

Wolverhampton & Black Country

ISSUE 458 MARCH 2025

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inside:

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the National Theatre's War Horse visits the Grand



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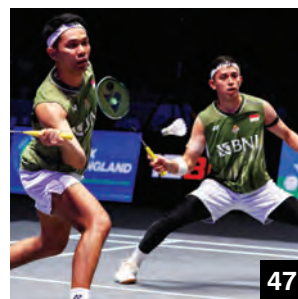
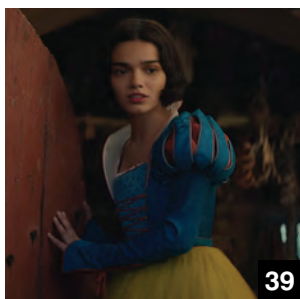
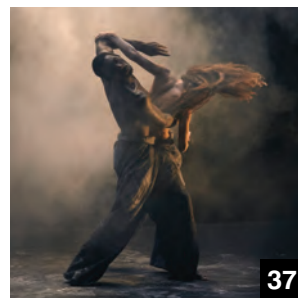
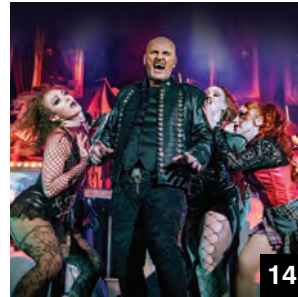


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What's On

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RSC announces Big Friendly Giant of a show!

Roald Dahl's Big Friendly Giant will be spending his Christmas in Stratford-upon-Avon!

A Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), Chichester Festival Theatre and Roald Dahl Story Company production of The BFG will show at the town's Royal Shakespeare Theatre from Tuesday 25 November to Saturday 31 January 2026.

The production is one of many highlights in the RSC's programme for the remainder of 2025. Other stand-out shows include the late Sarah Kane's 4.48 Psychosis and Hamlet Hail To The Chief, a show that sees Shakespeare's greatest tragedy and Radiohead's seminal album collide.

To check out everything happening at the Royal Shakespeare Company across the next few months, visit rsc.org.uk

Judge Jules to serve time in Shrewsbury prison

Judge Jules is spending Easter Sunday 'incarcerated in Shropshire'.

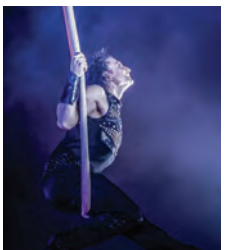
The legendary DJ, producer & promoter will be heading up a nine-hour showcase of house, trance, drum & bass and UKGA at Shrewsbury Prison on Sunday 20 April.

Further information and tickets are available at skiddle.com



Contemporary circus at Albrighton Garden Centre

A contemporary-style circus is set to delight Midlands families when it pitches up at Albrighton Garden Centre across the Easter holiday (Saturday 12 - Sunday 27 April). Featuring 'laughter-filled clowns, death-defying acrobats, breathtaking jugglers and awesome contortionists', Cirquoise is promising 'a dazzling combination of high-energy, jaw-dropping talent, an electric atmosphere and an unforgettable experience'.



Tickets on sale for Air Ambulance's Bike4Life

Tickets are now on sale for Midlands Air Ambulance Charity's ever-popular Bike4Life event.

The Ride Out, which starts from Meole Brace in Shrewsbury and travels along the M54 to Weston Park in Shifnal, will take place on Sunday 20 July. Tickets can be bought at bike4lifefest.com



Mayo and Lederer at Lichfield literature event

Broadcaster Simon Mayo and comedian Helen Lederer are among the well-known names making a contribution to this month's Lichfield Literature Festival.

The annual celebration of the written word runs at various venues across the city from Thursday 27 to Sunday 30 March. To find out more and book tickets, visit lichfieldfestival.org



Campaign to showcase Midlands filming spots

West Midlands venues and locations which have appeared in film and on television are to be showcased as part of a new multi-year global campaign by national tourism agency VisitBritain.

Taking the title Starring GREAT Britain, the campaign capitalises on the growing travel trend known as 'set jetting', which sees tourists visiting locations they have seen in movies and on TV.

To mark the new campaign, a tourist guide featuring the region's best known and most under-the-radar filming locations has been launched. To read A Guide To Filming Locations In The West Midlands, log on to visitbirmingham.com/inspire-me/recommended-for/film-tv-buffs



A summertime Ludlow Castle date for Jess...

Multi-platinum-selling BRIT Award winner Jess Glynne will be taking to the Ludlow Castle stage on Sunday 27 July for an outdoor show as part of the venue's summer series. Tickets can be purchased by visiting the website futuresound.seetickets.com

Symphony Hall date for Tony...

Tony Hadley is bringing his Christmas Big Band Tour to Birmingham's Symphony Hall on Wednesday 17 December. The show will see the former Spandau Ballet star performing a selection of timeless jazz standards and swing anthems. He will also be reworking 1980s classics such as True, Gold and Through The Barricades. To find out more and book your seat, visit MyTicket.co.uk



Benedict Shaw to star as Hamlet

Emmerdale and The Syndicate actor Benedict Shaw will take the title role in Shakespeare's most famous play this summer. Benedict will head up the cast of the Stafford Shakespeare production of Hamlet at the town's Gatehouse Theatre. The show runs at the venue from Tuesday 24 June to Saturday 5 July. To buy tickets, visit the website gatehousetheatre.co.uk



Beverley to raise the roof back home in Wolverhampton

Wolverhampton's Queen of Soul, Beverley Knight, is returning to her home city this spring. The award-winning singer & actress will be treading the boards at the Grand Theatre in late May (Tuesday the 27th to Saturday the 31st) when she stars in Marie & Rosetta.

A 'roof-raising play with music', the show tells the true story of American singer-songwriter Rosetta Tharpe and her protégé, Marie Knight. More information and tickets are available by visiting the venue's website: grandtheatre.co.uk



Popular Podcast in the Potteries

Following two sell-out tours of their Two Pints podcast, Will Mellor and Ralf Little are hitting the road again in the autumn and paying a visit to the Potteries. The duo will bring their November Nonsense: Two Pints Podcast Live tour to Stoke-on-Trent's Regent Theatre on Saturday 22 November. Tickets for the show are available to buy at atgtickets.com/stoke

BRB unveils new season of shows

Birmingham Royal Ballet's (BRB) critically acclaimed homage to the music of Black Sabbath will return to the city in the autumn. Featuring eight of the heavy metal band's best-loved songs, Black Sabbath: The Ballet shows at Birmingham Hippodrome from Thursday 18 to Saturday 27 September. Later-season highlights in BRB's 2025/26 programme of shows include Carlos Acosta's production of Don Quixote and a celebration of Nutcracker choreographer Sir Peter Wright, to mark his 100th year... To check out all of BRB's productions, visit the company's website: brb.org.uk



Harper Lee's Mockingbird coming to the Midlands

The critically acclaimed stage adaptation of Harper Lee's *To Kill A Mockingbird* will stop off at Birmingham Hippodrome next year (Monday 14 - Friday 18 April 2026). The acclaimed courtroom drama visits the venue as part of a UK & Ireland tour. Tickets for the play can be purchased at birminghamhippodrome.com

Church concert to mark International Piano Day

Shrewsbury Unitarian Church is to host two 'exceptional' female artists in celebration of International Piano Day at the end of this month (Saturday 29 March). An Exploration Of Harp & Piano will see Polish-born harpist & pianist Marysia Osu and Estonian ambient composer Hanakiv delivering a unique blend of classical, ambient and electronic music. Tickets to the event are available by visiting skiddle.com

Young poets unveiled at Midlands literary festival

Wolverhampton's Young Poet Laureate and Primary Poet Champion were officially unveiled at last month's Wolverhampton Literature Festival.



Young Poet Laureate Agneta Krieva, from Ormiston SWB Academy, and Primary Poet Champion Florence Ehigie, from SS Mary & John's Primary Academy, were chosen from dozens of budding poets after winning a competition organised by Wolverhampton's library service.

Janice's Barbara to visit Wolverhampton venue

Janice Connolly is bringing her much-loved comedy character, Mrs Barbara Nice, to Wolverhampton next month. Janice will stop off at the city's Newhampton Arts Centre on Saturday 26 April. To purchase tickets for the show, visit the website at mrsbarbaranice.com



Inspiring Everyone at RAF Museum Midlands

The Royal Air Force Museum has been awarded a £650,000 grant from research & education charity the Wolfson Foundation to fund its Inspiring Everyone initiative. The ambitious project will deliver a transformation of the Museum's Cosford site and a major regional engagement

programme, highlights of which will include a new immersive exhibition, a learning centre and a purpose-built collections hub. To find out more about the redevelopment project and how you can get involved, visit rafmuseum.org/midlands

New Oswestry festival to celebrate Great War hero

Oswestry's Hermon Chapel is this month hosting the first Wilfred Owen Festival. A celebration of the famous World War One poet & soldier, who hailed from the town, the event will include a screening of the film *Journey's End* on Wednesday 19 March.

Wolverhampton date for spaceman Tim Peake

British astronaut Tim Peake 'will bring the awe and wonder of space travel past, present and future' to Wolverhampton this autumn, when his latest touring show blasts off across the country. *Astronauts: The Quest To Explore Space* sees Tim sharing extraordinary archive footage and 'celebrating the historic human endeavour of space exploration'. The show stops off at the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre on Monday 29 September. Tickets are available from nothird.co.uk

Shropshire initiative for young film enthusiasts

A quartet of Shropshire's independent cinemas - Wem Town Hall, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, Wellington Orbit and The Old Market Hall in Shrewsbury - are launching a new initiative which will offer young film fans aged between 15 and 19 the

chance to choose and put on a film across all four venues this summer. Supported by the British Film Institute, Shropshire Young Curators will see the selected young people gain hands-on experience in film selection, event planning and audience engagement... Anybody interested in applying must do so before the deadline on Wednesday 5 March. To find out more, email info@wemtownhall.co.uk

Final headliners revealed for At Trentham event

Jax Jones and The House & Garage Orchestra (pictured) will co-headline the Saturday of brand-new concert series At Trentham. The three-day event - taking place at Trentham Gardens from Thursday 29 to Saturday 31 May - forms part of the Stoke 100 celebrations, a year-long programme marking the centenary of Stoke-on-Trent being granted city status by King George V. The Wombats will headline the Thursday night, with Ocean Colour Scene stepping into the spotlight on the Friday. To find out more and purchase tickets, visit the website: trentham.co.uk



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15 Mar | Town Hall



Fastlove: The Tribute to
George Michael
22 Mar | Symphony Hall



Kimichi Symphony Orchestra
& Kimichi Ballet: Spring into
Stravinsky 23 Mar | Symphony Hall



Tom Walker By Candlelight
24 Mar | Town Hall



Matt Goss: The Hits & More
25 Mar | Symphony Hall



How To Train Your Dragon: In
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28 Mar | Symphony Hall



Vasily Petrenko & the
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
29 Mar | Symphony Hall

bmusic.co.uk

Great Nights Out
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Late Nights dates at award-winning market

The Market Hall Shrewsbury has been named Britain's Favourite Market for a record-breaking fourth time.

The poll is organised each year by the National Association of British Market Authorities as part of the Great British Market Awards.

Big congratulations to everybody connected with the unprecedented success! Meanwhile, the venue's popular Late Nights initiative - which sees the market's cafes & bars staying open until 10pm - returns on the first Saturday of this month, so make a date in your diary for the 1st of March. Further Late Nights will be held on the following Saturdays: 5 April, 3 May, 6 September, 1 November and 6 December... For more details, visit shrewsburymarkethall.co.uk



On your marks for AJ Bell Great Birmingham Run!

The AJ Bell Great Birmingham Run returns in early May (Sunday the 4th).

Featuring a city-centre 10k and half marathon, the event starts in Centenary Square and will see participants passing some of Birmingham's most iconic landmarks en route to the finishing line in Smithfield. To find out more about the race - and the junior & mini versions - visit the event's website at greatrun.org

Registration now open for charity's ColourFest runs

Shropshire and Mid Wales' primary cancer charity, Lingen Davies Cancer Fund, is aiming to raise money by organising three 5K colour runs on the same day in May. The trio of ColourFest events will take place on the 17th of the month at Sansaw Estate in Hadnall, Apley Farm Shop near Shifnal, and Meadow Springs Country & Leisure Park in Caersws.

To take part in any of the runs, participants must pre-register through the charity's website. The entry fee includes a t-shirt, sunglasses, and a unique finisher's medal.



English Youth Ballet brings Coppelia to Shrewsbury

The critically acclaimed English Youth Ballet is bringing its production of Coppelia to Shrewsbury's Theatre Severn next month. The 'colourful production' sees local up-and-coming young talent perform alongside

international principal artists.

Coppelia stops off in Shrewsbury on Friday 25 & Saturday 26 April.

For more information and to purchase your seat, visit theatresevern.co.uk

Whitchurch Food & Drink Festival to return in May

Whitchurch Food & Drink Festival will return this spring for the first time since before the Covid pandemic.

Taking place on Saturday 24 May and featuring around 60 exhibitors, performances by local bands, cookery demonstrations and a special kids' area, the free-to-attend event is being co-organised by the town council and Shropshire Festivals. For further information, visit the website at whitchurchfoodanddrinkfestival.co.uk

Alan Surtees Trust opens 2025 round of funding

A trust that provides grants to musicians, dancers, singers and performers whose work is rooted in folk and traditional music & arts, has opened its 2025 round of funding.



Anyone aged between 16 and 30 can apply for one of four grants, of up to £2,000, from the Alan Surtees Trust, which was set up in 2017 in memory of the co-founder & director of Shrewsbury Folk Festival.

The closing date for applications is Wednesday 30 April. To find out more about the funding, including how to apply, visit the website at alansurteestrust.org.uk

Art gallery to showcase Rhea Storr installation

A brand-new installation goes on show at Wolverhampton Art Gallery this month (Saturday 8 March).

Created by artist Rhea Storr, Subjects Of State, Labours Of Love is a two-part film which 'forms an intimate portrait of Caribbean Associations in Wolverhampton from the 1980s onwards, and present-day Sheffield African & Caribbean Community Association SADACCA'. The work is available to view until Sunday 8 June. To find out more, visit wolverhamptonart.org.uk

Howzat! T20 Vitality Blast back in the Midlands

Howzat! Cricket fans will be delighted to know that the T20 Vitality Blast competition is returning to Birmingham's



Edgbaston Stadium this spring and summer. Home side Bears will host nine matchdays from May to July, with six double-headers (including the new MidlandsMania men's showpiece event, featuring international DJ Joel Corry and the big Bears v Pears local derby). To find out more about cricket at Edgbaston, and to book your seat(s), visit tickets.edgbaston.com

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Opera International's award-winning

Ellen Kent: Madama Butterfly

Fri 4 Apr



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Nikita Kuzmin – Midnight Dancer

Fri 2 May



Let's do the Time Warp again!

The Rocky Horror Show

Mon 5 – Sat 10 May

Victoria Hall



Cinematic nostalgia

Gareth Gates Sings Love Songs From The Movies

Thu 6 Mar



High-energy, high-octane, and hyper-active!

Russell Kane: HyperActive

Sat 8 Mar



A live vocal, drag-stravaganza

QUEENZ: Drag Me To The Disco!

Thu 13 Mar



Matter Does Not Define tour

The Lathums

Mon 17 Mar

FIT FOR A KING

Director Daniel Raggett talks about his new RSC production of Edward II...



Christopher Marlowe's most controversial play, about the ill-fated reign of Edward II, has returned to a Royal Shakespeare Company stage for the first time in 35 years. Director Daniel Raggett tells What's On why he jumped at the chance to breathe new life into the little-known 16th-century work...

First performed in 1592, Edward II - or, to give it its original wordy title, The Troublesome Reign And Lamentable Death Of Edward The Second, King Of England, With The Tragical Fall Of Proud Mortimer - is one of the earliest English history plays.

Written by Shakespeare contemporary Christopher Marlowe, and regarded as a major influence on the Bard's Richard II, it tells the tale of King Edward II, who was widely regarded as one of the worst monarchs in history and violently removed from office by an establishment that refused to accept a gay king.

But why was he considered such a bad ruler, and how much of the public's perception was influenced or prejudiced by his homosexuality? Both questions are at the heart of director Daniel Raggett's new production - but he's not planning on providing any explanations.

"It's about complicating the question," he says. "Maybe he's not allowed the chance to govern properly because people decide that, because he's gay, he's not fit for that office. Or maybe he's just a terrible king. And maybe it's quite complicated to sit in the audience and go 'What exactly am I upset about the most?' I want that question to be alive, but not in a simple way. In a complicated way."

But you won't be answering it?

"No, because I think that's where you tip over into being didactic, and I'd rather just open up the question and leave it for the audience to discuss."

Thankfully, Daniel is more forthcoming about the rationale for revisiting the play, and why the lengthy time gap since it was last on a Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) stage means he can effectively do what he wants with it, since most people won't remember the previous version.

"We're doing a scene-for-scene, move-for-move remake of the Simon Russell Beale production from 1990," he deadpans, before quickly confirming he's pulling my leg.

"I can be quite dry, and a lot of people don't know when I'm joking! I'll say things to the actors like 'Right, we're now going to do it all in Spanish accents,' and then they start. I'm like 'Come on, guys!'"

It might not be performed in Spanish brogue,

but one of the ways Daniel is putting his stamp on the play - which is the longest Marlowe wrote - is by making radical cuts to the script, to bring it down to the length of a typical movie.

Or at least that was the plan...

"I came in with all these ideas, and then the first week we started, these improvisations - and all the stuff that came out of that - is now somehow incorporated in the show. It's incredible. Plays aren't meant to be read; they're meant to be seen in 3D, in the flesh, and as soon as you see the actors, you think 'Actually, that's brilliant, I want more of that.'"

So it's now four hours long?

"Yeah, yeah, yeah... and with three intervals! No, I'm hoping we'll still be able to keep it as a short, sharp shock. It was quite radically cut and rearranged, but it still holds true to Marlowe's text and original impulses."

Putting on a lesser-known play at the home of the Bard is another element that excites the director, not least because it creates a different dynamic within the audience.

"Shakespeare wrote, what, 38 plays? And we do them again and again and again. We've all seen the plays, and everybody walks into the theatre with a pre-conception or decision about the show. That can be really exciting, but why not come and see an Elizabethan play by a contemporary of Shakespeare but totally different?

"It's exciting to discover something new from that period, and also to discover how political and anti-establishment Marlowe was. He's a lot of fun. He was sat there at the same time as Shakespeare, writing about a gay king. That's the fun thing to uncover. And I think that can sit very well alongside going to see Hamlet for the 14th time - which I definitely will do."

That last comment is sure to go down well with the RSC's Co-Artistic Director Daniel Evans, who offered Daniel R the chance to direct for the company and has collaborated with him on the play. And Daniel E will also be playing the part of Edward, marking his first time on stage in a full acting role for 14 years. So what tempted him back - and, more importantly, will he get paid an actor's wage on top of his normal one?

"I've never asked, but I should do!" laughs Daniel R. "He still has an actor's agent!

"I can't remember where [the idea of him acting again] came from, but we were just joking around about parts that he'd quite like to play. We narrowed it down to two, and I really liked the idea of him playing a king when he'd just taken over as 'king', along with Tamara Harvey [the other co-artistic director], of the RSC. That just seemed to fit. "So it came about as a happy accident. But then, when we started digging into the play and what it's about and what makes good leadership - cos he's a brilliant leader - and the idea of homosexuality in leadership, it just seemed really right.

"I think he's enjoying being part of a company again, and being on the shop floor of the RSC."

The director says the pair have also been enjoying looking at the 400-year-old play through a contemporary lens.

"Our starting point was that we supposedly live in some of the most liberal and open and permissive times, but what would happen if Charles passed away, William took the throne and turned round and said: 'You know what, although I've been married to Katherine, there's a guy called Colin, and he's my real queen, or my real king.' What would happen then?"

"It's not that the play is set in a modern world of mobile phones, but it's just making sure that what we're doing is plugging into these very pertinent questions about the world we live in now, as things move back towards the right, in inverted commas, and traditional values.

"Edward II's not very well known, but it's a great play. It's got the propulsion of a thriller, and it's quick and sharp and very violent. And then it's got a very provocative thing at the centre, which is this love story between two men. There's a lot of fun to play with."

.....
Edward II shows at the RSC's Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon until Saturday 5 April

ENTERTAINMENT CANNOCK CHASE at the PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE

MARCH

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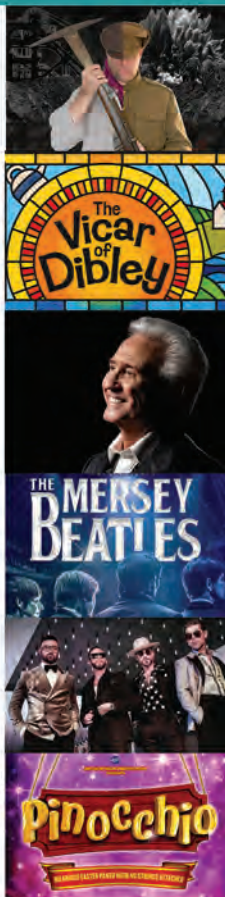
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THE OVERTONES

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Thursday 13 March



MILTON JONES

Mock the Week and Live at the Apollo star with a whole new show of daftness
Friday 14 March



JOHN POWER

Cast, The La's, and Me - an intimate evening with the brilliant singer-songwriter
Friday 14 March



PAUL MERSON

Discussing the highs and lows of his colourful life story with host Perry Groves
Tuesday 18 March



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Leave your 9 to 5 worries at the door and enjoy a night of great country classics
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Live music from across the region...

The Shires

Stafford Gatehouse, Fri 28 March

British duo Crissie Rhodes and Ben Earle combine the classic pop-rock drive of Fleetwood Mac with the uplifting singalong anthems of The Lumineers.

The duo formed after Ben appealed on Facebook for a female country singer to work with him. Crissie - a friend of a friend - replied to his message, and when the pair met up the very next day, they discovered that they had an instant chemistry.

Their Stafford stop-off comes as part of latest tour The Two Of Us.



The Rosie Hood Band

Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton, Sat 15 March

Forming in 2022 and featuring two Rosies (Hood and Butler-Hall) and a pair of Rochdale musicians (Nicola Beazley and Robyn Wallace), this all-female four-piece have been hailed for producing an inimitable sound which manages to stay rooted in tradition while simultaneously bursting with contemporary appeal.

As the band's name makes clear, the quartet's guiding light is Rosie Hood, a former BBC Performing Arts Fellow and Horizon Folk Award nominee. Taking as her subject matter nature, human struggle, women's voices and unheard stories, Rosie boasts a remarkable talent for interpreting traditional songs with a real dynamism and honesty.



Wille And The Bandits

St Mary's Church, Shrewsbury, Thurs 6 March

Counting blues, rock, Latin and folk among the styles of music they play, the Cornwall-based Wille And The Bandits have toured their huge and eclectic sound with the likes of Deep Purple, Joe Bonamassa, The John Butler Trio and Status Quo. They've also

made their mark on the UK blues charts, performed at the London Olympics and played countless sets at major music festivals, including Glastonbury and Green Man.

"Describing our music is always hard," says frontman Wille Edwards. "We get compared to all sorts of artists, so it's maybe best if people make up their own minds."

Juan Martin

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sat 15 March

In the world of flamenco guitar playing, Juan Martin is a colossus, performing in a highly distinctive compositional style that sees him blending the traditional and the modern to excellent effect.

"It doesn't matter whether it's flamenco or art or jazz," explains Juan, "the fact is that there are certain things that touch people, that connect with them and which can move an audience. Even if you're not playing at quite your best, it's important to make that connection; to touch them so that they can go away with a memory to treasure."

The Lathums

Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Mon 17 March; O2 Academy, Birmingham, Thurs 20 March

Although routinely compared with The Smiths and Arctic Monkeys, Wigan four-piece The Lathums are securing their much-deserved place in the sun entirely on their own merit, garnering plenty of praise both for their studio-based output and their infectiously energetic live shows.

The indie rockers visit the Potteries in support of third album Matter Does Not Define, single releases from which attracted significant critical acclaim last year.

Matt Goss

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Tues 25 March; The Civic at The Halls Wolverhampton, Thurs 27 March

"Trust me," says Matt Goss in publicising his Midlands' performances, "what I've learnt over the years being on countless stages around the world, this will be your best night of the year!"

