

# spot light

## 'CHER' THE MAGIC OF LIVE THEATRE

THE GRAND'S NEW SEASON 22/23



### Billionaire Boy

DAVID WALLIAMS TELLS  
US ABOUT THE STAGE  
ADAPTATION OF HIS BOOK



### Soweto Gospel Choir

GRAMMY AWARD WINNING  
GOSPEL CHOIR SET TO  
PERFORM AT THE GRAND



### Blood Brothers

LOCAL STAR NIKI EVANS  
RETURNS TO THE ROLE  
OF MRS JOHNSTONE

Main Image - Debbie Kurup as Cher in The Cher Show



# Welcome

## *Welcome to our third issue of SpotLight*

**Adrian Jackson**  
**CEO & Artistic Director**

**S**ince reopening, the Grand Theatre has had much to celebrate and showcase. The support from you, our audiences, has been overwhelming and as our new year of entertainment is now in full swing, we are riding high following our last season which featured many tremendous productions, and of course our very successful pantomime, **Cinderella**.

*Cinderella* received more five-star reviews than ever before and we have already sold over 10,000 tickets for this year's production of **ALADDIN**. We're thrilled to be welcoming back family favourite **Tam Ryan**, who will be joined

by a star cast to continue the magic of the Grand Theatre pantomime. Look out for our casting announcements which will be coming soon!

Disney makes a very welcome return in April with the world premiere stage adaption of **BEDKNOBS AND BROOMSTICKS**. The film was a childhood favourite of mine and this brand-new spectacular musical will be the perfect blend of nostalgia and state-of-the-art technology, bringing the Sherman brothers' story and music to life in the most gloriously theatrical and most magical of ways.

As we look forward to the new season, we are delighted to present premieres and never-seen-before productions of **THE CHER SHOW**, **THE BEST EXOTIC MARIGOLD HOTEL** and **CLUEDO**. We also welcome back classics including **BLOOD BROTHERS**, starring local favourite **Niki Evans** in the iconic role of Mrs Johnstone.

We continue our vital work within the community, this year we have introduced even more Memory Cafés for those living with dementia, and we are touring dementia-friendly performances into local care and residential homes.

We will once again tour into schools this autumn with our annual Introduction to Pantomime roadshow and this is all thanks to the sponsorship and support from you. We remain very grateful to you for your generous donations and for more information, please visit [grandtheatre.co.uk/support](http://grandtheatre.co.uk/support).

Within the following pages I hope you'll find something to enjoy and look forward to welcoming you back very soon.

From the whole team, I extend my thanks to you for continuing to support the Grand Theatre.

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*'The support from you, our audiences, has been overwhelming and as our new year of entertainment is now in full swing, we are riding high following our last season which featured many tremendous productions, and of course our very successful pantomime, **Cinderella**.'*





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spot  
light

# Contents

WOLVERHAMPTON  
**GRAND**  
THEATRE

**YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON AT  
WOLVERHAMPTON GRAND THEATRE**

2 WELCOME FROM CEO &  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, ADRIAN JACKSON

6 FRIENDS OF THE GRAND AT 40

8 VIP BOOTH EXPERIENCE

12 CRAIG REVEL HORWOOD:  
THE ALL BALLS AND GLITTER TOUR

UK PINK FLOYD EXPERIENCE

JIMMY CARR: TERRIBLY FUNNY

13 PAUL CHOWDHRY:  
FAMILY-FRIENDLY COMEDIAN

14 IN THE NIGHT GARDEN

16 A SPOTLIGHT ON NUFFIELD HEALTH

18 THE SENSATIONAL 60S EXPERIENCE

RUMOURS OF FLEETWOOD MAC

THE KING OF REGGAE

THE STORY OF SOUL

AN EVENING OF BURLESQUE

19 SIXTEEN 25 MEMBERSHIP

20 MEMORIES MATTER:  
THE GRAND'S MEMORY CAFÉ

22 BILSTON OPERATIC COMPANY  
PRESENT KINKY BOOTS

24 A FRIGHT IN THE MUSEUM

NORTHERN LIVE

SOME GUYS HAVE ALL THE LUCK

BARRICADE BOYS

25 THE ELVIS WORLD TOUR

SEVEN DRUNKEN NIGHTS

FIREMAN SAM

STEWART LEE: SNOWFLAKE/TORNADO

26 ANIMAL FARM

27 WE WILL ROCK YOU

28 BILLIONAIRE BOY

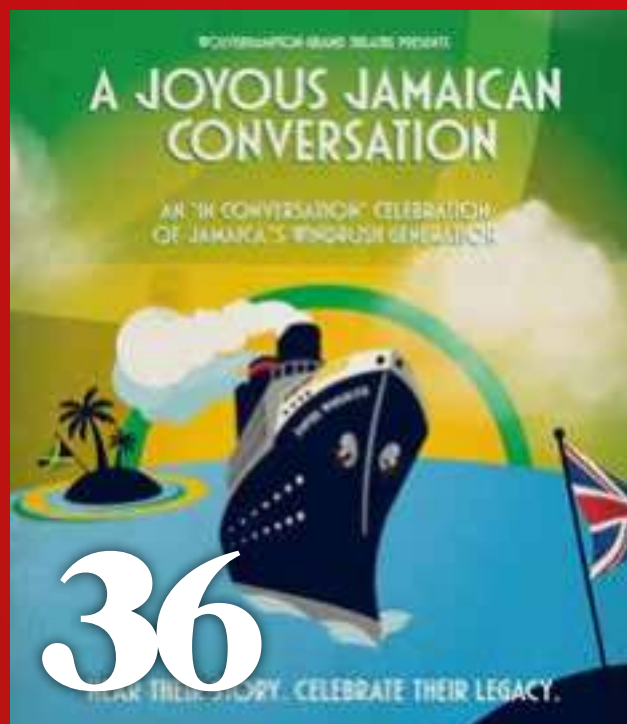
29 INTERVIEW WITH BILLIONAIRE  
BOY AUTHOR DAVID WALLIAMS

30 FIRST CALL

32 A THEATRE WITH ITS COMMUNITY AT HEART

34 ENGLISH VINGLISH

35 ACCESSIBLE PERFORMANCES



38 DERREN BROWN: SHOWMAN

39 STRICTLY PRESENTS: KEEEEP DANCING!

40 WAITRESS

41 INTERVIEW WITH WAITRESS  
SONGWRITER SARA BAREILLES

42 FOOTLOOSE

43 INTERVIEW WITH  
FOOTLOOSE STAR DARREN DAY

44 CLUEDO

45 INTERVIEW WITH CLUEDO  
STAR MICHELLE COLLINS



46 GETTING SOCIAL

48 ROB LAMBERTI - A CELEBRATION OF THE SONGS AND MUSIC OF GEORGE MICHAEL

THE SIMON & GARFUNKEL STORY

SARAH MILLICAN: BOBBY DAZZLER

49 DINOSAUR WORLD LIVE

TALON: THE BEST OF EAGLES

JANE McDONALD LIVE IN CONCERT

50 BLOOD BROTHERS

51 INTERVIEW WITH BLOOD BROTHERS STAR NIKI EVANS

52 JACK DEE: OFF THE TELLY

53 WHITNEY – QUEEN OF THE NIGHT

RUSSELL KANE LIVE: THE ESSEX VARIANT

54 BLACK IS THE COLOR OF MY VOICE

55 INTERVIEW WITH BLACK IS THE COLOR OF MY VOICE STAR APPHIA CAMPBELL

56 THE BLACK BLUES BROTHERS

SOUTH STAFFS MUSICAL THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS SING! SING! SING!

57 SUPREME QUEEN

INTO THE GROOVE

DON'T STOP BELIEVIN'

58 JUST NAACH

60 WBOS PRESENTS SHREK THE MUSICAL

62 THE COMMITMENTS

63 INTERVIEW WITH THE COMMITMENTS DIRECTOR ANDREW LINNIE

64 SOWETO GOSPEL CHOIR

65 INTERVIEW WITH SOWETO CHOIR MASTER SHIMMY JIYANE

67 INTERVIEW WITH THE CHER SHOW DIRECTOR ARLENE PHILLIPS

68 THAT'LL BE THE DAY

MILKSHAKE! LIVE

69 HARRY HILL - PEDIGREE FUN

JONGLEURS

THE MAGIC OF MOTOWN

QUEENZ – THE SHOW WITH BALLS

70 X-TREME MAGIC

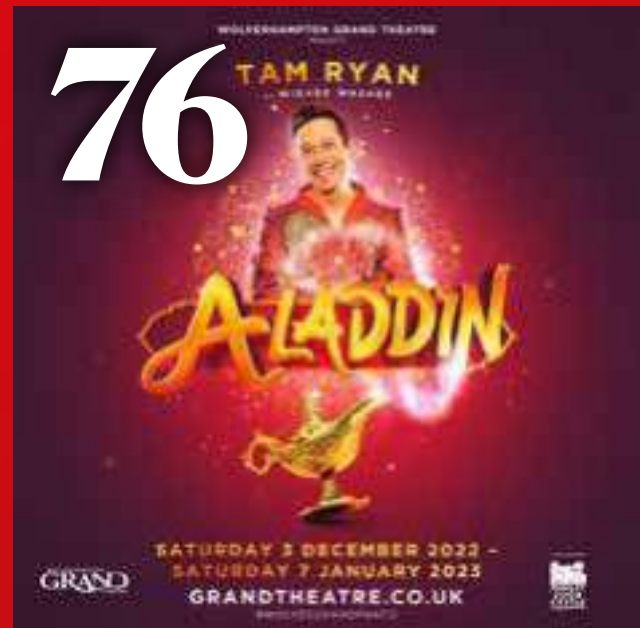
SHE'S ROYAL

JON RICHARDSON - THE KNITWIT TOUR

72 DARA O'BRIAIN – SO...WHERE WERE WE?

73 BILSTON OPERATIC COMPANY PRESENTS PETER PAN

76



78 INTERVIEW WITH RETURNING PANTO STAR TAM RYAN

80 INTRODUCTION TO PANTO

82 RELAXED PERFORMANCES - WHAT ARE THEY?

84 MAMMA MIA!

85 STRICTLY BALLROOM

86 BUSINESS CLUB

88 JERSEY BOYS

89 THE BEST EXOTIC MARIGOLD HOTEL

90 GENERAL INFORMATION

91 ALSO ON SALE





## FRIENDS OF THE GRAND AT 40

This year we are embarking on a twelve-month celebration of The Friends Of The Grand, as the membership marks 40 glorious years.

There has never been a better time to join the Friends as members receive priority booking, insider news and special discounts. Additionally, this year, an exclusive schedule of events has been programmed just for Friends.

Throughout 2022 the membership will continue to support the theatre's charitable work including the award-winning **Memory Cafés** that take place at the theatre for our patrons living with or affected by Dementia. The Friends will also be the headline sponsor for the yearly **Intro To Panto** which tours into local primary schools, showcasing the history of pantomime.

### Membership Benefits Include:

- 15% discount on most performances\*
- Priority booking
- No exchange fees
- 10% club membership, giving you savings at selected local businesses
- Access to Friends-only social events
- Entry to monthly prize draw
- All major updates and announcements

### single

- 1 discounted ticket per production\*
- 1 invitation to Friends-only events

**£21** per year

### standard

- 2 discounted tickets per production\*
- 2 invitations to Friends-only events

**£30** per year

### family

- 4 discounted ticket per production\* (for family or friends)
- 4 invitations to Friends-only events

**£50** per year



# EXCLUSIVE 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY EVENTS



## Coffee And Cake At The Mount Hotel, Tettenhall

THURSDAY 7 APRIL / 10.30AM - 12.30PM

**Cost: Free to all members** but booking is essential. Maximum 2 tickets per Friend.

After a two-year hiatus we are reintroducing the Friends Of The Grand coffee mornings, hosted by the committee. Join us in the lovely, relaxed setting of The Mount Hotel for a long overdue catch up, cake and a theatrical quiz!



## Friends 40th Anniversary Party Night, The Haywood Suite, Molineux

FRIDAY 13 MAY / 7PM - 1AM

**Cost: £60 per person.** Maximum 10 tickets per Friend.

Join us for a fantastic night out along with our President Jeffrey Holland at the 40th Anniversary Party Night. On arrival you will be served with a glass of prosecco before taking your seat for a three-course meal. There will be party games throughout the evening before dancing the night away to a Jersey Boys Tribute act.



## Friends Of The Grand Racing Night - Wolverhampton Racecourse

MONDAY 20 JUNE / FIRST RACE AT 4PM TBC

**Cost: £20 per person** including entry and one course hot meal. Maximum 4 tickets per Friend.

Back by popular demand, the Friends Race Night at Wolverhampton Racecourse will form part of our anniversary celebrations. Taking place in the Premier Bar, you will have access to the finish line and a front row view of the winning horses.



## Coffee Afternoon With Special Guest Miss Beth Belle

THE MOUNT HOTEL, TETTENHALL

THURSDAY 15 SEPTEMBER / 2.30PM - 4.30PM

**Cost: Free to all members** but booking is essential. Maximum 2 tickets per Friend.

Our traditional coffee and cake event will feature special guest, vintage singer Miss Beth Belle. Miss Beth Belle is a vintage performer from the Midlands with a repertoire spanning the 1920s through to the 1960s and beyond, containing a variety of swing and wartime tunes, 50s rock & roll numbers, 60s hits, and musical theatre classics with a selection of 'new old-fashioned' songs thrown in for good measure!



## Gala Performance Of Aladdin

WOLVERHAMPTON GRAND THEATRE

FRIDAY 16 DECEMBER / 6.15PM

**Cost: £55 per person**, seated in The Dress Circle. Maximum 6 tickets per Friend.

On arrival at the theatre, you will be shown to the Dress Circle for a drinks reception, before taking your seat for the evening's performance of Aladdin at 7pm.

Following the show you will make your way to The Encore Lounge for a post-show reception with the cast, supper, and complimentary drink.

# BOOK NOW

All events can be booked through the Customer Services Team on **01902 42 92 12**, between the hours of 2pm - 6pm Monday to Friday. For any enquiries, please email [feedback@grandtheatre.co.uk](mailto:feedback@grandtheatre.co.uk) or [vickyp@grandtheatre.co.uk](mailto:vickyp@grandtheatre.co.uk)

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includes the following: bottle  
of wine, bar snacks, show  
programme\*, waiter service  
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includes the following:  
a bottle of Prosecco,  
chocolates, bar snacks, show  
programme\*, waiter service &  
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**PRICES START FROM £50**

\*show programme not available on all shows

**Book your VIP booth experience online at [grandtheatre.co.uk](http://grandtheatre.co.uk)  
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Booths must be booked 48 hours in advance of the performance. Grazing platters must be booked  
five days in advance of the performance. Vegetarian and vegan options available upon request.  
Items may vary subject to availability. Information on allergens available upon request.

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WOLVERHAMPTON  
**GRAND**  
THEATRE



# 'A TRULY MAGICAL SHOW. YOU'LL BELIEVE A BED CAN FLY'

MAIL ON SUNDAY



Enter a world of magic and fantasy as Disney's classic movie *Bedknobs and Broomsticks* makes its world premiere as an exciting new stage musical.

With original songs by the legendary Sherman Brothers (*Mary Poppins*, *The Jungle Book*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*), and new music and lyrics by Neil Bartram and book by Brian Hill; **BEDKNOBS AND BROOMSTICKS** is brought to life by award-winning theatre-makers Candice Edmunds and Jamie Harrison.

When three orphaned children are evacuated from wartime London to live with the mysterious Eglantine Price, they have no idea what adventures lie ahead. Armed with an enchanted bedknob, a bewitched broomstick and a magical flying bed, they encounter surprising new friendships on their journey from Portobello Road to the depths of the beautiful briny sea.

**It's time to start believing.**

## Bedknobs And Broomsticks

**Tuesday 05 - Saturday 09 April '22**

Evenings at 7.30pm, Wednesday, Thursday & Saturday matinee at 2.30pm



BSL  
Interpreted



Audio  
Described

**Tickets  
from £25\***





**‘A BEWITCHING PRODUCTION.  
LEAVES ITS AUDIENCE SPELLBOUND. A TRIUMPH’**

DAILY TELEGRAPH



MICHAEL HARRISON  
presents

Disney

# BEDKNOBS AND BROOMSTICKS

*The Magical Musical*



**‘SPECTACULAR.  
THE SHOW HAS US IN THE PALM OF ITS HANDS’**

THE TIMES

## Craig Revel Horwood - The All Balls & Glitter Tour

**Sunday 10 April '22 - 7.30pm**

The star of BBC1's *Strictly Come Dancing* is taking to the road with his debut solo tour!

Join **Craig Revel Horwood** as he talks about his life from Australia to the West End to *Strictly*, reveals a wealth of backstage gossip with his trademark wit and candour, and gives a very special performance of some of the music which has been the soundtrack to his career. Book now for a fabulous evening of entertainment!

**Age Guidance: 16+**

**Tickets from £19\***



## UK Pink Floyd Experience

**Thursday 14 April '22 - 7.30pm**

Celebrating over 50 years of one of rock music's most influential bands, **UK PINK FLOYD EXPERIENCE** recreate the sights and sounds of the legendary band in concert.

This highly authentic show recreates the atmosphere of *Floyd* live. Featuring top-flight musicians and complete with video projections, a stunning light show and of course, over 2 hours of incredible music!

Come and share the passion for *Pink Floyd*'s music as we tackle the classic songs from seminal albums such as *Dark Side Of The Moon*, *Wish You Were Here*, *Animals*, *The Wall* and *The Final Cut*, plus many more!

With outstanding musicianship, superb vocals and amazing production, this spellbinding show is a true celebration of all things Floyd.



**Tickets from £18.50\***



## Jimmy Carr - Terribly Funny

**Sunday 17 April '22 - 7pm & 9.30pm**

Jimmy's brand new show contains jokes about all kinds of terrible things. Terrible things that might have affected you or people you know and love. But they're just jokes – they are not the terrible things.

Having political correctness at a comedy show is like having health and safety at a rodeo. Now you've been warned, buy a ticket.

**Age Guidance: 16+**

**Tickets £31\***





# PAUL CHOWDHRY

FAMILY-FRIENDLY  
COMEDIAN

Ahead of his show at the Grand on Saturday 16 April, record-breaking stand-up comic **Paul Chowdhry** talks to Claire Lishman about cancel culture, diversity and making the break into acting.

**G**iven what's happened over the past couple of years, we're all in dire need of a good laugh.

Paul Chowdhry is the man to deliver just that. You might recognise him from comedy shows such as *8 Out of 10 Cats* and *Live at The Apollo*, but his success is not limited to television; he was the first British-Asian comedian to sell out Wembley Arena and has won multiple awards for his Amazon Prime special stand up show, *Live, Innit*. Following on from these triumphs, Paul is touring the UK this Spring.

Coming to Wolverhampton Grand in April is a bit of a bonus for Paul, who should have really finished his **FAMILY-FRIENDLY COMEDIAN** tour last November.

"These dates coming up in March and April are additional dates due to demand. The tour was really only scheduled from September to the end of November. When this tour went on sale, the restrictions involving theatres and live entertainment were already lifted. We put the tour on with literally a month's notice, and many of the venues sold out in that short amount of time. I've been quite blown away by the response."

The Wolverhampton audience will see some material that the Autumn part of tour didn't include, as Paul has been updating his show over the last few months.

"I wrote a lot of it during lockdowns, but not all of it. Some of it was written before the pandemic and some of it is really recent; since the initial part of the tour ended in November, I've added some more bits to it."

Paul has got more strings to his bow than his hugely successful stand-up career. He also boasts an impressive acting CV, having worked with several Oscar and BAFTA winners. "I just did Cruella with Emma Stone, which was in

cinemas last year. And season two of *Devils* is coming out this Easter on Sky Atlantic. It's a fantastic drama with Patrick Dempsey. I was in all ten episodes in season one, and I'm back for season two. I also loved making *The Cleaner* with Greg Davies and Helena Bonham Carter, which was on BBC One last Autumn. I really enjoy the acting jobs, and it gives me a bit of variety to go along with the stand up, which will always be my bread and butter."

Stand-up has been Paul's bread and butter for nearly a quarter of a century now. He took to the stage for the first time in 1998, just after finishing his Media Studies degree. "I started a degree in Computer Science and dropped out of that." And he says that live comedy has changed in that time. "The culture has changed. The world has changed. The country has changed. And what's acceptable within the realms of entertainment has changed quite considerably, especially in comedy. You could say cancel culture is the new thing, but it's probably been around for a while. 'Lad culture' was quite big in the 1990s and early 2000s when I was starting out, which was a bit annoying as I wasn't really into it. But there's so much more diversity and different types of people doing entertainment now. Back in the late '90s when I started, there weren't many options for someone like me who is British Asian."

So why call his new show 'Family-Friendly Comedian?' "It's all down to what you can and can't say these days. If someone's considered a controversial comedian, the best thing to do is become family friendly. The audience can then decide whether I'm family-friendly or not. I leave it up to their own thoughts. After all, one man's political correctness is another man's offence."



## Paul Chowdhry: Family-Friendly Comedian

**Saturday 16 April '22  
8pm**

**Age Guidance:** 14+, likely to contain swearing and adult content

**Tickets from £29.75\***

★ Join Igglepiggle and friends at...

