victoria Park, Smethwick





The Cosavettes - Dead Wax, Birmingham

## Gigs

**MEGAN THEE STALLION**  
Tues 16 July, Utilita  
Arena Birmingham

**CHRIS HELME** Wed 17  
July, Hare & Hounds,  
Birmingham

**RAY BUTCHER'S  
"BUTCHER'S BREW"**  
Wed 17 July, The Jam  
House, Birmingham

**VERLOREN + BOOM  
BOOM WOMB + SHUT US  
UP** Wed 17 July, The  
Sunflower Lounge,  
Birmingham

**SKILLIBENG** Wed 17  
July, O2 Academy,  
Birmingham

**AMIGO THE DEVIL +  
NATE BERGMAN** Wed 17  
July, The Asylum,  
Birmingham

**GARBAGE** Wed 17 July,  
The Civic at The Halls  
Wolverhampton

**THE SIGNATURES** Thurs  
18 July, The Jam  
House, Birmingham

**RORY MCLEOD + EDDY  
MORTON** Thurs 18 July,  
Kitchen Garden,  
Birmingham

**THE GROVE DAISY ROAD**  
Thurs 18 July, The  
Victoria, Birmingham

**GASOLINE & MATCHES +  
PARIS ADAMS +  
HARLEYMOON KEMP +  
PRESTON D. BARNES**  
Thurs 18 July, Jennifer  
Blackwell Performance  
Space, Symphony  
Hall, Birmingham

**QUESTIONS OF ANGELS  
+ WMD + THE DEAD  
LIST** Thurs 18 July, The  
Station, Cannock

**FRANK TURNER & THE  
SLEEPING SOULS + THE  
MEFFS** Fri 19 July, O2  
Academy, Birmingham

**LOCK-IN + MEGAN WYN  
+ LITTLE JUKE +  
MOZAICS + IDLE NOISE**  
Fri 19 July, Dead Wax,  
Digbeth, Birmingham

**THE VIZ + SOLACE +  
TENNANT + LOUIE  
WALSH** Fri 19 July, The  
Rainbow, Digbeth,  
Birmingham

**BEAUX GRIS GRIS AND  
THE APOCALYPSE** Fri 19  
July, Temperance,  
Leamington Spa

**THE BOHEMIANS** Fri 19  
July, hmv Empire,  
Coventry

**ANT-TROUBLE** Fri 19  
July, Queens Hall,  
Nuneaton

**THE PHONICS -  
STEREOPHONICS  
TRIBUTE** Fri 19 July,  
The Robin, Bilston

**SPACEHOPPERS** Fri 19  
July, Katie Fitzgerald's,  
Stourbridge

**90S LIVE** Fri 19 July,  
The Prince Of Wales  
Theatre, Cannock

**LINK N PARK** Fri 19 July,  
The Station, Cannock

**THE DEVOUT** Fri 19 July,  
The Buttermarket,  
Shrewsbury

**THE RONALDOS** Fri 19  
July, The Buttermarket,  
Shrewsbury

**STONE JETS** Fri 19 July,  
Albert's Shed,  
Southwater, Telford

**INGENUA + HOLLOW  
ILLUSION + JIJ** Fri 19  
July, Percy's Cafe Bar,  
Whitchurch, North  
Shropshire

**NANNA RADLEYS** Fri 19 -  
Sat 20 July, The Jam  
House, Birmingham

**SINGLE MOTHERS** Sat 20  
July, Hare & Hounds,  
Birmingham

**INTO IT, OVER IT +**

**SWEET PILL + TANGLED  
HAIR** Sat 20 July, Hare  
& Hounds, B'ham

**DEATH FROM ABOVE**  
**1979** Sat 20 July, O2  
Institute, Birmingham

**FLORENCE JOELLE** Sat  
20 July, Winterbourne  
House and Garden,  
University of B'ham

**THE COVASETTES** Sat 20  
July, Dead Wax,  
Digbeth, Birmingham

**ASSURANCE +  
ESCHALON + VANITAS +  
SWARMED + CHAOS  
SEQUENCE** Sat 20 July,  
The Flapper, B'ham

**MIDNIGHT CITY** Sat 20  
July, Tower Of Song,  
Birmingham

**THE DEVOUT** Sat 20  
July, hmv Empire,  
Coventry

**EBB + RUBY DAWN +  
BIG HOGG** Sat 20 July,  
Queens Hall,  
Nuneaton

**THE SMYTHS** Sat 20  
July, KK's Steel Mill,  
Wolverhampton

**THE JACK FLETCHER  
BAND** Sat 20 July,  
Newhampton Arts  
Centre,  
Wolverhampton

**THE JAM'D** Sat 20 July,  
Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

**MOUNTAIN SONG** Sat 20  
July, Theatre Severn,  
Shrewsbury

**MR BLACK** Sat 20 July,  
Albert's Shed,  
Shrewsbury

**THE WEEKENDERS** Sat  
20 July, Albert's Shed,  
Southwater, Telford

**THE ZANGWILLS +  
BEDROOM HIGH CLUB +  
THE MASSES + LISSY  
TAYLOR + LEAH WILCOX**  
Sun 21 July, Dead  
Wax, Digbeth, B'ham