Having risen to fame many a moon ago in the company of his twin brother, Luke - from whom he says he is now completely estranged - Matt is stopping off at The Civic at The Halls to perform an evening's-worth of tunes from across the decades.



USING HIS LOAF

**Steve Steinman's Eternal Love The Musical
makes its Midlands debut...**



Steve Steinman has gone from impersonating Meat Loaf as a party piece to producing, writing and starring in a trilogy of bestselling rock musicals. It's been a (bat out of) hell of a ride, as he recently explained to What's On...

Just over 30 years ago, restaurateur Steve Murray got up and sang a Meat Loaf tune with a covers band that was playing at his family's hotel in Saddleworth, near Oldham. Three decades later, the self-confessed entrepreneur runs his own production company, putting on elaborate - and hugely successful - rock musicals that he also writes and stars in. It's a career move he never expected, and one which would almost certainly never have happened if a member of the tribute act hadn't hit 'record' on his camera during Steve's impromptu performance.

"I wasn't a singer in the band or anything," recalls Steve in a broad Mancunian accent. "I was running the restaurant, but I'd get up with bands who were playing dinner dances and that kind of thing."

The band member sent the tape in to TV talent show *Stars In Their Eyes*, and a phone call from the series' production company changed Steve's life forever.

After initially thinking going on the show would be good fun, as well as good publicity for the restaurant, it ultimately provided him with a whole new career. And just at the right time, too, as rising costs and all-time-high interest rates battered the hospitality trade. His restaurant was among the casualties.

"I was left high and dry, thinking 'What the hell do I do now?' I'd started singing with a local band, doing a bit of gigging as a bit of a joke, so I took that to the next level, and it's been that career ever since."

And it's been some career, too. He might not have won *Stars In Their Eyes*, but he's arguably its most successful contestant. Changing his name to Steve Steinman - after Jim Steinman, the writer of so many of Meat Loaf's biggest hits - he initially found his niche as a Meat Loaf tribute act, touring the world in shows such as *Anything For Love: The Meat Loaf Story*.

"I was never a big music fan as such," Steve admits. "I was just a normal lad who bought *Bat Out Of Hell* when I was about 17." He also owned albums by the likes of Bon Jovi and Queen - "just usual stuff" - always preferring rock to pop or soul music.

"I like a storytelling song, and that's where

Meat Loaf came in. Jim Steinman wrote some great stuff, and his songs suited my voice. When I did the Meat Loaf show, it just suited me, and I did the dressing up and all that. But now people come to see Steve Steinman, cos of the way I speak, have a joke and have fun on stage... it's not about me being Meat Loaf anymore."

Steve hasn't given up performing as Meat Loaf, but for the past 25 years he's also been starring as Baron Von Rockula in *Vampires Rock*, a trilogy of colourful rock musicals featuring music by the likes of Journey, Guns N' Roses, Europe and Foreigner. Steve also writes and produces the shows, and while he admits the first "was more of a concert than a musical", it was nevertheless a massive hit. Playing to arenas all over the world, it even featured guest stars Toyah Willcox (who performed in more than 200 shows) and Twisted Sister guitarist Eddie Ojeda.

Second instalment *The Ghost Train* continued in the same vein - comedy and horror with more monster rock tunes - but *Eternal Love*, this year's third and final part, is a whole new, and potentially risky, beast. Risky because it's the first show to jettison the safety net of well-known rock standards in favour of entirely original songs.

"Jukebox musicals have become the bread & butter of musical theatre, and my *Vampires Rock* franchise has benefitted immensely from their popularity. But where's the creativity in that? *Eternal Love* is a first for 21st-century musicals - it features an original storyline and an original score, performed by an original cast."

The opportunity to do something original was partly prompted by the Covid pandemic. "We were in lockdown, and I'd got a few songwriters sending me demos. I'd never really bothered with original songs, as I never really had the time. Lockdown gave me the time. I started listening to these songs, and I thought, you know what, I'm gonna do me own album, cos there's some brilliant stuff here."

The move led to him releasing two successful solo LPs (*Heaven's Gate* and *Take A Leap Of Faith*), as well as putting songs together for *Eternal Love*. This time, though, they were able to fit to a narrative, rather than the other

way round.

"I could put a bit more story in, and have the songs tie in with that story. Not every song was written for the musical - I'd already released an album, but nine or 10 of the songs (out of 20) were written to go in this musical."

In another unusual move, a cast recording of *Eternal Love* was released before the show premiered in January. Its success - it went to number one on the rock charts of both Amazon and iTunes, and number 40 in the Official UK Charts - brings other benefits, according to Steve.

"The idea was to get the fans into it, so that they know the songs and are singing them back at me. Also, if they bought the album and like the songs, they're definitely gonna come and see the show."

As for those who are unfamiliar with previous *Vampire Rock* productions, Steve says that although *Eternal Love* features the same characters, it can be enjoyed as a standalone offering, complete with its own unique storyline, humour and appeal. He also thinks the show is great for people who don't normally enjoy musicals.

"I would say that if you're not a fan of musicals, or don't think you're a fan, then this is probably the musical that will turn you into a fan."

"It's a rollercoaster of emotions and amazing songs. It goes from looking like something from a horror film, then like *Grease The Musical* when it's all poppy, and then into real rock - like a rock concert happening right in front of you. Then there's a love story, and a *Phantom Of The Opera*-type element. It's really got everything."

"And if you haven't heard the music before coming, you'll be buying the CD on the way out, I'm telling you."

.....

Vampire's Rock *Eternal Love* The Musical shows at Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, from Thursday 6 to Saturday 8 March, and The Alexandra, Birmingham, on Thursday 27 March

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Classical music from across the region...



Halle Orchestra: Bonnie Scotland

Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Fri 14 March

Admired around the world for their extensive orchestral repertoire, the Manchester-based Hallé here turn their attention north of the border, presenting Bruch's Scottish Fantasy - a work solely based on wholly authentic Scottish melodies - and Mendelssohn's Scottish Symphony - a much-loved piece that deposits its listeners in the mists of the

Highlands.

The concert begins with one of Edward Elgar's most popular compositions, Serenade for Strings.

Hallé Assistant Conductor Euan Shields - winner of the Siemens Hallé International Conducting Competition 2023 - is the man at the helm. The soloist is Berlin-based Chinese violinist Ning Feng (pictured).

Ex Cathedra: Latin American Baroque - Ritual 1631

Birmingham Town Hall, Sun 9 March

Ex Cathedra's latest concert sees them presenting a glorious fusion of musical styles from Africa, the Americas and Europe. "Ritual 1631," explains the ensemble's founder, Jeffrey Skidmore, "revisits the vivid colours, the fire and passion of Latin American Baroque music..."

"The haunting mantra of the Inca hymn Hanac pachap cussicuinin - published in 1631 - provides the heartbeat that binds the narrative together."



Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra

Wolverhampton Grammar School, Sat 22 March

Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra (WSO) has been in the news recently, having been shortlisted in the 'Award for



Inspiration' category of the Royal Philharmonic Society Awards 2025. The nomination came as a result of WSO's ongoing work with Wolverhampton Music Service and the city's children and young people. The orchestra will find out if they've won the coveted gong on the 6th of the month, so will hopefully be in celebratory mood when they perform this first concert of 2025. The evening's programme features works by Beethoven, Haydn, Mozart and Mendelssohn.

Alis Huws Harp Concert

Festival Drayton Centre, Market Drayton, North Shropshire, Sun 23 March

Former Official Royal Harpist Alis Huws performed at King Charles' coronation in Westminster Abbey two years ago and last year featured on



Classic FM's list of 30 'rising stars' under the age of 30 (she leaves her 20s behind her on the 2nd of next month).

Alis' Market Drayton concert forms part of the Shropshire Music 2024/25 season and features, among other more-modern pieces, compositions by Debussy, Britten and Bach.

Kyan Quartet

Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire, Wed 19 March

Bringing together musicians from the United Kingdom, the US, China and France, the Kyan Quartet is five years old, bursting with talent, and equally at home playing in international concert halls or community settings such as primary schools and care homes.

With a repertoire that features not only classical but also contemporary and folk music, they appear in Ludlow as part of the Assembly Rooms' Wednesday Concert Series. The programme includes works by Haydn, Debussy, Shostakovich and Soviet-Russian composer Sofia Gubaidulina.

London Concertante: The Four Seasons

Shrewsbury Abbey, Sun 9 March

While it's a given that they take the business of musicmaking extremely seriously, there's certainly nothing stuffy about London Concertante.

Indeed, 50 percent of people who attend a performance by this 34-year-old chamber orchestra are first-time classical music concert-goers - a statistic which speaks volumes for the ensemble's commitment to remaining at all times light-of-touch and refreshingly accessible.

The Concertante here present a candlelit performance of Vivaldi's Four Seasons and Ralph Vaughan Williams' The Lark Ascending.

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Comedy previews from across the region...

Rob Beckett

Birmingham Hippodrome, Thurs 27 - Sat 29 March; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Wed 14 May; Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Sat 17 May; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Fri 21 & Sat 22 November

First tickling the nation's funny bone in 2009, Rob Beckett's TV work includes 8 Out Of 10 Cats and Celebrity Juice. A high-tempo comedian who's been described by one newspaper as 'a little short of a revelation', Rob claims his relationship with comedy began as a youngster...

"I was the middle child and desperate for attention," he explains, "so I decided to try and get it by making my friends and family chuckle - or better still, belly laugh."

Gags include, "You know you're working-class when your TV's bigger than your bookcase," and "My girlfriend worries about me cheating on a night out. I say to her, 'Why would I have a burger when I've got steak at home?' The only problem is, when you're drunk, burgers are well nice."



Jamali Maddix

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Tues 11 March; Glee Club, Birmingham, Tues 25 March; Civic Hall, Wolverhampton, Fri 16 May; Stafford Gatehouse, Wed 21 May; Glee Club, Birmingham, Thurs 5 June

One-time Chortle Student Comedian of the Year Jamali Maddix has been hailed for his frank yet ironic take on everyday racism and his willingness to tackle the hot-potato subject of terrorism.

He visits the Midlands numerous times across the next couple of months with his brand-new touring show, Aston.



Max Amini

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Mon 24 March

Iranian-American comedian Max Amini brings together eccentric impressions and novel storytelling to explore a wide range of topics, in the process poking fun at the quirks

of modern society and highlighting the challenges of navigating cultural differences. No slouch when it comes to improvisation, Max promises a joyride of a show 'that will have you rolling in the aisles from start to finish'.

Milton Jones

Worcester Swan Theatre, Fri 7 March; Malvern Theatres Sun 9 March; Lichfield Garrick, Wed 12 March; Dudley Town Hall, Fri 14 March; New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Sat 15 March; Palace Theatre, Redditch, Sun 16 March; Birmingham Town Hall, Thurs 27 March; Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Thurs 8 May; Lichfield Garrick, Wed 2 July

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 funny-men. "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." 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."

Scott Bennett

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, Thurs 20 March

He may not feature on a list of the UK's best-known comics, but Scott Bennett is very much admired by those who do. So much so, in fact, that he's previously been selected as a support act by stellar laughter merchants Rob Brydon, Jason Manford, John Bishop and Mickey Flanagan. Hailed by fellow comedian Chris Ramsey as 'brilliantly funny and a joy to watch', Scott returns to the Gatehouse with latest show Stuff.



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Comedy previews from across the region...

John Shuttleworth

Birmingham Town Hall, Thurs 6 March;
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sat 22 March &
Wed 12 November

Graham Fellows may have enjoyed early chart success as Jilted John, singing the eminently memorable Gordon Is A Moron, but there's little doubting the character with which he will always be most associated... John Shuttleworth is one of those delightful creations who has become an intrinsic part of the nation's comedy heritage. A pigeon-fancying raconteur-par-excellence with an unusual and off-beam perspective on the world around him, John is never happier than when he's tinkling away on his Yamaha organ. Fellows brings the bespectacled northerner to the Midlands as part of his latest UK tour, Raise The Oof.



Shabaz Ali

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sun 23 March;
Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Thurs 3 April

Introverts beware: Shabaz Ali likes his shows to be truly interactive affairs, with nobody off-limits - and that includes members of the audience! Pop-culture phenomenon and Blackburn chemistry teacher Shabaz has made a name for himself as a social-media personality - his TikTok channel, ShabazSays, boasts millions of devotees. And it's his quick-witted takedowns of some of the internet's most ridiculous crazes that have really helped set him apart from other online commentators. Shabaz's Midlands dates come as part of his first-ever comedy tour.



Mo Gilligan

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry,
Fri 14 March

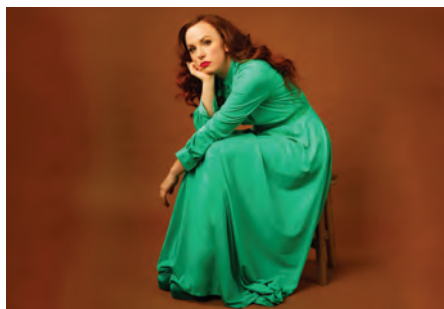
London stand-up Mo Gilligan has enjoyed a meteoric rise to fame and fortune since first coming to wider public attention almost a decade ago. It was back in 2016 that Mo uploaded a video about grime MCs - and fairly quickly thereafter found himself catapulted to celebrity status. Hired by Channel Four to front The Lateish Show and rewarded for his television work with a coveted Bafta gong, Mo admits that his life nowadays feels just a little bit crazy. "I wake up in the morning and think, 'This is nuts!'" admits the 37-year-old. "It's what I'd always dreamt about, and now that it's happened, I'm determined to make the most of it." Mo visits Coventry this month with his latest touring show, In The Moment.



Paul Chowdhry

Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent, Fri 21 March;
Utilita Arena, Birmingham, Sat 31 May

One of the most talented and popular Asian comedians on the UK comedy circuit, Paul Chowdhry has developed a stand-up act which taps into the multicultural diversity of contemporary Britain. His Midlands stop-offs this spring see him presenting latest touring show Englandia, an evening of comedy covering all manner of topical subjects.



Catherine Bohart

Glee Club, Birmingham, Wed 19 March

'The OCD, bisexual offspring of a Catholic deacon', Catherine Bohart's natural enthusiasm ensures excellent rapport with her audience, for whom the Irish comedian seems to have a genuine affection. Her Birmingham appearance this month sees her tackling a wide range of subjects, from death-obsessed parents, to queer reproduction and how adulthood 'frankly, isn't living up to her expectations'. Jokes include: "Lesbian sex is like cricket: it goes on forever and there's a lot of men watching it at home, alone, on the internet."



HORSE PLAY

The National Theatre brings Michael Morpurgo's powerful story back to the Midlands



The National Theatre's award-winning stage adaptation of Michael Morpurgo's 1982 novel, War Horse, makes a welcome return to the Midlands this month. Featuring music, song, and some of the best puppetry you're ever likely to witness, the production tells the powerful story of a young man named Albert and his beloved horse, Joey, as they find themselves caught up in the horrors of the Great War...

The stage play War Horse revolutionised the way theatre used puppetry by creating realistic and life-sized animals and placing them at the centre of the drama. Premiered in 2007, the show, based on the bestselling novel by Michael Morpurgo, tells the story of Albert and his beloved horse Joey - both of whom have to leave behind a farm in Devon for the trenches of World War One.

Adapted by Nick Stafford, the National Theatre production features more than 20 puppets created by South African company Handspring Puppets. These include Joey and fellow horse Topthorn, which are each powered by three people - one in the head, one at the heart and one at the hind.

And while it's no mean feat, being a horse puppeteer is also great fun, says Welsh-born actor Michael Larcombe, who is one of a team of people playing the hind of both Joey and Topthorn, in the current touring production of the show.

"I wanted to be part of the global phenomenon which is War Horse," explains Michael. "I had a little play in the horse in the first audition, and it was just amazing to see the craftsmanship of the puppets and how the horses work. It's just gorgeous."

Michael had previously undertaken puppetry roles in a number of other shows. As well as performing as lemurs and monkeys in Madagascar, he also formed part of the Aslan puppet team in The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe, which showed at Birmingham Rep across Christmas 2023.

War Horse, though, takes things to a whole new level.

"The puppeteers have two weeks of puppetry school before the actors come in for main rehearsals, and there is a lot of learning," recalls Michael who began the tour last summer. "And there's a lot of research into all kinds of things, like the sounds horses make and their different gaits, to make sure the movement is authentic. We also went on a little excursion to the King's Household Cavalry, just outside Hyde Park, and spent a day with the military horses there. We got to observe them and groom them a little bit and

understand more about horses from the military point of view.

"And you can carry on learning. In January, the tour was in Woking, and the place I was living was right next door to a field where there were two horses. So I could observe them and think 'I might try that tonight.'"

The tour has four teams of three puppeteers rotating to play both Joey and Topthorn.

"We all contribute to the personality of the horses. The two horses are very different; they both had very different upbringings. Topthorn was born into the military, so he's had military training. He is used to gunfire and loud noise and those sort of things, so he's a lot more stoic and rigid. That influences how we portray him.

"Joey is a half-thoroughbred/half-draft horse, so has the personality of both. He's bought at auction and then grows up at Albert's farm, where he's used as a riding horse to begin with. Then he's forced into having to plough and work on the farm, which is something you wouldn't expect of that sort of horse, so he has a more rugged upbringing.

"Joey looks up to Topthorn, they become very close, and Joey gets a lot of how to deal with the war noises from him. Joey is a very strong, rambunctious horse, so although he hasn't been around that environment, he settles to it quite quickly because he has to."

Made primarily from cane, aluminium, leather and mesh, the horses are life-sized. Measuring about eight feet in length, they are 10 feet tall and weigh around 40 to 50kg. Although the puppetry roles are physically demanding, Michael says the team receive great support from the tour company.

"They are fantastic. Even as far back as the auditions, they gave us a physiotherapy session to make sure there was nothing that would cause any issues using the horses.

Then, being cast in it, we use a physiotherapy company we are affiliated with, and they give us all an individualised plan. We are really well looked after. You are going to get tired or have sore muscles doing this every day, but actually your body gets

used to it very quickly."

War Horse is the most successful play in the history of the National Theatre. It originally spent two seasons at the National before opening at the New London Theatre in March 2009. Since then, the show has been seen in around 100 cities worldwide, with productions on New York's Broadway, in Toronto and Berlin. With touring productions in the UK & Ireland, North America, the Netherlands and Belgium, it has played to audiences of more than eight million people worldwide and won in excess of 25 major awards.

For Michael, the key to its success is in the relationship between Albert and Joey.

"At the heart of the show, there's so much love and hope and friendship, and the theme of perseverance. People really resonate with that. It's set in the First World War, so a very specific time, but I think friendship and hope are universal. You meet these characters at the beginning, you go through this really epic, tumultuous journey with them, and you really want them to get to the end and get back together.

"I also think it's the fact that you are seeing this journey through the eyes of the horse; people really connect with that. It's not the kind of thing you would normally see on stage."

And, he says, audiences - whether they're new to War Horse or returning to see it again - are in for a real treat: "I don't think there's a reason not to see the show. Why wouldn't you want to see a gorgeous play with wonderful music and wonderful actors telling this story of friendship and love and perseverance? And you'll also see some gorgeous puppetry, if I do say so myself!"

.....

War Horse shows at the Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, from Tuesday 4 to Saturday 8 March, and then at the Grand Theatre in Wolverhampton from Tuesday 11 to Saturday 22 March



Calamity Jane Birmingham Hippodrome, Tues 18 - Sat 22 March; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Tues 17 - Sat 21 June; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 9 - Sat 13 September

Calamity Jane, telling the story of the Wild West's most notorious female outlaw, is best known from its 1953 film version, starring Doris Day and Howard Keel. In common with the movie, the stage show boasts comedy, drama, dance and music, with its playlist including such much-loved numbers as The Deadwood Stage, Black Hills Of Dakota, Windy City and Secret Love.

"The show is so wholesome," says West End star Carrie Hope

Fletcher, who takes the title role. "It's such a wonderful, nostalgic story. People are going to come and be immersed in the world of Deadwood City, be transported away for a while and not have to think about the state of the world right now.

"Calamity Jane is a really fun, feelgood time, and I think our audiences will be leaving the theatre slapping their thighs and singing. That's what we hope, anyway!"

The Rocky Horror Show

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Mon 17 - Sat 22 March; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Mon 7 - Sat 12 April; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Mon 5 - Sat 10 May; The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Mon 22 - Sat 27 September

Hook up your fishnets, tighten your corsets and prepare to 'do The Time Warp again' - The Rocky Horror Show is returning to the Midlands!

Richard O'Brien's cult production tells the tale of the straight-laced Brad and the deliciously corruptible Janet, who arrive at the castle of the alien transvestite Frank N Furter and witness the birth of the monster, Rocky. Along the way, they take the audience through a selection of love-'em-or-loathe-'em musical numbers, including Sweet Transvestite, Damn It Janet and The Time Warp. Great fun's a guarantee - particularly if you get into the spirit of things and attend the show dressed in your very best stockings & suspenders (as many patrons do)!



Chitty Chitty Bang Bang

Birmingham Hippodrome, Tues 4 - Sun 9 March

Everybody's favourite flying car makes a welcome return to the region, complete with the Sherman Brothers' memorable score and a high-energy cast headed by Ore Oduba and Liam Fox.

When eccentric inventor Caractacus Potts creates an amazing flying automobile, he uses it to take his family to the (fictional) country of Vulgaria. But all is not well in the European barony, where the sinister Baron Bomburst has decided to make children illegal... Truly Scrumptious, Toot Sweets, Hushabye Mountain and the Oscar-nominated title song feature among the show's best-known musical numbers.



A TRULY SCRUMPTIOUS NEW PRODUCTION

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STARRING ORE ODUBA AS GABRIEL PAPER AND LIAM FOX AS GABRIEL PAPER

Tue 4 - Sun 9 Mar

CAP

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UK AND IRELAND TOUR

CALAMITY JANE

STARRING CARRIE HOPE FLETCHER

Tue 18 - Sat 22 Mar

CAP

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SMALL WORLD

Sun 23 Mar

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DRAGONS

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Shark in the Park! Shark in the Park! Shark in the Park!

Based on the book by Nick Sharratt.

From the producers of the Hairy Maclary show!

Sat 29 Mar - Sun 6 Apr

Songs of the Bulbul

by Aakash Odedra Company

Tue 8 - Thu 10 Apr

'AN EVENING WITH SIR TIM RICE IS AN ALL TIME HIGH!'

TIM RICE

MY LIFE IN MUSICALS

I KNOW HIM SO WELL

WITH THE DUNCAN WAUGH BAND & WEST END SINGERS

Sun 13 Apr

Juliet

Tue 22 Apr - Sat 3 May

BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET

BRB2

Carlos Acosta's Ballet Celebration

DIAGHILEV AND THE BIRTH OF MODERN BALLET

Tue 6 May

Welsh National Opera

Peter Grimes Britten

Sat 10 May

ACOSTA DANZA'S CUBAN ECLECTICO

Photo: Toti Ferrer.

Tue 13 & Wed 14 May

DARA Ó BRIAIN

Re:Creation

Thu 15 & Fri 16 May



Farm Boy

Tamworth Assembly Rooms, Sat 22 & Sun 23 March; Worcester Swan Theatre, Mon 31 March - Tues 1 April; Albany Theatre, Coventry, Fri 25 - Sun 27 April

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

NOW That's What I Call A Musical

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Tues 11 - Sat 15 March

EastEnders' Nina Wadia, former X Factor winner Sam Bailey and 80s pop icon Sonia are the terrific trio tasked with lighting up this brand-new musical comedy.



Directed & choreographed by Craig Revel Horwood, and marking 40 years of the chart-topping NOW That's What I Call Music compilation albums, the show is set in Birmingham and finds old school friends Gemma and April facing up to the challenges of a 20th anniversary school reunion... Featured hits from an evening of 80s classics include Gold, Girls Just Wanna Have Fun, Tainted Love, Hey Mickey and Sisters Are Doing It For Themselves.

Rita, Sue And Bob Too

Crescent Theatre, Birmingham, Tues 4 - Sat 8 March

When best friends Rita and Sue are given a lift home by married man Bob after they've spent the evening babysitting his kids, they find themselves embarking on a sexual adventure that swiftly spirals out of control...