# In the Night Garden... **Live**



In the Night Garden™ & © DHX Worldwide

## In The Night Garden

**Thursday 21 – Saturday 23 April '22**

Thursday & Friday at 1pm, Saturday at 10am, 1pm & 4pm



**Tickets  
from £10\***



**With full-size  
costumes,**



**the amazing  
flying Pinky Ponk,**



**and magical  
puppets!**

**In the Night Garden Live is coming to Wolverhampton in 2022!**

Igglepiggle, Upsy Daisy, Makka Pakka and friends are back in their fun-filled live show **Igglepiggle's Busy Day!** Join Igglepiggle as he looks for his friends in the Night Garden by following their funny sounds until he finds them all!

You'll see all your favourite characters beautifully brought to life with full-size costumes, magical puppets, and enchanting music. This show lasts just under an hour and your little ones will be amazed when they see a very special visit from the amazing flying Pinky Ponk.

Now in its 13<sup>th</sup> year, In the Night Garden Live is one of the UK's favourite family events. Over 1.1 million people have seen it so far and it gets 4.8 out of 5 stars based on 13,634 parents' reviews. There are other shows for young children, but as The Independent wrote, "there's nothing quite like In the Night Garden Live."

Pip-pip, onk-onk!

# How you feel tomorrow, starts today

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At Nuffield Health, we put your safety first in a COVID-19 secure environment. We have a dedicated team of experts you can trust, offering award-winning healthcare across a range of specialities, at affordable prices with flexible ways to pay.

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## Nuffield Health Wolverhampton Hospital

Nuffield Health Wolverhampton Hospital is set in tranquil, idyllic grounds in Tettenhall, Wolverhampton. With a CQC rating of Good, patients can rest assured they'll receive the highest level of Matron led, award-winning care from experts they can trust. Patient safety is our number one priority and we have a number of measures in place, in line with Government and Public Health England guidance, to reassure patients that our hospital is safe and Covid-19 secure. The option of virtual/remote consultations are available, as well as face to face appointments, should patients prefer.

We provide a number of specialities at the Wolverhampton Hospital, including but not limited to, Orthopaedic, Ophthalmology, Gynaecology, Urology, General Surgery and Cosmetic. We also offer a comprehensive diagnostic service including X-ray, Ultrasound, Mammography, MRI and CT, as well as having a state-of-the-art, JAG accredited Endoscopy suite on site.

With Nuffield Health hospitals providing a private service, there are no waiting lists, meaning you can see a consultant in as little as 48 hours, and receive treatment within two weeks. Nuffield Health are approved with all main insurance providers, as well as being available to patients paying for themselves, with a number of flexible payment options available if required.

Nuffield Health are the UK's leading healthcare charity and are committed to building a healthier nation, with all profits being reinvested back in to this vision through improving the services we offer and into the communities we serve. We provide a number of charitable programmes, including the Cystic Fibrosis Exercise Programme, Schools Wellbeing Activity Programme, Joint Pain Programme, and the UK's first Covid Rehabilitation Programme.

Nuffield Health Wolverhampton Hospital are proud to be the Official Medical Provider to Wolverhampton Wanderers Football Club, as well as supporting Wolverhampton Grand Theatre and South Staffordshire Golf Club.

At Nuffield Health Wolverhampton Hospital, we're proud to be a key part of your community and are honoured to work closely with and support the Royal Wolverhampton Trust.

Nuffield Health also provide Fitness and Wellbeing Gyms, with sites located in Wolverhampton, Stafford and Telford.

**For more information on Nuffield Health, please visit [www.nuffieldhealth.com](http://www.nuffieldhealth.com)**



## The Sensational 60s Experience

**Sunday 24 April '22 - 7.30pm**

Join us for the musical phenomenon of 2022 with this festival of nostalgia.

Whether you come to relive your childhood memories or you want to see what your parents have been raving about for all these years this is the show to see. These legends of the 60's will deliver a night never to be forgotten.

Hits include *Needles and Pins*, *Silence Is Golden*, *Storm In A Teacup*, *The Legend Of Xanadu*, and *Little Children*. Step back in time to when pop music was at its very best.

**Tickets from £20\***



## Rumours Of Fleetwood Mac

**Monday 25 April '22 - 7.30pm**

**RUMOURS OF FLEETWOOD MAC**, the world's finest tribute to *Fleetwood Mac*, returns to the stage with a brand new show celebrating the very best of *Fleetwood Mac*, including a very special blues set.

**RUMOURS OF FLEETWOOD MAC** offers a unique opportunity for fans, both old and new, to rediscover the songs and performances that have ensured *Fleetwood Mac*'s place as one of the most loved groups of all time.

**Tickets from £20\***



## The King Of Reggae - The Man - The Music

**Wednesday 27 April '22 - 7.30pm**

'Let's Get Together And Feel Alright' as **Rush Theatre Company** tell the story of the man who brought Reggae music to the world, in **THE KING OF REGGAE - THE MAN - THE MUSIC**.

From a government yard in Trenchtown to Rastafari icon, this brand new narrated musical charts the life and times of the King of Reggae and features over 20 of his iconic hits played live on stage by the **JA Reggae Band**, including *One Love*, *No Woman No Cry* and *Is This Love*.

**Tickets from £15\***



## The Story Of Soul

**Friday 29 April '22 - 7.30pm**

*Get Ready* as the producers who brought you *Lost in Music* and *The Magic of Motown* take you on a journey of Sweet Soul Music.

A supremely talented cast will showcase the hits of Aretha Franklin, Earth Wind and Fire, James Brown, Wilson Pickett, Sam and Dave, Chaka Khan, Tina Turner, and more.

So, make this the night to remember. Get your tickets now, for the must-see show of the year!



**Tickets from £17\***



## An Evening Of Burlesque

**Saturday 30 April '22 - 7.30pm**

Roll up, roll up... The UK's longest running burlesque show returns – bigger than ever. The ultimate variety show blends stylish cabaret, comedy, music, circus and burlesque, featuring world-class entertainers and stars of the stage and screen in an extravaganza of glitz and glamour! It's a sensational variety show for the 21st Century! Expect the unexpected - it's cabaret o'clock!

**Age Guidance: 18+**



**Tickets £17\***







# A WORLD OF THEATRE AWAITS

Love Theatre? Aged 16 -25? Join Sixteen25 for free, and enjoy exclusive benefits, allowing you to see more of the theatre you love.

## **P**riority booking, special events and potentially huge savings on show tickets... Sound good?

If you're aged 16 to 25, you can get these benefits by becoming a Sixteen25 member.

Our Sixteen25 youth membership scheme is free to join and offers priority booking when most new shows go on sale, so you can have your pick of the seats.

You can also enjoy 15% off your ticket for most of our shows when you book in advance. One of the best things about Sixteen25 membership is the unique access to standby tickets.

Standby tickets cost £10\* and are available in person at the Box Office 1 hour before the show starts. You have the chance to buy the best available tickets, which could mean you're buying a top band ticket for a fraction of its original price.

As a Sixteen25 member, you will also receive invitations to exclusive events, where you can meet other theatre lovers.

When The National Theatre's *Macbeth* visited, Sixteen25 members were invited to a free special evening with live music, a backstage tour, a chance to explore the set on stage and a meet and greet with cast. Members were also given complimentary tickets to watch the show.

Joining Sixteen25 is free, and easy. Simply register online at

[grandtheatre.co.uk/memberships](http://grandtheatre.co.uk/memberships), and your membership will be active immediately. Alternatively, you can register by phoning the Box Office on 01902 42 92 12.

So, what are you waiting for? A world of theatre awaits...



Standby tickets are not available for every show. Standby ticket availability is announced on the Grand Theatre's Facebook page on the Wednesday before the show run starts.

If you really want to see a show and/or want to sit in a particular seat we always advise you to book your ticket as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

Standby tickets can only be issued as e-tickets. E-tickets can be shown on your mobile device or printed at home ready to present when you arrive at the theatre.

Standby tickets are available to Sixteen25 members only and are not transferable. Our ticket scanning machines will recognise your standby discount and you may be asked to present photo ID to verify your name and age.

\*A £4 booking fee applies to all purchases



WOLVERHAMPTON  
**GRAND**  
THEATRE



# Memories MATTER

WE'RE TAKING ON DEMENTIA



*What is a Memory  
Café and Who is it for?*

*Where  
and When?*

*Our Memory Cafés have been enriching the lives of customers living with dementia, their loved ones and carers since April 2019. They are a safe and supportive space to socialise, make friends and build support systems with people in a similar situation.*

A Memory Café is a dementia friendly morning of live entertainment and refreshments, held in a relaxed environment, for those living with dementia and their carers.

Music can have a positive effect on those living with dementia, it can help prompt feelings, emotions and memories. Each Café features two thirty-minute sets of live music, where singing along is welcome.

Our Cafés also offer the chance to meet others affected by dementia.

Memory Cafés take place in Wolverhampton Grand Theatre's relaxing Encore Lounge from 10am – 12pm.

The following dates feature entertainment from the Bluebird Belles and Memory Café regulars Ian Adams & Julie Paton:

**Thursday 24 & Friday 24 March**

**Thursday 28 & Friday 29 April**

**Thursday 26 & Friday 27 May**

**Thursday 23 & Friday 24 June**

**Friday 29 July**

**Thursday 25 & Friday 26 August**

**Thursday 29 & Friday 30 September**

**Thursday 20 & Friday 21 October**

**Thursday 15 & Friday 16 December**







Carl McGregor & Sophie Clayton



*None of this work  
would have been  
possible without  
the kind donations  
of customers and  
support of our  
generous sponsors:*



## How can I book?

Memory Cafés are FREE to attend but numbers are limited so tickets must be booked in advance. To book or for more information please contact Remy Lloyd at [RemyL@grandtheatre.co.uk](mailto:RemyL@grandtheatre.co.uk) or call 01902 57 33 20

Since the theatre's dementia-friendly initiative began, we estimate to have reached over 4500 people from our cafés and care home tours alone.

We are really excited to be broadening our reach even further in 2022 by including an additional Memory Café with entertainment tailored for the Black, African and Caribbean community with Carl McGregor and Sophie Clayton who will be singing the best of gospel, soul, Motown, reggae and more, from 11am – 1pm. The following dates feature entertainment tailored for the Black, African and Caribbean Community, but all living with dementia are welcome to attend:

**Friday 11 March**  
**Friday 1 April**  
**Friday 6 May**

**Friday 10 June**  
**Friday 1 July**  
**Friday 5 August**



To find out more about our dementia-friendly services, please contact Outreach Manager - Access & Inclusion by email [remyl@grandtheatre.co.uk](mailto:remyl@grandtheatre.co.uk) or by calling **01902 57 33 20**.



BILSTON OPERATIC COMPANY PRESENT

THE MUSICAL WITH BIG HEART  
AND EVEN BIGGER HEELS!



BOOK BY  
**HARVEY FIERSTEIN**

MUSIC & LYRICS BY  
**CYNDI LAUPER**

ORIGINAL BROADWAY PRODUCTION DIRECTED AND CHOREOGRAPHED BY JERRY MITCHELL

Based on the Miramax motion picture Kinky Boots written by Geoff Barrow and Tim Firth  
This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International (Europe)  
All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI Europe [www.mti-europe.co.uk](http://www.mti-europe.co.uk)

## Bilston Operatic Company Presents Kinky Boots

**Wednesday 04 - Saturday 07 May '22**

Evenings at 7.30pm, Saturday matinee at 2.30pm



**Tickets from £12.50\***

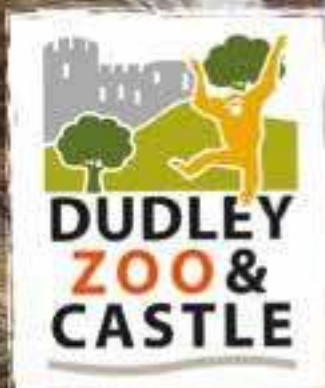
Bilston Operatic Company present the smash hit musical  
**KINKY BOOTS.**

Inspired by true events, **KINKY BOOTS** takes you from a gentlemen's shoe factory in Northampton to the glamorous catwalks of Milan. Charlie Price is struggling to live up to his father's expectations and continue the family business of Price & Son. With the factory's future hanging in the balance, help arrives in the unlikely but spectacular form of Lola, a fabulous performer in need of some sturdy new stilettos.

With a book by Broadway legend and four-time Tony® Award-winner Harvey Fierstein (*La Cage aux Folles*), and songs by Grammy® and Tony® winning pop icon Cyndi Lauper, this joyous musical celebration is about the friendships we discover, and the belief that you can change the world when you change your mind.

**This is an amateur performance.**





# GO WILD!

## A DAY OF DISCOVERY

### OPEN DAILY FROM 10AM



GET CLOSER TO THE WORLD'S rarest animals



## A Fright In The Museum

**Sunday 08 May '22 - 2pm**

**Danny & Mick** & their dad **Clive** have decided they don't make enough money from their circus, so they get themselves part time jobs as night watchmen in the museum to make ends meet.

This years show is packed full of hilarious comedy routines, magic, mayhem, slapstick and specialty acts, making it a laugh out aloud show not to be missed for the whole family!



**Tickets from £12\***



## Northern Live

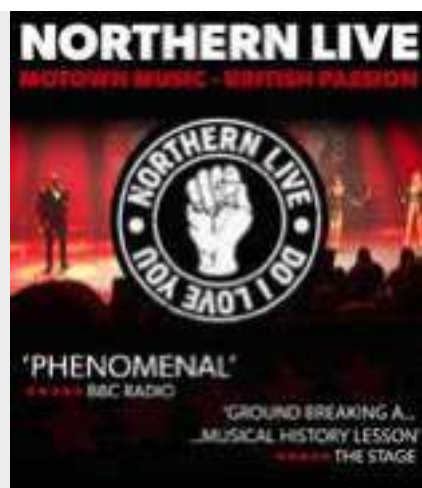
**Tuesday 10 May '22 - 7.30pm**

Keeping the faith to the original sounds of the underground movement that started on the dance floors in the North and eventually swept the Nation, including an 11-piece band with 4 lead vocalists performing over 30 original hits, expect to hear:

Dobie Gray – *Out On The Floor*, R Dean Taylor – *There's A Ghost In My House*, Frank Wilson – *Do I love You – Indeed I Do*, Gloria Jones – *Tainted Love*, Al Wilson – *The Snake*, Yvonne Baker – *You Didn't Say A Word*, Jimmy Radcliffe – *Long After Tonight Is Over*, Garnet Mimms- *Looking For You*, Dean Parrish – *I'm On My Way* and many more.



**Tickets from £18.50\***



## Some Guys Have All The Luck

**Wednesday 11 May '22 - 7.30pm**

Direct from the West End. Capturing the excitement, energy and charisma that have made Rod a true rock icon, including those infamous moves and all the hits like *Handbags & Gladrags*, *Maggie May*, *Baby Jane*, *Da Ya Think I'm Sexy*, *Sailing* and, *The First Cut Is The Deepest*.



**Tickets from £18.50\***



## The Barricade Boys

**Thursday 12 May '22 - 7.30pm**

Starring past performers from the global theatrical sensation that is *Les Misérables*, **THE BARRICADE BOYS** have entertained fans around the world since they formed in 2015 and now, they are back on tour in 2022.

The **BARRICADE BOYS' BRING HIM HOME TOUR** will feature music from some of the best-loved shows from the West End and Broadway stage, including *Phantom Of The Opera*, *Miss Saigon*, *Jersey Boys* and, of course, *Les Misérables*, as well as hits from some of pop and rock music's all-time greats including *Queen*, *Elton John*, *The Beatles*, *Ed Sheeran* and *Adele*.



**Tickets from £20\***





## The Elvis Tribute Artist World Tour

**Friday 13 May '22 - 7.30pm**

Celebrate the 4th July with the ultimate All American party night out, as the biggest and best Elvis show in the world, **THE ELVIS TRIBUTE WORLD TOUR** arrives direct from the USA!

Starring three Ultimate Elvis Tribute World Champions, the winner of BBC's *The World's Greatest Elvis* **Shawn Klush**, the incredible **Dean Z** and the sensational **Cody Ray Slaughter**. So put on your *Blue Suede Shoes* and join the party!



**Tickets from £16\***



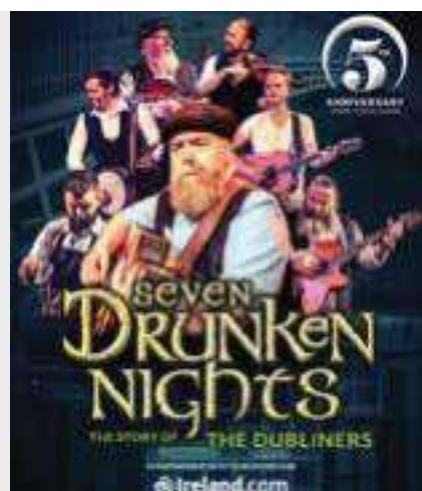
## Seven Drunken Nights - The Story Of The Dubliners

**Saturday 14 May '22 - 7.30pm**

The ultimate feel-good Irish show returns to theatres in 2022 for its incredible 5th Anniversary tour in partnership with Tourism Ireland. This hugely talented cast of musicians and singers bring the music of this iconic group back to life and will have you singing and dancing in the aisles.



**Tickets from £18.50\***



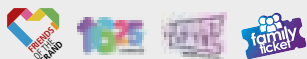
## Fireman Sam Live

**Sunday 22 May '22 - 11am & 1pm**

When all of his friends go away, Norman Price decides to find adventure in Pontypandy and become the star of a visiting circus. But with a tiger on the loose and faulty lights, the adventure soon turns to danger. Can Fireman Sam come to the rescue and save the circus?

Join Sam, Penny, Elvis, Station Officer Steele and Norman in an all singing, dancing, action-packed show. You can become a fire-fighter cadet and then watch the magic of the circus.

So, come along to Pontypandy and watch the adventures unfold!



**Tickets from £12.50\***



## Stewart Lee: Snowflake/Tornado

**Sunday 22 May '22 - 7.30pm**

The first half, **SNOWFLAKE**, will be heavily rewritten in light of the two years the show has been laid off, looking at how the Covid-Brexit era has impacted on the culture war declared on lovely woke snowflakes by horrible people.

The second half, **TORNADO**, questions Stew's position in the comedy marketplace after Netflix mistakenly listed his show as "reports of sharks falling from the skies are on the rise again. Nobody on the Eastern Seaboard is safe."

**Age Guidance: 16+**

Likely to contain swearing and adult content

**Tickets £26\***



A CHILDREN'S THEATRE PARTNERSHIP PRODUCTION IN ASSOCIATION WITH BIRMINGHAM REP



★★★★★  
'SUPERB.  
IT WILL GRIP ADULTS  
AND CHILDREN ALIKE'

SUNDAY TIMES



Adapted & Directed by **ROBERT ICKE**

Set and Costume Designer  
**BUNNY CHRISTIE**

Puppet Designer and Director  
**TOBY OLIÉ**



CHILDREN'S  
THEATRE  
PARTNERSHIP



Arts Council  
ENGLAND

## Animal Farm

**Tuesday 17 - Saturday 21 May '22**

Evenings at 7pm,  
Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday Matinee at 2pm

George Orwell's dystopian classic **Animal Farm** is being brought to life in a striking new production. The animals of Manor Farm drive out the farmer and run the farm themselves. A revolution. And then what?

Orwell's world-famous, thought-provoking fable tells the story of a revolution and its aftermath. Re-imagined by an award-winning creative team, **Animal Farm** combines captivating music and cinematic staging to create a powerful atmosphere onstage. The beautifully detailed life-sized puppets make this production a visually stunning spectacle, retelling a well-known story in an exciting new way.

**Animal Farm** is directed by Robert Icke, whose version of 1984 (co-adapted and directed with Duncan Macmillan) was a smash-hit in the West End and on Broadway. This brand new production features puppetry by Toby Olié (whose credits include *War Horse*, *Running Wild* and *Goodnight Mister Tom*) and is designed by four time Olivier award-winner Bunny Christie.

★★★★★

'Powerful theatre, oinkingly recommended.' - Mail on Sunday



**Tickets  
from £10\***



# — THE 20th ANNIVERSARY UK TOUR —

Phil McIntyre Entertainment, Queen Theatrical Productions and Tribeca Theatrical Productions present

## WE WILL ROCK YOU

THE MUSICAL BY  
QUEEN AND Ben Elton

‘A KIND OF MAGIC.  
**SPECTACULAR.**  
**MAGNIFICO!’**

The Sun

SEEN BY OVER **20 MILLION** ACROSS THE GLOBE  
INCLUDING ALL OF **QUEEN'S** GREATEST HITS!



**YOUR FINAL CHANCE TO SEE - DON'T MISS OUT!**

## We Will Rock You

**Monday 23 – Saturday 28 May '22**

Evenings at 7.30pm,  
Wednesday & Saturday matinee at 2.30pm



BSL  
Interpreted



Audio  
Described

**Tickets from £19.50\***

The worldwide smash hit musical by *Queen* and Ben Elton returns to the UK. The multi-million-pound show dazzles all the senses in breath-taking style. Guaranteed to blow your mind, this musical phenomenon is not to be missed! Since 2002, over 16 million theatregoers in 19 countries have been thrilled by this awe-inspiring production. With 24 of *Queen's* biggest hits delivered in a show that boasts the scale and spectacle that marked the bands legendary live performances.