**DRACULA'S GARAGE** Sun  
21 July, Tower Of  
Song, Birmingham

**IZZIE DERRY** Sun 21  
July, Temperance,  
Leamington Spa

**BENJI KIRKPATRICK +  
PATAKAS** Sun 21 July,  
Temperance,  
Leamington Spa

**DOUBLE CROSS** Sun 21  
July, Queens Hall,  
Nuneaton

**AMY - A TRIBUTE TO AMY  
WINEHOUSE** Sun 21  
July, The Robin,  
Bilston

## Classical Music

### WORKPLACE VOICES: SUMMER

**CONCERT** Featuring workplace choirs  
from around the region, Tues 16 July,  
Jennifer Blackwell Performance  
Space, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**HWAN HEE KIM PIANO CONCERT** Tues  
16 July, St Alkmund's Church,  
Shrewsbury

**CBSO: SCHUBERT 9** Featuring Edward  
Gardner (conductor) & Mary Bevan  
(soprano). Programme includes  
Symphony No. 9 and other works by  
Schubert, Wed 17 July, Birmingham  
Town Hall

**CBSO SO VOCAL** Featuring Lucy  
Hollins (conductor) & musicians from  
the CBSO. Programme includes a  
selection of familiar classics, Thurs  
18 July, The Bradshaw Hall, Royal  
Birmingham Conservatoire

**MICHAEL BARKER PIANO CONCERT**  
Programme includes works by  
Barker & Liszt, Fri 19 July, Bridge  
House Theatre, Warwick

**CHAMELEON WIND QUINTET** Fri 19 July,  
St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

**BOURNVILLE CLARINET CHOIR**  
Featuring Malcolm Pollock (musical  
director). Programme includes works  
by Mussorgsky, Piazzolla, Sullivan &  
Mozart, Sat 20 July, Bournville Parish  
Church, Birmingham

**LEE WARD ORGAN PROM** Programme  
includes works by Lidon, Handel, JS  
Bach, Hollins & more... Sat 20 July,  
Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

## Comedy

**MILTON JONES: HA!MILTON WORK IN  
PROGRESS** Wed 17 July, Midlands  
Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

**GLENN WOOL, JASON JOHN WHITEHEAD  
& JAY HANLEY** Wed 17 July, The  
Patrick Kavanagh, Birmingham

**ALICE SNEDDON & JOE KENT WALTERS**  
Thurs 18 July, The Hub at St Mary's,  
Lichfield

**SASHI PERERA** Fri 19 July, The Glee  
Club, Birmingham

**MARK SIMMONS** Fri 19 July, Festival  
Drayton Centre, Market Drayton,  
North Shropshire

**JASON JOHN WHITEHEAD, STEVE  
GRIBBIN, CHARLIE BAKER & COMIC TBC**  
Fri 19 - Sat 20 July, The Glee Club,  
Birmingham

**ALISTAIR WILLIAMS, LOUISE LEIGH,  
DIANE SPENCER & RICH WILSON** Sat 20  
July, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham

**PAUL SINHA, TONY LAW, SEAN PERCIVAL  
& WAYNE BEESE** Sat 20 July, Castle &  
Falcon, Birmingham

**TAT VISION** Sun 21 July, The Glee  
Club, Birmingham

**DAN NIGHTINGALE & LINDSEY SANTORO**  
Sun 21 July, Katie Fitzgerald's,  
Stourbridge

## Theatre

**ANOTHER DAY IN THE LIFE** That Theatre  
Company present four new pieces  
based on people with unusual  
occupations. Part of Birmingham  
Fest 2024, Mon 15 - Tues 16 July,  
The Blue Orange Theatre, B'ham

**THE UNRAVELLING** The Rekindled  
Ensemble present a reimaging of  
Georg Büchner's *Woyzek*.  
Performed as part of Birmingham  
Fest 2024, Mon 15 - Tues 16 July,  
The Blue Orange Theatre, B'ham

**GREASE** Iconic high-school musical,  
directed by Nikolai Foster and  
featuring choreography by Arlene  
Phillips, Mon 15 - Sat 20 July, The  
Alexandra, Birmingham

**MAGIC TO DO** Birmingham Ormiston  
Academy Year 10 students present a  
showcase of performance shorts,  
Mon 15 - Tues 16 July, Old Rep,  
Birmingham

**MY SON'S A QUEER, (BUT WHAT CAN  
YOU DO?)** Rob Madge's award-  
winning play celebrates the joy and  
chaos of raising a queer child, Mon  
15 - Wed 17 July, Belgrade Theatre,  
Coventry

**PRETTY WOMAN THE MUSICAL** Amber  
Davies and Ore Oduba star in the  
stage adaptation of the iconic 1990  
film, Mon 15 - Sat 20 July, Regent  
Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