By the time Andrea Dunbar was 20, she had written two critically acclaimed plays - The Arbor, at the age of 15, and the wickedly funny Rita, Sue And Bob Too, four years later. Hailed a genius straight from the slums, Dunbar spent time in a Women's Aid refuge, had three children by three men, developed a serious addiction to alcohol and died of a brain haemorrhage at the age of 29. Both of her plays, but particularly Rita..., are shining examples of an extraordinary talent that burned brightly for all too short a time...

Vici Wreford-Sinnott: Unruly

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, Thurs 20 March

A rare example of disabled-women-led theatre, Unruly is written and performed by playwright & campaigner Vici Wreford-Sinnott. Using her work to challenge societal and cultural misconceptions around the subject of disability, Vici here turns the spotlight on the character of Marina, who, having lost her best friend Suze, 'carefully unpacks her life and slowly removes the layers of women she was expected to be by others'.

A Matter Of Life And Death

New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Fri 28 March - Sat 19 April

New Vic Artistic Director Theresa Heskins has

adapted and directs this stage version of the much-loved 1941 film starring David Niven. The story's main character is World War Two pilot Peter Carter, who thinks he's about to meet his maker when his plane goes down just off the coast of England. Instead, he finds himself face-to-face with June, the American radio operator who kept him company on what he thought would be his final journey. Peter soon falls in love with her and looks ahead to a bright future - until, that is, a celestial entity makes contact to inform him that he should in fact have died in the plane crash...

An Inspector Calls

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Tues 4 - Sat 8 March; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Tues 6 - Sat 10 May

When Inspector Goole calls unexpectedly on the prosperous Birling family, his startling revelations not only shatter the foundations of their lives but also challenge them to examine their consciences...



Anybody who's seen a production of JB Priestley's classic 1945 play will have no trouble understanding why it's been such a long-time worldwide hit... Stephen Daldry's award-winning production is presented by the National Theatre.

What will you see next?



TUE 8 - SAT 12 APR '25
PIG HEART BOY



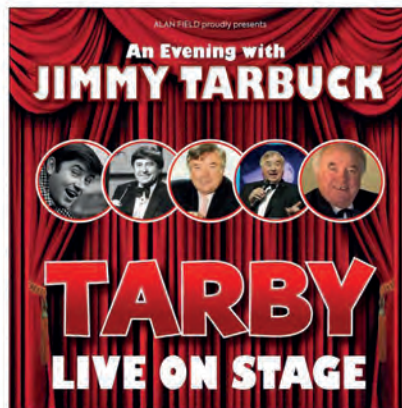
SAT 26 APRIL '25
MAN IN THE MIRROR



TUE 6, WED 7, THU 8 MAY '25
LA TRAVIATA, LA BOHEME,
MADAMA BUTTERFLY



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BALLET BC



TUE 17 JUN '25
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Try our brilliant hands-on courses for children and young people - from Shadow Puppet Making, to Eco Textiles and more!

The People's Theatre Company: A Big Egg

Sat 26 Apr | Ages 3+

A scrumptious musical to delight all the family based on the picture book by Steven Lee.



Hamlet

Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, until Sat 29 March

Hamlet, the Prince of Denmark, struggles to come to terms with his life. Not only is he faced with the ghost of his murdered father, he must also grapple with the behaviour of his widowed mother, who has married his conniving uncle, Claudius, in indecent haste. And things aren't going too well with his girlfriend, Ophelia, either...

One of the true masterpieces of world theatre, Shakespeare's most famous play is also one of the most testing to perform. The lead role is among the largest ever written, and it's a brave actor indeed who undertakes the necessary plunge into his own psyche. So best of luck, then, on this particular occasion, to RSC debutant Luke Thallon... Jared Harris and made-in-the-Midlands veteran actor Anton Lesser also star.

Boiler Room Six: A Titanic Story

Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham, Wed 26 & Thurs 27 March

Boiler Room Six made a significant splash at last year's Edinburgh Fringe, selling out its run and whetting the appetite for this current UK tour. The play tells the impossible true survival story of Frederick Barrett, a stoker given the prestigious role of lead fireman in one of the boiler rooms aboard RMS Titanic, the British ocean liner which sank on its maiden voyage in 1912 after hitting an iceberg.



Napoleon Dynamite

Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton, Fri 21 & Sat 22 March

The young Wolverhampton creatives performing this show are promising a fast-paced, upbeat and joyful comedy - very much in the style of the same-titled 2004 coming-of-age film on which the production is based. The story follows the misadventures of awkward teenager Napoleon as he befriends new student Pedro and does his best to find his place in the world.

All Blood Runs Red

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Thurs 13 - Fri 14 March

Highly acclaimed theatre company Imitating The Dog is the ensemble behind this

fascinating and true story, which tells the tale of an extraordinary life. At its heartland is Eugene Bullard, a man who, at various points in his life, was a runaway, a circus entertainer, a boxer, a nightclub owner, one of the first black fighter pilots in World War One, a jazz drummer, a spy and a civil rights activist.

Containing themes of racism and references to racist violence, the show's age recommendation for audience members is 12-plus.

Sherlock Holmes: The Last Act

Lichfield Garrick, Wed 12 March

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's master of deduction makes a welcome return in a story that sees Sherlock Holmes emerging from two years of Sussex retirement for the funeral of his friend, Dr Watson, and then returning to Baker Street to resolve 'the last act' of his epic career...

Nigel Miles-Thomas stars in this one-man show, taking on the challenge of playing not only the world's greatest detective but also 13 other characters.

You Know My Mum

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Fri 28 & Sat 29 March; The Rep, Birmingham, Fri 27 & Sat 28 June

Marketed as 'a cheeky comedy about life and death for all the family', You Know My Mum is presented by Ego Arts and features a baby bird named Bluey and a 25-year-old woman with Down's syndrome, who is struggling to come to terms with the death of her mother.

While Bluey learns about fried chicken factories and joins a boot camp for birds, Alex battles Harry Potter monsters and dreams about life after death. As her wild imagination comes to life, she begins to realise that the love which she thought she had lost is actually all around her...



Peter James: Picture You Dead

Malvern Theatres, Tues 25 - Sat 29 March; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Tues 29 April - Sat 3 May; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Tues 24 - Sat 28 June

Bestselling crime writer Peter James has scored major successes on stage as well as in print and on TV, with adaptations of his novels having played to appreciative audiences at venues across the UK. This latest offering sees Detective Superintendent Roy Grace - the Brighton-based policeman who's headed up murder investigations in a number of James' most popular works - investigating a cold case that leads him into the secretive world of fine art... Casualty's George Rainsford returns in the role of Grace, with Peter Ash (Coronation Street) and Fiona Wade (Emmerdale) also featuring in the cast.



FAMILY SORTED FUN

Dinosaur World Live

Tue 22 – Thu 24 Apr
Dino 'Meet and Greet' after each performance.
Age 3+

Minnie Stynker

Sun 27 Apr 1pm & 3pm
An unusual adventure unfolds when a boy's drawings giggle into life.
Age 3+

Family Singing

Sun 27 Apr 11.30am - 12.30pm
Come and learn songs to sing together.
All ages

Mini Creatives

Tue 22 Apr 10.30am - 12pm
Join musician Sam Frankie Fox for our weekly session for babies and their grown-ups.
Age 0-4yrs

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Theatre for younger audiences



Shark In The Park

Patrick Centre, Birmingham Hippodrome, Sat 29 March - Sun 6 April

Nick Sharratt has illustrated hundreds of books, a significant percentage of which have been his own. One of these is the hugely successful *Shark In The Park!*, a children's story about a young lad named Timothy who goes to his local park to try out his new telescope. While there, he thinks he spots a shark - and not just on one occasion either, but several times in several places!...

The popularity of the book prompted Nick to write and illustrate two follow-up offerings - *Shark In The Dark!* and *Shark In The Park On A Windy Day!*.

All three stories are featured in this much-loved stage production from the highly rated Nonsense Room theatre company. The show is suitable for children aged two-plus.

The Dinosaur That Pooped

The Alexandra, Birmingham, Sun 2 March; Crewe Lyceum Theatre, Sat 5 April; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sat 17 May; The Albany Theatre, Coventry, Fri 30 May; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Sun 20 July; Lichfield Garrick, Wed 29 October

Tom Fletcher and Dougie Poynter are promising their brand-new production will come complete with new songs, a lot of laughs and (not surprisingly given the show's title) a whole load of poo!

Based on Tom and Dougie's bestselling children's books, *The Dinosaur That Pooped* follows Danny and Dino as they try to get hold of the last two tickets to their favourite rock band's last-ever concert. But with a villainous band manager lurking, nothing goes to plan... Will the band perform? Will Danny rock out? Or will Dino's rumbling tummy save the day?...

Pirates Love Underpants

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Tues 11 - Fri 14 March; Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa, Wed 23 - Thurs 24 April; Crewe Lyceum Theatre, Mon 26 - Tues 27 May

Claire Freedman certainly knows a thing or

two about writing for children. And she's no slouch on the subject of underpants either, with her much-loved picture books including *Aliens Love Underpants*, *Aliens Love Panta Claus* and *Aliens In Underpants Save The World...*

It turns out pirates are pretty keen on underpants too, as evidenced by this stage adaptation of another of Claire's books. Shrewsbury Theatre Severn's legendary pantomime Dame, Brad Fitt, has written the show, which features a winning combination of 'music, puppetry and glittering pants of gold'.



Room On The Broom

Tamworth Assembly Rooms, Tues 4 - Wed 5 March; Worcester Swan Theatre, Tues 11 - Wed 12 March; Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Wed 23 - Sat 26 April

Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler, the creators of *The Gruffalo* and *We're Going On A Bear Hunt*, are the team behind this 'spellbinding' tale of a witch who makes the mistake of thinking she can fit a daft dog, a

beautiful bird and a friendly frog - as well as her own cat - on her broomstick without it snapping in two. And when a hungry dragon appears, things really start to hot up...



Dinosaurs Live!

Malvern Theatres, Sat 15 March; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Sun 13 April; Lichfield Garrick, Wed 23 July; The Alexandra, Birmingham, Sun 31 August; Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sat 20 & Sun 21 September; The Albany Theatre, Coventry, Sat 27 September

Dinosaurs are once again roaming the region this year, thanks to this interactive show for all the family to enjoy.

Presented by the Natural History Museum in association with Mark Thompson Productions, *Dinosaurs Live!* provides youngsters with the chance to meet a host of impressive prehistoric creatures on a fun- and fact-filled journey through the Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous periods. The show is suitable for children aged three-plus.

LOLA LAND

Kinky Boots The Musical struts back to the Midlands



Inspired by the true story of a failing Northamptonshire shoe factory, Kinky Boots The Musical stops off in Birmingham next month as part of a UK tour. Courtney Bowman will reprise the role of factory worker Lauren, while Strictly Come Dancing star Johannes Radebe will be donning thigh-high red boots to play drag queen Lola...

Three years ago, actor Courtney Bowman played the role of factory worker Lauren in a concert performance of the hit musical Kinky Boots. She loved the show and the part. So when she heard a new UK tour was in the planning, she was keen to reprise the role in the full show.

"We put the concert up in a week," she recalls. "When I heard the show was touring again, I really wanted to be in it. I saw the original production in 2016 and loved it. I think the show is brilliant; it has so much heart."

Helmed by Leicester Curve Artistic Director Nikolai Foster, the touring production features Strictly Come Dancing professional & choreographer Johannes Radebe as drag queen Lola and Dan Partridge as factory owner Charlie.

The show, which is based on a true story and a hit 2005 film, focuses on the character of Charlie Price, who inherits the family shoe factory but struggles to keep the business afloat. When he meets drag queen Lola and sees her kinky boots, he realises there may be an untouched shoe market...

Courtney believes that, beyond its sparkle, the show is about family and friendship.

"The story is so beautiful. There's the father-son relationships, which can also easily translate to mother-daughter relationships, so it's a universal story. Whatever people are exploring or are feeling challenged on, if you have a friend to help you, then you can get there.

"Its message is about love and acceptance and being open to change. Just being open is wonderful. Be as open as Lauren, be as strong, resilient and fabulous as Lola, and as understanding and caring as Charlie."

For Courtney, Lauren's strength is her willingness to welcome people as they are. "I love that when Lola comes into her life, Lauren just accepts her. She's just 'This is how it is, let's go and enjoy this new world, which isn't necessarily the factory in Northampton.'

"The boots are Charlie and Lola's story, but everyone's got their own boots, where they think 'I had a problem, someone came along and they helped me.' It's so full of love, and a lot of love has been put into this production."

With a score by American singer-songwriter Cyndi Lauper and book by American actor & writer Harvey Fierstein, Kinky Boots opened in Chicago in 2012. It then transferred to Broadway, where it won six Tony Awards, and the London West End, where it picked up three Oliviers, including Best New Musical.

Courtney is no stranger to prize winning herself. Two years ago, she bagged the WhatsOnStage Award for Best Performer In A Musical, for her portrayal of Ellie Woods in Legally Blonde at Regent's Park Open Air Theatre. She also originated the role of Fatimah in Everybody's Talking About Jamie, and played Anne Boleyn in Six.

"I've always loved musicals. I used to watch the video of Cats in the 1990s and wore that video out! I love to connect all three disciplines of singing, dancing and acting, and on top of that, comedy and improv.

"I love the stage. If you go wrong on a film or television take, you can do it again, but if something goes wrong on stage, you've got to fix it. I love being on my toes. If someone goes wrong, that's my favourite thing because it's nice to see how other actors can save things or if I can save things. So, for instance, there's a line in Kinky Boots where Dan says 'Why am I the only one that believes in you, and why am I the only one who cares?' He swapped them round by accident one night. There was a split second, but then Jo went straight on, and it just worked. You see that and think 'Now *that* is acting!'"

Kinky Boots will mark the first time Courtney has performed at Birmingham Hippodrome, although she did visit the city last year to see Here And Now - The Steps Musical at The Alexandra.

"I loved Steps - they were my religion as a child, and I really enjoyed the show. Now I'm looking forward to going to the Hippodrome. I'm from Boston in Lincolnshire, so Birmingham, Nottingham, the Midlands, is kind of my domain. I claim the whole of the Midlands, even though I'm from the corner of it by Skegness!

"It's very tiring touring, but it's a rewarding kind of tiring. It's fun, and I'm trying to experience the culture of each city. Responses from the audiences so far have

been insane."

After touring his own dance shows (Freedom, Freedom Unleashed and House Of Jojo), Johannes Radebe is stepping in a new direction with Kinky Boots - taking on a lead role in a musical. And having experienced bullying for being gay while growing up in a South African township, he can certainly relate to his character of Lola.

"She's insecure and scarred, like many of us - me included - but she's also very bold, confident and powerful," he explains. "The premise of the show is about the acceptance of oneself and of others, and I can relate to that so much because it's been my personal fight. I hope with what I do in my career that I influence the world in a positive way, just by saying 'Yes, we are all different but we can live as one.'

"Kinky Boots has been a long-held dream of mine. I came across the movie first, and it spoke to my search for belonging as a young boy growing up in a township. I've always looked for spaces that could accommodate me or stories that resonate with me."

Johannes is also enjoying the experience of wearing such iconic boots.

"I'd worn heels in my house - without anybody witnessing it - for many years, and then Strictly gave me the platform to be fabulous and kinky in front of the world!"

That's not to say the role hasn't been without its challenges. "It's daunting and nerve-racking, but at the same time, it's really exciting. I think I have been an actor in some way or other across my career because I'm a storyteller. Now I get to say and sing how I feel as well as expressing myself through movement and dance.

"This show is so inspirational, with a universal message in a story and songs that leave people feeling happy and joyful. Maybe their minds will be changed by it, too. I find that quite incredible."

.....

Kinky Boots The Musical shows at Birmingham Hippodrome from Tuesday 15 to Saturday 19 April

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PRIZES UP FOR GRABS IN ACORNS' FIRST ONLINE AUCTION

Acorns Children's Hospice will hold its first online auction this month, and there's a spectacular array of prizes up for grabs - all of which have been donated by regional and national arts organisations and visitor attractions with links to film and television.

All monies raised from the auction will go to Acorns, which helps to support around 1,000 children and their families each year through their hospices in Birmingham, Worcester and the Black Country.

Here are just some of the amazing prizes on offer:

A must for Pink Floyd fans: Two Dark Side Of The Moon albums, signed by drummer Nick Mason - a prize certain to create a stir amongst music fans...



By Order of the Peaky Blinders: Award-winning writer, creator & director Steven Knight, who is Patron of Acorns Children's Hospice, has donated nine exquisitely tailored Peaky Blinders suits and caps made by Garrison Tailors. There are also signed photographs of Cillian Murphy and Tom Hardy to bid for.

Peaky Blinders on stage: Birmingham Hippodrome, in conjunction with Rambert Dance Company, have donated a pair of tickets to the press night of Peaky Blinders: The Redemption Of Thomas Shelby, which returns to the city in June after its original sell-out tour. A package of themed merchandise from the show is also included in the prize.

Into the wild: A one-night stay in the Hippo Lodge at West Midlands Safari Park.

Boxing high: Signed boxing gloves donated by boxing legend Chris Eubank.

Celebrity haunt: Tom Cruise's favourite Indian Restaurant, Asha's - named after the legendary Bollywood star - is offering a lavish afternoon tea for six people.



All aboard! The award-winning Severn Valley Railway has provided an all-day Freedom Pass, with the highest bidder enjoying a scenic journey aboard the train which featured in The Chronicles Of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe.

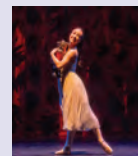
Journey to Narnia: The producers of touring show The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe, in conjunction with Birmingham theatre The Alexandra, are providing four VIP tickets to the show's Press Night at the venue in May, as well as complimentary interval drinks.

Time to indulge: The Grand Hotel on Birmingham's Colmore Row is providing lunch or dinner for two at Isaacs restaurant, as well as an overnight stay in a Junior Suite.

Fine Dining: Masterchef and Great British Menu chef Paul Ainsworth has donated a meal for two at his Michelin-starred restaurant, No 6, in Padstow.

Chewton Glen, the five-star hotel in Hampshire, which is home to the James Martin Cookery School, will offer the highest bidder two cookery school places and an overnight stay.

Pamper time: Hoar Cross Hall in Staffordshire has donated a Purity Overnight Spa Stay for two.



Festive magic: Birmingham Royal Ballet, regular supporters of Acorns, have added a seasonal sparkle to proceedings by offering four tickets to the first night of The Nutcracker, together with a pair of pointe shoes signed by principal dancer Celine Gittens.

All auction bids are open to everyone, and the bidding will go live at midnight on Saturday 1 March. Just visit acorns.org/bid

Light entertainment from around the region



Jazz Emu: Knight Fever

Birmingham Town Hall, Wed 12 March

Impressive musicianship and surrealist observation combine when Archie Henderson brings comedy character Jazz Emu to town. If you've not yet encountered Jazz (and plenty have - his YouTube videos have garnered more than 70,000 views), here's a sample of his humour, lifted from the biography posted on his website: "When Jazz met the Pope several years ago, he was notably impressed, and said that Jazz was taller than he expected, and also handsomer. Jazz reminded him that 'handsomer' isn't a word; grammatically, it should be 'more handsome'. The Pope thanked him for his wisdom bigly and also said that Jazz reminded him of one of the paintings in the Sistine Chapel (God), and that Jazz should consider modelling."

Jazz visits Birmingham mid-month with his contractually-less-talented-than-him full live band, The Cosmique Perfection.

Jimbo's Drag Circus

Birmingham Town Hall, Tues 18 March

Adult humour and outrageous characters abound in this touring show from RuPaul's Drag Race favourite Jimbo.

"I love the aesthetic of the circus," the Canadian performance artist & designer told werrk.com. "I love that feeling that anything can happen, and I love the variety show and the different acts. I want people to come with an open mind and expect to laugh, and I want them to leave saying 'What the f**k was that? That was crazy, and I want to see that again!'"



Hitchcocked!

Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham, Thurs 13 March

This homage to legendary movie director Alfred Hitchcock comes complete with a serious slice of surreal silliness. Foghorn Unscripted are the wildly improvising laughter merchants behind the production, taking some of Hitchcock's most famous films and combining them with audience-written suggestions to create a unique show every night.

Sam Rabone's Big Bostin' Variety Show

Lichfield Garrick, Sun 16 March

Familiar to (and greatly appreciated by) Lichfield theatre-goers, thanks to his annual Garrick appearance as the pantomime Dame, Sam Rabone here makes a springtime return with his third Big Bostin' Variety Show. Expect laugh-out-loud comedy, amazing magic, 'and a bit of everything in-between'.

Hold On To Your Butts

The Rep, Birmingham, Fri 21 & Sat 22 March

The dinosaurs may have been gone for a while now - around 65 million years, in fact - but there's no sign of filmgoers' love for Jurassic Park becoming extinct any time soon. Hence, *Hold On To Your Butts* - a chaotic, frenetic and delightfully irreverent homage to a time, some 30-plus years ago, when a Steven Spielberg-directed movie about T-Rex and his tragically doomed pals ruled the cinema box office. The show runs for 75 minutes without an interval.



Buffy Revamped

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Sun 9 March; Malvern Theatres, Sat 22 March

Calling to mind the work of ensembles such as the Reduced Shakespeare Company, *Buffy Revamped* is a fast-paced production that

wings its way through all 144 episodes of hit 1990s television series *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*. Not only that, but it does so in an admirably concise 70 minutes.

The one-man production is presented by Brendan Murphy, whose central character of Spike is a fella who, as you might imagine, knows a thing or several about the now-cult US TV show...

Buffy Revamped scored a big hit in Edinburgh (and on its previous visits to the Midlands), so if you're a fan of the series, a fun evening out is pretty much a guarantee.

Steptoe & Son Live

Albany Theatre, Coventry, Sat 22 March; Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire, Fri 25 April; Halesowen Town Hall, Fri 16 May

In the 50 years since the BBC stopped making *Steptoe & Son*, the Ray Galton & Alan Simpson-created sitcom has established itself as a gold-star comedy classic. With that in mind, there's little wonder that the theatrical version continues to pull in the crowds. Focusing on the brittle relationship between a cantankerous old rag & bone man and his comically pretentious son, the production comprises stage adaptations of four much-loved episodes of the long-running television series.



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Sofia Linares. © Perou.

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Dance previews from across the region



Eun-Me-Ahn Dance Company's Dragons

Birmingham Hippodrome,
Tues 25 & Wed 26 March

"The dragon is a very symbolic creature," explains avant-garde South Korean choreographer Eun-Me Ahn. "Everybody knows it, and we have many, many stories about dragons. But the dragon in Asia has many sides. Sometimes it is very good. Sometimes the dragon has humour. Sometimes it is a brave hero. And sometimes it becomes very bad."

The traditional heritage of these mythical beasts is here combined with cutting-edge technology to create a stunning kaleidoscope of past and present.

Fusing modern and traditional Asian dance styles with hologram appearances and colourful projections, *Dragons* received huge critical acclaim when it showed in London and Salford in 2023.

Amy & Carlos: Reborn

Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Mon 10 March

Powerful and show-stopping routines are the order of the day when Amy Dowden and Carlos Gu make a Birmingham stop-off mid-month. The *Strictly Come Dancing* stars will be joined by 'a dazzling cast of world-class dancers and vocalists' for a production that's being described as 'a testament to the joy of dancing'.



Ballet Black: Shadows

The Rep, Birmingham, Thurs 27 & Fri 28 March

Twenty-three-year-old company Ballet Black comprises British and international dancers of black and Asian descent and takes an impressively daring approach to its work. Under the guidance of highly rated artistic director Cassa Pancho, the ensemble here presents a new double bill. Pancho's darkly comic adaptation of Oyinkan Braithwaite's bestselling novel, *My Sister, The Serial Killer*, shares the evening with a British choreographic debut by Brooklyn-born award

winner Chanel DaSilva, who delves into the profound practice of shadow work, 'exploring its power to reveal our true selves'.

Tap Factory

Albany Theatre, Coventry, Wed 12 March

Described as 'Tap Dogs meets Stomp', Tap Factory visits Coventry this month as part of a UK tour. The rhythm-based production sees an array of internationally renowned exponents of dance, gymnastics and acrobatics take to the stage to showcase their skills.