Brian May said: "This is a stunning state-of-the art new-look production of *We Will Rock You* - but of course the original story is now more relevant than ever. We're confident *We Will Rock You* fans will love revisiting the world's first true Rock Theatrical, and a whole new generation will now discover the VIBE!"

THE PERFECT HALF-TERM FAMILY TREAT!

# David Walliams BILLIONAIRE BOY

LIVE  
ON  
STAGE!



## Billionaire Boy

**Wednesday 01 – Sunday 05 June '22**

*Wednesday at 7pm, Thursday at 1.30pm & 7pm,  
Friday at 10.30am & 7pm, Saturday at 2pm & 7pm and Sunday at 11am*

From the award-winning producers of *Gangsta Granny* comes this amazing West End production of David Walliams' **BILLIONAIRE BOY!**

Joe Spud is twelve years old and the richest boy in the country! He has his own sports car, two crocodiles as pets and £100,000 a week pocket money! But what Joe doesn't have is a friend. So he decides to leave his posh school and start at the local comp. But things don't go as planned for Joe and life becomes a rollercoaster as he tries to find what money can't buy!

**"WHAT A MAGNIFICENT SHOW! IF THIS PRODUCTION WAS ON BRITAIN'S GOT TALENT, I'D BE GIVING IT THE GOLDEN BUZZER! IT'S FANTASTIC!" - David Walliams**

**"A ROLICKING SHOW WITH BIG BELLY LAUGHS AND A SWEET HEART!" - The Times**


**"THIS COMIC MUSICAL IS WONDERFUL STUFF. A HOOT FOR ADULTS. IRRESISTIBLE FOR KIDS!" - The Spectator**



**CAP** Captioned

**Tickets  
from £9.50\***





*"It's the most brilliant thing, seeing a book that you've written come to life on stage...You feel like a magician because what was in your head is somehow now all real, right in front of you, so it is a very exciting thing."*

# DAVID WALLIAMS

*David Walliams tells us about the hit stage adaptation of his children's book **Billionaire Boy** and what he'd buy if he was given a billion pounds.*

**D**avid Walliams is on a roll. The celebrated comedian, talent show judge and writer remains the country's biggest-selling children's author, which is not surprising given global sales of his books have reached 45 million copies. His story **BILLIONAIRE BOY** visits the Grand Theatre in a hit adaptation from acclaimed producers Birmingham Stage Company.

What does David think about seeing his story take the leap from the page to performance?

"It's the most brilliant thing, seeing a book that you've written come to life on stage", he explains. "You feel like a magician because what was in your head is somehow now all real, right in front of you, so it is a very exciting thing."

**Billionaire Boy** tells the story of Joe Spud, a boy who is wealthy beyond anyone's wildest dreams. But it's not a typical rags to riches story. "The reason Joe is a billionaire is because his father, Len Spud, who was just a humble man who worked in a factory, came up with this brilliant idea of a creating a special toilet roll which is moist on one side and dry on

the other."

It sounds lovely! So, what would David buy today if he was given a billion pounds? "There's one thing that Joe Spud has in the book which is a water slide going down from his bedroom to a swimming pool. That is something I don't have and it really pains me!"

Many of David's stories have an epic quality, which hasn't made it easy for the experienced theatre producers, particularly when it comes to landing a helicopter on stage. "The thing is that when I write the books, I'm not thinking much beyond them being books. And, of course, in children's books you want to have lots of really exciting things happening like helicopters and fast cars and I know that does create problems for people staging it. But the brilliant thing about theatre is that with imagination, anything can be done."

The billionaire boy Joe encounters some fantastic characters on his journey and David can't resist talking about one in particular. "My favourite character in the story of **Billionaire Boy** is Mrs Trafe. In the story she asks Joe for money which she says she needs for a hip operation but instead

she spends it on plastic surgery. It was a lot of fun creating her horrible school dinners, giving her the surgery in the book and seeing what she does with the money."

Yet as so often in his stories, there's a more to Mrs Trafe's character than simply providing laughs. "It highlights the fact that Joe's in a pretty difficult predicament because everyone is asking him for money and they all have good reasons why they need it. But at the same time money is quite a corrupting thing and it makes people do bad things and lie to him. Mrs Trafe is really a side character but she does something pretty important in the story."

This is David's third partnership with the Birmingham Stage Company, following their stage adaptations of *Gangsta Granny* and *Awful Auntie*, and he has hugely enjoyed seeing this production. "It's a really fun show because in a way this is the most comic book. It's a story with an emphasis on jokes and silly situations and obviously the whole thing is quite surreal with someone having so much money. So it's turned into a really fun theatre show and I loved seeing it on stage in the West End."



# MAKING MAGICAL MOMENTS WITH FIRST CALL



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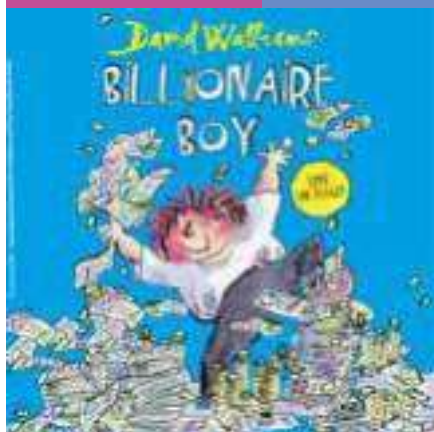
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Two tickets for  
Save up to £24 **£70\***



Two tickets for  
Save up to £7 **£25\***



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Save up to £15 **£75\***



Two tickets for  
Save up to £14 **£39\***



Two tickets for  
Save up to £15 **£45\***



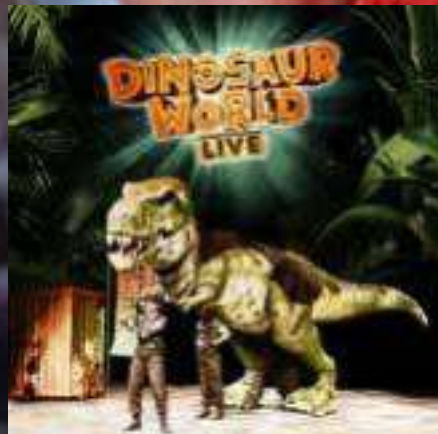


**First Call is the perfect way for you and your child to visit Wolverhampton Grand Theatre.**

With our FREE membership, you can enjoy the biggest and best shows together with our special First Call member rates.

If you both love theatre and want to see more of it together then join First Call today. First call membership is open to all theatregoers aged 8-15.

For full details of all the features and benefits that First Call members enjoy visit [grandtheatre.co.uk/memberships](http://grandtheatre.co.uk/memberships)



Two tickets for  
Save up to £13

**£20\***



Two tickets for  
Save up to £32

**£49\***



Two tickets for  
Save up to £15

**£30\***



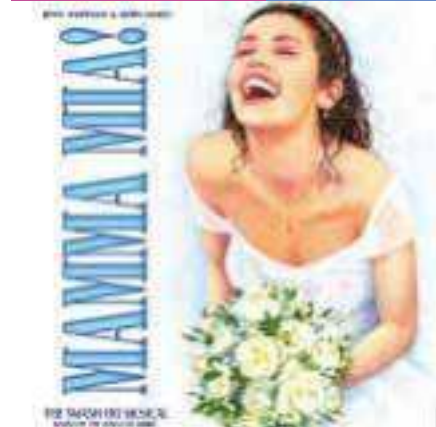
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**£49\***



Two tickets for  
Save up to £17

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Two tickets for  
Save up to £19

**£75\***



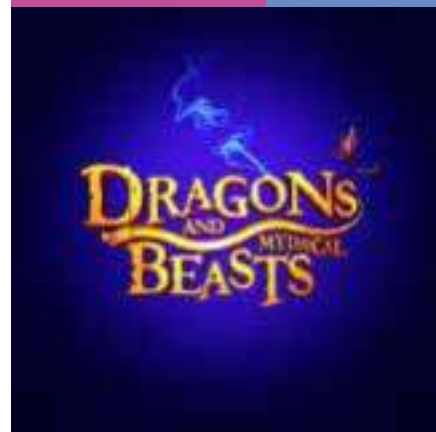
Two tickets for  
Save up to £30

**£49\***



Two tickets for  
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**£69\***



Two tickets for  
Save up to £13

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# “A THEATRE WITH ITS COMMUNITY AT HEART”

Hardish Virk



**W**ithout the community what would Wolverhampton Grand Theatre be? Probably an empty building without life and soul.

The Grand has always stood to serve the community, providing the widest range of art forms to suit all tastes. Since re-opening in 2021, the Audience Development Team have made it a priority to expand the programme even further with the help of our dedicated ambassadors.

This started with a celebration of Indian dance and film in October with a curation from award-winning South Asian Arts organisation Jaivant Patel Dance followed by a screening of the Bollywood classic *Devdas*.

Audience Development Consultant Hardish Virk commented,

“*Devdas* is an epic Bollywood love story with incredible dance and music set pieces. We wanted to make this more than a cinema screening - we wanted this to be an event. The live elements curated by Jaivant Patel Dance added magic through the dance performances. South Asian foods and drinks added to the atmosphere as majority South Asian audiences visited the Grand, many for the first time. Grand staff support was pivotal in the success of the event, from the marketing through to looking after the new audiences.

In November The Grand welcomed Rush Theatre Company with their

production of *RUSH – A Joyous Jamaican Journey*, documenting the Windrush generations journey from Jamaica to the UK, Audience Development Consultant Tonia Daley-Campbell reflects,

“One of the most talked about things before the show arrived was the marketing, mainly the fabulous large window vinyl right at the front of the Grand Theatre. This was so visible it allowed other black led production companies to see that at the Grand Theatre Wolverhampton they could be front and centre when it comes to marketing their shows.

This all resulted in a sell-out show with a waiting list of people wanting a ticket! On the night it was as bright, and full of energy off stage in the auditorium with our rich and colourful audience as it was on stage with the fabulous show. And the Jamaican feel extended to the bar areas where Jamaica’s famous Wray and Nephew rum punch was on sale alongside Dragon Stout. We also partnered with local company, The Original Patty company, who sold traditional Jamaican curry patties to our audience.

Also, we had a very special gift for a member of Wolverhampton’s Windrush community, our very own Mr Campbell, whose personal story features in a special ‘in conversation’ film the Grand are producing called **A JOYOUS JAMAICAN CONVERSATION**, which will show at the Lighthouse Cinema on Windrush Day

2022 (22 June). He was presented with a seat plaque with his name on and he was over the moon. All the years he had lived in Wolverhampton he had never been to the Grand Theatre and this is why we do what we do.”



*“After nearly four years of working with the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, I am confident to say that the Grand has demonstrated its’ commitment to becoming a theatre for all citizens of the city. Change will not happen overnight, but the groundwork is strong, and the audience development ambitions at the theatre are real.”*





## ***The Work Continues In The Community...***

Each year the Outreach Team co-ordinate a schools project themed around the pantomime. In 2021, International Storyteller Peter Chand, led workshops in schools encouraging primary school children to develop their creative writing and storytelling. The winning stories were displayed throughout the run of Cinderella in The Grand's foyer.

This year we've introduced new dates to our programme of Memory Cafés, with entertainment tailored for the Black, African and Caribbean community. Music has been proven to help those living with dementia and these additional cafés featuring gospel, soul, motown and reggae will allow more people to enjoy the benefits of attending a Memory Café.

We've also opened up our stage to local filmmakers and performers. Grand Theatre Ambassador Simone Stewart filmed her new online series 'Getting2Know' from the Grand Theatre stage, interviewing a host of prominent local figures against the backdrop of our beautiful auditorium, while performers from Gazebo Theatre took to our stage for the very first time to film their own creative pieces.

## ***What's Next?***

So what does 2022 have in store?

Tonia said, "I'm really blown away with the Grand Theatre's commitment to future programming. I was very keen that we didn't sit still after the success of Rush. I didn't want this to be a one night only effect, but to continue to build a more diverse programme of shows appealing to all different types of Black audiences. It was important that we kept the momentum going so our new audiences could clearly see it's not just a one off type of thing. Booking Rush Theatre Company's new show The King of Reggae (formerly known as Bob Marley-The Man- The Music) was so important in making sure we develop and nurture that relationship.

Both myself and Tim Hession, the Grand Theatre's Head of Programming and Production Co-ordinator, decided we would go looking for shows to program and we came across Black Is The Colour Of My Voice which we feel is a brilliant opportunity to see how drama and one women shows can do well with the right subject matter.

The Soweto Gospel Choir will visit for one night only in October. Even though the show is a while away we have made a plan to really push this show throughout our networks and to try and really target our African Diaspora within the local community.

And local company Blackstory Partnership visit with a brand new production called She's Royal, which unveils the hidden relationship between Queen Victoria and two extraordinary women of colour, Sarah Forbes Bonetta and Sophia Duleep Singh"

Hardish commented: "2022 features a diverse range of local and national South Asian talent from high profile comedians, Paul Chowdhry to local dance competition, Just Naach Wolverhampton, the film screening of the Indian comedy drama, English Vinglish alongside the recent performance of international singer, Satinder Sartaqj. The Grand recognises the role of programming when developing new audiences and it will continue to diversify the stories and entertainment presented on its stage to reflect this.





## Film Screening

### English Vinglish

**Saturday 11 June '22 - 5pm**

(Finish time 7.30pm)

In October 2021, the Grand Theatre screened the Bollywood classic *Devdas*, and welcomed hundreds of new visitors to the theatre from across the Midlands.

After fantastic feedback we are delighted to host another film screening, the comedy drama **ENGLISH VINGLISH**, written, and directed **Gauri Shinde**.

Shashi Godbole is a sweet natured, Indian homemaker who makes and sells laddoos as a home-run business. Her husband Satish and daughter Sapna take her for granted and mock her because she doesn't speak much English. After travelling alone to New York City to help her sister prepare for a wedding, Shashi, secretly enrolls in a conversational English class using the money she made from selling her laddoos. Comedy ensues after Shashi meets her fellow classmates and embarks on learning the English Language in a pursuit to gain the self-respect she deserves.

Starring **Sridevi** in her come back role as Shashi, **Adil Hussain**, **Mehdi Nebbou** and **Priya Anand**.

Screened in Hindi with English subtitles.

**Adults £5\***  
**U16's £2.50\***



# Accessible

## PERFORMANCES

*BSL Interpreted, Captioned, Audio Described, Relaxed and Dementia Friendly performances are among the services that are offered at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre. For further information on our access services and facilities, visit [grandtheatre.co.uk/access](http://grandtheatre.co.uk/access)*

Did you know we operate an Access Register scheme that provides customers with disabilities or impairments with appropriate information and concessional rates? To request an application form, contact our Box Office on 01902 42 92 12 or contact Remy Lloyd on 01902 57 33 20 or email [remyl@grandtheatre.co.uk](mailto:remyl@grandtheatre.co.uk)



BSL  
Interpreted



Audio  
Described



Captioned



Relaxed  
Performance



Dementia  
Friendly

Bedknobs & Broomsticks	Wednesday 6th April - 7:30pm
Bedknobs & Broomsticks	Saturday 9th April - 2:30pm
We Will Rock You	Thursday 26th May - 7:30pm
We Will Rock You	Saturday 28th May - 2:30pm
Billionaire Boy	Thursday 2nd June - 7pm
Waitress	Thursday 30th June - 7:30pm
Waitress	Saturday 2nd July - 2:30pm
Cluedo	Wednesday 13 July - 2:30pm
Blood Brothers	Thursday 15th September - 7:30pm
Blood Brothers	Saturday 17th September - 2:30pm
The Commitments	Saturday 15th October - 2:30pm
The Cher Show	Thursday 20th October - 7:30pm
The Cher Show	Saturday 22nd October - 2:30pm
Aladdin	Saturday 10th December - 11am
Aladdin	Wednesday 14th December - 2:30pm
Aladdin	Wednesday 14th December - 7pm
Aladdin	Thursday 5th January - 11am
Aladdin	Saturday 7th January - 2pm
Mamma Mia	Wednesday 25th January - 7:30pm
Mamma Mia	Saturday 28th January - 2:30pm
Jersey Boys	Thursday 16th March - 7:30pm
Jersey Boys	Saturday 18th March - 2:30pm

2022

2023

WOLVERHAMPTON GRAND THEATRE PRESENTS

# A JOYOUS JAMAICAN CONVERSATION

AN 'IN CONVERSATION' CELEBRATION  
OF JAMAICA'S WINDRUSH GENERATION

**W**olverhampton Grand Theatre is known for the stories it tells on stage but this summer it will present its first ever self-produced film screening, **A JOYOUS JAMAICAN CONVERSATION**, an 'in conversation' celebration of Jamaica's Windrush Generation.

Hosted by Grand Theatre Audience Development Consultant **Tonia Daley-Campbell** and featuring contributions from respected local resident **Mr Reuben Campbell** and Rush Theatre Company Members **Owen Miller**, **Ken 'Dread' McLean** and **Orvil Pinnock**, the film grew from a smaller idea, as Tonia explains.

'In the run up to Rush Theatre Company's visit to the Grand last year with their sell out production of *RUSH A Joyous Jamaican Journey*, which tells the history of Jamaica and the Windrush Generation, the team at the Grand wanted to highlight the Jamaican contribution to local life by filming some short pieces of film to share on social media.

We invited **Mr Campbell**, who arrived in Wolverhampton in 1962, to share his personal experiences of moving from Jamaica to the city and forging a new life here, which included running the Rising Star Club, and asked the guys from Rush to share

their parents' stories, alongside their memories of growing up within the Jamaican community in the Midlands.

When the footage came back we realised we had something much greater than the original idea, we saw a beautiful free flowing conversation with so much potential that justified a bigger stage'

That bigger stage is an exclusive screening at Wolverhampton's Light House Cinema on Windrush Day 2022 (22 June), and that potential was to shine a light on a generation that Rush Theatre Company 'Hype Man' **Ken 'Dread' McLean** speaks passionately about, 'They are such strong individuals that achieved so much against the odds. They were invited over by the British Government to help rebuild the country and arrived not knowing what to expect, they faced struggles but they worked hard, raised families and succeeded'.

**Orvil Pinnock**, Rush Theatre Company's Musical Director, highlights the importance of preserving the Windrush generations story on film: 'Very sadly many of that generation have passed, and as each person passes their contribution is lost. But if we're talking about it, it means people have the opportunity to learn, the younger generation can begin to understand whose shoulders they're

standing on. This film, like our show, is another opportunity to keep the Windrush story alive'.

Rather than a textbook history of the Windrush Generation **A JOYOUS JAMAICAN CONVERSATION** offers a series of personal memories, of receiving houses where Caribbean landlords and tenants helped new arrivals settle into new surroundings, of informal community run financial collectives called 'pardners' that helped monetarily when high street banks would not, of hard work, of resilience and camaraderie in the face of unfair treatment, and of joyous social events, and the sights, sounds and flavours of life in Jamaican family homes.

As **Mr Campbell** explains 'viewers will gain a clear understanding of the life we had, how we used to live and

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*'It was a pleasure interviewing Mr Campbell, Owen, Ken and Orvil, their stories and memories are so inspiring, there's a lot to smile about in there, and a few tears to wipe away as well. These are authentic, lived stories that are so important to share. The Grand Theatre team is really proud of this film, and we can't wait to share it'*



# FILM SCREENING



*The Grand Theatre team presented Mr Reuben Campbell with an honorary seat plaque inside the Theatre's historic auditorium as a heartfelt thank you for sharing his extraordinary story.*



*Rush Theatre Company Members Ken 'Dread' McLean, Owen Miller and Orvil Pinnock, before their recent visit to the Grand Theatre with their sold out production of 'RUSH – A Joyous Jamaican Journey'.*



*'A Joyous Jamaican Conversation' was filmed on stage at the Grand Theatre and hosted by Tonia Daley-Campbell, it's the Grand's first ever self-produced film.*

how we supported each other... the struggles and the hardship, but also the love and kindness'

While this story very much focuses on the experiences of those Jamaican's who arrived in the Midlands as part of the Windrush Generation, Rush Theatre Company Producer **Owen Miller** believes the film will connect across communities'.

'We spoke about our personal experiences, which are Jamaican experiences, but as well as ringing true for others from the Caribbean there will also be familiarities for other communities who made similar journeys to Britain, whether South Asian, Irish, Polish, from wherever, there are universal themes, they faced the same challenges my parents faced... There's an opportunity for everyone to connect with and learn from this film.'

With their memories committed to film and a date on the big screen waiting, how do the participants feel about the upcoming screening? Owen says he and his colleagues are all 'excited', while **Mr Campbell** shares that it was 'a surprise and an honour to be asked,' adding 'I have loved every minute of it and I'm looking forward to it, and I'll hopefully have some lifelong friends who have also been a part of this story watching along with me on the night'.