**SPIKED** Saraya Haddad's one-woman  
production about 'the time she  
performed a play but doesn't  
remember'... Tues 16 July, Old Joint  
Stock Theatre, Birmingham

**I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW  
CHANGE** Heartfelt musical that traces  
the overall arc of relationships  
throughout the course of a life, Tues  
16 - Sat 20 July, Wolverhampton  
Grand Theatre

**THE TRIAL** Immersive jury experience  
based on a real-life murder trial and  
presented by Set In Stone Theatre,  
Tues 16 - Sat 20 July, Stoke  
Repertory Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

**HERE YOU COME AGAIN - THE NEW  
DOLLY PARTON MUSICAL** Brand-new  
musical comedy telling the story of a  
diehard Dolly Parton fan whose  
fantasy version of the legendary  
singer gets him through the most  
trying of times, Tues 16 - Sat 20 July,  
Malvern Theatres

**MY CHAT WITH HAROLD PINTER** Miriam  
Higgins' new play about finding  
one's voice and the important things  
in life: gender, neurodivergance, and  
how you shouldn't believe everything  
you read on Twitter, Wed 17 July, Old  
Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

**A WORKER'S PARADISE** Birmingham



History Theatre Company explore and celebrate the Cadbury story through song, performance and film. Part of Birmingham Fest 2024, Wed 17 July, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

**THE OPPOSITE SEX** Lichfield Players present an amateur version of David Tristram's adult comedy, Wed 17 - Sat 20 July, Lichfield Garrick

**AN IMPROVISED MURDER** Join Foghorn Unscripted for a night of hilarity, mystery and mayhem. No scripts, no plans... 'just you and a classic whodunnit waiting to be born', Thurs 18 July, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

**THE HAUNTING OF BLAINE MANOR** A haunted-house chiller set in a manor with a twisted history of madness, witchcraft, tragedy and death, Thurs 18 - Fri 19 July, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM** Stage2 Youth Theatre present an amateur version of Shakespeare's popular comedy, Thurs 18 - Sat 20 July, Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

**AS YOU LIKE IT** A 'joyful' 80-minute staging of Shakespeare's timeless comedy, Thurs 18 July - Sun 1 Sept, The Holloway Garden Theatre, Nr Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

**LOOSER WOMEN** Live-on-stage drag podcast featuring Gina Tonic, Stealia Heart and The Empress. Part of Birmingham Fest 2024, Fri 19 July, The Birmingham Black Box, Harford Street

**MS OLINI & THE THREE BEARS** Adult panto performed as part of Birmingham Fest 2024, Fri 19 - Sat 20 July, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

**A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM** The South Devon Players fuse fantasy with steampunk in a production suitable for all ages, Sat 20 July, The Birmingham Black Box, Harford Street

**FAIRLIGHT** Brand-new musical performance which both celebrates the invention of lawn tennis in Birmingham in the 1860s and explores one of the biggest issues in the modern game: queer invisibility, Sat 20 July, Edgbaston Archery & Lawn Tennis Society, Birmingham

**DEBRIS** Alex Viveash's new play explores what it's like to be the grown-up child of an alcoholic, Sat 20 July, The Swan Studio, Worcester

**GIRLS NIGHT OUT WITH FLAT AND THE CURVES** A glittery cabaret described as Sex And The City meets The Spice Girls, Sun 21 July, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

**RE-TURN** Vivi Bayliss and Ella Godfrey present a wistful dance theatre piece celebrating the beauty of failure. Part of Birmingham Fest 2024, Sun 21 July, Blue Orange Theatre, B'ham

## Kids Theatre

**CHARLIE COOK'S FAVOURITE BOOK** Stage adaptation of Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler's much-loved children's book, Tues 16 - Wed 17 July, Palace Theatre, Redditch

**THE TIGER WHO CAME TO TEA** Join the tea-guzzling tiger in a delightful family show packed with oodles of magic, singalong songs and plenty of clumsy chaos. Based on Judith Kerr's bestselling children's book, Wed 17 - Thurs 18 July, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**MINISTRY OF SCIENCE LIVE** 'Entertaining and educational show' featuring 20ft liquid nitrogen clouds, exploding oxygen & hydrogen balloons, fire tornados and a self-built hovercraft, Sun 21 July, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

## Light Entertainment

**@STAGE DOOR JOHNNY: ACCIDENTAL INFLUENCER** Join the TikTok and Instagram sensation for a lighthearted exploration of the digital age's impact on identity and success, Fri 19 July, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

**MIRIAM MARGOLYES: OH MIRIAM! LIVE** Join Miriam as she entertains audiences with tales from her extraordinary life, Fri 19 July, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**SOLVE-ALONG-A-MURDER SHE WROTE** Interactive screening of the classic Murder, She Wrote episode Broadway Malady, as well as games, prizes and audience participation, Fri 19 July, Stourbridge Town Hall

**THAT'S LIFE! - A CELEBRATION OF SWING** Musical theatre's Dom Hartley-Harris and James Edge perform songs from the kings of swing, including Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davies Jr, Dean Martin, Nat King Cole and Michael Buble... Sat 20 July, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