Nikita: Midnight Dancer

Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Sat 29 March; Malvern Theatres, Sat 26 April; Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent, Fri 2 May; Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, Sun 11 May; Birmingham Hippodrome, Sat 17 May

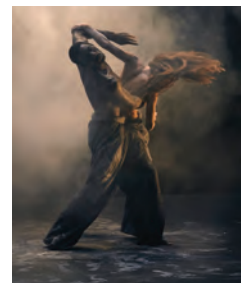
International champion and *Strictly Come Dancing* star Nikita Kuzmin's first-ever solo tour sees him being joined by 'a sharp and chic cast of talented dancers and vocalists... for an evening bursting with happiness, euphoria, and of course, world-class dance'.



Humanhood: Vortex

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham,
Fri 28 & Sat 29 March

Aiming to expand human awareness and elevate human potential through mystical dance performances, Birmingham- and Barcelona-based Humanhood here present a full-length and immersive



'movement and dance' production. The show takes its inspiration from the image of the eye of a tornado, exploring the way in which humans can activate 'deep reservoirs of unexplored resilience to adapt, transform and evolve in any apparent chaos'.

Karen & Gorka: Speakeasy

Warwick Arts Centre, Coventry, Sat 15 March; Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Sun 6 April

Karen Hauer and Gorka Marquez here make a welcome return with a show in which they're promising to unlock the door to an undercover world of iconic dance flavours. The Mamba, Charleston, Foxtrot and Salsa are all present and correct as the talented duo call to mind the New York Speakeasy, Havana dancefloors, the Chicago Blues scene, burlesque cabaret clubs and the glittering mirror balls of Studio 54.

Film highlights in March...



Mickey 17 CERT 15 (139 mins)

Starring **Robert Pattinson, Toni Collette, Mark Ruffalo, Naomi Ackie, Steven Yeun, Angus Imrie**
Directed by **Bong Joon Ho**

Academy Award-winning writer/director Bong Joon Ho - who picked up his Oscar for the 2019 black comedy *Parasite* - is once again breaking new ground with his latest film. The movie sees Robert Pattinson starring as unlikely hero Mickey Barnes, a man who finds himself in the extraordinary circumstance of working for an employer who demands of him the ultimate commitment to the job: that he should die, for a living...

Mickey 17 is based on Edward Ashton's book *Mickey7*, but Ashton is realistic enough to know that the film is going to be very different from his 2022 novel...

"Bong is going to change a lot about the book," he told *Nerdist*. "When I spoke with him, he made it pretty clear: 'You've got a 350-page book. I'm gonna have a 120-page script. There's a lot that's gonna go!'... In my view, the man's a genius. I don't believe he's ever made a bad film. And I sincerely hope that this isn't going to be his first."

Released Fri 7 March

The Alto Knights CERT 15 (123 mins)

Starring **Robert De Niro, Cosmo Jarvis, Debra Messing, Kathrine Narducci, Matt Servitto, Wallace Langham** Directed by **Barry Levinson**

Now here's a treat for film fans: *two* characters played by Robert De Niro for the price of one.

The Alto Knights features double Academy Award winner De Niro in a dual role, starring as two of New York's most notorious organised-crime bosses - Frank Costello and Vito Genovese - as they vie for control of the city's streets.

Having once upon a time been the best of buddies, the pair are now fierce rivals on a deadly collision course - one which will see the world of organised crime reshaped forever...

With the prospect of De Niro doing what he

arguably does best - playing Mafia-style gangsters (think *Goodfellas*, *The Irishman*, *Casino*) - *The Alto Knights* has been hotly anticipated since receiving the green light a couple of years back.

The fact that Barry Levinson (*Good Morning, Vietnam* and *Rain Man*) is helming the movie, and that it's been scripted by *Goodfellas* and *Casino* writer Nicholas Pileggi, further whets the appetite.

All of which hopefully counterbalances word coming out of recent test screenings, the general consensus of opinion being that the finished product badly misses the mark.

Released Fri 21 March



Black Bag CERT 15 (93 mins)

Starring **Michael Fassbender, Cate Blanchett, Tom Burke, Pierce Brosnan, Regé-Jean Page, Naomie Harris** Directed by **Steven Soderbergh**

Details about director Steven Soderbergh's latest film have been fairly thin on the ground. *Black Bag*'s official publicity describes it as 'a gripping spy drama about legendary intelligence agents George Woodhouse and his beloved wife Kathryn'. When Kathryn (Blanchett) is suspected of betraying the nation, George (Fassbender) faces the ultimate choice: loyalty to his marriage or his country.

"it's a very, very specific take on people who are in the intelligence business but also have complex personal, emotional lives," Soderbergh told *The Hollywood Reporter* in talking about the UK-set film. "It's the kind of thing that I like a lot."

Strike actor Tom Burke and former James Bond star Pierce Brosnan offer Fassbender and Blanchett solid support.

Released Fri 14 March



Opus CERT 15 (103 mins)

Starring **Ayo Edebiri, John Malkovich, Juliette Lewis, Murray Bartlett, Melissa Chambers, Tony Hale**
Directed by **Mark Anthony Green**

Advice for ambitious young writers: never accept an invitation to the remote compound of a legendary but notoriously reclusive pop star who's aiming to make a return to the limelight with an album he's convinced is the greatest record ever made. If the experience of junior writer Ariel is anything to go by, it's definitely a situation to be avoided.

When Ariel accompanies her magazine editor to the desert compound of aforementioned pop star Alfred Moretti (played by John Malkovich), she is determined to make the most of a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. But, surrounded by the star's weird community of robe-wearing sycophants and intoxicated journalists, she instead finds herself slap-bang in the middle of a twisted little game...

A commentary on the cult of celebrity - and one which comes complete with an escalating body count - Opus is director Mark Anthony Green's debut feature.

Reviews have not been kind. **Released Fri 14 March**



The End CERT 12a (148 mins)

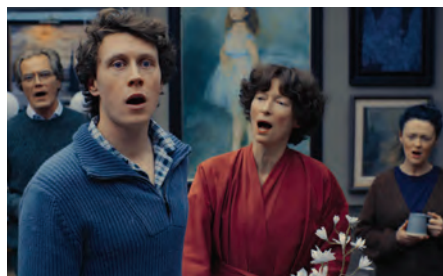
Starring **Tilda Swinton, George McKay, Moses Ingram, Michael Shannon, Bronach Gallagher, Tim McInnerny**
Directed by **Joshua Oppenheimer**

Documentary filmmaker Joshua Oppenheimer here makes his narrative-feature debut with that rarest of beasts: a post-apocalyptic musical.

The storyline follows the fortunes of a wealthy family with generic character descriptors - Father, Mother, Son - who are living out their lives in a luxurious but claustrophobic underground bunker, deep within a converted salt mine, after an environmental catastrophe renders the Earth's surface uninhabitable. The family - and various other connected individuals - follow a regular schedule (safety emergency drills included) and decorate the bunker to evoke the changing seasons.

But then they discover a Girl - unconscious in the mines - and find that the reassuring predictability of their subterranean existence is suddenly compromised...

Released Fri 28 March



Disney's Snow White CERT tbc (120 mins)

Starring **Rachel Zegler, Gal Gadot, Andrew Durnap, Ansu Kabia, Colin Michael Carmichael**, and the voice of **Patrick Page** Directed by **Marc Webb**

Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, it's off to the cinema we go...

The Brothers Grimm penned the fairytale of Snow White in the early 19th century. In the mid-20th, Walt Disney turned the terrific tale into what has since become a greatly adored animation.

Now, Disney are running with the story again, releasing this live-action reimaging of their own 1937 classic.

But the film has not been without its controversies, including the casting of Rachel Zegler as the titular character. The Latina star of West Side Story has been criticised for not being pale enough for the part, given that the princess is described as having skin "as white as snow". She's also been slammed for some of her comments

connected to Snow White, with critics claiming she's derided the 1930s version and shamed anybody who liked it.

And Disney itself hasn't been immune to criticism regarding the new movie either. Its decision to use only one actor with dwarfism was met with a loud chorus of disapproval. Away from the controversy, the Mouse House will be hoping this live-action remake scores as big a success as the animated original. The presence of Wonder Woman herself, Gal Gadot, as the Evil Queen looks to be a clever piece of casting. And with Marc Webb (The Amazing Spider-Man) in the director's chair and Greta Gerwig (Barbie) co-writing the script, there's certainly been no shortage of talent driving the project.

Released Fri 21 March



TURNING 25 IN '25

Walsall's New Art Gallery celebrates its silver anniversary by stepping down memory lane, looking to the future, and jumping for joy...

The New Art Gallery's anniversary celebrations began exactly 25 years after the building opened its doors, on the 20th of February. They continue with a fresh take on an old exhibition - *The People's Show* - the addition of a new work of chrysanthemum flowers gifted by Walsall-born artist Hannah Maybank, and plenty more besides.

Opening just weeks into the new millennium - and replacing Walsall's previous gallery & arts centre - the New Art Gallery represented a

forward-looking perspective for the region, while the modern design of the building itself caused quite a stir. Indeed, it was shortlisted for the prestigious Stirling Architecture Prize that very year.

Regular free events are scheduled throughout 2025, including a big summer bash and the continuation of a popular series of community festival celebrations.

What's On here picks out a few highlights from the Gallery's anniversary programme...

A BUNDLE OF JOY

A new collaborative exhibition, The Joy Project, commemorates the gallery's 25th anniversary and runs until Sunday 6 July. Created by young people over the last year, the project explores the concept of 'joy'. The participants - all of whom are younger than the New Art Gallery! - worked as part of a Collections Youth Panel, gaining an outside perspective by collaborating with other groups, colleges and schools.

As part of the exhibition, the Youth Panel have revived a popular show that was exhibited in the 1990s in the previous gallery, now Walsall's library. The original, entitled The People's Show, was inspired by the need to create more space for the gallery's collections. In a series of photographs, it showcased local people and their personal collections. In The Joy Project, new photo portraits by Sherrie Edgar have been added to the series, exploring what 'the joy of collecting' means to individuals under the age of 25 - whether they're fans of trainers or vinyl records.



ART IN ARCHITECTURE

The New Art Gallery was designed by architects Peter St John and Adam Caruso, who were selected for the job following an international competition.

The building contains six interconnected floors, designed to inspire visitors to explore the space and discover the treats contained in each of the galleries.

The rooms which house the Garman Ryan Collection are at a comfortably domestic scale, contrasting with the large and impressive temporary exhibition space on the floor above. Nods to natural materials - from the building's exterior terracotta, to the mixture of wood used inside - gives the design warmth while still retaining a contemporary, airy brightness. The building is literally topped off by a roof terrace designed by artist Sarah Staton.

COMMUNITY VENTURES

The gallery hosts a World Book Day celebration on Saturday 8 March. The event includes a special performance of Mughal Miniatures: The Peacock & The Princess by Sonia Sabri Company, interactive poetry from Pep the Poet, and the chance to make bookmarks with illustrator Bec Tonks.

The following Saturday (the 15th) is a community day to celebrate Holi, the Festival of Colours. Bharatanatyam dance performances, sessions led by different artists, and food provided by Hargun Sweet Centre all feature.

The gallery also hosts a regular Sunday Art Club - a weekly, artist-led initiative aimed at young people aged four and upwards. The sessions take place from 12pm to 3pm, on Sundays throughout the year. More information about the content of individual sessions can be found on the New Art Gallery's website.



THE GARMAN RYAN COLLECTION

The New Art Gallery is the permanent host to an exceptional collection of artwork, gifted in 1973 by Kathleen Garman. Garman grew up locally, in Wednesbury, and although she lived most of her life in London, donated the works to her home county, believing in the importance of cultural development outside the capital.

Developed by Garman alongside artist Sally Ryan, the collection features works by Henri Matisse, Edgar Degas, Paul Cézanne and Vincent van Gogh. Sculptures by Garman's partner, Jacob Epstein, are also included, among other works.

The New Art Gallery was designed with the collection very much in mind. The works are housed in unique galleries, and grouped - as suggested by Garman - to prompt viewers to make links across cultures and centuries.

FLASH FORWARD...

Other shows this year include Suzanne Holtom's And Hills Bore Scars (opening on Saturday 29 March) in which she explores her deep connection to her Midlands roots. According to the artist, the exhibition "encompasses geological time, social histories, personal experiences and memory".

Looking ahead to summer, the gallery will host a National Open exhibition presented by Outside In, a charity that provides a platform for artists who encounter significant barriers to the art world. This year's theme is 'Shelter'.

Walsall-born artist Hannah Maybank is creating a special new work as a gift to celebrate the gallery's birthday, also exhibiting a series which explores the still-life genre. The works all make use of materials that change over time - including silver - to create 'living still lives'.

REASONS TO VISIT

- The Gallery features world-class art exhibitions, which include works by Van Gogh, Monet, Picasso and more
- It's centrally located and easy to access - only three minutes' walk from major transport links, like Walsall Train Station
- The venue hosts a welcoming programme of events, celebrating a range of festivities and reflecting the local community
- Children and young people can join the regular Sunday Art Club, for free, to get involved and learn new creative skills
- The New Art Gallery represents a flagship drive to bring exceptional artwork to the Black Country



Birmingham
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6 March - 1 June 2025

Rembrandt

Masterpieces in Black & White

Prints from the Rembrandt House Museum

Gas Hall, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

www.birminghammuseums.org.uk



Rembrandt: Masterpieces in Black and White—Prints from the Rembrandt House Museum is co-organised by the American Federation of Arts and the Rembrandt House Museum.



Rembrandt van Rijn, *Self-Portrait, Wearing a Flat Cap*,
c. 1642. Etching. Rembrandt House Museum, Amsterdam

Visual Arts previews from around the region



Towering Dreams

Compton Verney, Warwickshire, Sat 15 March - Sunday 31 August

Ever fancied trying your hand at being an architect? Well, your wish can (briefly) come true at Compton Verney over the next few months, with visitors to the venue's Towering Dreams exhibition being invited to add their own imaginative touches to a cardboard structure that will develop over time.

Drawn from the collection of the Sir John Soane's Museum, the exhibition explores how architects of the 18th and early 19th centuries found the inspiration for their creativity in a variety of places - from ancient Greek and Roman buildings, to Egyptian monuments, and even buildings from the Far East and Asia.

Htein Lin: Escape

Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, Thurs 20 March - Sun 1 June

Htein Lin hails from Myanmar and has built his career as an artist around a lifelong commitment to documenting human experience in difficult times. This major solo exhibition features a comprehensive selection of paintings made by the artist on prison uniforms and found textile during six years spent as a political prisoner between 1998 and 2004. The Ikon display also includes drawings, sculpture and video, as well as a new, large-scale painting; created last year, Fiery Hell portrays the plight of Myanmar's rural populations - including ethnic and religious minorities - who have found themselves caught up in the country's ongoing civil war.



Marcia Michael: The Family Album

Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham, Sat 15 March - Sun 1 June

The beauty and depth of Black family connections in British history is the subject of this thought-provoking exhibition by Marcia Michael, a multidisciplinary artist of Caribbean descent.

"The things that we really look for, whilst looking at our photo album, is sameness and familiarity," says Marcia. "Do we have the same eyes, the same mouth? Do we have the same taste in clothes, music or things? Did I look like my mum when she was my age? Those things that we look for in the photographs are never placed in the album intentionally, yet are so important in understanding who we are and how family ties are made."



Painted Dreams: The Art Of Evelyn De Morgan

Wolverhampton Art Gallery & Museum, until Sun 9 March

Pre-Raphaelite artist Mary Evelyn Pickering De Morgan (1855 - 1919) painted in an elegant style inspired by Italian Renaissance paintings - particularly the work of Botticelli - and often featured female figures and mythological or allegorical subjects in her work.

Until the 9th of this month, Wolverhampton Art Gallery is continuing to display 30 of De Morgan's oil paintings and drawings, recreating an exhibition which was held at the venue in 1907. The original show, the largest of De Morgan's career, certainly made an impression. One reviewer at the Wolverhampton Express & Star newspaper called the pictures "painted dreams", an evocative description which has provided the gallery's current exhibition with its title. The artworks - here reunited for the first time in more than 100 years - have been loaned from private collections and by the Trustees of the De Morgan Foundation.



Coventry Open

Herbert Museum & Art Gallery, Coventry, Fri 28 March - Sun 8 June

The creative prowess of artists throughout the West Midlands region will be showcased to thousands of art lovers when the Coventry Open returns to the city's Herbert Art Gallery & Museum late this month. Taking place for the 13th time, the exhibition will, as usual, feature an eclectic mix of artworks created in a wide range of mediums.

Herbert

Art Gallery & Museum

coventry open 2025

Friday 28 March -
Sunday 8 June 2025

Returning for its thirteenth year at the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, the Coventry Open celebrates local creative talent and provides selling opportunities for artists from across Coventry and the West Midlands.



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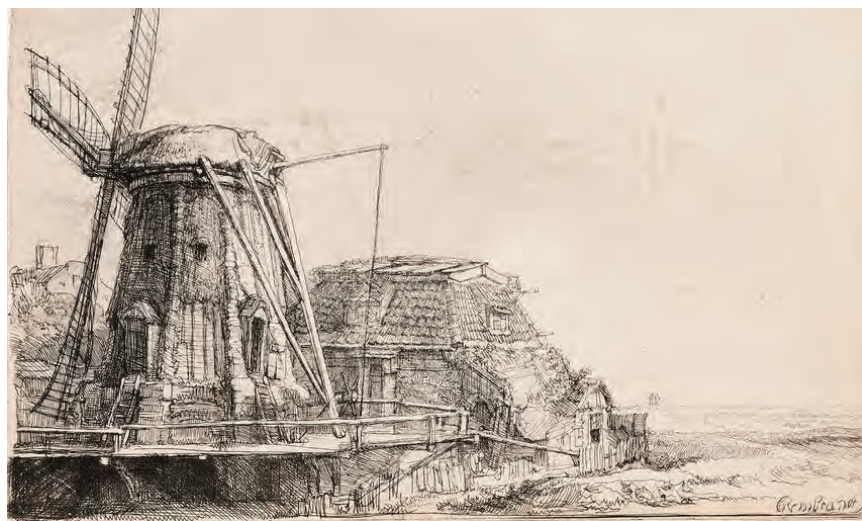
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Visual Arts previews from around the region



Rembrandt: Masterpieces In Black And White

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery,
Thurs 6 March - Sun 1 June

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery is the only UK stop-off for this major new show, which marks the first time Rembrandt's etchings have been brought out of the Netherlands as a collection. "We are delighted to be bringing his fascinating prints to Birmingham," says Epco Runia, head of collections at the Rembrandt House Museum, which has co-organised Masterpieces In Black And White with the American Federation of Arts. "With this exhibition, we hope to demonstrate that each of Rembrandt's prints is a work of art in its own right. If you take the time to look at them closely, a whole world opens up to you: a world in black & white, but with enormous visual richness."

Beyond The Canvas

Rugby Art Gallery, Sat 1 March - Sat 7 June

Taking the subtitle A Celebration Of British Sculpture From The Ingram Collection, Beyond The Canvas explores the diverse styles and techniques that defined British sculpture throughout the 20th century.

The Ingram Art Foundation boasts one of the most significant collections of modern British art in the UK. The collection is here sharing space with pieces from the widely admired Rugby Collection.

The display is being presented as part of the gallery's 25th anniversary celebration.



The Toys Strike Back

The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery,
Stoke-on-Trent, Sat 1 March - Sun 1 June

Readers of a certain vintage will surely recall the impact which Star Wars made when it first hit cinema screens way back in 1977. They may also remember - and might even have owned - some of the Star Wars-connected merchandise that flooded the marketplace in the wake of George

Lucas' blockbuster movie... Star Wars aficionados can this month take a walk down memory lane courtesy of this fascinating exhibition. The display features iconic action figures, dioramas, the legendary Millennium Falcon, and all manner of other collectibles - from vintage board games to children's school lunchboxes and thermos flasks.

Pop, Print, Protest

Wolverhampton Art Gallery,
until Sun 11 May

Featuring artwork created in the mid-20th century, this fascinating show explores how Pop Artists used mixed-media collage and combined text and image in order to protest against capitalism, racism and conflict. In the process of doing so, the artists were responding to some of the biggest social and political issues of the time, including the Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam War... The exhibition has been curated by Sophie Hatchwell, who is Associate Professor of Art History at the University of Birmingham.



Eduardo Paolozzi: General Dynamic F.U.N.

Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum,
until Sun 30 March

Pop Art pioneer Sir Eduardo Paolozzi once referred to himself as "a wizard in Toytown", transforming the mundane, the derelict, and the mass-produced into what he described as 'surrealist' art...



This Worcester City Art Gallery exhibition focuses on a series of 50 screenprints and photolithographs created by the Edinburgh-born artist between 1965 and 1970. Described by Paolozzi's friend and collaborator, JG Ballard, as "a unique guidebook to the electric garden of our minds", General Dynamic F.U.N. employs the technologies of mass-reproduction and gorges on its idols: the household names and familiar faces of consumer advertising, high fashion and Hollywood.

Sun & Fire: Life And Death At The Dawn Of History

Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery,
until Wed 30 April

Taking a look at life in ancient Shropshire, Sun & Fire provides visitors with an opportunity to learn about life in the county between 4,500 and 2,000 years ago. As its main title suggests, the exhibition has a particular focus on the significance of light and heat for people living in prehistoric times, exploring how the sun was once upon a time celebrated with huge stone circles and bright gold objects.

The exhibition is interactive and has been funded by Arts Council England.

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Events previews from around the region



The Wonderful Wizard Of Oz The Drone Light Show

Edgbaston Stadium, Birmingham, Sat 1 March

Drone light show specialists Celestial will be heading Over The Rainbow on the first of the month, when they bring their brand-new production, The Wonderful Wizard Of Oz, to Birmingham.

Promising to be ‘a spellbinding adaptation of the beloved novel’, the presentation will

see hundreds of drones ‘dancing across the night sky’, as cutting-edge technology fuses with ‘artistic brilliance’... Birmingham will be the first UK city to experience the new show, which will then continue on a tour across the country.



YONEX All England Open Badminton Championships

Utilita Arena Birmingham, Tues 11 - Sun 16 March

The YONEX All England Open Badminton Championships makes a welcome return to Birmingham this month. The event is the world’s oldest and most

prestigious badminton tournament, having first been held in 1899. This year’s get-together features 50 hours of live badminton made up of 155 matches.

The Creative Craft Show

NEC, Birmingham, Thurs 13 - Sun 16 March

The Creative Craft Show and sister shows Sewing For Pleasure and Fashion & Embroidery return to the NEC for four days mid-month.

One ticket allows access to all three shows, offering visitors an abundance of workshops and demonstrations to enjoy, stalls around which to browse and great opportunities to stock up on supplies.

New events at The Creative Craft Show include the Creative Homes Theatre and accompanying workshops, which need to be booked in advance.

This year will also see Sewing For Pleasure host ‘a bigger and better’ Proud Lounge - a dedicated space celebrating the diversity of the sewing and crafting community.



Meanwhile, over in the Fashion & Embroidery section, visitors will be able to enjoy a number of never-before-seen features. The ever-popular catwalk shows and National Embroidery competition both make a return. Visitors will also have the opportunity to view The Red Dress, an award-winning global and collaborative embroidery project, created across a period of 14 years, which has been embroidered by 367 women and girls, 11 men and boys, and two non-binary artists from 51 countries across the world.



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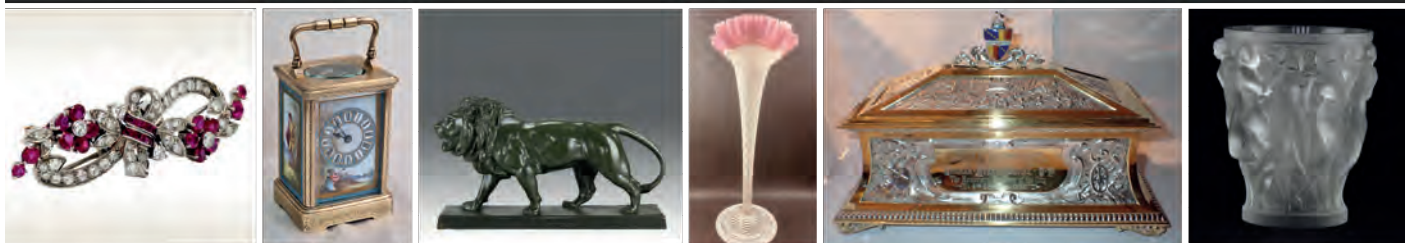
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Events previews from around the region



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National Homebuilding & Renovating Show

NEC, Birmingham, Thurs 20 - Sun 23 March

The National Homebuilding & Renovating Show brings together designers, experts, builders and suppliers ‘to help you create the home of your dreams’.