That excitement is echoed by the team at the Grand, as Tonia concludes, 'It was a pleasure interviewing Mr Campbell, Owen, Ken and Orvil, their stories and memories are so inspiring, there's a lot to smile about in there, and a few tears to wipe away as well. These are authentic, lived stories that are so important to share. The Grand Theatre team is really proud of this film, and we can't wait to share it'

**A JOYOUS JAMAICAN CONVERSATION** will screen at Wolverhampton's Light House Cinema on the evening of 22 June. Tickets are not yet on sale, but will be available to purchase from the Grand Theatre Box Office and website in the coming weeks. To be the first to know when tickets go on sale, email [feedback@grandtheatre.co.uk](mailto:feedback@grandtheatre.co.uk) and register your interest today.

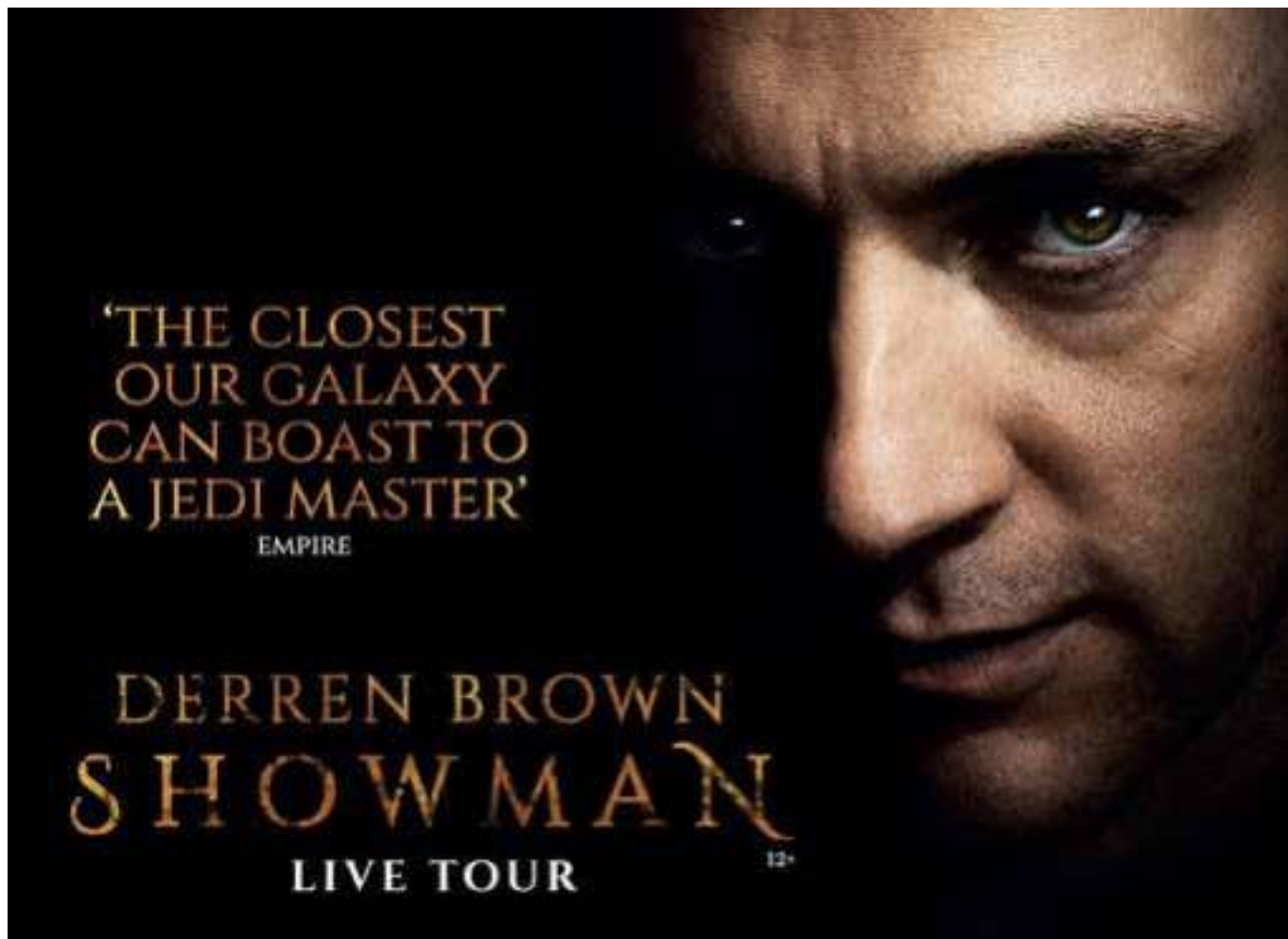


## Wed 22 June

Screening at Light House Cinema, Wolverhampton

**Tickets on sale soon from the Grand Theatre Box Office.**

To be the first to know when tickets go on sale email [feedback@grandtheatre.co.uk](mailto:feedback@grandtheatre.co.uk) and register your interest today.



## Derren Brown - Showman

**Tuesday 21 – Saturday 25 June '22**

*Evenings at 7.30pm, Saturday matinee at 2.30pm*

**Derren Brown** returns to the stage with his brand-new live show!

The multi award-winning master of mind control and psychological illusion, **Derren Brown**, is at his very best on stage. His one-man shows have received wide critical acclaim and more Olivier wins and nominations than any other in history!

Now with his first brand new theatre show in six years, **Derren Brown** returns to astonish and amaze audiences up and down the country. The content of **SHOWMAN** remains a closely guarded secret, but if you've seen him before, you know you're in for a powerhouse treat!

*"All I can reveal is that the show will ultimately be about you, the audience member, because that's what I find most interesting. There are places I'd like to take the audience where we haven't been before. I always aim to have it deliver more than you'd expect."*

*"Prepare to be wowed. This is not a show it's an EXPERIENCE... go ahead and BOOK!"*

**One Plymouth**

**Age Guidance: 12+**



**LAST  
TICKETS  
REMAINING!**

**Tickets  
from £19.50\***



Phil McIntyre Live in association with BBC present



KEEEEP DANCING!



WITH LIVE MUSIC  
PERFORMANCES FROM  
**MAX GEORGE**



**MAISIE SMITH**



**RHYS STEPHENSON**



**NEIL  
JONES**



**GORKA  
MARQUEZ**



**JOWITA  
PRZYSTAL**



**NANCY  
XU**

Celebrate the Power of Dance

## Strictly Presents: Keeeeeep Dancing!

**Sunday 26 June '22 -  
2.30pm & 7.30pm**

**Tickets from £19.75\***

**STRICTLY PRESENTS: KEEEEEPP DANCING!** is a brand new spectacular show featuring *Strictly* 2020 finalist and *EastEnders* star **Maisie Smith**, together with *Strictly* 2021 semi-finalist and CBBC Presenter **Rhys Stephenson**. They will be joined by the incredible *Strictly* professional dancers **Neil Jones**, **Gorka Marquez**, **Jowita Przystal** and **Nancy Xu**. And, as an extra special treat for *Strictly* fans, live music will be performed by *The Wanted*'s **Max George**, who competed in the 2020 series of the smash hit *BBC One Show*.

# EVERYONE DESERVES A SLICE OF HAPPINESS



THE TIMES, THE SUN, DAILY EXPRESS

LONDON'S SMASH HIT MUSICAL COMEDY

# WAITRESS

## IS COMING TO WOLVERHAMPTON



## Waitress

**Tuesday 28 June – Saturday 2 July '22**

Evenings at 7.30pm, Thursday & Saturday matinee at 2.30pm

"Treat yourself to a slice of five-star musical pie" (The Times) as **Chelsea Halfpenny** (9 to 5, BBC's *Casualty*, ITV's *Emmerdale*) stars as Jenna in the hit musical comedy **WAITRESS**.

Meet Jenna, a waitress and expert pie-maker who dreams of some happiness in her life. When a hot new doctor arrives in town, life gets complicated. With the support of her workmates Becky and Dawn, Jenna overcomes the challenges she faces and finds that laughter, love and friendship can provide the perfect recipe for happiness.

Brought to life by a ground-breaking, female-led creative team, this 'warm, witty, wise and hilarious' (EXPRESS) hit features 'one of the best scores in years' (THE STAGE) by the Grammy award-winning Sara Bareilles (*Love Song, Brave*) a book by acclaimed screenwriter Jessie Nelson (*I Am Sam*) and direction by Tony® Award-winner Diane Paulus (*Pippin, Finding Neverland*).

**WAITRESS** deals with some adult content and themes so discretion is advised for parents bringing children under age 13. The producers may make alterations to the published cast for any reason, at any time, and therefore cannot guarantee the appearance of any named artist.



**BSL  
Interpreted**



**Audio  
Described**

**Tickets  
from £19.50\***



"I love the UK! There's a beautiful spirit here, and a real dedication to the arts that I'm really appreciative of. I think there's an especially strong understanding of and reverence for theatre that I find really refreshing. You won't find that everywhere!"

# SARA Bareilles

*A recipe for success; Sara Bareilles serves up a slice of musical theatre pie-fection in Wolverhampton.*

**A**head of hit Broadway and West End musical **WAITRESS** coming to Wolverhampton, singer/songwriter Sara Bareilles talks to Theo Bosanquet about writing the music and lyrics for the show and bringing it to the Grand Theatre, allowing it to be seen by audiences outside of the world's theatre capitals.

"It's my pride and joy" she begins, "I grew up in a small town and I couldn't get to Broadway, so I was reliant on the theatres close to me. That's where I was introduced to musical theatre, which has become one of the great loves of my life, so I love that we now get to take this show to new places that might not have seen it before."

**WAITRESS**, based on the 2007 film of the same name has three incredible female lead roles in Jenna, Becky and Dawn and a female-led creative team but it really is a musical for everybody, as Sara explains;

"It's got something for everyone. I think there's a preconception that it's a very female-driven show, which to some extent it is, but there are also lots of great male characters. It's universally enjoyable, very funny but also very moving and relatable."

A relatable show that's made an impact worldwide and has a huge fanbase who return to the musical time and time again...

"Writing a musical is by far the hardest thing I have ever done. It's so complicated, with so many revisions, and it's easy to

lose sight of the finish line. So I was just so happy and proud that we got off the runway, everything else was a bonus. The fan community is off the charts! It's such a beautiful reflection of this story that so many people are finding themselves inside it and it's resonating on a deep level. You never know how something you create is going to be received, so to have it be embraced in this way has just been awesome."

The central role of Jenna, played by **Chelsea Halfpenny** on the UK tour is special to Sara as she played the role in the New York and London production of the show.

"It's a real honour to get to tell this story from the inside out, and to join such a wonderful cast and crew to bring the show to life every night in such a whole-hearted way. Telling this story and playing this role has been one of the biggest privileges of my artistic life. Jenna is an extraordinary pie-maker who lives in a small town in southern Indiana. She's in an abusive marriage and gets pregnant, but doesn't want the baby.

Over the course of the show we see her encounter an unlikely new relationship, and also develop her friendships within the diner and the community. She goes on a soul-searching journey and learns to love herself. She's a really interesting, complicated character that a lot of people can relate to"

And has **WAITRESS** increased Sara's love of baked goods?

"I've always been a lover of baked goods, though you have to be careful as all that sugar is not very good for your singing voice. Fortunately, Jenna doesn't eat too many pies herself, she only makes them."

**WAITRESS** comes to Wolverhampton as part of its first ever UK tour, which has all the ingredients of a good night at the theatre...

"I love the UK! There's a beautiful spirit here, and a real dedication to the arts that I'm really appreciative of. I think there's an especially strong understanding of and reverence for theatre that I find really refreshing. You won't find that everywhere!"

everybody  
cut  
loose

FEATURING THE CLASSIC HIT SONGS:

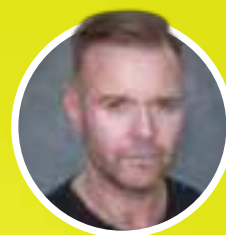
**HOLDING OUT FOR A HERO**

**ALMOST PARADISE**

**LET'S HEAR IT FOR THE BOY**

AND OF COURSE THE  
UNFORGETTABLE TITLE TRACK

**FOOTLOOSE**



**DARREN DAY**

As Reverend Moore



**JAKE QUICKENDEN**

As Willard



THE  
MUSICAL

## Footloose

**Monday 04 - Saturday 09 July '22**

Evenings at 7.30pm, Saturday matinee at 2.30pm



**Tickets from £15\***

Following two critically acclaimed tours and a West End run, **FOOTLOOSE** is back and better than ever with the incredible **Jake Quickenden** (*Dancing on Ice* Winner, *Hollyoaks*, *Dreamboys*, *Hair*, *Peter Pan – A Musical Adventure*) as loveable cowboy Willard and the legendary **Darren Day** (TV personality and star of numerous West End and National tours including *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*, *Grease* and *Summer Holiday*).

Based on the 1980s screen sensation which took the world by storm, **FOOTLOOSE** sizzles with spirit, fun and the best in UK musical talent. With cutting edge modern choreography, you'll enjoy classic 80s hits including *Holding Out for a Hero*, *Almost Paradise*, *Let's Hear It For The Boy* and of course the unforgettable title track *Footloose*.



# Day <sup>Darren</sup>

*...on playing one of his dream roles and why he loves visiting Wolverhampton on tour.*

**S**haw, the respected pastor of a local church in Bomont County and central to the story of **FOOTLOOSE**, is a long-awaited role for Darren Day, who returns to Wolverhampton Grand following a triumphant run as Billy Flynn in *Chicago* last year.

"I'm genuinely so happy about playing the Reverend. Over a decade ago I met with the producers for *Footloose* and *Chicago* within about three months of each other. I was told I didn't look old enough! The only downside of me playing these two roles back to back is that I must now look 'old enough!' Since those meetings all those years ago, Billy Flynn and the Reverend have been on my bucket list of roles I desperately wanted to play so to get the opportunity to play them both in one year is incredibly exciting for me and I feel deeply grateful."

Darren is no stranger to Wolverhampton Grand, a theatre he holds dear to his heart.

"The Grand has always had a special place in my heart. I took a break from musical theatre from 2005 to 2008 to do other projects. My return to theatre was *Hello, Dolly!* and the tour opened at the Grand. It was great to go back on stage and Wolverhampton was the perfect place to begin my theatre journey again. Similarly, after not having done musical theatre for a while during the pandemic, going back on stage at the Grand after my fellow performers and I spent over 18 months out of work and being a part of a big musical feels magical again, in the way it felt when I landed the role of Joseph at the Palladium at the beginning of my career. To have played Wolverhampton Grand again as Billy

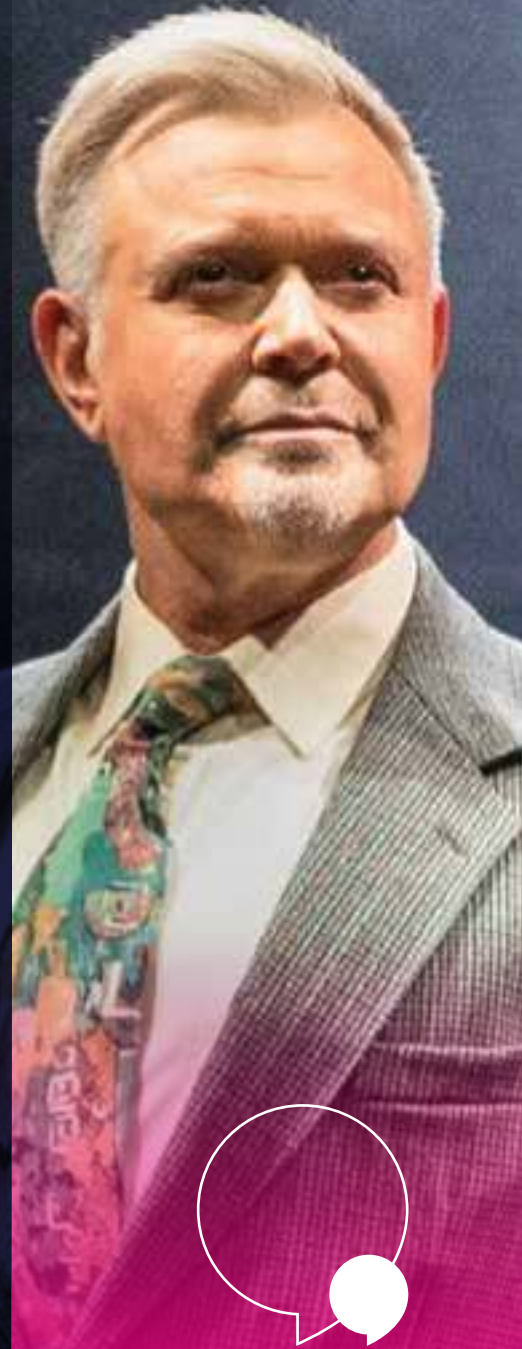
Flynn in *Chicago* a few months ago and to be returning as the Reverend in *Footloose* ... I feel very lucky."

And now, starring in a brand new production of **FOOTLOOSE**, Darren is working with the creative tour-de-force, Racky Plews, who choreographed our Grand Theatre pantomime *Cinderella* last year.

"This production of *Footloose* is particularly a special It's a brand new and amazing set. Racky Plews, who's directing, has brought an edgy and exciting new take on it. She's also been working closely with the writer of the original movie and songs, Dean Pitchford. His input into this new production has been invaluable. The cast and the whole team on this are truly 'the cream of the crop', a really gifted bunch of performers. Acting, singing, dancing and playing instruments throughout the show. One of my favourite moments in the show is my solo song 'Heaven Help Me' It's a brilliant tune with beautifully written lyrics. Also, the poignant moments with the Reverend's daughter are lovely to play and the revelations that happen to him. Having a teenage daughter myself (in real life!) I have a lot of 'method' experience to draw upon! It's tough letting your 'little princess' out into the big, bad world!"

It's almost time to kick off your Sunday shoes and cut *Footloose* and for Darren, he knows that come July, Wolverhampton is in for a very special week!

"I've always felt the audiences of Wolverhampton are among the best in the UK. They just 'get' musical theatre and it's always a joy to play to them. I can promise everyone a very special night out at The Grand. We'll all have a ball on the night!"



***"I've always felt the audiences of Wolverhampton are among the best in the UK. They just 'get' musical theatre and it's always a joy to play to them."***

**"...a surefire night of comedy  
entertainment."**

Southwark News

**"Brilliant  
Nostalgic Fun"**

Eastern Daily Press

**"Phenomenal"**

This is Local London

Starring

**MICHELLE COLLINS** as Miss Scarlett  
**DANIEL CASEY** as Professor Plum



**THE HILARIOUS WHODUNNIT PLAY**

## Cluedo

**Monday 11 – Saturday 16 July '22**

Evenings at 7.30pm, Wednesday & Saturday matinee at 2.30pm

Was it Miss Scarlett, with the revolver in the dining room, or Professor Plum, with the lead pipe in the library...?

Starring **Michelle Collins** as Miss Scarlett, **CLUEDO** is an exciting, comedy thriller based on the hit 1985 film *Clue* and the classic board game loved by generations. Directed by Mark Bell, director of the award winning *The Play That Goes Wrong* and *A Comedy About a Bank Robbery* just like the game, this brand new play promises a nostalgic, fun and thrilling evening of entertainment.

When Miss Scarlett, Professor Plum, Mrs Peacock, Reverend Green, Mrs. White and Colonel Mustard arrive at a country house one dark and stormy evening, they are surprised to find they have all received the same intriguing invitation from Lord Boddy. It soon becomes clear that they all have something to hide as the mystery and hysteria grows and the inhabitants and guests of Boddy Manor are killed off one by one, with a variety of familiar weapons, leaving everyone to wonder, who will be next!

This hilarious spoof of a thriller will keep you guessing right up to the finale as both the guests and audience try to work out whodunnit...with what...and where!



**Audio  
Described**

**Tickets  
from £15\***



# Michelle Collins

tells us about landing the role of Miss Scarlett in the new UK tour of **CLUEDO**.

**W**e all need a bit of glamour in our lives, don't we darling?' says Michelle Collins. The glamour in question comes in a role she brings to life on stage here in Wolverhampton, that of Miss Scarlett, the most glamorous and potentially most deadly member of the cast of **CLUEDO**, the new play based on the film *Clue* and, originally of course, the murderous board game that Michelle was obsessed with as a child.

'We all wanted to be Miss Scarlett,' says Michelle. She is one of the most iconic characters, along with Colonel Mustard and Professor Plum maybe, which makes it more difficult to play,' she goes on. 'Me and my sister would go and stay with my five cousins and we would all fight for that part but because I'm the bossy one, I would always get it.' She laughs. 'And I think because of lockdown people have gone back to board games, just to be together really.'

Then she remembers how her mum once bought her a board game that turned out – to her horror! – to be a ouija board: 'Doing séances at the age of 10! But it's funny that board games have brought us back together when you find out that Cluedo was actually invented during the Second World War, when people were stuck at home during air raids, almost out of boredom!' It adds a lovely dollop of nostalgia to the fun – and the murder! – of Cluedo.

It may sound a bit of a strange concept, a play based on a film based on a board game but to Michelle it makes perfect sense. 'It's a comedy whodunit,' she says of the story of a group of disparate people who turn up to a mansion one dark and stormy night at the behest of the one person they all have in common: their blackmailer. 'I've done a Miss Marple and everyone loves those,' she goes on.