## Talks & Spoken Word

**STORY BAZAAR: AN EVENING WITH LEN CABRAL** The award-winning storyteller joins Peter Chand for an evening of 'incredible, thoughtful, moving and eerie traditional tales for adults', Thurs 18 July, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

## Events

**THE BISTRO EXPRESS** Afternoon dining

experience serving a two-course lunch, Wed 17 July, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

**ROARING WITH DINOSAURS** Come face-to-face with baby dinosaurs and a full-size velociraptor, Thurs 18 July, Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

**COUNTRY RACENIGHT** Evening of racing, with live music from The Luke Combs Experience, Thurs 18 July, Worcester Racecourse

**MUSICAL MEANDERS** Meander from place to place and encounter different sounds and music, Fri 19 July, Castle Bromwich Historic Gardens, Birmingham

**ART ON THE BRAIN** Experience the impact that art has on your brain in real time with brainwave-reading technology, Fri 19 - Sat 20 July, Compton Verney, Warwickshire

**FANTASY FOREST FESTIVAL** Festival bringing together fans of all genres of fantasy, Fri 19 - Sun 21 July, Sudeley Castle, Cheltenham

**FLAXMILL CREATES FESTIVAL** Three days of live music, performances, street food, beer and more, Fri 19 - Sun 21 July, Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings, Shropshire

**FESTIVAL AT THE EDGE** 'A weekend of storytelling, tall tales, terrific tellers, music and more', Fri 19 - Sun 21 July, Hopton Court Estate, Kidderminster

**GET THE PICTURE - SUMMER OF DESIGN** Dive deep into the world of car design via a range of activities, Fri 19 July - Mon 2 Sept, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

**DUDDY PRIDE** LGBT+ event with live entertainment and music, Sat 20 July, Stone Street Square, Dudley

**THE JQ FESTIVAL 2024** Enjoy live music and performances, independent makers markets, demonstrations, arts & heritage tours and more, Sat 20 July, St Paul's Square, Birmingham

**DAY OF DANCE** Morris Dancing groups perform at stations along the line, Sat 20 July, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

**VINTAGE & CLASSIC TRANSPORT FESTIVAL** Featuring steam engines, motorbikes, replica cars and more, Sat 20 July, British Ironwork Centre, Oswestry, North Shropshire

**FRANK WARREN PRESENTS CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING: THE MAGNIFICENT 7** Seven championship fights in one night, Sat 20 July, Resorts World Arena, Birmingham

**BIRMINGHAM BACK TO BACKS 20TH BIRTHDAY** Take a look around the houses for free and enjoy some courtyard crafts, Sat 20 - Sun 21 July, Birmingham Back to Backs

**LEGENDARY JOUST** Experience a spectacle of speed and skill as four legendary knights compete in the grand medieval joust, Sat 20 - Sun 21 July, Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire

**GIN TRAIN** Learn about the history of gin whilst sampling several drinks, Sat 20 - Sun 21 July, Severn Valley Railway, Worcestershire

**STONELEIGH HORSE SHOW** Featuring a range of showing classes, including a variety of Horse Of The Year Show qualifiers, Sat 20 - Sun 21 July, NAEC Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

**ATHELSTAN 1100** Week-long festival featuring Anglo-Saxon living history, community archaeology, talks & lectures, demonstrations, community art and live music, Sat 20 - Sun 28 July, Tamworth Caste, Staffordshire

**COTSWOLD FLOWER FESTIVAL** Enjoy flower fields, the maize maze, craft activities and more, Sat 20 July - Sat 31 Aug, Cotswold Farm Park, Cheltenham

**JURASSIC PLAYGROUND** Taking inspiration from Dippy, the museum's youngest visitors will encounter specially designed artworks 'in a world of sensory spaces', Sat 20 July - Sun 1 Sept, Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry

**SUMMER FAMILY FUN** Packed line-up of interactive exhibits and workshops along the railway, Sat 20 July - Sun 1 Sept, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

**VICTORIAN SEASIDE EXPERIENCE** Enjoy a day at the beach, complete with donkeys and a stage show, recreating the atmosphere of the traditional Victorian seaside, Sat 20 July - Mon 2 Sept, Blists Hill Victorian Town, Ironbridge

**OLD FORD RALLY** Treasure trove of pre-1995 vehicles with Ford engines, Sun 21 July, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

**ROOTES HERITAGE DAY** Featuring all kinds of Classic Rootes Group vehicles, Sun 21 July, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

**ACORNS BUBBLE RUSH** Fun-run raising money for Acorns Children's Hospice, Sun 21 July, Walsall Arboretum

## Festivals

**NOZSTOCK** Line-up includes Andy C, Arrested Development & The Undercover Hippy, Thurs 18 - Sun 21 July, Rowden Paddocks, Bromyard, Herefordshire

**WOODSHOP** Line-up includes The Stereotronics, Oasish & The Rat Pack Live, Fri 19 - Sun 21 July, West Mid Showground, Shropshire