Visitors can check out all the latest products, join seminars and masterclasses, and ask the experts for an opinion on everything

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



Classic Antique Fairs NEC, Hall 11, Birmingham, Fri 28 - Sun 30 March

Classic Antique Fairs are back at the NEC, Hall 11, with around 80 specialist dealers offering a wide variety of high-quality pieces to suit all budgets.

The exhibitors cover a wide range of fields, including Cartier and Fabergé jewellery, Art Deco furniture, Lalique, Roman glass, porcelain, ceramics, silver, animalier bronzes, C19th animal portraits and

contemporary art. Amongst the exhibits will be an important parcel silver gilt Freedom of The City of Birmingham casket, presented to Thomas Avery Esquire, former Mayor and Alderman of the city on the 4th of October 1892. The piece is being exhibited by T Robert Fine Antiques. To book tickets and reduced cost parking, visit: classicantiquefairs.co.uk

Peter Rabbit Visit

Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster, Sat 29 & Sun 30 March

Families can take a heritage train ride out into the countryside to see Peter Rabbit at Severn Valley Railway late this month. On arrival at The Engine House at Highley, visitors will be able to see Peter during storytime sessions, after which they can explore the interactive exhibits and outdoor play area. Magic shows - taking place throughout the day - are also included in the price of a ticket.



Cheltenham Festival

Cheltenham Racecourse, Tues 11 - Fri 14 March

Cheltenham Racecourse has hosted racing since 1815 and now showcases some of the best jump racing in the country.

The highlight is the Cheltenham Festival, which features a total of 28 races and 14 Grade 1 events, contested in front of more than 65,000 racegoers on each of the four days. To add to the event’s excitement, the ongoing rivalry between Great Britain and Ireland is celebrated with the Prestbury Cup, which sees the two nations compete against one another to accumulate the most Festival winners.



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*Ticket Offer expires 3pm 19 March. Saving based on one day full price tickets for two people. Children 16 and under go free.



SPONSORS AND PARTNERS



Your week-
by-week
listings guide
March 2025

the list



Mugenkyo Taiko Drummers - Lichfield Garrick, Fri 28 March & Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, Tues 1 April

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

What's On

Sat 1 - Sun 9 March



Patrick Monahan - Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth
Sat 1 March

Mon 10 - Sun 16 March



The Girl On The Train - Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury
Tues 11 - Sat 15 March

Mon 17 - Sun 23 March



Welcome To The World - The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield
Sun 23 March

Mon 24 - Mon 31 March



Jonny Cole - Halesowen Town Hall & Stafford Gatehouse
Mon 24 - Thurs 27 March

VISUAL ARTS IN THE MIDLANDS

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR Exhibition of powerful photographs showcasing animal behaviour, spectacular species and the fragility of our planet, until Sun 20 Apr

MODERN MUSE BY ARPITA SHAH A series of photographic portraits celebrating the identities and experiences of young South Asian women from Birmingham and the West Midlands.

CURTIS HOLDER: DRAWING CARLOS ACOSTA Curtis Holder, winner of Sky Arts Portrait Artist of the Year in 2020, was commissioned to draw Carlos Acosta, director of Birmingham Royal Ballet. This display brings together portraits Curtis made during the competition and his working sketches.

Midlands Arts Centre, Edgbaston, Birmingham

MADE AT MAC: WORKING WITH METAL A stained glass and jewellery exhibition, showcasing the talents of students and tutors who work with metal on MAC's 12-week creative courses, Sat 8 Mar - Sun 18 May

PRISM PHOTOGRAPHY OPEN 2025 Group exhibition bringing together a selection of thought-provoking new photographs by image-makers based across the West Midlands, Sat 15 Mar - Sun 18 May

SU RICHARDSON: IN STITCHES The largest retrospective of Richardson's work to date, and the first solo exhibition in her home town. Works include recent soft sculptures that explore themes of motherhood, the maternal body, breastfeeding, loss and illness, Sat 8 Mar - Sun 1 June

New Art Gallery, Walsall

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

EARTHBOUND A major group exhibition, set within the context of global anxiety about the climate crisis and planetary health research, until Sun 8 June

OUTSIDE IN: SHELTER A National Open Exhibition in collaboration with the charity, including a 21-week residency by West Midlands artist Chantal Pitts, until Sun 29 June

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

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

Wolverhampton Art Gallery

SUBJECTS OF STATE, LABOURS OF LOVE Immersive video installation and exhibition, capturing the shared joys, celebrations, struggles, oppressions and complexities experienced by Caribbean heritage communities, Sat 8 Mar - Sun 8 June

Elsewhere:

VIBRANT MOODS AND TEMPOS: LOUISE C EAMES A series of works by gestural abstract painter Louise, until Sat 8 Mar, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

CHRIS DAY: STORYTELLER IN GLASS (IMAGE BELOW) Exploring the interplay of a vibrant range of colours and the texture of mixed materials, Chris often incorporates into his work recycled plumbing materials, like copper metal cages, manipulating glass to create tension and emotional depth, until Sun 1 June, Stourbridge Glass Museum



GREENER GLASS Explore the beauty and innovation of environmentally sustainable glass art in this unique exhibition, emphasising eco-friendly practices and the artistic exploration of environmental themes, until Sun 27 July, Stourbridge Glass Museum

BEAR STEPS ART GALLERY SOLO EXHIBITIONS Featuring works by Jon Young & Sam Sweet, Sun 2 - Sat 15 Mar, Bear Steps Art Gallery, Shrewsbury

IRONBRIDGE FINE ARTS SPRING 2025 EXHIBITION Featuring works of mixed media by Wayne Longhurst, Linda Nevill, Rob Pountney, Rob Leckey, Louise Davies & Claire Walton, Sat 1 Mar - Sat 24 May, Ironbridge Fine Arts, Ironbridge, Shropshire

EMMA BARNARD: MEMENTO VIVERE Exhibition of image-based poetry, inviting you into a space where words and images create a sanctuary for the soul, Fri 14 Mar - Sat 3 May, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

Gigs

MASTERS OF THE SCENE - ABBA THE SHOW Sat 1 Mar, The Robin, Bilston

TURIN BRAKES Sat 1 Mar, Wulfrun Hall at The Halls Wolverhampton

BLAZIN FIDDLES Sat 1 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE BLUETONES Sat 1 Mar, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

SAM DRAISEY Sat 1 Mar, Katie Fitzgeralds, Stourbridge

COUNTRY FEST Sat 1 Mar, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

HEADSTICKS Sat 1 Mar, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek

STEREOHOLICS - STEREOPHONICS TRIBUTE Sat 1 Mar, 45Live, Kidderminster

ELLE-J WALTERS BAND Sat 1 Mar, The Jam House, Birmingham

THE OCELOTS Sat 1 Mar, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

LEVI WASHINGTON Sat 1 Mar, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

CALUM BOWIE Sat 1 Mar, O2 Institute, B'ham

MARTIN THOMAS Sat 1 Mar, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shrops

LOTTERY WINNERS + THE COVASETTES + EIGHTY EIGHT MILES Sat 1 Mar, O2 Institute, B'ham

ZION TRAIN + TRANSGLOBAL UNDERGROUND SOUNDSYSTEM Sat 1 Mar, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

JHARIAH + POLLYANNA Sat 1 Mar, The Asylum, Birmingham

THE BLACK FRIDAYS + THE SLIPPERY PEOPLE Sat 1 Mar, Tower Of Song, Birmingham

UNDER THE COVERS Sat 1 Mar, Joe Joe Jims, Birmingham

BIOHAZARD + LIFE OF AGONY Sun 2 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

JACK WHITE Sun 2 Mar, O2 Academy, B'ham

THE ROY ORBISON STORY Sun 2 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse

THE GARRY ALLCOCK TRIO Sun 2 Mar, Tower Of Song, Birmingham

WHO'S NEXT Sun 2 Mar, The Station, Cannock

JIVE ACES Sun 2 Mar, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

THE BRYAN BRINDLEY BAND Sun 2 Mar, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

SEVEN DRUNKEN NIGHTS Sun 2 - Mon 3 Mar, Lichfield Garrick

CHUCK PROPHET Mon 3 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

DELIVERY Mon 3 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

RØRY + AS DECEMBER FALLS + LAKE MALICE Mon 3 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

JAMIE MILLER + MAISY KAY + ALEX SAMPSON Mon 3 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

MARY CHAPIN CARPENTER + JULIE FOWLIS + KARINE POLWART Mon 3 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

CHRIS DE BURGH Mon 3 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

TEDDY SWIMS Mon 3 - Tues 4 Mar, Utilita Arena Birmingham

MIKE Tues 4 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

PUNK OFF: THE SOUNDS OF PUNK AND NEW WAVE Tues 4 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

SQUID Tues 4 Mar, XOYO, Digbeth, B'ham

JIM GHEDI Wed 5 Mar, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

ROISIN MCCARNEY Wed 5 Mar, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

NOTORIOUS BIG TRIBUTE + LIL CEASE + THE FRANK WHITE EXPERIENCE Wed 5 Mar, O2 Institute, B'ham

ZAKK SABBATH + LOWEN Wed 5 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

CRYWANK + JOHNNY FOREIGNER Wed 5 Mar, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

SUFFOCATION + ANGELMAKER + FUMING MOUTH + CARCOSA + MELANCOLIA Wed 5 Mar, XOYO, Birmingham

PETE KELLY + EMMA LANGFORD Wed 5 Mar, Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

POLLY PAULUSMA Wed 5 Mar, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

BLACK DOLDRUMS Thurs 6 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE CARRIVICK SISTERS Thurs 6 Mar, Hermon Arts Centre, Oswestry, North Shropshire

PRIDE OF IRELAND Thurs 6 Mar, Dudley Town Hall

JOSIAH QUEEN Thurs 6 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

WILLE AND THE BANDITS Thurs 6 Mar, St Mary's Church, Shrewsbury

NAO Thurs 6 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

RONNIE RAMERO Thurs 6 Mar, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

ROSALIE CUNNINGHAM + COLOSSAL APOSTLE Thurs 6 Mar, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

SABRINA CARPENTER Thurs 6 Mar, Utilita Arena Birmingham

AMIGOS OPEN MIC Thurs 6 Mar, The Rhodhouse, Sutton Coldfield

THE GEORGE MICHAEL LEGACY Thurs 6 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse

LUCA SIMIAN Fri 7 Mar, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

SHEF LEPPARD Fri 7 Mar, The Robin, Bilston

THE MUSIC OF KATE BUSH - STARRING LISA-MARIE WALTERS AND THE MOMENT OF PLEASURE BAND Fri 7 Mar, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

THE STORY OF GUITAR HEREOS Fri 7 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse

ED SHEERAN NIGHT Fri 7 Mar, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

THE ROY ORBISON STORY Fri 7 Mar, Lichfield Garrick

DEAD AIR Fri 7 Mar, The Victoria, Birmingham

THE SENSATIONAL 60S EXPERIENCE Fri 7 Mar, The Alexandra, B'ham

THE KATE GEE BAND Fri 7 Mar, Tower Of Song, Birmingham

HUEY MORGAN'S NYC BLOCK PARTY Fri 7 Mar, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

PARADISE FOUND: THE ULTIMATE MEAT LOAF ROCK SHOW Fri 7 Mar, Wulfrun Hall at The Halls Wolverhampton

SWEET CAROLINE Fri 7 Mar, William Aston Hall, Wrexham

ELVIS - THE ULTIMATE EXPERIENCE Fri 7 Mar, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

THE MADCHESTER EXPERIENCE + PARKLIFE BLUR TRIBUTE Fri 7 Mar, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

THE FAZYS Fri 7 Mar, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

GENESIS SONGBOOK Fri 7 Mar, Mitchell Arts Centre, Stoke-on-Trent

ROBBIE WILLIAMS TRIBUTE NIGHT Fri 7 Mar, Uttoxeter Racecourse

CLOTH Sat 8 Mar, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

KD AND THE DOGS Sat 8 Mar, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

THE MIDNIGHT CITY SOUL BAND Sat 8 Mar, The Night Owl, Birmingham

SHAMAN'S HARVEST + BLACKTOP MOJO Sat 8 Mar, O2 Institute, B'ham

DOVES Sat 8 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

TRISH CLOWNS Sat 8 Mar, The Hive, Shrewsbury

SOUNDS OF SEATTLE Sat 8 Mar, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

SECOND CITY SIN + ROOD END + CRUSH VELVET + GRACIE ROO Sat 8 Mar, O2 Institute, B'ham

THE MARY WALLOPERS Sat 8 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE BRACKNALL + ROSA CAELUM + THE MASSES Sat 8 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

FLINT FIRE Sat 8 Mar, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

SUNSCREEN Sat 8 Mar, Katie Fitzgeralds, Stourbridge

TOTALLY TINA Sat 8 Mar, Dudley Town Hall

SELF DECEPTION +

THECITYISOURS + EYES WIDE OPEN Sat 8 Mar, The Asylum, B'ham

NOW I'M HERE - QUEEN TRIBUTE Sat 8 Mar, Brierley Civic Hall, Dudley

THE DAISY JANE BAND + VIVIENNE + ALABASTER + STATIC + NAUSY Sat 8 Mar, The Rainbow, Digbeth, Birmingham

AAJ KI RAAT Sat 8 Mar, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

THE ELTON JOHN SHOW Sat 8 Mar, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

BOOTLEG ABBA Sat 8 Mar, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

SWEETPOOL Sat 8 Mar, Firefly, Oakengates, Telford

JIZZY PEARL'S LOVE/HATE Sat 8 Mar, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

10CC'S GRAHAM GOULDMAN & HEART FULL OF SONGS Sat 8 Mar, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

BUDDY HOLLY'S WINTER DANCE PARTY Sat 8 Mar, Festival Drayton Centre, North Shropshire

CLUN VALLEY JAZZ SESSION Sat 8 Mar, SpArC Theatre, Bishops Castle, South Shrops

COLDWAVE Sun 9 Mar, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

BRIT FLOYD Sun 9 Mar, Symphony Hall, B'ham

MICHAEL KIWANUKA Sun 9 Mar, The Civic at The Halls, Wolverhampton

THE MERSEY BEATLES Sun 9 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse

QUILL Sun 9 Mar, Katie Fitzgeralds, Stourbridge

NAPALM DEATH + CROWBAR + FULL OF HELL + BRAT Sun 9 Mar, O2 Institute, B'ham

ALBERT LEE Sun 9 Mar, The Robin, Bilston

THE BROTHERS GILLESPIE Sun 9 Mar, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

90S LIVE Sun 9 Mar, Lichfield Garrick

CHOP SUEY AND SLIP-NOT Sun 9 Mar, The Station, Cannock

AMY LOU'S DIVA PARTY Sun 9 Mar, Brierley Civic Hall, Dudley

Classical Music

SHREWSBURY CHORAL: COME AND SING! VIVALDI'S GLORIA Featuring Martin Cook (director) & John Bowen (accompanist), Sat 1 Mar, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

CBISO BRASS & PERCUSSION Featuring Alpesh Chauhan (conductor). Programme includes works by Gade, Piazzolla, Eliasson & Mussorgsky, Sun 2 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

ECHO RISING STARS: MATILDA LLOYD - LEGENDE Featuring Matilda Lloyd (trumpet) & Jonathan Ware (piano).

Programme includes works by Honegger, Enescu, Debussy & more..., Sun 2 Mar, Jennifer Blackwell Performance Space, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

PAUL CARR: ORGAN RECITAL Programme includes works by Elgar, Harris, Howells & more..., Sun 2 Mar, Holy Trinity Church, Wordsley

BARNARDO'S NATIONAL CHOIR COMPETITION 2025 Over 70 school and community choirs competed to win a place at this prestigious final, Tues 4 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

LUNCHTIME RECITAL Featuring Emilija Karaliute (kankles), Tues 4 Mar, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

DISCOVERING MORRICONE Featuring Giacomo Loprieno (conductor), Anna Delfino (soprano), Attila Simon (violin) & Ensemble Symphony Orchestra, Wed 5 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

PRE-CONCERT PERFORMANCE: RBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Programme includes works by Meyer, orch. Berlioz & Ravel, Thurs 6 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CBISO: BEETHOVEN & MAHLER Featuring Alpesh Chauhan (conductor), Karen Cargill (mezzo soprano) & Brenden Gunnell (tenor), Thurs 6 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

ROYAL PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY AWARDS 2025 Classical music's biggest awards night comes to Birmingham for the first time, Thurs 6 Mar, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

PAUL CARR: ORGAN RECITAL Programme includes works by Spicer, J S Bach, Vivaldi & more..., Thurs 6 Mar, St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham

PIANO DUETS WITH GILL STYLES & RICHARD WALKER Fri 7 Mar, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

CELEBRITY SONG RECITAL Featuring Benjamin Appl (baritone) & James Baillieu (piano). Programme includes works by Schubert, Fischer-Dieskau, Brahms & more..., Fri 7 Mar, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

EX CATHEDRA: LATIN AMERICAN BAROQUE - RITUAL 1631 Featuring Jeffrey Skidmore (conductor). Programme includes works by Araujo, Hernandez, Salazar & more..., Sun 9 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

SEAN GODDEN PIANO CONCERT Programme comprises Beethoven's Sonata No 29, Hammerclavier, Sun 9 Mar, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

LONDON CONCERTANTE: FOUR SEASONS & LARK ASCENDING BY CANDLELIGHT Programme includes works by Mozart, Vivaldi & Vaughan Williams, Sun 9 Mar, Shrewsbury Abbey

Comedy

KAT B & RICHARD BLACKWOOD Sat 1 Mar, Birmingham Hippodrome

JIM DAVIDSON Sat 1 Mar, Dudley Town Hall

PADDY MCGUINNESS Sat 1 Mar, Civic Hall at The Halls Wolverhampton

PATRICK MONAHAN Sat 1 Mar, Theatre on the Steps, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire



LINDSEY SANTORO, WILL DUGGAN, DARREN HARRIOTT & MARK NELSON Sat 1 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

CLINTON BAPTISTE Sun 2 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

CONNOR BURNS Sun 2 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ZOE LYONS Mon 3 Mar, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

ANIA MAGLIANO Wed 5 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

CLOSEUP COMEDY FEAT. AURIE STYLA & MORE Thurs 6 Mar, Hockley Social Club, B'ham

JOHN SHUTTLEWORTH Thurs 6 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

MATT FORDE Thurs 6 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

RUSSELL KANE Thurs 6 Mar, William Aston Hall, Wrexham

KUM-N-AVALOFF WITH RICKY BALSHAW, TAL DAVIES, JAMIE DOUGLAS & DAN SMITH (MC) Thurs 6 Mar, Stourbridge Town Hall

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, ALLYSON JUNE SMITH & JOHN FOTHERGILL Thurs 6 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

EMMANUEL SONUBI & SOL BERNSTEIN Thurs 6 Mar, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek

KIRI PRITCHARD-MCLEAN Fri 7 Mar, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek

SHAZIA MIRZA, KATE BARRON, ALLYSON JUNE SMITH, JOHN FOTHERGILL & SARAH ROBERTS Fri 7 Mar, The Glee Club, B'ham

RACHEL FAIRBURN Fri 7 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JASON MANFORD Fri 7 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

ANDY ZALTZMAN Fri 7 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

AL MURRAY Fri 7 Mar, Walsall Arena and Arts Centre

SHAZIA MIRZA, FAIZAN SHAH, ALLYSON JUNE SMITH & JOHN FOTHERGILL Sat 8 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

DOMINIC FRISBY Sat 8 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

MARTIN MOR AS MARTIN BIGPIG KIDS COMEDY SHOW Sat 8 Mar, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek

IAIN STIRLING Sun 9 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

LINDSEY SANTORO, DARREN HARRIOTT, JAY HANDLEY, JONATHAN HIPKISS, TAL DAVIES, FREDDIE FARRELL, RYAN MOLD, RACHEL BAKER & AARON TWITCHEN Sun 9 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

WORLD COMEDY CLASH WITH RICHARD BLACKWOOD, WHITE YARDIE, QUINCY, JAY HANDLEY, TOJU & DANA ALEXANDER Sun 9 Mar, The Glee Club, B'ham

MICK MILLER Sun 9 Mar, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek

RACHEL FAIRBURN Sun 9 Mar, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek



Theatre

ANNIE Amateur version presented by Sutton Coldfield Musical Theatre Company, until Sat 1 Mar, Lichfield Garrick

ROCK OF AGES Split Mask Theatre Company present an amateur version of the American jukebox musical, featuring songs by Bon Jovi, Whitesnake, Foreigner and more... until Sat 1 Mar, Prince of Wales Theatre, Cannock

LABOUR OF LOVE The Crescent Theatre Company present an amateur version of James Graham's Olivier Award-winning political comedy, until Sat 1 Mar, The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

HANDBAGGED Moira Buffini's clever comedy provides a fly-on-the-wall look at what might have happened when Queen Elizabeth II and Margaret Thatcher came face-to-face in the privacy of the palace, until Sat 1 Mar, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

THE LAST QUIZ NIGHT ON EARTH Alison Carr's humorous and heartfelt play explores how we cope with the inevitable, until Sat 1 Mar, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

HAMLET Luke Thallon takes the lead in a new production of Shakespeare's most famous play. Jared Harris, Anton Lesser and Nancy Carroll also star. Rupert Goold directs, until Sat 29 Mar, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

EDWARD II Double Olivier Award winner and RSC Co-Artistic Director Daniel Evans takes the lead in Christopher Marlowe's famous play, until Sat 5 Apr, Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

RABBITS OUT OF THE HAT Magic Circle magicians Norvil & Josephine present a whimsical play about being yourself, no matter what, Sat 1 Mar, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

HONEST LIES Domestic story celebrating the resilience of women everywhere. Written by Jenny Stokes & Dawn Butler and directed by Alison Belbin, Sat 1 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

REVISION ON TOUR: MACBETH An ensemble of six actors create a cauldron of characters, as Macbeth and Lady Macbeth make their perilous descent towards hell, Mon 3 - Tues 4 Mar, The Alexandra, B'ham

WE WILL ROCK YOU Hadley Learning Community present an amateur version of the smash-hit jukebox musical, Mon 3 - Tues 4 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES One-man show in which Jonathan Goodwin plays Sherlock Holmes and a host of other characters from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's iconic story,

Tues 4 Mar, Middleport Pottery, Stoke-on-Trent

WAR HORSE Powerfully moving drama based on Michael Morpurgo's wartime novel and featuring life-sized horses from Handspring Puppet Company, Tues 4 - Sat 8 Mar, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

AN INSPECTOR CALLS Stephen Daldry's award-winning production of JB Priestley's classic thriller, Tues 4 - Sat 8 Feb, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

GASPING Stafford Players present an amateur version of Ben Elton's 'scintillating parody of corporate greed', Tues 4 - Sat 8 Feb, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG Ore Oduba stars as Caractacus Potts and Liam Fox as Grandpa Potts in a brand-new production of the much-loved family favourite, Tues 4 - Sun 9 Mar, Birmingham Hippodrome

PLAY/TEST: A SCRATCH NIGHT Expect bold performances, as playwrights, directors and actors showcase their work-in-progress pieces, Wed 5 Mar, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

REVISION ON TOUR: DR JEKYLL & MR HYDE A new stage adaptation of Robert Louis Stevenson's Victorian gothic masterpiece, Wed 5 Mar, The Alexandra, Birmingham

QUENTIN CRISP: NAKED HOPE Mark Farrelly's one-man play depicts Quentin at two phases of his extraordinary life: alone in his Chelsea flat in the 1960s, certain that life has passed him by, and 30 years later, performing An Evening With Quentin Crisp in New York, Wed 5 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury



MADE IN DAGENHAM Crewe Amateur Musical Society presents its version of the powerhouse musical comedy about friendship, love, and the importance of fighting for what's right, Wed 5 - Sat 8 Mar, Crewe Lyceum Theatre

NEW MUSICALS SHOWCASE Presented by the venue's Musical Theatre Writer's Group. Expect an eclectic collection featuring inspirational true stories and 'magical washing machines', Thurs 6 Mar, Birmingham Hippodrome

THE MINER BIRDS Lisa Blower's play fuses song, storytelling and poetry to breathe life into the experiences of miners' wives past and present - and also to look into the future, Thurs 6