'And it's great to dress up in period clothes, 40s clothes. So glamorous! And we are in the hands of the perfect director in Mark Bell...' he did the smash hits *The Play That Goes Wrong* and *A Comedy about A Bank Robbery*. 'It takes a very particular director to get the best out of something as fun and escapist as this.'

As for her character... 'I'll have to have my own take on her but it's really exciting to play someone who, like most women, has more going on than you see on the surface. She has a history. She's very smart, looks glam and dressed up but she's the smart cookie. The play will be very funny, very dry, a little dark at times but ultimately great entertainment, it's feel-good, and it will have something for all the family.

The fact that this is the British premiere of a play that has been a smash hit in the States makes it even more exciting, says Michelle. 'And it's kind of nice that it's not all on me, it's an ensemble piece...'

So, is Miss Scarlett the one to watch? Or Professor Plum in the library with a candlestick? She taps her nose conspiratorially. 'Well, you'll just have to come along and find out, won't you?' she laughs.



*"Me and my sister would go and stay with my five cousins and we would all fight for that part but because I'm the bossy one, I would always get it."*



# GETTING SOCIAL

LAUNCHES, PRESS NIGHTS, EVENTS -  
A LOOK BACK AT OUR LATEST SEASON.

AJ and Curtis Pritchard at the press night for Cinderella



Brenda Edwards at the press night for Hairspray



Divina de Campo



Nick Malenko & Royston Blythe



BSL Interpreted Post-Show Q&A for SIX The Musical



Gangsta Granny press night







The Da Vinci Code press night



Scott Bird and Jeet Rattnam at Devdas Screening



Hairspray press night



RUSH - A Joyous Jamaican Journey Gala Night



Gangsta Granny press night



Nigel Harman at the Da Vinci Code press night



Shaka McFarlane (Anne of Cleves) at SIX press night



Press call for Chicago



Tam Ryan at the press night for Cinderella



Hairspray press night



Tonia Daley-Campbell and Ken 'Dread' McLean



Danny John-Jules at the Da Vinci Code press night



Tyne Lexy Clarson at the press night for SIX

## Rob Lamberti - A Celebration Of The Songs And Music Of George Michael

**Sunday 24 July '22 - 7.30pm**

From the live final of *Stars in Their Eyes* to being hired by *George Michael* himself to promote his *25Live* album, this is a performer in a different league. Few tribute artists capture George's musical talent, charisma and passion as closely as **Rob Lamberti**. With some of *George Michael*'s personal musicians proudly joining Rob's band, his performances are guaranteed to hypnotise your senses and do justice to one of the greatest singer-songwriters of our time. Experience an exceptional moment with George, courtesy of the voice that captures his timelessly.



**Tickets from £18\***



## The Simon & Garfunkel Story

**Wednesday 27 July '22 - 7.30pm**

Direct from a weeklong run in London's West End at the Vaudeville Theatre, a sold out worldwide tour and standing ovations at every performance, **THE SIMON & GARFUNKEL STORY** is back!

Using huge projection photos, original film footage and a full live band performing all the hits including *Mrs Robinson*, *Cecilia*, *Homeward Bound* and many more.

**Tickets from £17.50\***



## Sarah Millican - Bobby Dazzler

**Thursday 28 July - Saturday 30 July '22 - 8pm**

The hilarious **Sarah Millican** is back on tour with a 'Bobby Dazzler' of a new stand-up show. In this, her sixth international tour, you'll learn about what happens when your mouth seals shut, how to throw poo over a wall, trying to lose weight but only losing the tip of your finger, a surprisingly funny smear test, and how truly awful a floatation tank can actually be. Sarah has spent the last year writing jokes and growing her backside. She can't wait to get back on the road and make you laugh.

**Age Guidance: 16+**

**Tickets £29.25\***





## Dinosaur World Live

**Thursday 01 - Saturday 03 September '22**

Thursday & Friday at 2pm, Saturday at 11am & 2pm

Dare to experience the dangers and delights of **DINOSAUR WORLD LIVE** in this *roarsome* interactive show for all the family.

Grab your compass and join our intrepid explorer across uncharted territories to discover a pre-historic world of astonishing (and remarkably life-like) dinosaurs. Meet a host of impressive creatures, including every child's favourite flesh-eating giant, the Tyrannosaurus Rex, a Triceratops, Giraffatitan, Microraptor and Segnosaurus!

Don't miss this entertaining and mind-expanding Jurassic adventure, live on stage.

Book now before tickets become extinct!



**Tickets from £10.50\***



## Talon - The Best Of Eagles

**Sunday 04 September '22 - 7.30pm**

Come and join **TALON** on the opening night of their **25th Anniversary Tour**, which will once again feature all the Eagles timeless back catalogue including *Hotel California*, *Take It Easy*, *One Of These Nights*, *Take It To The Limit*, *Desperado*, *Lyin' Eyes*, *Life In The Fast Lane* and many more.

Formed in September 1997 from truly humble beginnings, this world class seven-piece band are a phenomenon and have transcended the tag of 'tribute'. Over the last quarter of a Century, they have become a brand name in their own right who are not only revered by their peers, respected by the music industry but dearly loved by their loyal and ever expanding fan base.



**Tickets from £18.50\***



## Jane McDonald Live In Concert

**Sunday 11 September '22 - 7.30pm**

**Jane McDonald** is back in 2022 with her brand new **LET THE LIGHT IN** tour.

The BAFTA award-winning star always delivers a phenomenal show along with her fantastic live band and backing singers. With stunning production and a new line-up of songs her **LET THE LIGHT IN** tour promises to be the best one yet.

After her sell out tours of 2018 and 2019 you'll need to book early to secure your seat for this fabulous evening of music and laughter.

**Tickets from £25\***



# 'UNMISSABLE AND UNBEATABLE'

THE SPECTATOR

BILL KENWRIGHT  
PRESENTS

## WILLY RUSSELL'S **BLOOD** *Brothers*

**BEST MUSICAL**  
ALL MAJOR AWARDS



'BRINGS THE AUDIENCE CHEERING TO ITS FEET  
AND ROARING APPROVAL'

DAILY MAIL

## Blood Brothers

**Tuesday 13 – Saturday 17 September '22**

Evenings at 7.30pm, Wednesday,  
Thursday & Saturday matinees at 2.30pm

Willy Russell's legendary musical tells the captivating and moving tale of twins separated at birth, who grow up on opposite sides of the tracks, only to meet again with tragic consequences.

Few musicals have been received with such acclaim as the multi-award-winning **BLOOD BROTHERS**.

Former *X Factor* finalist **Niki Evans** returns to the iconic role of Mrs Johnstone, and starring alongside her will be the touring circuit's all-time favourite Mickey, **Sean Jones**, who will be returning to the role for what will be his final ever tour in **BLOOD BROTHERS**.

The superb score includes *Bright New Day*, *Marilyn Monroe*, *Easy Terms* and the emotionally charged hit *Tell Me It's Not True*.

'BRINGS THE AUDIENCE CHEERING TO ITS FEET  
AND ROARING ITS APPROVAL' - Daily Mail

'EXHILARATING...ONE OF THE BEST MUSICALS EVER WRITTEN'  
- Sunday Times

'UNMISSABLE AND UNBEATABLE' - The Spectator



BSL  
Interpreted



Audio  
Described

**Tickets  
from £19\***





*"She's a strong female lead and she's so real. Every mother in this country can relate to her on some level because of how real she is. Every mother must see something in Mrs Johnstone that they've also gone through."*

# NIKI EVANS

*Returning to the role of Mrs Johnson in Willy Russell's legendary musical **BLOOD BROTHERS**, Niki Evans shares her thoughts on playing the iconic musical matriarch.*

## **W**hen did you last play Mrs Johnstone and how is it returning to the show?

I last played her in 2012 and returning to it was scary at first. The first time I did it I'd never done a musical or been a part of the theatre world so when [producer] Bill Kenwright called me I think I turned it down four times. I was like 'No, you're OK!' but he persuaded me to audition, and my audition was terrible. But he saw something in me and within a week I was on stage in the Phoenix Theatre. It was such a whirlwind. Since then, I've done lots of other roles, mainly funny ones, so to come back to such a dramatic role is very scary but it's like a dream come true. They'd asked me to come back before but I had to be ready, and now I am.

## **What makes her such an iconic musical theatre role?**

It's because of her strength and the emotions you have to go through when you're on stage. She starts as a young

girl in her 20s, then within 20 minutes she's got seven kids and has to give one away. It's a big part and it's a big part for a woman, which is rare at my age. My window is tiny to get a part where you're on for more than ten minutes. She's a strong female lead and she's so real. Every mother in this country can relate to her on some level because of how real she is. Every mother must see something in Mrs Johnstone that they've also gone through. I know I can. I've got two sons so her Micky and Eddie are my Morgan and Jonah. My kids have had troubles, I've had troubles, and the way I look at it is: I don't have to play her, I just have to be her.

## **Are you discovering new things about her and the show this time round?**

[Laughs] Yes, she's not such a feisty tiger as I thought when I first did the show. They used to call me 'The Feisty Tiger Mrs Johnstone'. I come from a family of four, we grew up on a council estate, we had

no money, I used to go to school in jelly shoes even in November, and my mum was a tough cookie. You didn't mess with her and that's how I thought Mrs J. was or at least that she was how I was, like 'Don't mess with my kids or I'll come at you with a baseball bat'. But now I'm older I've mellowed. I'm 50 now and I'm not so bouncy as I was ten years ago, so my take on her is much more grounded. She's stronger without being quite so feisty.

## **It's such an emotional rollercoaster for the audience. Is it the same for you as a performer?**

It is, yes. There are a couple of parts in the show, without giving spoilers, where it rips me to shreds. I do it as though someone is about to take one of my children and I can't hold back. I have to feel it every time I do it.

*You can see Niki Evans as Mrs Johnson in Blood Brothers from Monday 13 – Saturday 17 September.*



# JACK DEE

# Off The Telly

**OFF THE TELLY** and onto the stage, deadpan comedian **Jack Dee** talks to James Rampton about his hilarious new live show



## Jack Dee - Off The Telly

**Sunday 18 September  
- 8pm**

**Age Guidance:** 14+, likely to contain swearing and adult content

**Tickets £24.75\***

**J**ack Dee's live tour, **OFF THE TELLY**, was cut off in its prime when the pandemic hit the UK last spring.

"That was annoying. People just don't think about people like me in the pandemic, do they? It's all about the doctors and nurses!"

This is typical of Jack's wonderfully acerbic sense of humour, and you'll be delighted to hear that you can enjoy plenty more splendid material like this as Jack returns to live stand-up with **OFF THE TELLY** this autumn, including a visit to the Grand Theatre on Sunday 18 September.

Specialising in beautifully worked, brilliantly deadpan observational routines and truly memorable one-liners, Jack is a compelling stage presence. It is no surprise that after 35 years as a stand-up, he remains enormously popular.

His grouchy on-stage demeanour is particularly magnetic. Audiences really relate to Jack's exasperation with the idiocies of the modern world. He explains, "that persona has always chimed with audiences. People enjoy hearing me articulate things they'd been half-thinking themselves. That's where the identification comes in.

"My job as a comedian is to locate those things, put them into words and make them funny for people who lead much more productive lives and don't want to spend time doing that. That's my silly job!"

So, what will Jack talk about in his new show? "At first I thought everything would need to be seen through the lens of Covid. I was saying to myself, 'how long is this going to go on for? At this rate, Covid is going to go on longer than one of Robert Preston's questions!'"

However, Jack carries on, "I was over-thinking things. People are actually more concerned with going out and having a good time. So in the show I make references to Covid – it would be odd not to – but I move on relatively quickly. I am aware that every comedian will have material on Covid and I don't want to be the guy who overdoes that. At some point, people will think, 'let's move on'.

Whether something is funny or not takes precedence over all else in Jack's show. "The audience never misunderstand me. They either find it funny or they don't. I've tried every other way, but I know that if it's not funny, it's my fault. It's not the audience's fault. I can't get away from that, and that's very disappointing!"

Jack, who has also enjoyed a stellar TV career on programmes such as *The Jack Dee Show*, *Jack Dee's Saturday Night*, *Jack Dee's Happy Hour* and *Jack Dee Live at the Apollo* ("in fact, I've probably appeared in every TV show with my name in the title"), reveals why he has called the show **OFF THE TELLY**. "The title comes from my disenchantment with the kind of telly I get offered now. I really won't do anything with 'Celebrity' in the title anymore.

"Artists are known for doing things they're really good at, whereas celebrities are known for doing things they're really terrible at. They go on *Bake Off* and make an absolute tit of themselves, and that's how they make a living."

Will Jack be appearing in the next run of *Celebrity Love Island*, then? "Not this season. I'll let everyone else get buffed up first. I don't want it to be unfair. Other people have to have time to get fit so they can catch up with me. Otherwise I'd win too easily."



## Whitney - Queen Of The Night

**Tuesday 20 September '22 - 7.30pm**

After a fantastic a sold-out run in London's West End, the critically-acclaimed international stage sensation **WHITNEY – QUEEN OF THE NIGHT** comes to Wolverhampton, celebrating the music and life one of the greatest singers of our time.

Fans will be blown away by the live band performing three decades of nostalgic hits, including *I Wanna Dance With Somebody*, *Higher Love*, *One Moment in Time*, *I'm Every Woman*, *How Will I Know*, *The Greatest Love Of All*, *I Will Always Love You* and many more.

**Tickets from £20\***



## Russell Kane Live - The Essex Variant

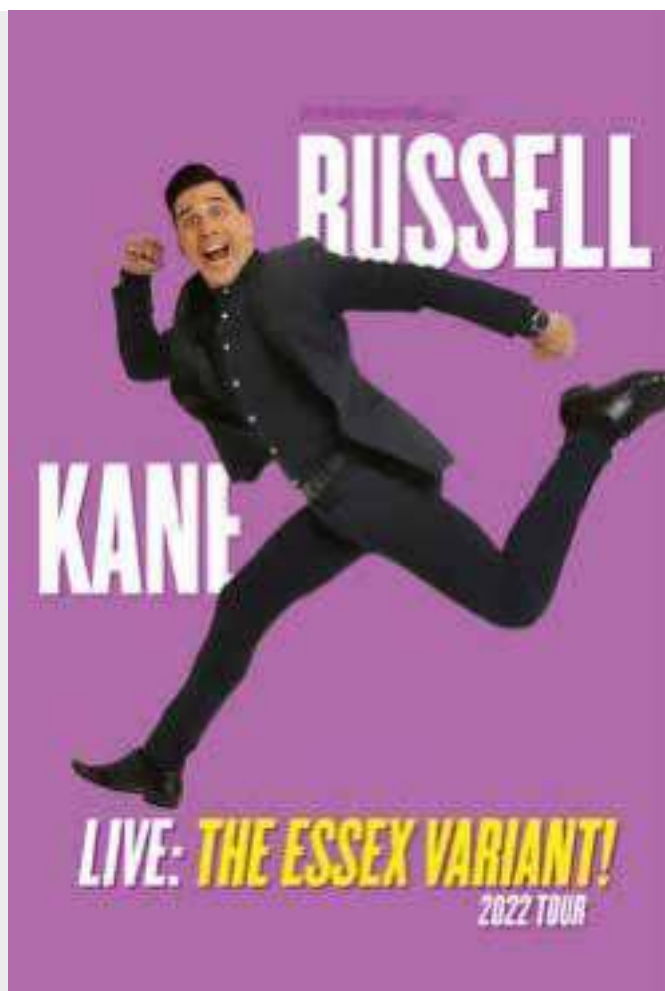
**Wednesday 21 September '22 - 8.00pm**

**Russell Kane's** bringing to town his gut-punch funny, searing, award-winning take on the two years we've just gone through. Hailed as the *The Guardian's* 'Number 1 comedy performance to come out of 2020' (*The Guardian* are miserable and usually hate everything) – this high-octane show brings nuclear-energy belly laughs and pant-wetting observations which prove laughter really is the best medicine\* (\*actually, it's probably hospital medicine).

Russell Kane has two chart-topping, award-bagging podcasts: *Man Baggage* and *BBC Radio 4's Evil Genius*. He is a regular on *Channel 4*, *BBC*, and *ITV*: all the usual shows you see funny people on. He's also a writer, actor, and presenter. He drinks lots of coffee and is 'like that in real life'.

**Tickets £21.75\***

**Age Guidance: 14+** - Likely to be swearing and adult content



WRITTEN BY APPHIA CAMPBELL

# BLACK IS THE COLOR OF MY VOICE



'MOVING PORTRAYAL OF  
DETERMINATION AND SURVIVAL.'

- *The Times*



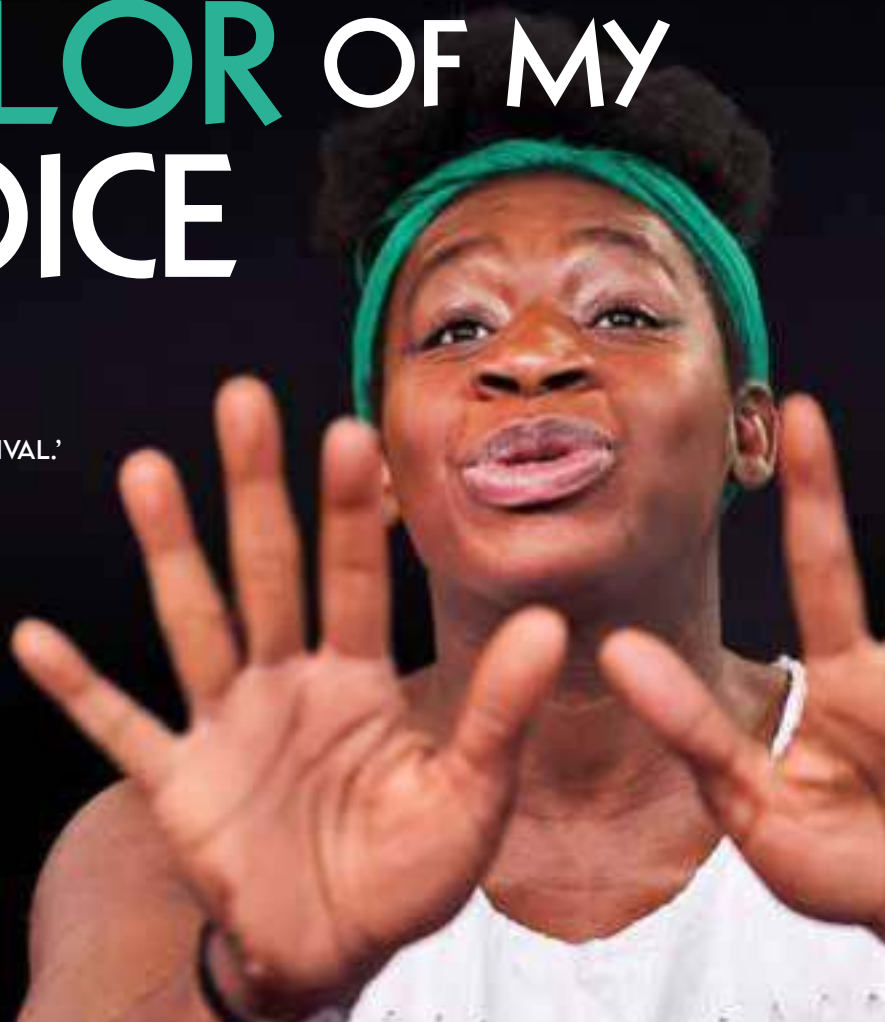
'A COMPELLING AND  
HEARTBREAKING STORY,  
PUNCTUATED WITH BURSTS  
OF SONG.'

- *Ed Festival Magazine*



'NOTHING SHORT OF  
SENSATIONAL... WILL MAKE  
YOU CHEER FOR HER, SMILE  
WITH HER AND THEN STING  
YOUR EYES WITH TEARS'

- *Broadway Baby*



INSPIRED BY THE LIFE OF NINA SIMONE, AND FEATURING  
MANY OF HER MOST ICONIC SONGS PERFORMED LIVE

## Black Is The Color Of My Voice

**Thursday 22 September '22 - 7.30pm**

**Tickets from £12\***

Age Guidance: 12+

**Apphia Campbell's** acclaimed one woman play follows a successful singer and civil rights activist as she seeks redemption after the untimely death of her father. She reflects on the journey that took her from a young piano prodigy destined for a life in the service of the church, to a renowned jazz vocalist at the forefront of the Civil Rights Movement.

Following sell-out seasons in Shanghai, New York, Edinburgh, and in the West End of London, *Fringe First* award winner Apphia Campbell brings her acclaimed play to Wolverhampton Grand for one night only.

*A word from our programming team: We cannot wait for you to see this acclaimed and powerful performance which has enjoyed standing ovations all over the world. Please note that the show features a simple set and a cast of one.*





# ‘FREEDOM IS NO FEAR’

*Apphia Campbell brings Nina Simone back to the stage and with it, a story of life imitating art...*

**S**he hoped she'd get an opening night audience of 50, within two weeks, audiences four times that were flocking to see Apphia Campbell's intimate one woman portrayal of the life of Nina Simone. From studios around the world, to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, **BLACK IS THE COLOR OF MY VOICE** is about to take on its biggest stage ever at Wolverhampton Grand.

Sitting down with Campbell, Scott Bird discovers her journey from student to stage that started at college with the question, "who is Nina Simone?"