**BIRMINGHAM JAZZ & BLUES FESTIVAL** Line-up includes The Shakedown Brothers, Ben Toury, Willy & The Poorboys, Florence Joelle, Roy Forbes, Simon Spillett Quartet & Calypso Moon, Fri 19 - Sun 28 July, various venues across Birmingham



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### SATURDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2024



### Main Arena Fun – The Shetland Pony Grand National

Attwell Farm Park - Sheep Shearing Competition - Livestock & Horses including the 'Heavies' - Rare Breed Sheep Championship - Fine Worcestershire Food & Drink - Carter Jonas Talks Theatre - Flowers & Produce - Exquisite Crafts - Vintage Steam Engines & Classic Vehicles - Fun Dog Show & Gundogs - Children's Amusements & Pony Rides - Countryside Area - Thrilling Competitions - Live Music at The Bandstand - Public Bar  
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### Gigs

**THE SWING CATS** Mon 22 July, The Alexandra, Birmingham

**ANDRES ROOTS** Mon 22 July, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**ALAN FLETCHER BAND + CHANTEL MCGREGOR** Tues 23 July, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**THE COMMONERS** Tues 23 July, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

**ERIC ROBERSON** Wed 24 July, The Jam House, Birmingham

**DEAN OWENS** Wed 24 July, Temperance, Leamington Spa

**THE SPOOKY MEN'S CHORALE** Wed 24 July, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**SWEET CAROLINE - THE MUSIC OF NEIL DIAMOND** Wed 24 July, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**GREG FOAT/AYO SALAWU + OCEAN IVY** Wed 24 July, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

**THE SKUM + RAT SALAD + THE MUCKS** Thurs 25 July, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

**GRAPHIC NATURE** Thurs 25 July, The Asylum, Birmingham

**JESSE SMITH** Thurs 25 July, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

**LEGEND - THE MUSIC OF BOB MARLEY** Thurs 25 July, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**A HEAD FULL OF COLDPLAY** Thurs 25 July, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

**THE HELLFLOWERS + HISTP** Thurs 25 July, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

**EASY CURE** Fri 26 July, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

**ATOM HEART FLOYD** Fri 26 July, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

**THIS IS TINA - TINA TURNER TRIBUTE** Fri 26 July, The Night Owl, Birmingham

**GUNS 2 ROSES + MÖTLEY CRÜDE** Fri 26 July, O2 Academy, Birmingham



*The Swing Cats - The Alexandra, Birmingham*

**DUSK BROTHERS** Fri 26 July, Dead Wax, Digbeth, Birmingham

**THE SHADOW CABINET** Fri 26 July, The Victoria, Birmingham

**ERNESTO RENÁN FT THE EDGAR MACÍAS QUARTET** Fri 26 July, Tower Of Song, Birmingham

**LIV WILKES** Fri 26 July, The Royal Pug, Leamington Spa

**KING PLEASURE AND THE BISCUIT BOYS** Fri 26 July, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

**BON GIOVI** Fri 26 July, The Rialto, Coventry

**GHOST UK + BLACK WATER FIEND + FLEISCH** Fri 26 July, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**INNER EMPIRE** Fri 26 July, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**LIMEHOUSE LIZZY** Fri 26 July, The Robin, Bilston

**JOHN BRAMWELL** Fri 26 July, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

**FAT LIP + PARAMORE GB** Fri 26 July, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

**LIKE THE BEATLES** Fri 26 July, Two Gates Club, Tamworth

**MAET LIVE AND THE NEVER NEVER EXPRESS** Fri 26 July, The Station, Cannock

**JUST RADIOHEAD** Fri 26 July, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

**THE VERTIGO BAND** Fri 26 July, Albert's Shed, Southwater, Telford

**LAURA ASTON & THE LA BAND** Sat 27 July, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

**SIGNING OFF - A TRIBUTE TO UB40** Sat 27 July, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

**TOM MARTIN'S CELTIC SOUL** Sat 27 July, Tower

Of Song, Birmingham

**CHEMICAL DANCE** Sat 27 July, Arches Venue, Coventry

**DEVOTED TO ROCK** Sat 27 July, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**THE JIVE ACES** Sat 27 July, The Priory Theatre, Kenilworth

**SIMULATION MUSE + THE RUNAWAY KILLERS** Sat 27 July, The Robin, Bilston

**THE SMITHS LTD** Sat 27 July, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

**THE DRIFTERS** Sat 27 July, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

**THE GREATEST STAR - BARBARA STREISAND TRIBUTE** Sat 27 July, The Prince Of Wales, Cannock

**FIVE O'CLOCK HERO** Sat 27 July, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

**THE BEAUTIFUL WAYS** Sat 27 July, Albert's Shed, Southwater, Telford

**THE CROSSROADS BLUES** Sun 28 July, Tower Of Song, Birmingham

**ROADRUNNER** Sun 28 July, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

**MORGAN WALLEN TRIBUTE UK** Sun 28 July, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

**HUMANITY'S LAST BREATH + HEART OF A COWARD** Tues 30 July, The Asylum, B'ham

**ALKALINE TRIO** Wed 31 July, O2 Institute, Birmingham

**HERE AT LAST** Wed 31 July, O2 Academy, Birmingham

**TOM ROBINSON BAND** Wed 31 July, Queens Hall, Nuneaton

### Comedy

**MITCH BENN, JAY HANDLEY & COMIC TBC** Wed 24 July, The Patrick Kavanagh, Birmingham

**SARAH CALLAGHAN, SCOTT BENNETT, RUNI TALWAR & COMIC TBC** Thurs 25 July, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**MICK FERRY, MORGAN REES, HELEN BAUER & FREDDY QUINNE** Thurs 25 July, Herberts Yard, Birmingham