Mar, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

LOOK AFTER YOUR KNEES Natalie Bellingham's one-woman show fuses storytelling, comedy and movement to uncover some of the things in life that can be hard to talk about, Thurs 6 Mar, Arena Theatre, W'hampton

ETERNAL LOVE THE MUSICAL A new beginning and chapter, celebrating 22 years of the Vampires Rock chronicles, Thurs 6 - Sat 8 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

CREATING CARMEN A co-production between The Telling and music ensemble CarmenCo which promises a 'fun-filled evening of fantasy, comedy, drama and tremendous music', Fri 7 Mar, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

SPACE GIRL KRYPT Junior Company present 'an action-packed play bursting with songs and imagination, celebrating curiosity, resilience and exploration', Sat 8 - Sun 9 Mar, The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster

BUFFY REVAMPED Fast-paced, one-man, 70-minute show taking a journey through all 144 episodes of hit 1990s TV series Buffy The Vampire Slayer, Sun 9 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Kid's Theatre

THE DINOSAUR THAT POOPED: A ROCK SHOW! A new musical for younger audiences adapted from the number one bestselling books by Tom Fletcher & Dougie Poynter, Sun 2 Mar, The Alexandra, Birmingham

ROOM ON THE BROOM Tall Stories' fun-filled production, based on Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler's much-loved children's book, Tues 4 - Wed 5 Mar, Tamworth Arts Centre

A BIG EGG The People's Theatre Company fuse animation, puppetry, music and live action in a children's show based on Steven Lee's picture book, Sat 8 Mar, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

POP DIVAS LIVE! Pop concert experience where younger audiences can sing and dance along to their favourite pop stars, Sat 8 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Dance

BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET: CLASS ON STAGE A chance to look behind the scenes and watch BRB's dancers warm up and complete their final pre-show preparations, Sat 1 Mar, Birmingham Hippodrome

CARISMÁTICO TANGO A cultural exploration of Argentine Tango music and dance, Sat 8 Mar, Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

Light Entertainment

LAVELLES - THE LADIES OF MOTOWN A 'dazzling homage' to the golden era of America's soulful vocal artists, Sat 1 Mar, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

LAS VEGAS LIVE WITH THE RAT PACK Twenty-fifth anniversary show, Sat 1 Mar, Stoke Repertory Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

MATRICKS ILLUSION PRESENTS: REIMAGINED A fast-paced production featuring brand-new magic and signature pieces... Sat 1 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

TRASH! Energetic show in which the possibilities of recycling are explored through percussion, movement and humour, Mon 3 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre



IRELAND THE SHOW High-energy showcase of song, dance and comedy celebrating Irish culture, Tues 4 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

KARL LOXLEY: SONGS FROM THE STAGE AND SCREEN Wed 5 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

BACK ON THE WARD: THE HOSPITAL SHOW Charity showcase of comedy, song and dance, performed by NHS employees, ex employees and friends, Wed 5 - Sat 8 Mar, Stoke Repertory Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

QUEENZ - DRAG ME TO THE DISCO! 'A live vocal drag extravaganza where dancing queenz and disco dreams collide for the party of a lifetime', Thurs 6 Mar, The Alexandra, B'ham

PRIDE OF IRELAND: ST PATRICK'S DAY SHOW Featuring music, fun and craic, with contributions from Mike Denver (The Galway Boy) and Dominic Kirwan, Thurs 6 Mar, Dudley Town Hall

BEYOND THE BARRICADE The UK's longest musical theatre concert tour, featuring principal cast members from both the West End and UK tours of Les Miserables, Thurs 6 Mar, Lichfield Garrick

GARETH GATES SINGS LOVE SONGS FROM THE MOVIES Thurs 6 Mar, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

LOOKING FOR ME FRIEND - THE MUSIC OF VICTORIA WOOD Paulus The Cabaret Geek celebrates the music of Victoria Wood, accompanied by Fascinating Aida's Michael Roulston

on piano, Fri 7 Mar, Blackheath Library, Rowley Regis



THE PADDY BLINDERS An immersive theatre experience featuring music, characters and stories from the Emerald Isle, Sat 8 Mar, Birmingham Black Box Theatre

PETER ANDRE IN THE BEST OF FRANKIE VALLI Sat 8 Mar, Lichfield Garrick

KNIGHTMARE LIVE! 10TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR Smash-hit comedy show based on the cult 1990s TV classic. Tom Bell (The Mash Report) and Paul Flannery (Ghosts Of Darkness) star, Sat 8 Mar, Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-upon-Trent

BEYOND THE BARRICADE The UK's longest musical theatre concert tour, featuring principal cast members from both the West End and UK tours of Les Miserables, Sun 9 Mar, Crewe Lyceum Theatre

Talks & Spoken Word

KATE MOSSE: UNLOCKING THE SECRETS OF THE LABYRINTH One-woman show in which the bestselling author shares her inspiration for conjuring up a timeless modern classic, at the same time using music, imagery and film to bring her characters to life, Sat 1 Mar, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

JAMES MARTIN: LIVE Taking inspiration from the menus of France, Spain, the US and home, James whips up a series of culinary delights before journeying through the decades with themes and dishes from the 1950s to the 80s, Sat 1 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

DR RANGAN CHATTERJEE: THE THRIVE TOUR Join the host of Europe's biggest health podcast, Feel Better, Live More, to discover secrets of optimal health and how to make changes that actually last, Sun 2 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

KATE MOSSE: UNLOCKING THE SECRETS OF THE LABYRINTH One-woman show in which the bestselling author shares her inspiration for conjuring up a timeless modern classic, at the same time using music, imagery and film to bring her characters to life, Sun 2 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

LENN SISSAY LET THE LIGHT POUR IN A brand-new show from the award-winning author and master of the

spoken word, Mon 3 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

15 YEARS OF THE INBETWEENERS - IN CONVERSATION WITH JOE THOMAS A stripped-back event in which Joe talks about his time on the hit show and takes questions from the audience, Thurs 6 Mar, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-upon-Trent

SUN AND FIRE: CELEBRATING PREHISTORIC SHROPSHIRE A morning of talks on prehistoric Shropshire, followed by a visit to the Sun And Fire exhibition, Sat 8 March, Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

Events

WHAT UNIVERSITY? & WHAT CAREER? LIVE Event for 15- to 19-year-olds who are considering their options after leaving school or college, until Sat 1 Mar, NEC, Birmingham

BOOGIE LIGHTS EXPRESS Celebrate SVR's 60 years in style, with a sound & light show on board a steam train, until Sat 1 Mar, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, nr Kidderminster

GANDEYS CIRCUS Back for 2025 with a carnival spectacular, until Sun 2 Mar, Trentham Estate, Staffordshire

LAMBING LIVE Visit the lambs in the huge indoor barn. You might even be there when a birth happens! until Sun 2 Mar, Park Hall Countryside Experience, Oswestry, North Shropshire

WIZARD OF OZ DRONE LIGHT SHOW: BIRMINGHAM Witness a magical performance in the sky, tuck into your favourites in the food village and enjoy live entertainment, Sat 1 Mar, Edgbaston Stadium, Birmingham

MADE IN BIRMINGHAM TOUR A guided tour featuring a selection of key Birmingham-built objects, Sat 1 Mar, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

STITCHED TOKENS Inspired by the tokens in the Foundling Museum's collection, create a badge or a patch to take home with you, Sat 1 Mar, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

THE NATIONAL WEDDING SHOW The UK's leading wedding planning event, Sat 1 - Sun 2 Mar, NEC, Birmingham

GO DIVING SHOW The only consumer dive and travel show in the UK, Sat 1 - Sun 2 Mar, NAEC Stoneleigh, Warwickshire

THE NATIONAL EQUINE SHOW The perfect weekend for new and existing equestrians, Sat 1 - Sun 2 Mar, NEC, Birmingham

AXE CASTING WORKSHOP Discover how some of the earliest metal tools were produced in prehistoric Britain, Sat 1 - Sun 2 Mar, Shrewsbury Museum &



James Martin: Live - Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Art Gallery

THE ENCHANTED TRAIL Rescue the princess on this interactive trail, Sat 1 - Sun 30 Mar, Hawkstone Park Follies, North Shropshire

MELTING POINT Drop in to this interactive talk with Dr Natasha Harlow and learn more about the Bronze Age with an opportunity to handle original artefacts, Wed 5 Mar, Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

THURSDAY TOURS AT BLAKESLEY HALL A guided tour of the Tudor building, Thurs 6 Mar, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

SHROPSHIRE BUSINESS FESTIVAL Networking opportunity for business leaders and emerging talent, Thurs 6 Mar, Telford International Centre, Shropshire

CRUFTS The Kennel Club presents 'the world's greatest dog show', Thurs 6 - Sun 9 Mar, NEC, B'ham

BOOGIE LIGHTS EXPRESS Celebrate SVR's 60 years in style, with a sound & light show on board a steam train, Fri 7 - Sat 8 Mar, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster



MADE IN BIRMINGHAM TOUR A guided tour featuring a selection of key Birmingham-built objects, Sat 8 Mar, Thinktank Birmingham Science Museum

WORLD BOOK DAY: PEACOCKS & PEAHENS A celebration of books, stories, art and poetry inspired by peacocks, Sat 8 Mar, The New Art Gallery Walsall

FAMILY STEAM DAY Take part in free, family-friendly steam activities, Sat 8 Mar, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

CLOSING EVENT OF 'PAINTED DREAMS: THE ART OF EVELYN DE MORGAN' Featuring expert talks, a creative workshop and the option to attend an evening performance by Flexus Dance Collective, Sat 8 Mar, Wolverhampton Art Gallery

COUNTRY SUPERSTARS BRUNCH Presented by The Brunch Club, Sat 8 Mar, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

MIDDLEPORT ARTISAN SPRING MARKET Join the local makers and bakers at this indoor artisan market, Sat 8 - Sun 9 Mar, Middleport Pottery, Stoke-on-Trent

SPECTACLE OF STEAM A weekend of working steam locomotives, Sat 8 - Sun 9 Mar, Staffold Country Park, Tamworth

ULTIMATE DUBS The UK's largest indoor VAG enthusiasts event Sun 9 Mar, Telford International Centre, Shropshire

WORLD OF WEDGWOOD ARTISAN MARKET Thirty-stall market featuring independent local makers and small businesses from Staffordshire, Sun 9 Mar, World of Wedgwood, Stoke-on-Trent

LIVE PRO WRESTLING - ROYAL RUMBLE Enjoy the action, the drama and the hard-hitting matches, Sun 9 Mar, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

Sam
Rabone

Ben
Thornton



POCKET

DREAM



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Gigs

DHRUV + TARA LILY
Mon 10 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

RIVERS OF NIHL + CYNIC + BEYOND CREATION + DAATH
Mon 10 Mar, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

LUCIA & THE BEST BOYS Mon 10 Mar, Mama Roux's, B'ham

DAVID KUSHNER + JENNA RAINE Tues 11 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

WILLOW AVALON Tues 11 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

MACHINE GIRL Tues 11 Mar, XOYO, Digbeth, Birmingham

RONNIE ROMERO Tues 11 Mar, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

ANDY FAIRWEATHER LOW & THE LOW RIDERS Tues 11 Mar, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

JOSHUA BURNSIDE Wed 12 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE BAREFOOT BANDIT Wed 12 Mar, Actress & Bishop, B'ham

SOLYA + BABY BUGS Wed 12 Mar, O2 Academy, B'ham

BAD TOUCH + THE DUST CODA Wed 12 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

MIRANDA SYKES & JIM CAUSLEY + DICK WOODHOUSE Wed 12 Mar, Red Lion Folk Club, Birmingham

KRIS DREVER & CHRIS STOUT Wed 12 Mar, Jennifer Blackwell Performance Space, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

MIKE AND THE MECHANICS Wed 12 Mar, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

ALBERT LEE Wed 12 Mar, Brierley Civic Hall, Dudley

LARA JONES + LARRY STABBINS + MARK SANDERS Thurs 13 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE SONGS OF STUART ADAMSON Thurs 13

Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

JASON DONOVAN
Thurs 13 Mar, William Aston Hall, Wrexham

ROB LAMBERTI AS GEORGE MICHAEL
Thurs 13 Mar, The Robin, Bilston

THE DUBLIN LEGENDS
Thurs 13 Mar, Halesowen Town Hall

EDDIE PARKER Thurs 13 Mar, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

DS:UK - IN TRIBUTE TO DIRE STRAITS Thurs 13 Mar, Brierley Civic Hall, Dudley

BDRMM Thurs 13 Mar, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

STEVE KNIGHTLEY
Thurs 13 Mar, Katie Fitzgeralds, Stourbridge

LEVELLERS COLLECTIVE + IAN PROWSE Thurs 13 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

BADLY DRAWN BOY
Thurs 13 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

LIMP BIZKIT Thurs 13 Mar, bp pulse LIVE, Birmingham

PETER DOHERTY Thurs 13 Mar, XOYO, Digbeth, Birmingham

SOME MIGHT SAY - OASIS TRIBUTE Thurs 13 Mar, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

AMIGOS OPEN MIC
Thurs 13 Mar, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

JOHN KIRKPATRICK
Thurs 13 Mar, The Talbot Theatre, Whitchurch, Shrops

BLOCK 33 Fri 14 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE SONGS OF STUART ADAMSON Fri 14 Mar, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

WASHBOARD RESONATORS Fri 14 Mar, Hermon Arts, Oswestry, Shrops

TOM AND AURELIE Fri 14 Mar, Burton Folk Club

THE PINK FLOYD SHOW Fri 14 Mar, Theatre



Steve Knightley - Katie Fitzgeralds, Stourbridge

On The Steps, Bridgnorth, Shrops
CHARLOTTE YOUNG Fri 14 Mar, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

MIRACLE OF SOUND + COLM R. MCGUINNNESS Fri 14 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

STEEL PULSE + THE SELECTER Fri 14 Mar, O2 Institute, B'ham

MORETALLICA Fri 14 Mar, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

ALABAMA 3 + SONNY E. Fri 14 Mar, O2 Academy, B'ham

FLO Fri 14 Mar, O2 Academy, B'ham

THE MALAKITES Fri 14 Mar, bp Dead Wax, Digbeth, Birmingham

TWO RIVERS DEEP Fri 14 Mar, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

THE KAISER MONKEY KILLERS Fri 14 Mar, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

OVERSIZE + MERCURY Fri 14 Mar, The Asylum, Birmingham

MELYS Fri 14 Mar, The Victoria, B'ham

KIM WILDE Fri 14 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE WILDHEARTS Fri 14 Mar, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

GOAT MAN & THE MOTH FEAT. DS-DOS + TWINNINETSIX + DREDGE Fri 14 Mar, The Rainbow, B'ham

JAKE VAADELAND & THE STURGEON RIVER BOYS Fri 14 Mar, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

JOHN POWER Fri 14 Mar, Halesowen

Town Hall

QUOVENTION Fri 14 - Sat 15 Mar, The Robin, Bilston

SY SMITH Sat 15 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

AIN'T NO DISCO Sat 15 Mar, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

SOLACE + PIP + MAXWELL AVENUE + ELEVEN FIFTEEN + ROAD CLOSED Sat 15 Mar, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

FAYE SMITH & PAUL WETTON Sat 15 Mar, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

ALEC BENJAMIN Sat 15 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SKABURST Sat 15 Mar, Albert's Shed Southwater, Telford

JUAN MARTIN Sat 15 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE DEAD SOUTH + CORB LUND Sat 15 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE LANCASHIRE HOTPOTS Sat 15 Mar, O2 Academy, B'ham

PAGAN SWORD + AMETHYST + MONOCHOPSIS Sat 15 Mar, The Flapper, Birmingham

GO YOUR OWN WAY - THE FLEETWOOD MAC LEGACY Sat 15 Mar, Wulfrun Hall at The Halls Wolverhampton

THE DARKESS Sat 15 Mar, Civic Hall at The Halls Wolverhampton

THE FATHER TEDS Sat 15 Mar, The Rhodehouse, Sutton Coldfield

HERE WE GO AGAIN Sat 15 Mar, Lichfield

Garrick

LET'S ROCK CLUB TROPICANA FT PAT SHARPE AND ANDY CRANE Sat 15 Mar, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

THE BRAINS Sat 15 Mar, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

MAD CADDIES & THE SKINTS Sat 15 Mar, Regal, KK's Steel Mill, Stoke-on-Trent

THE ROSIE HOOD BAND Sat 15 Mar, Newhampton Arts Centre, W'hampton

HOCKEY DAD Sun 16 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE LYDIA RAE QUARTET Sun 16 Mar, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

DANNY & THE CHAMPIONS OF THE WORLD + ANNIE DRESSNER Sun 16 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

NATHAN EVANS & THE SAINT PHNX BAND Sun 16 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

SPIKE FROM THE QUIREBOYS Sun 16 Mar, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

ESOTERIC + WARCRAW + PANTHEIST + TUMANDUUMBAND Sun 16 Mar, The Flapper, Birmingham

WE HATE YOU PLEASE Sun 16 Mar, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

BILLY OCEAN: A CELEBRATION Sun 16 Mar, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

DIRE STREETS Sun 16 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse

Classical Music

THOMAS TROTTER LUNCHTIME ORGAN CONCERT: CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Programme includes works by Frances-Hoad, J Weir, F Price & more..., Mon 10 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

LUNCHTIME RECITAL Featuring Packwood Haugh Young Musicians, Tues 11 Mar, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

CBSO: DVOŘÁK & RACHMANINOFF
Featuring Joshua Weilerstein (conductor) & Alisa Weilerstein (cello). Programme also includes Poem for Orchestra by William Grant Still, Wed 12 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

KEELE CONCERTS Featuring Aaron Azunda Akugbo (trumpet - pictured) & Zeynep Özsucu (piano). Programme includes works by Honnegger, Boulanger, Vivaldi & more..., Wed 12 Mar, Keele University Chapel



KELL WIND TRIO Programme includes music for flute, clarinet & bassoon, Fri 14 Mar, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

HALLE: BONNIE SCOTLAND Featuring Ning Feng (soloist) & Euan Shields (conductor). Programme includes works by Elgar, Bruch & Mendelssohn, Fri 14 Mar, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA AND JAZZ BAND CONCERT Fri 14 Mar, Keele University Music Union

RISE UP, MY LOVE Featuring Tony Pinel (organ) & David Thomas (conductor). Programme includes works by Palestrina, Lassus, D Bednall & more..., Sat 15 Mar, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

STAFFORD SINFONIA: THE GREAT Programme includes works by Schubert & Mozart, Sat 15 Mar, Rising Brook Community Church, Stafford

KEELE CHAPEL SINGERS: THE SPRING CONCERT Featuring Peter De Cruz (conductor). Programme includes works by Mozart & Vivaldi, Sun 16 Mar, Keele University Chapel



The Girl On The Train - Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Comedy

- KEMAH BOB** Wed 12 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham
- MILTON JONES** Wed 12 Mar, Lichfield Garrick
- DAN TIERNAN** Thurs 13 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham
- COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, PHIL ELLIS & PAUL TONKINSON** Thurs 13 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham
- JENNY ECLAIR** Fri 14 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall
- FITZ OF LAUGHTER** Fri 14 Mar, Katie Fitzgeralds, Stourbridge
- MILTON JONES** Fri 14 Mar, Dudley Town Hall
- INGRID DAHLE, MIKE RICE, PHIL ELLIS, PAUL TONKINSON & OLLIE FOX** Fri 14 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham
- INGRID DAHLE, MIKE RICE, PHIL ELLIS & PAUL TONKINSON** Sat 15 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham
- CLINTON BAPTISTE** Sat 15 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre



- JASON MANFORD** Sat 15 Mar, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent
- MILTON JONES** Sat 15 Mar, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme
- LUNCHTIME FAMILY COMEDY WITH ROBIN MORGAN, JAMES COOK & PATRICK MONAHAN** Sun 16 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham
- HUGE DAVIES** Sun 16 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

Theatre

- FLUFF** A darkly comedic play exploring memories and the choices we make in life, Mon 10 - Tues 11 Mar, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham
- SIX THE MUSICAL** From Tudor queens to pop princesses, the six wives of Henry VIII take to the mic to tell their tales, remixing 500 years of historical heartbreak into an 80-minute celebration of 21st-century girl power, Tues 11 - Sat 15 Mar, Birmingham Hippodrome
- NOW THAT'S WHAT I CALL A MUSICAL** Brand-new musical comedy featuring an 80s soundtrack and choreography by Strictly's Craig Revel Horwood, Tues 11 - Sat 15 Mar, The Alexandra, Birmingham
- CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY** NODA present an amateur version of Roald Dahl's iconic story, Tues 11 - Sat 15 Mar, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall
- DEATH OF A SALESMAN** New version of Arthur Miller's famous post-war contemplation on 'the American Dream', Tues 11 - Sat 15 Mar, The Rep, Birmingham
- EVERYBODY'S TALKING ABOUT JAMIE** Amateur version presented by North Staffs Operatic Society, Tues 11 - Sat 15 Mar, Stoke Repertory Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent
- THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN** Giovanna Fletcher stars as Rachel Watson in the stage version of Paula Hawkins' bestselling novel of the same name, Tues 11 - Sat 15 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury
- WAR HORSE** Powerfully moving drama based on Michael Morpurgo's wartime novel and featuring life-sized horses from Handspring Puppet Company, Tues 11 - Sat 22 Mar,

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre
42ND STREET Amateur version presented by Cabaret Theatre Company, Wed 12 - Sat 15 Mar, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-upon-Trent

HONEST LIES Domestic story celebrating the resilience of women everywhere. Written by Jenny Stokes & Dawn Butler and directed by Alison Belbin, Wed 12 Mar, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE LAST ACT Nigel Miles-Thomas assumes multiple roles from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's legendary stories. The Last Act has been written by Conan Doyle expert David Stuart Davies, Wed 12 Mar, Lichfield Garrick

HITCHCOCKED! Foghorn Unscripted plunge into a world of suspense and silliness, where audience suggestions set the stage, Thurs 13 Mar, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

BIG DICK WHITTINGTON Adults-only panto, Thurs 13 - Sat 15 Mar, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

THE DRESSER Amateur version of Ronald Harwood's famous play, Thurs 13 - Sun 16 Mar, Dudley Little Theatre

CAROUSEL: A THEATRE SHOW BY IVO GRAHAM Acclaimed debut play in which the award-winning comedian fuses storytelling and spoken word to explore the nature of memory, Fri 14 Mar, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

THE WARDROBE Gatehouse Youth Theatre Plays Group presents an amateur version of Sam Holcroft's play, Fri 14 - Sat 15 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

Kids Theatre

PIRATES LOVE UNDERPANTS A swashbuckling story of pirates searching for the fabled Pants of Gold for the captain's treasure chest. Music and puppetry combine in this stage adaptation of the popular picture book by Claire Freedman, Tues 11 - Fri 14 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

ROOM ON THE BROOM Tall Stories' fun-filled stage adaptation of Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler's much-loved children's book, Sat 15 - Sun 16 Mar, Crewe Lyceum Theatre

Dance

- AMY DOWDEN & CARLOS GU: REBORN** Join the Strictly stars as they share an intimate portrait of their lives and journeys through powerful and show-stopping routines, Mon 10 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham
- AUNUSTHAN** Pagrav Dance Company

celebrate Indian classical dance, Fri 14 Mar, Glasshouse Arts Centre, Stourbridge

Light Entertainment

JAZZ EMU: KNIGHT FEVER Hotly anticipated new show in which the viral comedy character sensation is joined by his live band, The Cosmique Perfection, Wed 12 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

BOX OF FROGS An evening of 'high-octane improvised comedy nonsense', based entirely on audience suggestions, Wed 12 Mar, 1000 Trades, Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

DREAMCOAT STARS An evening of musical theatre hits performed by Any Dream Will Do star Keith Jack and Joseph stars Sam Cassidy, Graham Tudor and Andrew Geater, Thurs 13 Mar, Lichfield Garrick

QUEENZ - DRAG ME TO THE DISCO! 'A live vocal drag extravaganza where dancing queenz and disco dreams collide for the party of a lifetime', Thurs 13 Mar, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

BELIEVE IN BINGO WITH SHELL SUIT CHER Musical comedy bingo show from award-winning performer Tracey Collins (Audrey Heartburn, Elvis Lesley), Fri 14 Mar, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

IRELAND THE SHOW High-energy showcase of song, dance and comedy celebrating Irish culture, Fri 14 Mar, Walsall Arena and Arts Centre