"I found out about Nina in senior year. Everyone had to write a one-person show. I didn't write mine about her, but it was during that process that a friend said to me "you should definitely write a show about Nina Simone" and I said, "who is Nina Simone!?"

"There and then I started listening to her music and I instantly fell in love with her voice. I've never experienced a voice with that kind of pain. Every melody and every note really combine to tell a story. I started researching her and her activism. She continued to perform these songs even though it was detrimental to her career - I absolutely admire the courage that she had."

But how do you turn an autobiography and a catalogue of songs into a show?

For Campbell there was a story arc that she couldn't ignore – Simone's relationship with her father.

"People focussed a lot on the erratic side of her behaviour, I wanted them to fall in love with who she was as a woman, as I did, and understand the woman behind the music. It was when I narrowed down the relationship between her and her father, I found key moments in her life that I felt were the turning points for her. She was in front of an audience and her parents had to stand up and move seats – those are the moments that tell the story; her first real experience of racism, the rejections, the struggles but the love... and it all aligns itself to her songs."

Similarities with Simone have had a big impact on Campbell and her outlook on life.

"Life imitating art, we had a very similar journey in the discovery of our voices, singing in bars during international travel, it's where we both found our voices. Previously, when I was living in New York and trying to audition for Broadway, my vocal sound wasn't the sound I would hear in audition rooms. I would try and make my voice sound like the other peoples' voices. It took a long time for me to accept my voice and the uniqueness of my sound. Now, I think of a quote from her, "freedom is no fear" and if she could have lived her life with no fear, it would

have been so different. I always think about her and her strength when I look at the choices I make in life, she's been a great guide to me."

While Campbell connects with Simone's strengths, she sees her audiences connecting in a different way.

"What people really connect to is her vulnerability. In this show people get to see the person behind the icon, there's no façade and we do that by having a set that is just the bedroom, just her and keepsakes of her father. I think people really connect with her because it's an intimate experience with just them and this woman who goes through every emotion."

How does Campbell feel about taking that intimate experience to a bigger stage?

"This is going to be the biggest capacity audience and I've never performed it on a stage this big! Moving from fringe theatres and smaller capacity theatres to one as big as Wolverhampton Grand is incredibly exciting and I know that it's going to work just as well. I know what people connect to and I allow myself to be extremely vulnerable, truthful and in the moment. No matter what, this show translates to an audience of one hundred or indeed the twelve hundred that the Grand Theatre holds! I can't wait to see you there!"

## The Black Blues Brothers

**Saturday 24 September '22 - 7.30pm**

No one can resist the energy of **THE BLACK BLUES BROTHERS** in their acrobatic tribute to the legendary cult movie.

Expect jaw-dropping balancing acts, acrobatics with fire and human pyramids as **THE BLACK BLUES BROTHERS** use every chair, table and coat rack as part of their breathtaking routines!

Set in a nightclub, reminiscent of the Cotton Club, a vintage radio blasts out all of your favourite hits from the film, including *Gimme Some Lovin'*, *Sweet Home Chicago* and *Soul Man*.

Everybody needs someone to love, and **THE BLACK BLUES BROTHERS** need you, you and you to get up and get down with them!

**Tickets from £15\***



## South Staffs Musical Theatre Company presents Sing! Sing! Sing!

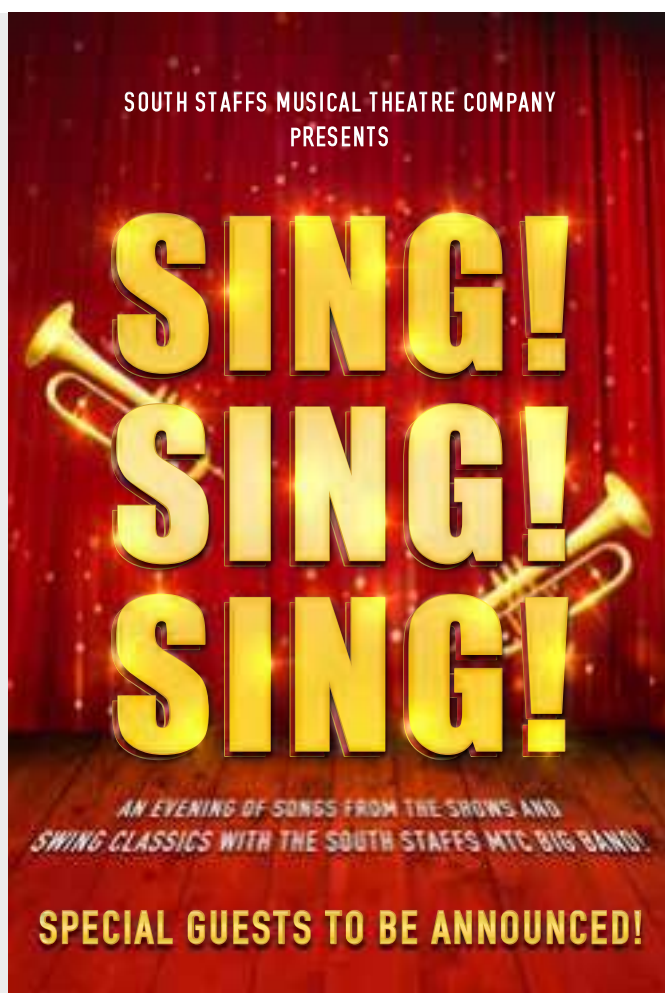
**Sunday 25 September '22 - 7.30pm**

**South Staffs Musical Theatre Company** continues its successful programme of one-night concerts at the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, this time with **SING, SING, SING!** a toe-tapping evening of show tunes and swing classics with their very own South Staffs MTC big band!

This award-winning company has been entertaining Midlands audiences for over 80 years and are hoping that this evening of spectacular entertainment will appeal to absolutely everyone!

This is an amateur performance.

**Tickets from £14.50\***





## Supreme Queen

**Tuesday 27 September '22 - 7.30pm**

Now one of the most recognisable Tribute bands in the world, **SUPREME QUEEN** continue to take things to a whole different level, with their homage to the halcyon days of one of the planet's greatest ever rock bands.

Since their formation in the nineties, **SUPREME QUEEN** has played to hundreds of thousands of Queen fans across the world, headlining at major events including St. Tropez's International Queen Convention, where they played to 10,000 people.

**Scott Maley's** incredible vocal and visual resemblance to Freddie Mercury, fronting this remarkable band of musicians has seen **SUPREME QUEEN** become one of the most respected bands of their genre anywhere on earth. Closely following the ethos of the original band, they have always strived to create the original *Queen* live experience.



**Tickets from £12.50\***



## Into The Groove

**Wednesday 28 September '22 - 7.30pm**

Strike a pose and get up on the dance floor it's time to open your heart as we've got the key!

Join us for an incredible night, as we cherish the love and celebrate the incredible career of the best-selling female artist of all time...*Madonna!*

This energetic, dazzling, colourful production, recreates the highlights from her breath-taking live tours, playing you all the hits for the ultimate concert night out!

So don't go for second best, put your love to the test and get **INTO THE GROOVE!**



**Tickets from £18.50\***



## Don't Stop Believin'

**Friday 30 September '22 - 7.30pm**

*One way, or another, nothing's gonna stop us now...* the brand-new, feel-good show of the year guarantees a crazy, crazy night of non-stop, singalong favourites.

This electrifying, high-energy theatre production brings you 30 of the biggest end-of-night anthems – all brought to life in full colour with a sizzling cast, fantastic costumes, and amazing light show. It's time to let your hair down and come dressed to impress as we bring you the biggest party night ever!

With songs including, *Summer of '69, I Love Rock 'n' Roll, Eye of the Tiger, Livin' on a Prayer, Sweet Child O' Mine, China in Your Hand, You Shook Me All Night Long, Sweet Home Alabama* and many more.



**Tickets from £18.50\***



# JUST NAAACH WOLVERHAMPTON

*A competition of South Asian  
Dance hosted by **Qasa Alom***

*Calling all budding community and emerging South Asian Dance groups and artists. Wolverhampton Grand Theatre presents **JUST NAAACH WOLVERHAMPTON** a competition to celebrate South Asian Dance in Wolverhampton and The Black Country.*

*Bollywood, Bhangra, Regional Folk, Indian Classical and South Asian Fusion are just some of the styles that make up the wonderful world of South Asian Dance. Whether you are a solo performer, youth group or dance school all entries are welcome. It is free to enter, and the winning group will win 50 tickets to the pantomime Aladdin at Wolverhampton Grand this December.*

*More details about how to enter will be announced in April.  
To register your interest please email  
**[feedback@grandtheatre.co.uk](mailto:feedback@grandtheatre.co.uk)***

*Finalists will perform on the main stage at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre in front of a live audience and a panel of judges.*

**SATURDAY 01 OCTOBER 2022**



HOSTED BY

# QASA ALOM

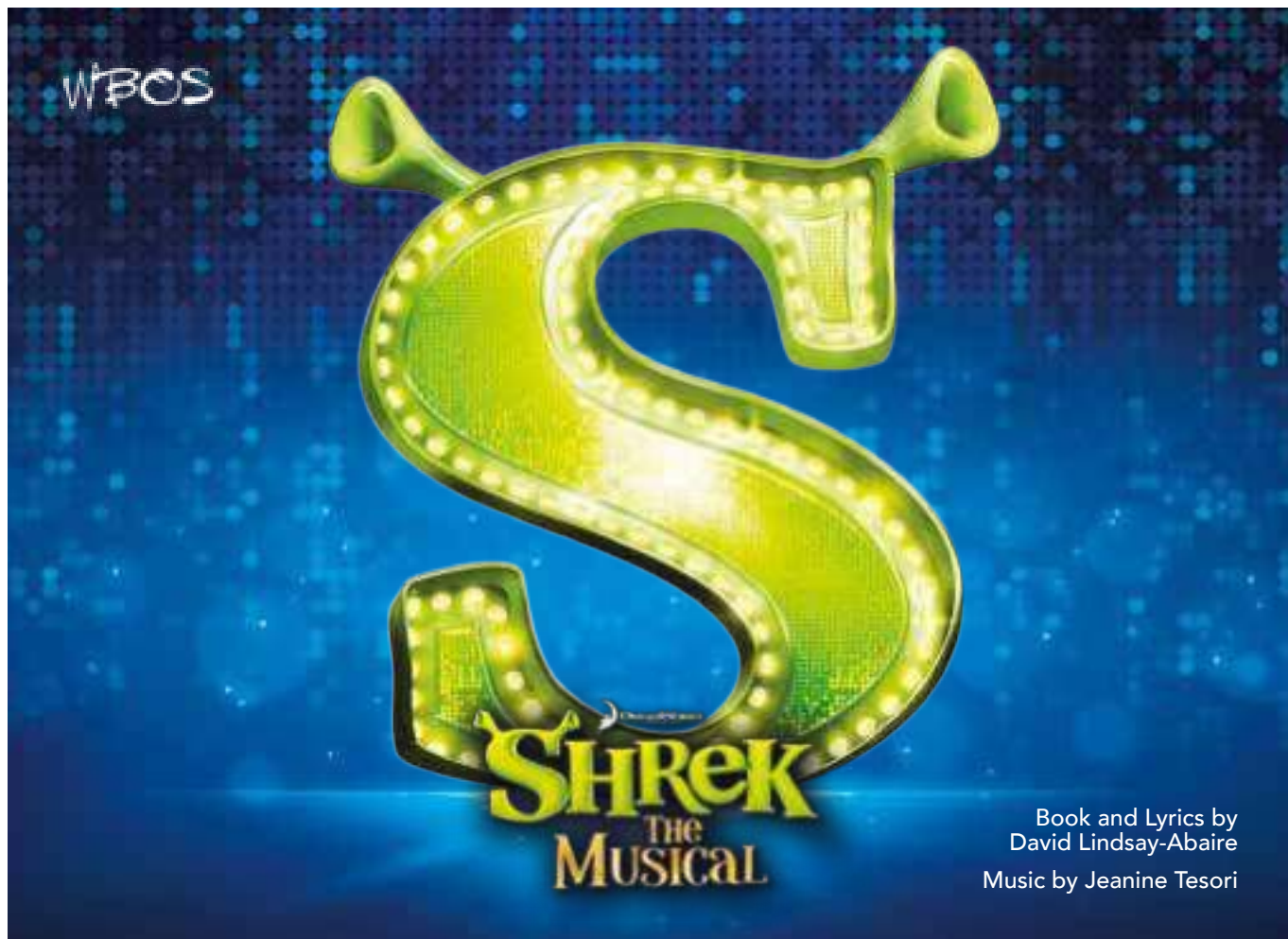
**Qasa** is a national broadcaster for the BBC having presented on BBC Asian Network, BBC Radio 5 Live & BBC Radio 4. He has also made various documentaries and hosted at major events such as at The Hundred, Cop 26 & Wimbledon. He comes from Birmingham and is proud of the Midlands and the talent in the region.



*Arena Theatre Wolverhampton*



*Images courtesy of Matthew Cawrey for cultural performances by Jaivant Patel Dance at Arena Theatre Wolverhampton.*



## WBOS Presents Shrek The Musical

**Tuesday 4 - Saturday 8 October '22**

Evenings at 7.30pm, Wednesday & Saturday matinee at 2.30pm

Following their hugely successful productions of *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*, *West Side Story* and *CATS*, **WBOS** are very proud to present **SHREK THE MUSICAL**.

Based on the story and characters from the Oscar®-winning DreamWorks Animation film, this hilarious and spectacular musical turns the world of fairytales upside down in a must-see production.

Join Shrek and his loyal steed Donkey as they set off on a quest to rescue the beautiful, yet feisty, Princess Fiona from her tower, guarded by a fire breathing love-sick dragon. Add the vertically challenged Lord Farquaad, a gang of fairytale misfits, and a biscuit with attitude, and you've got an irresistible mix of adventure, laughter and romance, guaranteed to delight audiences of all ages!

Featuring all new songs as well as cult Shrek anthem *I'm a Believer*, **SHREK THE MUSICAL** bursts into Wolverhampton in an all-singing, all-dancing extravaganza.

Based on the Dreamworks Animation Motion Picture and the book by William Steig.

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International (Europe).



**Tickets  
from £12.50\***



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THE SUNDAY TIMES

PHIL McINTYRE ENTERTAINMENTS PRESENTS

RODDY  
DOYLE'S

# THE COMMITMENTS

THE SMASH HIT WEST END MUSICAL

DIRECTED BY ANDREW LINNIE

**OVER 20 SOUL CLASSICS  
LIVE ON STAGE!**



## The Commitments

**Tuesday 11 – Saturday 15 October '22**

Evenings at 7.30pm, Wednesday & Saturday matinee at 2.30pm

**THE COMMITMENTS** is a fantastically feel-good celebration of soul. Returning to tour the UK and Ireland, 5 years after a phenomenally successful, record-breaking run in London's West End and subsequent sell-out tour,

**THE COMMITMENTS** is based on the BAFTA award-winning film classic.

**THE COMMITMENTS** received universal critical acclaim following its London World Premiere and was quickly hailed as a smash hit musical sensation. With over 20 soul classics performed live on stage including: *Night Train*, *Try A Little Tenderness*, *River Deep*, *Mountain High*, *In The Midnight Hour*, *Papa Was A Rolling Stone*, *Save Me*, *Mustang Sally*, *I Heard It Through The Grapevine*, *Thin Line Between Love and Hate*, *Reach Out*, *Uptight*, *Knock On Wood*, *I Can't Turn You Loose* and more!

**THE COMMITMENTS** musical has been adapted from the novel by Booker prize winning author Roddy Doyle himself and is directed by Caroline Jay Ranger. It is the story of Jimmy Rabbitte, a young working-class music fan, who shapes an unlikely bunch of amateur musicians and friends into the finest soul band Dublin has ever produced.

A guaranteed fabulously fun night out you will simply never forget.

**Age Guidance: 12+**



**Tickets  
from £19.50\***





**F**or anyone who isn't familiar with the story, what is *The Commitments* about?

**THE COMMITMENTS** is about a group of young people from Dublin in the 1980s who form a soul band to try and escape the poverty trap they've been growing up in.

**You are directing this time round, but you previously performed in the show. Tell us more about that.**

I made my West End debut with the show when it opened in September 2013, playing Dean Fay, the sax player in the band who spirals off on his own path to a jazz career. I played that role for over two years. During that time at one point both the lead actor playing Jimmy and the two understudies were off due to illness or injury and I was given the call and asked if I'd play Jimmy that night.

**Were you familiar with the story before it came to be a stage show?**

I'd seen the film, I think almost every Irish person has, it's part of our national psyche. Roddy Doyle's books and influence are huge, as a Man Booker winner and such a big international

success he's hugely influential, so it's hard not to be familiar with it growing up in Dublin.

**And Roddy Doyle adapted *The Commitments* for the stage.**

Yes, it's great to have had so much input from Roddy Doyle, and his adaptation works really well for stage with subtle changes to the dialogue here and there to get the most out of the theatre setting. The adaptation is a combination of the book and the film, so you get the best of both worlds; Roddy's wit and dialogue and a brilliant soul back catalogue.

**What is your favourite part of the show?**

Oh that's tough! I think it's probably when the band come together and play for the first time, and they become more than the sum of their parts. I think playing music together with other people for the first time is one of the most exciting things a musician gets to do, and that scene really captures it. Although *Papa Was A Rolling Stone* is one of my favourite songs so I'd have to say that is one of my favourite bits too.

*'I'd seen the film, I think almost every Irish person has, it's part of our national psyche. Roddy Doyle's books and influence are huge, as a Man Booker winner and such a big international success he's hugely influential, so it's hard not to be familiar with it growing up in Dublin.'*





## Soweto Gospel Choir: Freedom

**Sunday 16 October '22 - 7.30pm**

Winner of the 2019 Grammy Award for Best World Music Album for their latest album *Freedom*, a collection of songs which celebrate and commemorate South Africa's democratic movements struggle for freedom, **Soweto Gospel Choir** now bring their **FREEDOM** concert to Europe in 2022.

Hailing from Soweto (South West Township), a town outside of Johannesburg and home of Nelson Mandela and South Africa's democratic movement, **Soweto Gospel Choir** continues to inspire audiences around the world with their powerful blend of African gospel, freedom songs, and international classics.

Comprised of a line-up of South Africa's best vocalists, these uplifting performers have shared the stage with some of the biggest names in music including *U2, Aretha Franklin, Stevie Wonder, Robert Plant, Celine Dion, Red Hot Chili Peppers* and *Josh Groban*.

In this uplifting and joyous repertoire, the choir will perform a rousing program of freedom songs celebrating the life of the father of their Rainbow Nation, Nelson Mandela as well as international gospel classics including a spine-tingling take on Leonard Cohen's *Hallelujah* and an extraordinary rendition of *Amazing Grace* which has had over 15 million views on YouTube.



**Tickets  
from £17.75\***





It is  
truly  
amazing  
what  
music  
can  
do to  
people



*'I would say to anyone coming to see the show, prepare to be uplifted. You may not understand everything, but you will most definitely feel'*

*Pamilerin Beckley speaks to choreographer and choir master **Shimmy Jiyane**. They explore the history behind the award-winning **SOWETO GOSPEL CHOIR**, and what theatregoers can expect from the **Freedom** concert.*

**F**rom songs of freedom to gospel classics like *Amazing Grace* and Leonard Cohen's *Hallelujah*; South Africa's three-time Grammy award-winning **SOWETO GOSPEL CHOIR** is bringing their **Freedom Concert** to Wolverhampton Grand Theatre.

The Soweto Gospel Choir's Freedom concert in honour of father of the nation; Nelson Mandela, promises to be an "uplifting and joyous" rendition of songs that will take you on a journey through South Africa's vibrant culture and rich history, before and after apartheid.

In June 1976, the Soweto uprisings brought about a shift in the consciousness of black South Africans. Protests by school children drew a line in the sand and acquiescence was replaced with activism as young people engaged in the fight against apartheid. Choir master, choreographer, and artiste extraordinaire recalls the role of music at the time; "In the face of oppression the only way we could take away the pain was through song and dance," says **Shimmy Jiyane**. He credits this era with influencing and shaping the foundation of the choir. "Our performances are raw and stem from the deep roots of South Africa's past. We sing the songs we grew up singing as part of the movement against apartheid. Every performance is influenced by the traditions we grew up with."

South Africa is well known for its soul moving music and spirited rhythm. Soweto is often seen as a symbol of the new South Africa; caught between old songs of oppression and misery, and new songs of hope and prosperity. The Soweto Gospel Choir proudly carries the torch for this diverse nation of people, and they embody the power of music as a unifying language, and a symbol of faith, hope and love. "It is truly amazing what music can do to people," Shimmy says. An audience member once said that whenever they feel anxious, or afraid, they listen to the choir's rendition of *Amazing Grace*, and they feel better.

When asked for the secret to their success, Shimmy highlights three things; humility, simplicity and kindness. "Those are the reasons why people connect with us." He recalls key moments with the choir. "Stevie Wonder once heard us singing during sound check and made an impromptu decision to add us to the line-up for his set." The choir has been blessed to meet many of the legends of our time however Shimmy's favourite moment by far was when the choir presented their first ever Grammy to the late Nelson Mandela. "He was such a force. I have no idea how he managed to handle struggle and pain with so much poise and grace," he said. Five Grammy nominations and three wins later, Shimmy can't wait to grace the stage in Wolverhampton!