**LOU CONRAN** Thurs 25 July, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

**SARAH CALLAGHAN, SCOTT BENNETT, TOM HOUGHTON & COMIC TBC** Fri 26 - Sat 27 July, The Glee Club, B'ham

**PATRICK MONAHAN, AARON SIMMONDS, JOHN ROBERTSON & TOM TOAL** Sat 27 July, Rosies Nightclub, Birmingham

**GARY POWNDLAND** Sat 27 July, Stourbridge Town Hall

**ADAM BEARDSMORE, FREDDIE FARRELL, LOVELL SMITH, TAL DAVIES, DOM BANT, ERIC RUSHTON, JACOB NUSSEY SAMANTHA DAY, MARK ROW & LORI SMITH** Sun 28 July, The Glee Club, Birmingham

**MARK SIMMONDS** Sun 28 July, Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge

**DALIN OLIVER** Wed 31 July, Old Joint Stock, Birmingham

### Theatre

**STRICTLY ERIC 2024** Join Eric as he takes on the best ballroom dancers that 'Strictly' has to offer, Mon 22 July - Sat 3 Aug, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

**CLUEDO 2 - THE NEXT CHAPTER** Comedy whodunnit starring Jason Durr (Heartbeat/Casualty) as Colonel Mustard and Strictly Come Dancing winner 2023, Ellie Leach, as Miss Scarlett, Tues 23 - Sat 27 July, The Alexandra, Birmingham

**THE LAST OF THE HAUSSMANS** The Stafford Players present an amateur version of Stephen Beresford's touching play examining the fate of the revolutionary generation, Tues 23 - Sat 27 July, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**FIDDLER ON THE ROOF** Community musical presented by Our Star Theatre Company, Wed 24 - Sat 27 July, Malvern Theatres

**THE DEBUT** Featuring up to four new short plays, written by some of the most promising writers in Worcester and beyond, Thurs 25 July, Swan Studio, Worcester

**SAUNA BOY** Dan Ireland-Reeves' new play offers a semi-autobiographical look at one of the world's most secretive and seductive industries, Thurs 25 - Sat 27 July, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

**THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES**

Written by Mark Webster and based on the famous Sherlock Holmes story by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Part of Birmingham Fest 2024, Thurs 25 - Sat 27 July, The Blue Orange Theatre, Birmingham

**THE PRUSSIAN OFFICER** Ben Mills-Wood's adaptation of DH Lawrence's classic tale delves into the dark recesses of human psychology. Part of Birmingham Fest 2024, Thurs 25 - Sat 27 July, The Blue Orange Theatre, B'ham

**MY MOTHER'S FUNERAL: THE SHOW** New play by Kelly Jones which tackles the inequalities around death - and the cost of turning your loved ones into art, Thurs 25 - Sat 27 July, Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

**RHYMES OVER CRIMES KNIVES COUNTY LINES** Heartwarming 'edutainment' featuring poetry, illustration, theatrical performances, music 'and much more'... Fri 26 July, Birmingham Black Box, Harford Street

**THIS IS NOT MEDEA** The Other Theatre Company present a dark and triggering comedy about 'passports, pints, a global pandemic, arts, the lack of arts, the lack of toilet paper and murder'... Fri 26 July, Swan Studio, Worcester

**PERICLES** Tamara Harvey makes her RSC debut directing a rarely performed tale of love, hope and miracles, Fri 26 July - Sat 21 Sept, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon



**LAURA LIPROT - SEVEN WONDERS** Step into the world of the six wives of Henry VIII and hear how their stories relate to the emotions and heartache of women today, Sat 27 July, The Birmingham Black Box, Harford Street

**YOU DON'T HAVE A CLUE... DO YOU?** Laura Berridge's murder-mystery farce is set in the sleepy village of Long Piddleton, where a community of colourful characters reside... Sat 27 - Wed 31 July, The Loft Theatre, Leamington Spa

**WE WILL ROCK YOU** Amateur version of the hit stage show presented by Stoke Youth Musical Theatre Company, Tues 30 July - Sat 3 Aug, Stoke Repertory Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent





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as Colonel Mustard



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Directed by **MARK BELL**



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**WHEN VINCENT MET JOHN** Nick Wilkes' new play about a hypothetical meeting between John Lennon and Vincent van Gogh, Wed 31 July - Sat 3 Aug, Swan Theatre, Worcester