CROONERS Show packed with one-liners, silliness and musical numbers. The nine-piece Mini Big Band also feature, Sat 15 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

MASSAOKE: SING THE MUSICALS Featuring songs from some of the greatest musicals of all time, a live band, character singers and a giant screen displaying singalong lyrics, Sat 15 Mar, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

SET MENU: THE BEST OF GEORGE EGG An evening with the comedian who cooks. Find out how to make food on a train with a laptop, in a shed with power tools and in a hotel room with the appliances they unwittingly provide for you, Sat 15 Mar, SpArC Theatre, Bishops Castle, South Shropshire

CARRY ON - AN EVENING WITH MARK AND LARD Sun 16 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

THE CLASS OF 55 Nostalgic show celebrating the legendary sounds of Buddy Holly, Johnny Cash and Jerry Lee Lewis, Sun 16 Mar, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

Monday 10 - Sunday 16 March

SAM RABONE'S BIG BOSTIN' VARIETY SHOW Featuring America's Got Talent star Mat Ricardo, the West End's Samantha Dorrance, comedienne Hilary O'Neil and the Harper Brothers - sons of Bobby Ball, Sun 16 Mar, Lichfield Garrick

Talks & Spoken Word

AN EVENING WITH KALEB COOPER Expect 'honest conversations, hilarious anecdotes and plenty of surprises', Tues 11 Mar, Lichfield Garrick

BEN FOGLE: WILD Brand-new show in which the adventurer & TV presenter tells of his amazing encounters with people and animals, and how they have changed his life... Wed 12 Mar, Dudley Town Hall

AN EVENING WITH KALEB COOPER Expect 'honest conversations, hilarious anecdotes and plenty of surprises', Fri 14 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

KATE MOSSE: UNLOCKING THE SECRETS OF THE LABYRINTH One-woman show in which the bestselling author shares her inspiration for conjuring up a timeless modern classic, at the same time using music, imagery and film to bring her characters to life, Fri 14 Mar, Lichfield Garrick



SHAUN RYDER - HAPPY MONDAYS, AND FRIDAYS, AND SATURDAYS, AND SUNDAYS Expect 'a carnival of excess, wild tales and improbable truths' from the Happy Mondays and Black Grape frontman, Sat 15 Mar, Prince of Wales Theatre, Cannock

HARI BUDHA MAGAR - NO LEGS, NO LIMIT The first double above-knee amputee to summit Mount Everest shares his extraordinary story and explains how mindset is everything when it comes to making dreams a reality, Sun 16 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Events

YONEX ALL ENGLAND OPEN BADMINTON CHAMPIONSHIPS 2025 Six days of the very best badminton in the world, Tues 11 - Sun 16 Mar, Utilita Arena Birmingham

THURSDAY TOURS AT BLAKESLEY HALL Guided tour of the Tudor building, Thurs 13 Mar, Blakesley Hall, B'ham

SEWING FOR PLEASURE FEATURING FASHION & EMBROIDERY Major show for enthusiasts of sewing, knitting, patchwork and embroidery, Thurs 13 - Sun 16 Mar, NEC, Birmingham

THE CREATIVE CRAFT SHOW Packed with workshops, live demonstrations, and interactive sessions, Thurs 13 - Sun 16 Mar, NEC, Birmingham

ADULT NIGHTS The ultimate Indoor Lego playground, completely kid-free, Fri 14 Mar, Legoland Discovery Centre, Birmingham

VOLUNTEER OPEN DAY Learn about the museum's mission and how you can get involved, Fri 14 Mar, Stourbridge Glass Museum

BOOGIE LIGHTS EXPRESS Celebrate SVR's 60 years in style, with a sound & light show on board a steam train, Fri 14 - Sat 15 Mar, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

FLOCK Celebrate springtime with this special free family event, Sat 15 Mar, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

THE SPRING COLLECTION VINTAGE FAIR 'The ultimate vintage shopping experience', Sat 15 Mar, Himley Hall & Park, Dudley

HOLI 25 FESTIVAL OF COLOURS COMMUNITY DAY With Bharatanatyam dance performances from Jnan Deep Kundu, and Kathak dance performances from Roshni Pink, Sat 15 Mar, The New Art Gallery Walsall

CONNOISSEUR GUIDED TOUR AT GLADSTONE Learn about the history of the ceramic industry as well as the museum itself, Sat 15 Mar, Gladstone Pottery Museum, Stoke-on-Trent

LINO PRINTING Rediscover your creative side with a lino printing workshop, Sat 15 Mar, Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery

SPRINGTIME ANIMALS Check out some beautiful baby animals! Sat 15 Mar, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

SECRETS OF THE GREAT AND GOOD Step back in time and discover the history of Tamworth 'as you've never experienced it before' on this immersive walking tour, Sat 15 Mar, Tamworth, Staffordshire

BONGO'S BINGO ST PATRICK'S DAY SPECIAL The original bingo rave sensation, Sat 15 Mar, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

MIDLANDS GRAND NATIONAL 2025 A day of races and live entertainment, Sat 15 Mar, Uttoxeter Racecourse, Staffordshire

ALTON AFTER DARK Experience the twists and turns of your favourite rides - under the stars! Sat 15 - Sun 16 Mar, Alton Towers Resort, Staffordshire

SPRING GIFT FAYRE Featuring suppliers selling local and hand-made goods, Sat 15 - Sun 16 Mar,



Shaun Ryder - Prince of Wales Theatre, Cannock

The Engine House, Highley

BLOSSOM THEMED BUNTING ART

SESSIONS AT ERDDIG Make a colourful, nature-inspired bunting, Sat 15 - Sat 22 Mar, Erddig Hall, Wrexham

WARGAMES Join Tamworth Wargames Club for a day of tabletop battle

tactics and wits, Sun 16 Mar, Tamworth Castle

AGBO RALLY Eighty rally cars take on the stages around Weston, including the iconic watersplash, Sun 16 Mar, Weston Park, Shropshire / Staffordshire border

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Birmingham WHAT'S ON MARCH 2025

What's On

PLAY | COMEDY | THEATRE | GIGS | VISUAL ARTS | EVENTS

inside:

- ETERNAL LOVE** New musical comes to Brum feature inside...
- LOLA LAND** Summer stars on King George at the Hippodrome
- AIMING HIGH** Basketball championships return to Ullie Arena

HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON IN CONCERT
 Film accompanied live to picture by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra at The Music Box, Symphony Hall

B:Music

Your FREE essential entertainment guide for the Midlands

Coventry & Warwickshire WHAT'S ON MARCH 2025

What's On

PLAY | COMEDY | THEATRE | GIGS | VISUAL ARTS | EVENTS

inside:

- HORSE PLAY** Michael Morigan's vibrant classic returns to the region
- MIDNIGHT DANCER** Shirey & Nikita Kuznetsov bring new look to 'The Bolshoi'
- AIMING HIGH** Basketball championships return to Ullie Arena

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Shropshire WHAT'S ON MARCH 2025

What's On

PLAY | COMEDY | THEATRE | GIGS | VISUAL ARTS | EVENTS

inside:

- ETERNAL LOVE** New musical put on stage feature inside...
- HUGE AND ECLECTIC** What And The Berris to perform at St Mary's Church
- AIMING HIGH** Basketball championships return to Ullie Arena

ROCKY HORROR SHOW
 THE ORIGINAL ROCK & ROLL MUSICAL
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Staffordshire WHAT'S ON MARCH 2025

What's On

PLAY | COMEDY | THEATRE | GIGS | VISUAL ARTS | EVENTS

inside:

- HORSE PLAY** Michael Morigan's vibrant classic returns to the region
- THE TWO OF US** Stephen Galtmore's award-winning play at The Studio
- AIMING HIGH** Basketball championships return to Ullie Arena

Juliet

LEE
 LEAFORD CYCLES

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Wolverhampton & Black Country WHAT'S ON MARCH 2025

What's On

PLAY | COMEDY | THEATRE | GIGS | VISUAL ARTS | EVENTS

inside:

- HORSE PLAY** Michael Morigan's vibrant classic returns to the region
- TURNING 25 IN '25** Network's 'The Art of Calling In' is a first-class memory lane
- AIMING HIGH** Basketball championships return to Ullie Arena

DEAR EVAN HANSEN
 THE OLIVIER, TONY & GRAMMY AWARD-WINNING BEST MUSICAL
 BOOK BY STEVEN LEVENSON
 MUSIC & LYRICS BY BENJAMIN DIKEK & JUSTIN PAUL

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Worcestershire WHAT'S ON MARCH 2025

What's On

PLAY | COMEDY | THEATRE | GIGS | VISUAL ARTS | EVENTS

inside:

- FARM BOY** Michael Morigan's vibrant classic returns to the region
- LOLA LAND** Summer stars on King George at the Hippodrome
- AIMING HIGH** Basketball championships return to Ullie Arena

WORCESTER CATHEDRAL
 Explore Worcester Cathedral, a place of Christian worship and prayer for fourteen centuries...

Back for 2025: The Tower Climb
 Every year, thousands of people climb the spire of the tower. This year, we're taking it to the next level with a new experience. The Tower Climb, and beyond...
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AND CONTACT US ON EITHER OF THE BELOW:

WHAT'S ON SUBSCRIPTION HOTLINE - 01743 281714 OR EMAIL SUBSCRIPTIONS@WHATSONLIVE.CO.UK

Gigs

LOREEN Mon 17 Mar, O2 Institute, B'ham

THE LATHUMS Mon 17 Mar, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

THE GAME Mon 17 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

KID BOOKIE Mon 17 Mar, The Flapper, Birmingham

THE TUBS Tues 18 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

RED RUM CLUB + FLORENTINES Tues 18 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

WARDRUNA Tues 18 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

KATHRYN ROBERTS & SEAN LAKEMAN Tues 18 Mar, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

VICTOR RAY Wed 19 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

INIKO Wed 19 Mar, O2 Institute, B'ham

VAN MORRISON Wed 19 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

THE MARQUEE ALL STAR BAND Thurs 20 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

GIDIKI Thurs 20 Mar, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

MARCIN Thurs 20 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

ANTONY SZMIEREK Thurs 20 Mar, O2 Academy, B'ham

STIFF LITTLE FINGERS + RICKY WARWICK AND THE FIGHTING

HEARTS Thurs 20 Mar, O2 Academy, B'ham

THE PICTUREBOOKS + LOW VOLTS Thurs 20 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THEA GILMORE Thurs 20 Mar, Newhampton Arts Centre

SPACED OUT + SUPERSONIC FUZZ GUN, BRAINROT + NEW PULSE Thurs 20 Mar, The Rainbow, Digbeth, Birmingham

THE DUBLIN LEGENDS Thurs 20 Mar, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

COLDPLACE - TRIBUTE TO COLDPLAY Thurs 20 Mar, Brierley Civic Hall, Dudley

AMIGOS OPEN MIC Thurs 20 Mar, The Rhodhouse, Sutton Coldfield

THE RUMPLED Thurs 20 Mar, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

SNAPPED ANKLES Fri 21 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

ELECTROMANTICS Fri 21 Mar, The Robin, Bilston

ALL THE YOUNG Fri 21 Mar, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

FOREVER Fri 21 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse

SLACKRR Fri 21 Mar, Albert's Shed Southwater, Telford

MAN THE LIFEBOATS Fri 21 Mar, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

THE ATLANTIC PLAYERS Fri 21 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

JACK WALKER Fri 21 Mar, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTING Fri 21 Mar, Wulfrun Hall at The Halls, Wolverhampton

ERASURED Fri 21 Mar, O2 Institute, B'ham

RIZZLE KICKS Fri 21 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

8 BEFORE AVA + UNDERCURRENT + HAYDEN LLOYD + MOLOKA + MAX

SEARLE Fri 21 Mar, O2 Institute, B'ham

THE LATHUMS Fri 21 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

ANDY FAIRWEATHER LOW Fri 21 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

THE NEIL DIAMOND STORY Fri 21 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

HOT 8 BRASS BAND Fri 21 Mar, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

LEO GREEN & THE ICONS ORCHESTRA: CELEBRATING THE SONGS OF THE ROLLING STONES Fri



Van Morrison - Symphony Hall, Birmingham

21 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

THE CORE REGGAE BAND Fri 21 Mar, Joe Joe Jims, B'ham

LEGEND - THE MUSIC OF BOB MARLEY Fri 21 Mar, Lichfield Garrick

TARGET Fri 21 Mar, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

RED SNAPPER Fri 21 Mar, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek, Staffs

BIG INDIE TRIBUTE NIGHT Fri 21 Mar, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

JULIAN SMITH Fri 21 Mar, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield

STREISAND - THE GREATEST STAR Fri 21 Mar, Walsall Arena

SOFT MACHINE Fri 21 Mar, Lichfield Guildhall

PHIL CAMPBELL AND THE BASTARD SONS Sat 22 Mar, KK's Steel Mill, Wolverhampton

CHIC OUT Sat 22 Mar, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek

GRATEFUL DUDES Sat 22 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

THE DEADSHOTS Sat 22 Mar, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

WHOLE LOTTA SHAKIN Sat 22 Mar, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

BLOODYWOOD + CALVA LOUISE + DEMONIC RESURRECTION Sat 22 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

RAGING SPEEDHORN + KILL THE LIGHTS + FANGS OUT Sat 22 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

THE PRINCE EXPERIENCE... ENDORPHINMACHINE Sat 22 Mar, O2 Academy, B'ham

THE SIGNATURES WITH THE FLIRTIATIONS Sat 22 Mar, Brierley Civic Hall, Dudley

PEJA Sat 22 Mar, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

THE BLINK SHOW + WARNING + UNDERCLASS HEROES Sat 22 Mar, The Flapper, Birmingham

FASTLOVE: GEORGE MICHAEL TRIBUTE Sat 22 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

BRAVADO - TRIBUTE TO RUSH Sat 22 Mar, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

CHICAGO BLUES BROS Sat 22 Mar, Dudley Town Hall

THE WHIPJACKS Sat 22 Mar, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

ULTIMATE NIGHT AT THE DISCO Sat 22 Mar, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

HAMMERED Sat 22 Mar, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

GRAINNE DUFFY Sun 23 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

WINTER MCQUINN & ACACIA PIP + MYLES NEWMAN Sun 23 Mar, The Sunflower Lounge, Birmingham

JACK & JACK Sun 23 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

FEROCIOUS DOG Sat 22 Mar, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

10CC'S GRAHAM GOULDMAN Sun 23 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

LAUREN MAYBERRY Sun 23 Mar, O2 Academy, B'ham

CARPATHIAN FOREST Sun 23 Mar, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

JOHN CALE Sun 23 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

THE MUSIC OF TREES Sun 23 Mar, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

RICHARD JOBSON Sun 23 Mar, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek

BUDDY HOLLY AND THE CRICKETERS Sun 23 Mar, The Robin, Bilston

NAT2 Sun 23 Mar, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

Classical Music

EMILY HAN PIANO RECITAL Tues 18 Mar, St Alkmund's Church, Shrewsbury

KYAN QUARTET Featuring Naomi Warburton & Sydney Mariano (violins), Wanshu Qiu (viola) & Simon Guemy (cello). Programme includes works by Haydn, Shostakovich, Gubaidulina & Debussy, Wed 19 Mar, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

CBSO: CLASSIC FM HALL OF FAME Featuring Ben Palmer (conductor), Ella Taylor (soprano), Charne Rochford (tenor) & John Suchet (presenter). Programme includes works by Rachmaninoff, Sibelius, Tchaikovsky & more..., Fri 21 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

CONCERTS IN THE ROUND Featuring Sophie Henderson (soprano) & Tim Stewart (piano), Fri 21 Mar, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Featuring Ciaran O'Donnell (soloist). Programme includes works by Beethoven, Haydn, Mozart & Mendelssohn, Sat 22 Mar, Wolverhampton Grammar School

THE BREWOOD SINGERS: COME & SING Sat 22 Mar, St Dominic's School, Brewood

KEELE BACH CHOIR Programme includes works by Handel & J S Bach, Sat 22 Mar, Keele University Chapel

ORGAN PROMS Featuring Ben Lamb (director), Martyn Rawles (accompanist) & Lichfield Cathedral Choir. Programme includes works by Elgar, Fauré, Brahms, C Taylor & C H H Parry, Sat 22 Mar, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

KIMICHI SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA & KIMICHI BALLET: SPRING INTO STRAVINSKY A rare and breathtaking evening presenting all three of Stravinsky's iconic ballets - Petrushka, The Firebird, and Rite of Spring - performed back-to-back, Sun 23 Mar, Symphony Hall, B'ham

BIRMINGHAM CONTEMPORARY MUSIC GROUP: CHERRY BLOSSOM 2025 Programme includes works by Cage, Boulez, Bauckholt, Hindley & Reich, Sun 23 Mar, Oozells Square, Brindleyplace, Birmingham

ALIS HUWS: OFFICIAL ROYAL HARPIST Programme includes works by Debussy, Britten, Bach & C Lizotte, Sun 23 Mar, Festival Dryden Centre, North Shropshire

MOZART'S REQUIEM Featuring Shrewsbury School Community Choir and Shrewsbury School Chamber Choir, Sun 23 Mar, Alington Hall, Shrewsbury School

Comedy

CATHERINE BOHART Wed 19 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

IGNACIO LOPEZ Wed 19 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre



SCUMMY MUMMIES Wed 19 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, ALASDAIR BECKETT-KING & THANYIA MOORE Thurs 20 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SCOTT BENNETT Thurs 20 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

THE SCUMMY MUMMIES Thurs 20 Mar, William Aston Hall, Wrexham

ROY CHUBBY BROWN Thurs 20 Mar, Prince of Wales, Cannock

TWO PROMOTERS ONE POD Fri 21 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

COMEDY IN THE ATTIC WITH CATHERINE YOUNG, JULES O'BRIAN, JOSEPH EMSLIE & DUNCAN OAKLEY Fri 21 Mar, Crewe Lyceum Theatre

ALASDAIR BECKETT-KING, THANYIA MOORE, JOE MCTERNAN, SHALAKA KURUP & SAM PICONE Fri 21 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JOHN SHUTTLEWORTH Sat 22 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

HARRY HILL Sat 22 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

EMMAN IDAMA, ALASDAIR BECKETT-KING, THANYIA MOORE & JOE MCTERNAN Sat 22 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

FITZ OF LAUGHTER WITH JONNY COLE Sat 22 - Sun 23 Mar, Katie Fitzgeralds, Stourbridge

SPENCER JONES Sun 23 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SCOTT BENNETT Sun 23 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

JACK DEE Sun 23 Mar, Birmingham Hippodrome

SHABAZ ALI Sun 23 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Theatre

THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW The return of Richard O'Brien's legendary rock & roll musical, featuring timeless classics Sweet Transvestite, Dammit Janet, Time Warp and more... Mon 17 - Sat 22 Mar, The Alexandra, B'ham

LEGALLY BLONDE Kidderminster Operatic & Dramatic Society present an amateur version of the acclaimed

high school musical, Mon 17 - Sat 22 Mar, The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster

THE INTRUSION Bric à Brac Theatre and Told By An Idiot take a darkly comic and anarchic look at the subject of extinction, Tues 18 Mar, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

FLUFF Darkly comic play exploring memories and the choices we make in life, Tues 18 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

ANIMAL FARM Octagon Theatre Bolton, Derby Theatre & Hull Truck Theatre present a powerful retelling of George Orwell's timeless classic, Tues 18 - Wed 19 Mar, Crewe Lyceum Theatre

CALAMITY JANE Carrie Hope Fletcher takes the lead in a new production. Classic songs include The Deadwood Stage (Whip-Crack-Away), Just Blew In From The Windy City, and the Oscar-winning Secret Love, Tues 18 - Sat 22 Mar, Birmingham Hippodrome

THE INTRUSION Bric à Brac Theatre and Told By An Idiot take a darkly comic and anarchic look at the subject of extinction, Wed 19 - Thurs 20 Mar, The Rep, Birmingham

MOTH 'War, race, history and the consequences of our actions' come under the spotlight as Elysium Theatre Company present a world premiere of the Paul Herzberg thriller, Thurs 20 Mar, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

VICI WRETFORD-SINNOTT: UNRULY 'A powerful, urgent show about refusing to be invisible in hostile environments and the power of friendship and community to get us through', Thurs 20 Mar, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), Birmingham

PIAF BY PAM GEMS RBC actors present a show that charts the rise and fall of legendary French singer Edith Piaf, Thurs 20 - Sat 22 Mar, The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

NAPOLEON DYNAMITE Forefront Theatre Company present an amateur stage adaptation of the 2004 coming-of-age film of the same name, Fri 21 - Sat 22 Mar, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE RONALDO A 'raucous, high-octane Grime-sical' exploring football academies and the connection between mother and son... Fri 21 - Sat 22 Mar, The Rep, Birmingham

I'M AN 11-YR-OLD GET ME OUT OF HERE Our Mini Company present a family show complete with 'trials, challenges and plenty of messy fun', Sat 22 Mar, Crewe Lyceum Theatre

FARM BOY A Lichfield Garrick touring production, based on Michael Morpurgo's sequel to War Horse, Sat

22 - Sun 23 Mar, Tamworth Assembly Rooms

WHEN THE BIRDS COME Forefront Theatre Company present Tallulah Brown's play, telling the story of two children whose world is disappearing due to rising sea levels and Western influence, Sun 23 Mar, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

Kid's Theatre

WELCOME TO THE WORLD Little Wild Theatre use the power of nature to create magical mindful moments to support children's wellbeing, Sun 23 Mar, The Hub at St Mary's, Lichfield



Dance

MARIPOSA DeNada Dance Theatre present a 'queer tragedy' inspired by Puccini's Madame Butterfly, Fri 21 Mar, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

FABRIC - APPLAUSE YOUTH DANCE A celebration of youth dance from across the Midlands, Sat 22 - Sun 23 Mar, Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

KIMICHI SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA & KIMICHI BALLET: SPRING INTO STRAVINSKY See three iconic ballets - Petrushka, The Firebird, and Rite Of Spring - performed back to back, Sun 23 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Light Entertainment

THE REPAIR SHOP LIVE: SECRETS FROM THE BARN Join the experts as they share anecdotes, cherished memories and behind-the-scenes stories and secrets from life inside the barn... Mon 17 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

JIMBO'S DRAG CIRCUS An evening of outrageous characters and adult humour starring Canada's own Jimbo from RuPaul's Drag Race, Tues 18 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

LOOKING FOR ME FRIEND - THE MUSIC OF VICTORIA WOOD Paulus The Cabaret Geek celebrates the music of Victoria Wood, accompanied by Fascinating Aida's Michael Roulston on piano, Wed 19 Mar, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

AN EVENING OF MEDIUMSHIP WITH TONY STOCKWELL Wed 19 Mar,

Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

FORBIDDEN NIGHTS Celebrating nine years of muscles, mayhem and over 11,000 shirt rips, Thurs 20 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

QUEENZ - DRAG ME TO THE DISCO! 'A live vocal drag extravaganza where dancing queenz and disco dreams collide for the party of a lifetime', Thurs 20 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

HELLO FROM HEAVEN Evening of mediumship with Fiona Stewart, Fri 21 Mar, Festival Drayton, Market Drayton, North Shropshire

FATT BUTCHER'S BIG MEATY GAMESHOW Expect 'big prizes, face-melting live vocals and big belly laughs' in what promises to be 'a chaotic, naughty, and deliciously unforgettable night out', Fri 21 Mar, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

CONFESSIONS OF CASANOVA One-man show in which David Titley looks back on a life of fun, frolics and frustrated dreams, Fri 21 Mar, Lichfield Garrick

OUR TRACE KNICKERS & ALL COMEDY SHOW Join Trace as she shares her life stories and experiences, many containing adult content. Music, song and audience participation also feature, Fri 21 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

GEOFF ROBB: THE MUSIC OF TREES An evening of magical storytelling and virtuoso guitar 'that promises to transport you out into the woods', Fri 21 Mar, Bridgnorth Library, South Shropshire



CLUEDO MURDER MYSTERY EVENT An interactive performance where guests are required to use their sleuthing skills to determine who the murderer is. Presented in conjunction with Murder By Appointment, Sat 22 Mar, Prince of Wales Theatre, Cannock

TENORS UNLIMITED Sat 22 Mar, Lichfield Garrick

SEND IN THE CLOWNS: C*CK OF AGES A 'raucous, wild and tantalising' drag revue show celebrating the magic and madness of musical theatre, Sat 22 Mar, Arena Theatre, W'hampton