What is he hoping will be the audience's take away? "I would say to anyone coming to see the show, prepare to be uplifted. You may not understand everything, but you will most definitely feel." The Soweto Gospel Choir's message is one of joy, peace, and healing. "The songs we sing are deeply profound words of faith. We minister in song. We are looking forward to taking people on a journey and showing them how our songs of struggle became songs of freedom and hope. We want to uplift and heal, and we also want people to leave the theatre and book tickets to visit South Africa."



IT'S TIME TO  
**TURN BACK TIME**  
35 SMASH HITS – ONE POP GODDESS

# The **CHER** Show

A NEW MUSICAL

BOOK BY  
**RICK ELICE**

CHOREOGRAPHY BY  
**OTI MABUSE**

DIRECTED BY  
**ARLENE PHILLIPS**

COSTUMES BY  
**GABRIELLA SLADE**

## The Cher Show

**Tuesday 18 - Saturday 22 October '22**

Evenings at 7.30pm, Wednesday & Saturday matinee at 2.30pm

Music icon turned Hollywood royalty, the Grammy®, Oscar®, Emmy® and Golden Globe® award-winning Queen of re-invention has conquered it all. It's now time to turn back time with this fiercely fabulous kick-ass new musical, from the writer of *Jersey Boys*.

Three Chers is better than one! Three West End stars play Cher as we span her iconic career: **Millie O'Connell** (*SIX*, *RENT*) as BABE, **Danielle Steers** (*Bat Out of Hell*, *SIX*) as LADY and the Olivier Award nominated **Debbie Kurup** (*Prince of Egypt*, *The Bodyguard*) as the ultimate diva, STAR.

**THE CHER SHOW** tells the incredible story of Cher's meteoric rise to fame, flying in the face of convention at every turn. This huge new production features a fresh take on her show-stopping costumes which earned her the title of "the ruler of outré reinvention" (*VOGUE*).

In a dazzling glitter fest sparkling with Cher's signature wit and style, you'll be spinning in the aisles to the sounds of her biggest hits, including *If I Could Turn Back Time*, *Strong Enough*, *Gypsies Tramps and Thieves*, *The Shoop Shoop Song*, *I Got You Babe*, and *Believe*.

Book now for a joyous party musical fit for the Queen of pop.

Written by Tony award-winning Rick Elice (*Jersey Boys*), this brand new UK production is directed by Arlene Phillips (*Grease*, *Starlight Express*), choreographed by Oti Mabuse (double *Strictly Come Dancing* winner), with costumes by Gabriella Slade (*Spice World Tour*, *SIX*).

**Age Guidance: 12+**



BSL  
Interpreted



Audio  
Described

**Tickets  
from £22.50\***



*"With a female icon as the subject of the show and Arlene, Oti and Gabriella all adding their superpowers to the mix, there's definitely a whiff of Girl Power about the show."*

# Arlene Phillips



*Arlene Phillips talks to Vicky Edwards about Girl Power, refusing to act her age and why **THE CHER SHOW** is an unmissable and fabulously feel-good extravaganza.*

**I** loved Cher's music from the first time I heard it, but it's more than that;

Cher is an icon," says Arlene, confessing that she is thrilled to be directing **THE CHER SHOW**.

"I am so excited! Cher is a woman who right from the start of her career was ahead of her time. She's had hits in every decade, she's a great actress and she's whip-smart. She has also been a great pioneer for women's rights. If there's something to shout about then Cher shouts about it."

All of which results in an international following that transcends age, gender and race. And now the show that carries her name seems set to do likewise. Having debuted on Broadway in 2018, earning two Tony Awards, Arlene's production of **THE CHER SHOW** marks the European premiere. Telling how Cherilyn Sarkisian went from truck driver's daughter with big dreams to the Oscar-winning Goddess of

Pop and Queen of Reinvention, Cher takes the audience by the hand and introduces them to the influential people in her life; from her mother and Sonny Bono to fashion designer and costumer Bob Mackie. Recalling how she battled the men who underestimated her and defied convention, the story is told, Arlene explains, as if Cher is looking back on her life.

"There is a great story running through as she looks back at the moments where she made an impact, whether through a relationship, a hit, a movie or fashion. We want the audience to embrace her story and have a good time. There are so many hits and the show will have a great party feel to it, as the story builds and builds, finishing in a full-on full-out concert."

And if all that weren't enticing enough, joining Arlene on the journey are some impressive names. Written by Olivier and Tony Award-winning Rick Elice (who also wrote *Jersey Boys* and *The Addams Family*), choreography is by double *Strictly Come Dancing* champion Oti Mabuse.

"Oti's choreography is SO exciting! She is really gifted and people are going to see something that hasn't been seen before," promises Arlene, who as one of the world's most respected

choreographers is, let's face it, pretty well-placed to make such a pronouncement.

And of course you can't possibly tell Cher's story on stage without fabulous costumes. Enter costume designer Gabriella Slade, the super-talented creator of costumes for international smash hits including *Six*, *In the Heights* and the 2019 *Spice World* tour.

"The impact Cher has made in fashion has been enormous. She isn't afraid to say I want to stay as young as possible for as long as possible and she isn't afraid to wear the fantastic clothes and look as glamorous as can be. We have phenomenal costumes from Gabi - the details are incredible. It's a feast of costumes!"

With a female icon as the subject of the show and Arlene, Oti and Gabriella all adding their superpowers to the mix, there's definitely a whiff of Girl Power about the show.

"I love that," beams Arlene, who admits that directing rather than choreographing does require a gear shift.

*Shoop Shoop* your way to the Grand this October for an unforgettable night you'll definitely want to 'Cher' with everyone!

## That'll Be The Day

**Sunday 23 October '22 - 7.30pm**

**THAT'LL BE THE DAY** reaches another milestone this year as it celebrates its 35th anniversary!

Unashamedly nostalgic and 'Relentlessly Entertaining', the show takes its audience on a rollercoaster ride through the 'golden' age of Rock 'n' Roll and Pop, mixing brilliant vocals and superb musicianship with impersonations and hilarious comedy routines.

Truly the best 'feel good' show on the road.

**Tickets from £15\***



## Milkshake! Live

**Monday 24 October '22 -  
1pm & 4pm**

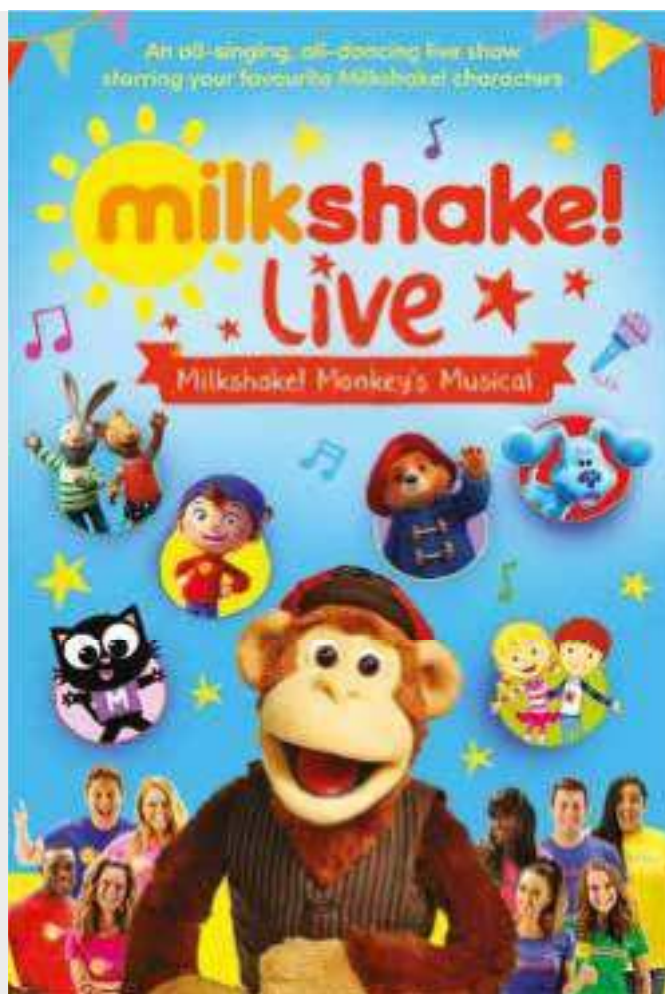
*Milkshake!* Monkey is back and can't wait to put on a spectacular NEW show for you all, joined by some of his favourite *Milkshake!* friends plus two *Milkshake!* presenters creating the most dazzling show you have ever seen!

Join **Paddington, Daisy & Ollie, Milo, Noddy, Pip and Posy, Blue's Clues & You!** and of course ***Milkshake!* Monkey** for an unforgettable family time at *Milkshake!* Monkey's Musical!

Learn the amazing songs and dances with your favourite *Milkshake!* friends and watch as the music, the lights, the costumes and the stage brings *Milkshake!* to life. With great *Milkshake!* friends, anything is possible.

This brand-new show has plenty of laughter, audience interaction and great fun to get everyone up on their feet! It's a family show not to be missed!

**Tickets from £10\***





## Harry Hill - Pedigree Fun

**Wednesday 26 October '22 - 8pm**

Harry is back with brand-new amazing jokes in an all-singing, all-dancing one-man spectacular.

Audiences will meet Harry's new baby elephant, Sarah, and Ian, The Information Worm. Harry will also be joined by Stouffer the Cat (his famous sidekick) who commented "what can I tell you? When Harry calls you say yes – end of!"

**Age Guidance: 14+**

likely to be swearing and adult content

**Tickets £31.75\***



## Jongleurs Legends

**Thursday 27 October '22 - 7.30pm**

Jarred Christmas has had audiences around the world howling over his hysterical and relatable past experiences and impeccable comic timing. Paul Tonkinson has long upheld his esteemed reputation as one of the finest stand-ups the UK has to offer.

Ninia Benjamin is a tour-de-force of comedy...she's outrageously rude but above all sidesplittingly funny. Mike Gunn's history is as interesting and entertaining as his comedy. A self-confessed pessimist, he describes himself as "not a natural choice for a career in laughter". Jarred Christmas, Paul Tonkinson, Ninia Benjamin and Mike Gunn will be relentless in their delivery to ensure that you have a great night.

**Age Guidance: 14+**

likely to be swearing and adult content

**Tickets £26.75\***



## Magic Of Motown

**Friday 28th October '22 - 7.30pm**

Seen by over a million people, now in its 16th year! It's no surprise that this show is one of the biggest success stories in British theatre history. Get ready for the biggest Motown party of the year.

You will be going *Loco down in Acapulco* as we take you back down memory lane with all the Motown classics from artists such as, Marvin Gaye, Diana Ross, Stevie Wonder, The Temptations, The Supremes, The Four Tops, Martha Reeves, The Jackson 5, Smokey Robinson, and many, many more.

Celebrate the sound of a generation with one very special night of **THE MAGIC OF MOTOWN!**



**Tickets from £18.50\***



## Queenz - The Show With Balls

**Saturday 29 October '22 - 7.30pm**

**QUEENZ – THE SHOW WITH BALLS** is a life-affirming night of fun and frolics with a bunch of boys who dance like Britney and sing like Whitney!

Enjoy remixed and reimagined pop anthems from *The Spice Girls, GaGa, Shakira, Janet Jackson, Britney, Whitney* and everything in between.

Get ready for a non-apologetic, sequin clad pop party, celebrating unity, unicorns, divas and death drops – it's the night out we've all been waiting for!



**Tickets from £18.50\***



## X-Treme Magic

**Monday 31 October '22 - 7.30pm**

The World's Most Dangerous Thrill Show!

Starring **Richard Cadell**, **X-TREME MAGIC** will deliver a non-stop adrenaline rush. A spectacular show packed with fire, illusion & death-defying stunts.

Created in Las Vegas & brought over to the UK to entertain audiences up & down the country. Imagine making a motorcycle appear from nowhere, playing russian roulette with sticks of dynamite or trying to escape from a straight jacket whilst hung from a burning rope...

The stars of **X-TREME MAGIC** do all this & more, all while looking incredibly sexy.



**Tickets from £18.50\***



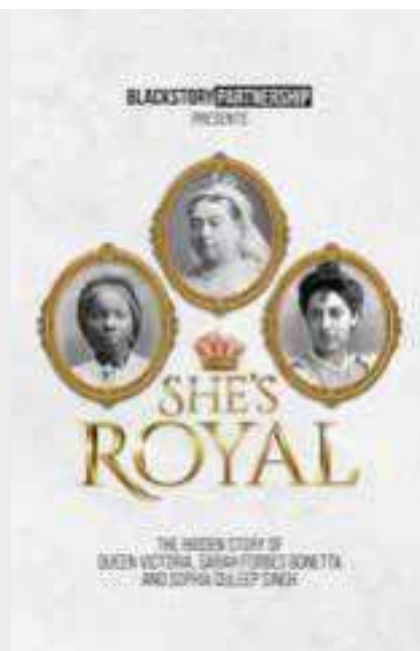
## She's Royal

**Tuesday 1 November '22 - 2.30pm & 7.30pm**

**Blackstory Partnership** presents **SHE'S ROYAL**, a brand new stage production revealing the untold relationship between Her Majesty Queen Victoria I and two extraordinary women of colour, Sarah Forbes Bonetta and Sophia Duleep Singh.

Discover the hidden journey of how these extraordinary women of colour became subjects of the Queen's court, how they were nurtured to become aristocratic high society English ladies, and became so close to one of the world's most powerful monarch's that they were referred to as the Queen's god-daughters.

**Tickets from £10\***



## Jon Richardson – The Knitwit

**Wednesday 2 – Thursday 3 November '22 - 8pm**

Will the recycling be put out on the right day? Who is going to smooth over the top of the margarine? How many lights are on upstairs when everybody is downstairs?

Watch Jon pretend that these aren't his foremost concerns as he leaves home on his first tour since the last one.

Best known as a team captain on *8 Out of 10 Cats Does Cats Countdown* (Channel 4), host of *Dave's Ultimate Worrier*, and upcoming sitcom *Meet the Richardsons*. As well as *Would I Lie To You* (BBC One), *Have I Got News For You* (BBC One), *Michael McIntyre's Comedy Roadshow* (BBC One), and *Taskmaster* (Dave).

**Age Guidance: 00+**

**Tickets £23\***







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# DARA O'BRIAIN

Funnyman **Dara O'Briain** speaks to James Rampton about his new live show **SO... WHERE WERE WE?** and his uncanny resemblance to Beyonce.

**I**t is five years since Dara Ó Briain last started a nationwide tour. It would have happened sooner, he says, "but there was a small matter that intervened and caused an interregnum.... Cards on the table; I ate a bat and decided to take some time off."

This is typical of Dara, an immensely entertaining presence on and off stage. You will be delighted to hear that he is returning to the live arena in the spring with a major new national tour entitled "SO... WHERE WERE WE?", which visits the Grand Theatre for two nights on Friday 4th and Saturday 5th November 2022.

So what subjects will Dara be covering in "So... Where Were We?" "I'm always loath to say, 'this is what's in the show'. Nobody asks Beyonce, 'what's your new album about?'"

Of course, he adds with a laugh, "I'm very much Beyonce in this analogy! The similarities are uncanny. Over the years, I've had lots of letters from her saying, 'don't tread on my IP!'"

One topic Dara will definitely be mentioning on stage is the pandemic. He explains, "I keep saying, 'I'm not going to talk about it', but it's very difficult for it not to creep in and colour what you're talking about. The pandemic was weirdly specific, but also incredibly universal.

"You can't escape the fact that it's been the one thing we've all done for the past two years. It is very difficult not to allude to home-schooling or isolation. It would be bizarre not to go, 'wasn't that a bit mad?' But you want to go easy on it because people are very much looking forward to moving on from it."

The Irishman proceeds to disclose that the second half of the show will be a long, moving and yet very funny story centring on a very personal revelation. Dara says, "I've never told this story before outside of the third bottle of wine at a dinner party.

"The story is full of revelations. You'll be reeling from surprise after surprise, each

one more surprising than the last. After one show recently, someone said to me, 'that's a lot more personal than you've done in the past'. 'Of course it is,' I replied. 'I haven't got any other stories – nothing has happened in the last two years! I'd love to tell you funny stories from the road, but I've just been sitting at home for the last two years.'"

This section of the show emphasises that comedy can be a very good vehicle for articulating something quite profound. "The tension you create with a true-life story is both serious and funny, and that's great fun to play with," Dara says.

"You ramp up the tension and the audience are thinking, 'hang on, this could be serious', and then you drop it. The audience then really laugh as they're releasing all that tension."

The comedian closes by reflecting on what he hopes audience members will be saying to each other as they leave "So... Where Were We?" "Well, if they come out in any way intrigued or moved, that's fantastic but first and foremost I just want them to be entertained."

Above all, though, Dara trusts that his audiences will be filing out of the theatre having enjoyed a brilliantly entertaining night out. "I'd just be delighted if they say, 'yeah, that was funny' to each other as they're getting into the car. Ultimately, that's what I want."

**"Pure, undiluted comic genius"**

- The Evening Standard



**Dara O'Briain -  
So... Where  
Were We?**

**Friday 04 - Saturday 05  
November '22 - 8pm**

**Age Guidance: 14+**, likely to contain  
swearing and adult content

**Tickets £24.75\***



BILSTON OPERATIC COMPANY  
presents

# PETER PAN

a musical adventure

MUSIC BY GEORGE STILES LYRICS BY ANTHONY DREWE BOOK BY WILLIS HALL

Based on J.M. Barrie's original play

With permission from Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International

All authorised performance materials are also supplied by MTI

[www.MTIShows.co.uk](http://www.MTIShows.co.uk)

## Peter Pan

**Tuesday 8 – Saturday 12 November**

*Evenings at 7.30pm,*

*Wednesday & Saturday matinees at 2.30pm*



**Tickets from £12.50\***

The legend of Peter Pan has been delighting children for over 100 years and this faithful new version is a festive adventure, perfect for the whole family. Featuring music and lyrics by the award-winning duo George Stiles and Anthony Drewe, we join Peter and the Darling family as they are whisked away to the famous land full of colourful characters including the Lost Boys, Tiger Lily and, of course, the dastardly Captain Hook. With a spectacular mix of swashbuckling adventure, jaw dropping flying, and an infectious score, **PETER PAN** is guaranteed to bring forth one's inner child and send you reeling *Just Beyond the Stars*.

# WOLVES

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Each membership includes an exclusive gift, smartcard, access to exclusive competitions, the ability to earn Wolves Cash on tickets and much more!

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for the 2021/22 season before time runs out on 31<sup>st</sup> March.**

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**0-2**

**GIFTS FOR NEW MEMBERS:**



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WOLVERHAMPTON GRAND THEATRE  
PRESENTS

**TAM RYAN**

AS WISHEE WASHEE



# ALADDIN



SATURDAY 3 DECEMBER 2022 -  
SATURDAY 7 JANUARY 2023

Local Partner



**GRANDTHEATRE.CO.UK**

#WOLVESGRANDPANTO



# EVERYTHING YOU COULD WISH FOR IN A PANTO!

Join Aladdin on a spectacular quest from humble beginnings to riches beyond his wildest dreams! With a magical lamp, the help of a trusty genie and three wishes, only he can take on the evil sorcerer Abanazar!

Can he conquer the cave of wonders and who will win the heart of the princess in the most spellbinding battle of good versus evil? Returning this year in the role of Wishee Washee is panto favourite **Tam Ryan!**

**More star cast to be announced soon!**

## PERFORMANCE TIMES & PRICES

SAT	03 <sup>rd</sup>	DEC 2022	2pm	7pm
SUN	04 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	11am	3pm
MON	05 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	NO PERFORMANCES	
TUE	06 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	2.30pm	7pm
WED	07 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	2.30pm	7pm
THU	08 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	2.30pm	7pm
FRI	09 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	11am	6pm
SAT	10 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	11am 	5pm
SUN	11 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	1pm	5pm
MON	12 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	NO PERFORMANCES	
TUE	13 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	2.30pm	7pm
WED	14 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	2.30pm 	7pm 
THU	15 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	2.30pm	7pm
FRI	16 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	2.30pm	7pm
SAT	17 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	2.30pm	7pm
SUN	18 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	11am	3pm
MON	19 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	NO PERFORMANCES	
TUE	20 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	2.30pm	7pm
WED	21 <sup>st</sup>	DEC 2022	2.30pm	7pm
THU	22 <sup>nd</sup>	DEC 2022	2.30pm	7pm
FRI	23 <sup>rd</sup>	DEC 2022	2.30pm	7pm
SAT	24 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	11am	3pm
SUN	25 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	NO PERFORMANCES	
MON	26 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	2.30pm	7pm
TUE	27 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	1pm	5pm
WED	28 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	2.30pm	7pm
THU	29 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	2.30pm	7pm
FRI	30 <sup>th</sup>	DEC 2022	2.30pm	7pm
SAT	31 <sup>st</sup>	DEC 2022	11am	3pm
SUN	01 <sup>st</sup>	JAN 2023	NO PERFORMANCES	
MON	02 <sup>nd</sup>	JAN 2023	11am	3pm
TUE	03 <sup>rd</sup>	JAN 2023	NO PERFORMANCES	
WED	04 <sup>th</sup>	JAN 2023	2.30pm	7pm
THU	05 <sup>th</sup>	JAN 2023	11am 	7pm
FRI	06 <sup>th</sup>	JAN 2023	2.30pm	7pm
SAT	07 <sup>th</sup>	JAN 2023	2pm 	7pm 



### BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETED PERFORMANCES

Wed 14 December at 2.30pm & 7pm, Sat 07 January at 2pm



### AUDIO DESCRIBED PERFORMANCES

Wed 14 December at 2.30pm, Sat 07 January at 2pm



### RELAXED PERFORMANCES

Sat 10 December & Thu 05 January at 11am

Adapted and ideal for those on the Autistic spectrum and/or with additional needs who may benefit from a more 'relaxed' theatre environment.