## Kids Theatre

**FIREMAN SAM: THE GREAT CAMPING ADVENTURE** New live show for younger audiences, Thurs 25 July, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**POP PRINCESSES** Musical spectacular for younger audiences in which four fairytale princesses become pop stars, singing hits from the likes of Little Mix, Ariana Grande and Taylor Swift, Thurs 25 July, Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

**SEEDHEART** Indigo Moon Theatre explore the impact of humans on the environment and consider what can be done to restore the once-green planet, Thurs 25 July, Regal, Tenbury Wells

**WOODLAND TALES WITH GRANDAD** Puppets and storytelling combine in a production for younger audiences which shares 'a strong environmental message', Sat 27 July, Number 8, Pershore

**BLUEY'S BIG PLAY** Brand-new theatrical version of the Emmy Award-winning children's television series, Sat 27 - Sun 28 July, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

**THE DRAGON WAGON** Jellyfish Theatre fuse puppetry and music in an inventive family show about friendship, food and dragons, Sun 28 July, Tamworth Castle Grounds

**PEPPA PIG'S FUN DAY OUT** Expect giggles and snorts aplenty as Peppa, her family and friends take trips to the zoo and beach, Wed 31 July - Thurs 1 Aug, The Alexandra, Birmingham

## Light Entertainment

**WONDERS OF OUR UNIVERSE** Journey through the cosmos via storytelling and soundtrack. Suitable for everyone aged eight-plus, Wed 24 July, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

**THE D-DAY DARLINGS - 80TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR** Featuring new arrangements of songs from the era, slick choreography and special guest performances, Wed 24 July, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

**CIRQUE: THE GREATEST SHOW** Variety spectacular combining West End and Broadway hits with performances by aerialists, contortionists and fire jugglers, Sat 27 July, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

**PRINCESS PICNIC** Three classic

princesses perform songs and dance routines. Photo opportunities also feature, Sun 28 July, Shrewsbury Castle

**JASPER CARROTT WITH SPECIAL GUESTS STRICTLY ABBA** Wed 31 July - Fri 2 Aug, Swan Theatre, Worcester

## Events

**SUMMER FUN: AMAZING OCEANS** Dive into ocean-inspired activities for all the family, Tues 23 - Thurs 25 July, The Commandery, Worcester

**LUNT ROMAN FORT: FABULOUS PHALERAE** Craft glittering Roman medals and take part in a family-friendly battle, Tues 23 July - Thurs 1 Aug, Lunt Roman Fort, Warwickshire

**FALCONRY AT THE CASTLE** See birds of prey demonstrating their incredible acrobatic skills every Tuesday and Thursday, Tues 23 July - Thurs 29 Aug, Sudeley Castle, Cheltenham

**HARVINGTON HISTORY FESTIVAL** A week of talks by renowned historians, authors and broadcasters, Wed 24 - Sun 28 July, Harvington Hall, Kidderminster

**KNIGHT SCHOOL** Dress up and join the fun every Wednesday and Thursday throughout the summer, Wed 24 July - Thurs 29 Aug, Sudeley Castle, Cheltenham

**THE BEACH** Featuring sand, decking, deck chairs, children's activities, refreshments and more, Wed 24 July - Sun 1 Sept, Lichfield Cathedral

**WOLVERHAMPTON CAMRA SUMMER FESTIVAL OF BEER & CIDER** Featuring a selection of real ales, cider and perry, Thurs 25 - Sat 27 July, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

**EVENING SOUND BATHS** Relax under the trees with a variety of sounds and instruments, including gongs, crystal bowls, drums and chimes, Fri 26 July, Baddesley Clinton, Warwickshire

**MADE ON THE BORDERS: HOMEMADE SUMMER FESTIVAL** Event supporting local crafters and makers, Fri 26 July, British Ironwork Centre, Oswestry, North Shropshire

**MUSEUM AFTER HOURS: DINOSAUR ROCK** Evening of music and cocktails to celebrate the Dinosaurs On The Doorstep exhibition, Fri 26 July, Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

**DINO DISCOVERY** Join the team of intrepid Dino Rangers as they search for the lost dinosaurs, Fri 26 July - Thurs 5 Sept, Lower Drayton Farm, Staffordshire

**FESTIVAL OF ARCHAEOLOGY** Local historical and archaeological societies and groups talk to the public about their work, Sat 27 July, Coalbrookdale Museum of Iron, Ironbridge, Shropshire

**THE SPICE TRAIN** Enjoy a curry while



Three Counties Food & Drink Festival - Three Counties Showground, Malvern

travelling on the Severn Valley Railway, Sat 27 July, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

**OXFORD BEARD FESTIVAL** Featuring 'larger-than-life' competitions celebrating all aspects of facial hair, Sat 27 July, FarGo Village, Coventry

**WELLINGTON GREEN FESTIVAL** A chance to meet local green organisations, traders and community groups, Sat 27 July, Market Square, Wellington, Shropshire