SING THE MUSICALS Featuring hits from Mamma Mia!, The Greatest Showman, Dirty Dancing, Les Misérables, The Phantom Of The Opera and more... Sat 22 Mar, Walsall Arena & Arts Centre

DRAG ME TO THE 80S Featuring the powerhouse vocals of 'the queens

Monday 17 - Sunday 23 March

who redefine the stage and bring the power of the 80s back to life', Sat 22 Mar, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

Talks & Spoken Word

AN EVENING WITH PAUL MERSON - MY LIFE Join the former Arsenal, Aston Villa and England star as he discusses his illustrious career and shares stories from the dressing room. VIP tickets available, Tues 18 Mar, Dudley Town Hall

GORDON BUCHANAN: LIONS & TIGERS & BEARS Join the wildlife photographer & filmmaker as he talks about his 'thrilling encounters' with pandas, grizzlies, tigers, jaguars and more... Thurs 20 Mar, Victoria Hall, Stoke-on-Trent

Events

SNOOKER PLAYERS CHAMPIONSHIP 2025 Snooker's biggest stars battle for the coveted title, Mon 17 - Sun 23 Mar, Telford International Centre

KABADDI WORLD CUP The world's best

kabaddi players compete for the ultimate prize, Mon 17 - Sun 23 Mar, venues across the West Midlands



THE NATIONAL LOTTERY OPEN WEEK 2025 A free opportunity for National Lottery players to visit the Mill exhibition, Wed 19 - Sun 23 Mar, Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings

THURSDAY TOURS AT BLAKESLEY HALL Guided tour of the Tudor building, Thurs 20 Mar, Blakesley Hall, Birmingham

THE NATIONAL HOMEBUILDING & RENOVATING SHOW Whether you're planning a major renovation or just looking for inspiration, this event 'has everything you need to kickstart your project', Thurs 20 - Sun 23 Mar, NEC, Birmingham

MURDER MOST FOUL, THE MEMORIES OF A MURDER INVESTIGATOR Retired Detective Sergeant James McManus reflects on his 30-plus years with West Midlands Police, Fri 21 Mar, West Midlands Police Museum

BOOGIE LIGHTS EXPRESS Celebrate SVR's 60 years in style, with a sound & light show on board a steam train, Fri 21 - Sat 22 Mar, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

ALTON AFTER DARK Experience the twists and turns of your favourite rides - under the stars! Fri 21 - Sun 23 Mar, Alton Towers Resort, Staffordshire

PRACTICAL CLASSICS CLASSIC CAR & RESTORATION SHOW A one-stop destination for all things restoration, Fri 21 - Sun 23 Mar, NEC, B'ham

CERAMIC MAKERS' MARKET Browse a range of stalls manned by local and national makers, Sat 22 Mar, Gladstone Pottery Museum, Stoke

ULTRA WHITE COLLAR BOXING An evening of boxing bouts raising money for charity, Sat 22 Mar, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

GOLDWORK LANDSCAPES Workshop introducing the ancient craft of goldwork couching, Sat 22 Mar,

Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery
THE NATIONAL OUTDOOR EXPO Bringing together inspirational speakers, cutting-edge technologies and the best in gear, all under one roof, Sat 22 - Sun 23 Mar, NEC, Birmingham

THE NATIONAL CYCLING SHOW An immersive retail experience enabling consumers to 'try and buy' everything from bikes to accessories, Sat 22 - Sun 23 Mar, NEC, B'ham

DAY OUT WITH THOMAS: THE PARTY TOUR Celebrating 80 years of Thomas the Tank Engine, Sat 22 - Sun 23 Mar, Statfold Country Park, Tamworth

CERAMIC MARCH HARES WORKSHOP Create your own ceramic March Hare from high firing clay, Sun 23 Mar, Coalport China Museum, Ironbridge

GO THROUGH YOUR WARDROBES - MAKE DO AND MEND A talk by Meridith Towne about the women who used the most innovative - even devious! - methods to maintain a fashionable wardrobe in wartime Britain, Sun 23 Mar, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

WEDDING OPEN DAY Meet event planners and trusted local wedding suppliers, Sun 23 Mar, Weston Park, Shropshire

"Fantastic, Sexy and Very Funny!"

Steve Steinman's
VAMPIRES ROCK
ETERNAL LOVE
THE
MUSICAL

A promotional image for the musical 'Vampires Rock: Eternal Love'. The background is a dark, stormy sky with a large, glowing red moon. In the foreground, several cast members are shown in dramatic, gothic-style costumes. A man in a black suit and hat is on the left, a woman with long blonde hair is in the center, and a man in a black suit is pointing towards the viewer. Other cast members are visible behind them, some with dramatic makeup and costumes.

Shrewsbury, Theatre Severn Thur 6 - Sat 8 Mar 2025

Gigs

MOONCHILD SANELLY Mon 24 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

JUANITA STEIN + CHARLOTTE CARPENTER + HANNAH MICHELL Mon 24 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

ALEX WARREN Mon 24 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

TOM WALKER Mon 24 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

MELIN MELYN Tues 25 Mar, Hare & Hounds, Birmingham

MATT GOSS Tues 25 Mar, Symphony Hall, B'ham

MARTIN TURNER Tues 25 Mar, The Robin, Bilston

THE STORY OF THE DUBLINERS Tues 25 Mar, The Alexandra, B'ham

ALMOST MONDAY Tues 25 Mar, Mama Roux's, Birmingham

THE NO COVERS CLUB Wed 26 Mar, The Dark Horse, Moseley, B'ham

COCO & CLAIR CLAIR + RAVEN ARTSON Wed 26 Mar, O2 Institute, Bham

BEANS ON TOAST Wed 26 Mar, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

ALINA BZHEZHINSKA & TONY KOFI Wed 26 Mar, Jennifer Blackwell Performance Space, Symphony Hall, B'ham

BIG SPECIAL + GANS + THE PILL Thurs 27 Mar, Hare & Hounds, B'ham

BILMURI + SOUTH ARCADE Thurs 27 Mar, O2 Institute, B'ham

HENGE + TIRIKILATOPS Thurs 27 Mar, Castle & Falcon, Birmingham

TOM SPENCER + RICH RAGANY + BILLY LIAR Thurs 27 Mar, The Victoria, Birmingham

RED SKY JULY Thurs 27 Mar, Kitchen Garden, Birmingham

QUILL Thurs 27 Mar, Lichfield Garrick

MATT GOSS Thurs 27 Mar, Civic Hall at The Halls Wolverhampton

DOMINIC FRISBY Thurs 27 Mar, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

SEAN REEVES Fri 28 Mar,

Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

CLEOPATRICK Fri 28 Mar, O2 Institute, B'ham

THE HIGHSTOOL PROPHEETS Fri 28 Mar, O2 Academy, B'ham

SPANDAU BALLET & DURAN DURAN HITS Fri 28 Mar, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

ELO 2 STAR Fri 28 Mar, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

ALI GILBERT Fri 28 Mar, The Victoria, B'ham

GUNS N' ROSES EXPERIENCE Fri 28 Mar, The River Rooms, Stourbridge

SOUL MACHINE Fri 28 Mar, Tower Of Song, Birmingham

DUB PISTOLS Fri 28 Mar, Albert's Shed, Shrewsbury

JUDGE JULES Fri 28 Mar, Brierley Civic Hall, Dudley

FOO FIGHTERS GB AND THOMAS NICHOLAS Fri 28 Mar, The Robin, Bilston

VADER Fri 28 Mar, The Rainbow, Digbeth, Birmingham

CIDER WITH MOLLY Fri 28 Mar, Burton Folk Club

PEASHOOTER Fri 28 Mar, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

KATHRYN ROBERTS & SEAN LAKEMAN Fri 28 Mar, Hermon Arts, Oswestry, North Shrops

THE SHIRES Fri 28 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse

METEORA - LINKIN PARK TRIBUTE Fri 28 Mar, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

PURPLE ZEPPELIN Sat 29 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse

JADE HELLIWELL AND LARS PLUTO - COUNTRY HITS LIVE Sat 29 Mar, Wulfun Hall at The Halls Wolverhampton

THE CLARE TEAL 5 Sat 29 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

CANTALOOP Sat 29 Mar, Actress & Bishop, Birmingham

THE DIRTY ROCKIN' SCOUNDRELS Sat 29 Mar, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

TRANCE CLASSICAL +

LANGE Sat 29 Mar, O2 Institute, Birmingham

KASHMIR - LED ZEPPELIN TRIBUTE Sat 29 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

YOU ME AT SIX + MOUTH CULTURE Sat 29 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

BETTER JOY Sat 29 Mar, Dead Wax, Digbeth, Birmingham

KICK UP THE 80S Sat 29 Mar, The Robin, Bilston

OCEAN COLOUR SCENE + KULA SHAKER + SLEEPER Sat 29 Mar, Utilita Arena Birmingham

INSPIRAL CARPETS Sat 29 Mar, The Sugarmill, Stoke-on-Trent

LE BEAT Sat 29 Mar, Albert's Shed Southwater, Telford

ROB LAMBERTI - PERFECTLY GEORGE Sat 29 Mar, Dudley Town Hall

SECOND CITY SOUND: A CAPPELLA SHOWCASE Sat 29 Mar, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

UNDER THE COVERS Sat 29 Mar, The Rhodhouse, Sutton Coldfield

NO LIMIT Sat 29 Mar, The Feathers Inn, Lichfield

THE ROLLING STONED Sat 29 Mar, Eleven, Stoke-on-Trent

JAYWALKERS Sat 29 Mar, The Hive, Shrewsbury

FEROCIOUS DOG ACOUSTIC Sun 30 Mar, Castle & Falcon, B'ham

TOM MARTIN'S CROSSROADS BLUES & ROOTS Sun 30 Mar, Tower Of Song, B'ham

ABBA ALIKE Sun 30 Mar, Joe Joe Jims, B'ham

THE THOMAS NICHOLAS BAND Sun 30 Mar, The Station, Cannock

JADIS Sun 30 Mar, The Robin, Bilston

THE BIG COUNTRY SHINDIG Sun 30 Mar, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

THE ACADEMIC Mon 31 Mar, O2 Institute, B'ham

YOU ME AT SIX + KID KAPICHI Mon 31 Mar, O2 Academy, Birmingham

THE DELINES Mon 31 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

Classical Music

THOMAS TROTTER LUNCHTIME ORGAN CONCERT Programme includes works by J S Bach, Russell, Fauré & more..., Mon 24 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

CBSO: ABBEY ROAD CONCERTO Featuring Eivind Gullberg Jensen (conductor) & Guy Braunstein (violin). Programme includes works by Elgar, Britten & more, with a UK premiere of Guy Braunstein / The Beatles' Violin Concerto (Abbey Road), Wed 26 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

PETER KING ORGAN RECITAL Fri 28 Mar, St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury

VASILY PETRENKO & THE ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA Featuring Esther Yoo (violin). Programme includes works by Tchaikovsky, Bruch & Prokofiev, Sat 29 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM GAY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: INTO THE LIGHT Featuring William Hammond (clarinet) & Neavan Lobban (musical director). Programme includes works by Mozart, Mayer & Tchaikovsky, Sat 29 Mar, St Paul's Church, Jewellery Quarter, B'ham

CLARINET CHOIR, SYMPHONIA AND BRASS BAND CONCERT Sat 29 Mar, Keele University Music Union

THE JOY OF SPRING Featuring In Sound Company Community Choir & Gren Bartley (singer-songwriter). Programme includes a wide variety of music old and new, including a new song written by one of the choir's members and Bartley's original songs, Mon 31 Mar, Stourbridge Town Hall

Comedy

MAX AMINI Mon 24 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

JONNY COLE Mon 24 - Tues 25 Mar, Halesowen Town Hall



JAMALI MADDIX Tues 25 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

WALSALL XL COMEDY CLUB WITH ANDY PARSONS, MIKE GUNN, JOHN ROBERTSON & ESTHER MANITO Wed 26 Mar, Walsall Arena and Arts Centre

JONNY COLE Wed 26 - Thurs 27 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

MILTON JONES Thurs 27 Mar, Birmingham Town Hall

COMEDY CAROUSEL WITH ANDY ROBINSON, HATTY PRESTON & COMIC TBC Thurs 27 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ROB BECKETT Thurs 27 - Sat 29 Mar, Birmingham Hippodrome

ANDREW BIRD, LEROY BRITO, HATTY PRESTON & DAVE LONGLEY Fri 28 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

STUART LAWS Fri 28 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

STAND UP FOR CHANGE COMEDY NIGHT Fri 28 Mar, Wulfun Hall, Wolverhampton

SIMON MUNNERY Fri 28 Mar, Foxlowe Arts Centre, Leek

THE EDGE COMEDY CLUB WITH HARRIET DYER, SEAN PERCIAL, RAYMOND & MR. TIMPKIN Sat 29 Mar, Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock, South Shropshire

AADAR MALIK Sat 29 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

ANDREW BIRD, LEROY BRITO, HATTY PRESTON & DAVE LONGLEY Sat 29 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

KATIE NORRIS Sun 30 Mar, The Glee Club, Birmingham

SEVERN JESTERS COMEDY CLUB WITH DEAN COUGHLIN, HOWARD ANSTOCK, NICK PAGE & PETER BRUSH Sun 30 Mar, Theatre, Severn, Shrewsbury

Theatre

REVISION ON TOUR: MACBETH An ensemble of six actors create a cauldron of characters, as Macbeth and Lady Macbeth make their perilous descent towards hell, Mon 24 - Tues 25 Mar, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

A SHAKESPEARE SELECTION An hour-long production featuring scenes from some of the Bard's greatest plays. The evening also includes a Q&A, sonnets, and requests from the audience, Tues 25 Mar, Perton Library, Staffordshire

REVISION ON TOUR: DR JEKYL & MR HYDE A new stage adaptation of Robert Louis Stevenson's Victorian gothic masterpiece, Wed 26 Mar, Regent Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

MURDER ON THE DANCEFLOOR A 'fun and exciting' murder-mystery play, written by Matthew Gabrielli and co-created with the young people of Wolverhampton Grand Arena Youth Theatre, Wed 26 - Thurs 27 Mar, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

BOILER ROOM SIX: A TITANIC STORY Acclaimed production telling the true story of Titanic stoker Frederick Barrett and his fight for survival, Wed 26 - Thurs 27 Mar, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

OUTSIDE EDGE Studio 61 present an

amateur version of Richard Harris' cricket comedy, Wed 26 - Fri 28 Mar, Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton

SPRING AWAKENING Stoke Youth Musical Theatre Company present an amateur version of the coming-of-age rock musical, Wed 26 - Sat 29 Mar, Stoke Repertory Theatre, Stoke-on-Trent

SHREK THE MUSICAL Get Your Wigle On present a stage version of the Oscar-winning film, Wed 26 - Sun 30 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY West Bromwich Operatic Society present an amateur version of Roald Dahl's iconic story, Wed 26 - Sun 30 Mar, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

METTLE The true story of a man and his wartime service on one of the most infamous Atlantic convoys of World War Two, Thurs 27 Mar, Theatre On The Steps, Bridgnorth, South Shropshire

STEVE STEINMAN'S VAMPIRES ROCK - ETERNAL LOVE THE MUSICAL A new beginning and chapter, celebrating 22 years of the Vampires Rock chronicles, Thurs 27 Mar, The Alexandra, Birmingham

MERRY OPERA: DIE FLEDERMAUS Strauss' timeless operetta, featuring 'unforgettable melodies, fizzy frolics and cheeky capers', Thurs 27 Mar, Lichfield Garrick

AWOL Rob Gee's play follows two old men who escape from a care home to embark on an adventure at a metal festival, Thurs 27 Mar, Wednesday Library



STEPPING OUT Shrewsbury Musical Theatre Company present an amateur version of Richard Harris' award-winning comedy, Thurs 27 - Fri 28 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

DEATH OF A SALESMAN New version of Arthur Miller's famous post-war contemplation on 'the American Dream', Thurs 27 - Sat 29 Mar, Crewe Lyceum Theatre

ELLEN KENT: LA BOHÈME Featuring the Ukrainian Opera & Ballet Theatre Kyiv, international soloists, chorus and full orchestra, Fri 28 Mar, The Alexandra, Birmingham

LEARNING TO FLY Theatre, comedy and music combine in James Rowland's one-man show about a remarkable friendship he made as a lonely, unhappy teenager, Fri 28 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

HANNAY STANDS FAST This 'thrillingly

funny' sequel to John Buchan's *The 39 Steps* sees dashing hero Richard Hannay attempting to thwart a new and deadly threat to his beloved England, Fri 28 Mar, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, South Shropshire

A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH Romance, drama and fantasy combine in a story that explores what happens when love, fate and the laws of the universe collide, Fri 28 Mar - Sat 19 Apr, New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme

ELLEN KENT: MADAMA BUTTERFLY Puccini's heartbreaking tale, performed by the Ukrainian Opera & Ballet Theatre Kyiv, with international soloists, a highly praised chorus and a full orchestra, Sat 29 Mar, The Alexandra, Birmingham

ONLY FOOLS AND HORSES THE MUSICAL Paul Whitehouse reprises his role as Grandad in a touring production of the West End hit, featuring 'cherished material from Britain's best-loved TV series', Mon 31 Mar - Sat 12 Apr, Birmingham Hippodrome

Kids Theatre

THE VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR Celebration of four Eric Carle stories: Brown Bear, Brown Bear; 10 Little Rubber Ducks; The Very Busy Spider; and (of course) The Very Hungry Caterpillar, Wed 26 - Thurs 27 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

SHARK IN THE PARK A fin-tastic family musical in which all three of Nick Sharratt's *Shark In The Park* children's books are performed live on stage, Sat 29 Mar - Sun 6 Apr, Patrick Studio, Birmingham Hippodrome

THE ULTIMATE BUBBLE SHOW Fast-paced show in which various different gases are used to create 'incredible bubble sculptures, effects and magical displays', Sun 30 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Dance

EUN-ME AHN COMPANY - DRAGONS 'A joyful riot of dance, music and non-stop movement' that brings together modern and traditional dance styles from across Asia. Presented by avant-garde South Korean choreographer Eun-Me Ahn, Tues 25 - Wed 26 Mar, Birmingham Hippodrome

VORTEX BY HUMANHOOD An immersive movement/dance production exploring the concept of a vortex as a physical and energetic phenomenon in nature, Fri 28 - Sat 29 Mar, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), B'ham

ANTON DU BEKE - AT THE MUSICALS Featuring a live band, a guest singer and dancers, Sat 29 Mar, Lichfield Garrick



Mugenkyo Taiko Drummers - Lichfield Garrick

GISELLE Stephanie Parrot's Midlands Youth Ballet presents the romantic story of a peasant girl who falls in love with a nobleman hiding his true identity, Sat 29 Mar, The Brewhouse Arts Centre, Burton-upon-Trent

Light Entertainment

SCIENCE RE-PUBLIC An evening of science, mayhem and comedy from three real scientists, Mon 24 Mar, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

BOX OF FROGS An evening of high-octane improvised comedy nonsense, based entirely on audience suggestions, Wed 26 Mar, 1000 Trades, Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham

TREVOR FRANCIS MEMORIAL CONCERT: HOSTED BY JASPER CARROTT Featuring a surprise all-star line-up, Thurs 27 Mar, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

PSYCHIC SALLY Evening of mediumship, Thurs 27 Mar, Prince of Wales Theatre, Cannock

KATE BUTCH: WUTHERING SHITES Jukebox musical based on the songs of Kate Bush, Fri 28 Mar, The Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON: IN CONCERT See the acclaimed film presented in HD whilst John Powell's Academy Award-nominated score is performed live by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Fri 28 Mar, Symphony Hall, B'ham



MUGENKYO TAIKO DRUMMERS Full theatrical experience featuring dynamic choreography and heart-pounding rhythms, Fri 28 Mar, Lichfield Garrick

BOTTOMS UP: BURLESQUE & CABARET 'The creme de la creme of the cabaret world take to the stage to surprise and delight with sultry striptease, witty wisecracks and saucy songs', Sat 29 Mar, Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham

KNIGHTMARE LIVE! 10TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR Smash-hit comedy show based on the cult 1990s TV classic. Tom Bell (The Mash Report) and Paul Flannery (Ghosts Of Darkness) star, Sat 29 Mar, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton

SECOND CITY SOUND: A CAPPELLA SHOWCASE Local and international talent showcase a cappella and barbershop music. Sweden's Lemon Squeazy headline, with Malevox, AMI Quartet and hosts Second City Sound also featuring, Sat 29 Mar, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

NEW STAGES Celebrating the best of contemporary musical theatre, Sat 29 Mar, Crown Wharf Theatre, Stone

Talks & Spoken Word

AN EVENING WITH PAUL MERSON - MY LIFE Join the former Arsenal, Aston Villa and England star as he discusses his illustrious career and shares stories from the dressing room. VIP tickets available, Mon 24 Mar, Stafford Gatehouse Theatre

NIGEL HAVERS: TALKING B*LL*CKS Solo show promising an evening of laughter, nostalgia, and behind-the-scenes gossip, Tues 25 Mar, The Recen, Birmingham

KILLER COUPLES WITH EMMA KENNY Join the psychological therapist & crime commentator as she delves into the dark world of killer couples,

Wed 26 Mar, The Alexandra, B'ham
GORDON BUCHANAN: LIONS & TIGERS & BEARS Join the wildlife photographer & filmmaker as he talks about his 'thrilling encounters' with pandas, grizzlies, tigers, jaguars and more...
 Wed 26 Mar, Lichfield Garrick

AN EVENING WITH ADAM FROST Join the award-winning British garden designer and BBC Gardeners' World presenter for his 'most intimate' show to date, Mon 31 Mar, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Events

VICTORIAN PRINTERS EXPERIENCE DAY Learn the art of printmaking as you design and typeset your very own poster, Wed 26 Mar, Blists Hill Victorian Town, Ironbridge

BRAWL AT THE HALL Local line-up, including hometown champion Ryan Griffiths, Fri 28 Mar, Dudley Town Hall

BOOGIE LIGHTS EXPRESS Celebrate SVR's 60 years in style, with a sound & light show on board a steam train, Fri 28 - Sat 29 Mar, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

ALTON AFTER DARK Experience the twists and turns of your favourite

rides - under the stars! Fri 28 - Sun 30 Mar, Alton Towers Resort, Staffordshire

CLASSIC ANTIQUE FAIRS Featuring around 80 specialist dealers offering a wide variety of high-quality pieces, Fri 28 - Sun 30 Mar, NEC, Birmingham

CERAMIC GARDEN LANTERNS WORKSHOP Create your very own garden lantern using high firing clay, Sat 29 Mar, Coalport China Museum, Ironbridge, Shropshire

MEGAICON LIVE 'The ultimate pop-culture experience', Sat 29 - Sun 30 Mar, NEC, Birmingham

STAFFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY DAY Featuring illustrated talks on recent archaeological work in Staffordshire and the surrounding counties, Sat 29 Mar, The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent

HERITAGE OPEN DAY Be among the first to experience Leekbrook Triangle and visit the site of the yet-to-be-built Leek Station, Sat 29 Mar, Churnet Valley Railway, Staffordshire

BONGO'S BINGO The original bingo rave sensation, Sat 29 Mar, The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury

SAUSAGE AND CIDER FESTIVAL RACEDAY



Classic Antiques Fairs - NEC, Birmingham

An afternoon of sausages, cider and racing, Sat 29 Mar, Uttoxeter Racecourse, Staffordshire

RLCS 2025 BIRMINGHAM MAJOR The world's best Rocket League players compete for the first trophy of the RLCS 2025 season, Sat 29 - Sun 30 Mar, bp pulse LIVE, Birmingham

PETER RABBIT VISIT Take a heritage train ride out into the countryside to see Peter Rabbit and listen to tales of his adventures, Sat 29 - Sun 30 Mar, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr

Kidderminster

CHAMPAGNE BREAKFAST Relax and enjoy being served a full English breakfast whilst dining in the first-class carriage, Sat 29 - Sun 30 Mar, Severn Valley Railway, Bewdley, Nr Kidderminster

SPRING BULB FESTIVAL Enjoy the immersive and colourful experience of taking a walk through the gardens, Sun 30 Mar - Sun 18 May, Trentham Gardens, Staffordshire

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