**STOURBRIDGE PRIDE** Featuring drag, comedy and music, Sat 27 July, Katie Fitzgeralds, Stourbridge

**KIDDERMINSTER STATION 40TH ANNIVERSARY** Celebratory weekend of attractions, including vintage vehicles and model railways, Sat 27 - Sun 28 July, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

**THREE COUNTIES FOOD & DRINK FESTIVAL** Featuring more than 160 local traders, Sat 27 - Sun 28 July, Three Counties Showground, Malvern

**TITANIC EXHIBITION: BIRMINGHAM** Exhibition exploring the story of the Titanic and featuring remarkable footage of the wreckage and real objects and interesting artefacts recovered from the seabed, Sat 27 July - Sun 25 Aug, NEC, Birmingham

**DRAGON TAMERS SURVIVAL SCHOOL** Find out about the mythical beasts as you are guided through the castle, Sat 27 July - Sun 1 Sept, Tamworth Castle

**CREATIVE OPEN DAY** A morning of arts & crafts, plus a behind-the-scenes tour of the theatre, Sun 28 July, Swan Theatre, Worcester

**BURTON ALBION FAMILY FUN DAY** Watch live horse racing while your kids enjoy a wide range of family entertainment, Sun 28 July, Uttoxeter Racecourse, Staffordshire

**MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITION** Featuring layouts, trade stands and demonstrations, Sun 28 July, Telford Steam Railway, Shropshire

**JAGUAR SUMMER FESTIVAL** Featuring

over 1,100 Jaguars in the museum grounds, Sun 28 July, British Motor Museum, Gaydon

**BUBBLE HEAVEN** Bubble-based outdoor entertainment, Sun 28 July, Compton Verney, Warwickshire

**WILDPLAY** Featuring the mud kitchen, bug hunting, den building and rope trails, Sun 28 July - Thurs 1 Aug, Eastnor Castle, Herefordshire

**SUDELEY'S 70S SUNDAYS** Take part in a series of 'groovy 1970s activities' every Sunday throughout the summer holidays, Sun 28 July - Sun 1 Sept, Sudeley Castle, Cheltenham

**HALESOWEN BOSTIN BLACK COUNTRY BEACH** Enjoy 'seaside' fun as Halesowen's beach returns, Mon 29 July - Sat 10 Aug, Somer's Square, Halesowen

**STEAM POWERED ADVENTURE** Featuring activities, tabletop and oversized games combining science and history, Tues 30 - Wed 31 July, Churnet Valley Railway, Staffordshire

**SUMMER FUN: MEDIEVAL QUEST** Leap back to medieval times with all the family, Tues 30 - Wed 31 July, The Commandery, Worcester

**BESIDE THE SEA - SUMMER HOLIDAY CRAFTS** Holiday-themed crafts. Decorate a lighthouse, create a seagull puppet and make a kite, Tues 30 July - Thurs 1 Aug, Hartlebury Castle, Worcestershire

**A WIZARD'S BIRTHDAY IN BRIDGNORTH** An immersive and town-wide event to celebrate Harry Potter's birthday, Wed 31 July, Bridgnorth, Shropshire

## Festivals

**WARWICK FOLK FESTIVAL** Line-up includes, The Unthanks, Oysterband & Breabach, Thurs 25 - Sun 28 July, Warwick Castle

**TRUCK FESTIVAL** Line-up includes, Jamie T, Wet Leg & The Streets, Fri 26 - Sun 28 July, Hill Farm, Steventon, Oxfordshire



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### Win! A family ticket to Thinktank!

Located in the heart of Birmingham, Thinktank offers a great day out for visitors of all ages. From steam engines and talking robots, to gurgling guts and a chocolate-wrapping machine, the venue features more than 200 hands-on science & technology displays...

We are offering one lucky reader the chance to win a family ticket to visit the attraction this summer.

**Competition closes Friday 16 August**



### Win! A family ticket to the British Motor Museum!

The British Motor Museum is home to the world's largest collection of historic British cars. Visitors can learn about the people behind the vehicles, with free tours and interactive family activities bringing their stories to life.

We are offering one lucky reader the chance to win a family ticket to visit the attraction this summer.

**Competition closes Friday 9 August**



### Win! Two tickets to see The Merry Wives Of Windsor!

Curtains are twitching and tongues are wagging in this fresh new production of Shakespeare's suburban comedy, showing at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon until Saturday 7 September...

We have two tickets to give away to see the Saturday 17 August matinee performance of the show...

**Competition closes Monday 5 August**



### Win! A family ticket to see Peppa Pig's Fun Day Out!

Packed full of singing and dancing (and muddy puddles!), Peppa Pig's Fun Day Out guarantees giggles and snorts for all Peppa fans - and provides a perfect introduction to theatre for your little ones.

We have a family ticket (4 tickets) to give away for this oinktastic stage show when it stops off at The Alexandra, Birmingham, on Wednesday 31 July.

**Competition closes Friday 19 July**

For your chance to WIN! with What's On, visit:  
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