Relaxed performances are also suitable for under 5's

# TICKETS FROM £16.50\*

## GOLD SHOWS

### Group Discounts:

Parties of 50+: £2.50 off all ticket prices (excluding gold seats)

## PURPLE SHOWS

### Group Discounts:

Parties of 50+: £6 off all ticket prices  
Parties of 100+: £7 off all ticket prices

## RED SHOWS

### General Concessions:

£6 off all ticket prices

### Family Ticket:

4 tickets £92\*

(must include at least 1 adult and 1 child)

**Valid on all Red Performances**

**Sat 03 – Fri 09 Dec**

**(excluding gold seats)**

**All Wed – Thu evening performances in January**

### Group Discounts:

Parties of 20+: £6 off all ticket prices  
Parties of 50+: £7 off all ticket prices  
Parties of 100+: £8 off all ticket prices

### School Parties:

As Group Discounts plus 1 free supervising adult for every 10 students

## GREEN SHOWS

### General Concessions:

£5.50 off all tickets

### Group Discounts:

Parties of 10+: £7.50 off all tickets

### School Parties:

**Dec:** £13 plus 1 free supervising adult for every 10 students

**Jan:** £11 plus 1 free supervising adult for every 10 students

## FRIENDS OF THE GRAND & SIXTEEN25


15% off all ticket prices at all performances on Sat 03, Sun 04, Tue 06, Wed 07, Thu 08 Dec 2022 and Wed 04 Jan 2023 performances

### FIRST CALL

£40 for First Call member and accompanying adult on Sat 03, Sun 04, Tue 06, Wed 07, Thu 08 Dec 2022 and Wed 04 Jan 2023 performances




# TAM Ryan



*"Firstly, Wolverhampton Grand is perfect for panto, because it's a very intimate auditorium but it seats a mighty 1,200 people which is great for comedy because you still get the big audience numbers and lots of laughs but none of the comedy gets lost."*





**H**e has a pantomime career that includes some of the country's greatest theatres and has starred alongside panto royalty and Hollywood stars... following a triumphant turn in *Cinderella* last year, Tam Ryan sat down with Scott Bird to talk about why the Wolverhampton pantomime tops them all ahead of his return for this year's production of **ALADDIN**.

But where did it all start? Was Tam always destined for a career on the stage?

"My mum was a principal boy and my dad was a pantomime dame, so you can imagine the confusion for someone who is seven or eight years old, which is when I first got a grasp of what it was my parents did for a living... I grew up around pantomime with my mum dressed as a man and my dad dressed as a woman, it was great!"

Stepping back into Wolverhampton Grand, not even two months after finishing the run of *Cinderella*, Tam looks to a photograph that adorns the wall on the dress circle level.

"I love that there's a signed picture up of Keith Harris and Orville from what happened to be his final ever pantomime appearance, here in Wolverhampton. It always makes me smile because I first met Keith in the mid-eighties, when my parents appeared alongside him in pantomime, and we remained friends. It was through my parents and Keith that I was introduced to the real panto icons of the day."

"Everything I do on stage is rooted in those early days and watching the greats like the Chuckle Brothers and the Grumbleweeds gave me a great understanding of how to entertain and make an audience laugh. 'Panto' itself is evolving now but the heart of it remains the same. That conveyor belt that brought you Joe Pasquale, Brian Conley, Bradley Walsh and such acts might not be there anymore, but panto needs that type of act. Whilst some might say that 'variety is dead', pantomime is as popular as ever and it's very special, it's ours, it's British and it's a beautiful thing to be part of keeping that tradition alive and going."

Having starred in almost 20 pantomimes all around the country, including many at Manchester's acclaimed Opera House alongside the

likes of David Hasselhoff and Priscilla Presley, Tam had taken a four-year break from panto to star as Buddy The Elf in *Elf The Musical*. The 2021 tour of *Elf* finished early enough to allow Tam back into the world of pantomime and Wolverhampton was quite the appeal...

"Firstly, Wolverhampton Grand is perfect for panto, because it's a very intimate auditorium but it seats a mighty 1,200 people which is great for comedy because you still get the big audience numbers and lots of laughs but none of the comedy gets lost. I knew that because I'd played here before, but never in panto. When the job first came up, there were a few cities to pick from. Wolverhampton came last alphabetically on the list but anyone who's done or seen a lot of pantos at the Grand knows there's a rich culture of pantomime and there's been a panto here every year since it opened nearly 130 years ago."

"As a performer, you don't just get given a part in the Wolverhampton panto, you earn it because everything is right here, and the pantomime culture here is so precious that you have to treat the Grand panto with the utmost respect it deserves. *Cinderella* was perfect, I don't mind going on record saying that it was the best pantomime I've been involved in for the experience, the enjoyment and the quality of show... even with the backdrop of covid and the many challenges that brought in terms of keeping the show going, it was a dream of a panto season."

"From day one of rehearsals right through to the end of the run everything felt so right with the cast and the audiences - it's like the early stages of dating... you know if you're going to like them and if they're going to like you and I can honestly say there wasn't one single show of the run where I thought "this isn't going to work..." – the Wolverhampton panto is a very good fit for me and I can't wait to come back for *Aladdin*!"

A firm audience favourite, Tam will return with his signature charm and bucketloads of comedy this year alongside a star cast to be announced soon! Tickets for **ALADDIN** are now on sale and are flying out of the Box Office – you don't need a three wishes to make your Christmas one to remember, it's all here at the Grand Theatre in one magical family adventure!

ENJOY THE 'MAGIC' OF

# ALADDIN

IN YOUR SCHOOL HALL

Our annual **Intro to Panto** workshop tours local primary schools, teaching children about the history of pantomime.



Here at Wolverhampton Grand, we realise the importance of live theatre on everyone in the community, especially our younger generation. Often, pantomime is a child's first experience of theatre and watching live performance helps them to develop in so many ways. Key skills in language, communication and confidence are all aided by drama and theatre and we want to make sure as many children have access to that and the many educational and behavioural benefits it inspires.

We realise that circumstances may prevent families from accessing theatre and so we do everything we can to make sure we can still reach everyone. How do we do that? We head out onto the road and visit schools with an interactive touring pantomime!

Imagine the fun of the Grand Theatre live in your school hall as your children experience live theatre for the first time!

As part of our **INTRO TO PANTO** school's tour, they'll see:

- A much-loved fairytale come to life
- Colourful costumes and make up
- Professional sets and props
- Singing, dancing, and acting by professional actors who have performed on the Grand's stage.

All while learning about the wonderful British tradition of pantomime!

Every autumn a small troop of actors visit local primary schools to perform the **INTRO TO PANTO** workshop and a mini version of the pantomime.

The project has brought joy to 35,000 children over the last 5 years.



*'I liked everything about it. It made me laugh and I wanted to watch it again and again.'*

**Student feedback**

*"We wanted to say thank you for a fantastic show. All of the children loved it and your show was a great way to start off our Christmas activities."*

**Teacher feedback**



### Fun from start to finish

James Collins, Outreach Manager for Creative Learning explains more:

"The 30-minute workshop is aimed at Years 4, 5 and 6 and explains panto history: from its roots in Italy and commedia dell'arte and adoption by the Victorians to the Christmas tradition we love today.

Children also learn the "rules" of panto and typical routines. We kick off with a song. They learn to cheer the good characters and boo the baddies.

Of course, there's the infamous ghost

and "he's behind you" gag. Everyone really gets into it – it can get pretty noisy!

The workshop is followed by a 40-minute "highlights" version of the panto – this year **ALADDIN**.

It's minimal disruption for the school. We only need 40 minutes to set up and some power sockets."

### The show must go on!

Last year more than 7,000 children (and their teachers) experienced the magical world of *Cinderella*!

James continues: "It's always

great to see the children's reactions, especially last year, going back into school's after many months of lockdowns. It was an absolute joy to see children experiencing the much-missed magic of live theatre again!"

You can book a morning session or an afternoon session for £275. A full day is £500.

Bring the magic of **INTRO TO PANTO** into your school. Contact James Collins at [JamesC@grandtheatre.co.uk](mailto:JamesC@grandtheatre.co.uk) / 01902 57 33 20.



Photos from 2021 *Cinderella* Intro to Panto tour

*'Thank you for a brilliant afternoon of pantomime. Everyone loved it and it has put a huge smile on everyone's face. It helped bring some much-needed festive cheer.'*

Teacher feedback





# RELAXED

## CELEBRATING 10 YEARS



Vicky Price, Associate Director of Audiences & Communication



Remy Lloyd, Outreach Manager  
– Access & Inclusion

*Associate Director of Audiences & Communication, Vicky Price and Outreach Manager - Access & Inclusion Remy Lloyd reflect on the last 10 years.*

**When I joined The Grand Theatre back in 2009 discussions were being held about producing a Relaxed Performance of the pantomime, a new concept of theatre that was very much in its infancy.**

Soaking in the conversations around me I gleaned that a Relaxed Performance provided a vital way to access the theatre for people on the Autism Spectrum, those with a sensory processing disorder and/or additional access needs.

In order to make a performance "relaxed" the pantomime is carefully adapted by reducing the volume and removing flashing lights, loud bangs and any other elements of the show that may be stress-inducing.

At the time there were only a handful of theatres trialling these performances and mostly based in London. So, when we launched a Relaxed Performance of *Snow White* in 2012 we were the first theatre in the Midlands to do so. Within a couple of months of being on sale it had sold out and it has continued to do so ever since.

**I have been involved with Relaxed Performances since 2015 while working as a Front of House Manager and have loved every minute of it since. It's not just the auditorium that transforms for the event, all our front of house area is rearranged and adapted to create a more comfortable environment and to include a Sensory Room, a Quiet Room and various places to relax away from the auditorium.**

After listening to feedback from our customers and to celebrate our tenth anniversary, we will be holding two relaxed performances for our 2022/23 pantomime, **ALADDIN!** A Saturday morning show tailored to families, in addition to our usual Thursday morning showing which has been popular with school groups since they began back in 2012! This is an opportunity for families to experience the magical world of pantomime together!

Relaxed performances are also a great chance to bring young children (under 5's) to the theatre for the first time as the usual auditorium rules are relaxed, more movement and noise is expected, and an open-door policy applies throughout the performance.

The family relaxed performance will take place on Saturday 10 December at 11am and the School's performance will be on Thursday 5 January 2023 at 11am

For more information or to book for a Relaxed Performance, schools or groups please contact me by emailing [remyl@grandtheatre.co.uk](mailto:remyl@grandtheatre.co.uk) or by calling **01902 57 33 20**.

Individual bookings can be made via the Box Office on **01902 42 92 12**.





## WHAT THE RELAXED PERFORMANCE MEANS TO US

**Dan and Lois Raven met whilst working at the Grand in 2005 and they have two children Elliot and Anya. Dan is a General Technician in the technical department and has worked on Relaxed Performances since the beginning.**

When their son Elliot was diagnosed with Autism, Lois became a founding member of **EMBRACE AUTISM WV** a support group for parents with children on the autism spectrum in Wolverhampton.

Here she explains about her lived experience, "Relaxed Performances provide the opportunity for families like mine to experience the magic of theatre with no judgement. I came to see the panto twice last year, once with Anya and once with Elliot. We are so excited that this Christmas we will be able to come as a family group.

It's hard for Elliot to access the community. As a theatre family we attend as many events as possible but if Elliot becomes overwhelmed and starts to distract others we would leave, even if he was enjoying it. Which is really sad.

As parents we feel less stressed at Relaxed Performances. There's lots of shouting and flapping from the audience around us, but it's an environment that is made to feel comfortable for us."

Dan added: "The key is the kids being able to do their own thing without the fear of others shushing them and we don't have to worry about him leaving if he gets overwhelmed. The quiet rooms and sensory rooms are brilliant because we don't need to physically leave the building, then we have the opportunity to go back into the auditorium if we can.

More of these events would benefit us greatly."

**EMBRACE AUTISM WV** will be holding a coffee morning in The Grand Theatre's Encore Lounge on Thursday 12 May from 10am – 12noon.

For more information contact the support group through Facebook at Embrace Autism WV – parent support group run by parents for parents/carers



The Raven Family



BENNY ANDERSSON & BJÖRN ULVÆUS'

# MAMMA MIA!

THE SMASH HIT MUSICAL BASED ON THE SONGS OF ABBA®



## Mamma Mia!

**Tuesday 17 – Saturday 28 January '23**

**Week One:** Evenings at 7.30pm,  
Thursday & Saturday matinee at 2.30pm

**Week Two:** Evenings at 7.30pm,  
Wednesday & Saturday matinee at 2.30pm



**Tickets from £19.50\***

Set on a Greek island paradise where the sun always shines, a tale of love, friendship and identity is irresistibly told through the timeless hits of ABBA.

Sophie's quest to discover the father she's never known brings her mother face to face with three men from her distant romantic past on the eve of a wedding they'll never forget!

Every day's a holiday at **MAMMA MIA!**, so have the time of your life at the world's sunniest and most exhilarating smash-hit musical.

© LITTLESTAR



BSL  
Interpreted



Audio  
Described

**Age Guidance 8+**





## Strictly Ballroom

**Monday 13 – Saturday 18 February '23**

Evenings at 7.30pm, Wednesday & Saturday matinees at 2.30pm

**STRICTLY BALLROOM THE MUSICAL**, based on the award-winning worldwide film phenomenon, is heading to Wolverhampton, starring *Strictly Come Dancing's* **Kevin Clifton**!

With direction from dancer, choreographer, theatre director and Britain's favourite TV Judge, Craig Revel Horwood, **STRICTLY BALLROOM THE MUSICAL** will be foxtrotting around the UK from September 2020.

Bringing together a cast of over 20 world class performers, **STRICTLY BALLROOM THE MUSICAL** follows rebellious young ballroom dancer, Scott Hastings. When his radical dance style sees him fall out of favour with Australian Federation, he must dance with beginner, Fran. Together they find the courage to defy tradition and discover that to win, your steps don't need to be strictly ballroom!

Featuring toe tapping numbers such as *Love is in the Air*, *Perhaps Perhaps Perhaps* and *Time After Time*, as well as several wonderful new songs by internationally acclaimed artists including *Sia*, *David Foster* and *Eddie Perfect*. This spectacle is sure to make for an unforgettable evening under the glitter ball that will send your heart soaring!



**Tickets  
from £19.50\***



*"Working with the Grand Theatre enables us to give something back to the community in which we operate, which is a really important part of what we do at FBCMB."*

*Laura Jones, Marketing Manager, FBC Manby Bowdler*

*"We have been members of the Business Club for three years and enjoy regular theatre trips with our staff and clients who appreciate the splendour and entertainment on our doorstep. We happily continue to support this great charity, as it's not only a great fun thing to do, but ensures its lifetime for future generations to enjoy."*

*Debra Lawrence, Director, Lawrence Cleaning Solutions*

# JOIN THE BUSINESS CLUB

The Grand Theatre is not only a wonderful place to come with family and friends, it's also a fantastic place for business.

More than 250,000 people visit per year, meaning there's a captive audience for promoting your brand and advertising. There's also a wide variety of shows offering a host of corporate hospitality options.

But, if you want more than a one-off engagement, the Grand Theatre Business Club offers a longer-term approach and cost-effective packages.

As a registered charity (number 515154), Business Club membership can also fulfil Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) objectives as it supports the Grand's ongoing work, enabling us to run projects and workshops for the community.

**Business Club Memberships start from £2000 +VAT per annum. Please contact [paula.jones@grandtheatre.co.uk](mailto:paula.jones@grandtheatre.co.uk) for more information.**



## What our Members say;

*"Wolverhampton Grand Theatre is a Jewel in the Crown for Wolverhampton and the Black Country - working with the team as a valued member of Black Country Chamber of Commerce is a privilege and delight."*

*"The theatre is a fantastic asset to the night time economy in Wolverhampton and a great venue to use for business and corporate meetings, launches and promotions etc. Our Chamber has certainly made good use of the corporate facilities through being a member of their Business Club and we have met some fantastic people and businesses along the way."*

*Gail Arnold, Head of Premium Membership, Black Country Chamber of Commerce*



# OUR GRATEFUL THANKS TO OUR CURRENT GRAND THEATRE SPONSORS AND BUSINESS CLUB MEMBERS

## SPONSORS



## GRAND EXECUTIVE MEMBERS



## GRAND PREMIER MEMBERS



## GRAND CLUB MEMBERS



# THE BOYS ARE BACK!

# JERSEY BOYS



## 'OH WHAT A NIGHT'

EXPRESS AND STAR

## Jersey Boys

**Tuesday 07 - Saturday 18 March '23**

Evenings at 7.30pm, Thursday & Saturday matinee at 2.30pm



**Tickets from £23\***



BSL  
Interpreted



Audio  
Described

The internationally acclaimed stage sensation is returning to Wolverhampton!

The smash-hit musical has won 65 major awards and has been seen by over 27 million people worldwide.

They were just four guys from Jersey, until they sang their very first note. They had a sound nobody had ever heard... and the radio just couldn't get enough of. The show features all their hits including *Sherry*, *Big Girls Don't Cry*, *Oh What A Night*, and *Can't Take My Eyes Off You*.

Go behind the music and inside the story of *Frankie Valli* and *The Four Seasons* in the Olivier Award-winning **JERSEY BOYS**. From the streets of New Jersey to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, this is the musical that's too good to be true.





## The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel

**Tuesday 28 March – Saturday 01 April '23**

Evenings at 7.30pm, Wednesday & Saturday matinee at 2.30pm

Based on the *Sunday Times* bestseller which inspired one of this century's most treasured films, **THE BEST EXOTIC MARIGOLD HOTEL** takes us on a journey to India with an eclectic group of British retirees as they embark on a new life. The luxury residence is far from the opulence they were promised, but as their lives begin to intertwine and they embrace the vibrancy of modern-day India, they are charmed in unexpected and life-changing ways.

**THE BEST EXOTIC MARIGOLD HOTEL** is a joyous comedy about taking risks, finding love and embracing second chances, even in the most surprising of places.

Get ready for the journey of a lifetime.

"I'm so thrilled that my characters are stepping into a new life on the stage. They've been waiting impatiently for the curtain to rise, and none of them are getting any younger. So welcome again to the Marigold Hotel! We've assembled an amazing cast, so I hope they bring you plenty of laughs, and some warm sparks of recognition." - Deborah Moggach, author of *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel*.

Cast to be announced.



**Tickets  
from £15.50\***

# General Information



## Public Transport

The theatre is a three minute walk from Wolverhampton Rail Station and three minutes from Wolverhampton St George's Metro Station. The main Bus Station is a minute away. West Midlands Cycle Hire scheme have bicycle docks at the bus station, where you are able to hire or dock a bike for your journey.

## Car Parking

Convenient car parks are situated at Broad Street, Piper's Row, Fryer Street and the train station car park at the station. PLEASE NOTE: You may need to allow extra time for parking on Wolves home match dates.

## Purchasing Tickets Online

Tickets can be purchased online 24 hours a day at [grandtheatre.co.uk](http://grandtheatre.co.uk)

## By Telephone

Tickets can be purchased by telephone on 01902 42 92 12. Telephone lines are open Monday to Friday from 2pm to 6pm.

Phone lines will also open on Saturday and Sunday if performances are scheduled to take place on those days. Phone lines will not open on Saturday and Sunday if no performances are scheduled to take place. Saturday and Sunday telephone line opening times will vary depending upon performance start times.. Please email [feedback@grandtheatre.co.uk](mailto:feedback@grandtheatre.co.uk) for more information.

All telephone calls are answered

and placed in an automatic queuing system, which ensures your call is dealt with in strict rotation. Please note, calls are recorded and may be used for training purposes.

## In Person

On performance days, the Box Office will usually open 90 minutes prior to the performance start time for tickets sales and enquiries only and will remain open for a further 15 minutes once the performance has started.

The Box Office is closed to in person counter sales on non-performance days. Please visit [grandtheatre.co.uk/what's-on](http://grandtheatre.co.uk/what's-on) for an up to date list of performance days.

## Methods of Payment

The theatre accepts payment Visa Credit and Debit cards, Mastercard, Maestro, Solo, Grand Theatre credit, Grand Theatre gift vouchers, Theatre Tokens or cash (please note, cash payments are not accepted at Box Office).

## Booking Fee

A £4 fee applies to all bookings, irrespective of the method of payment.

## E-Tickets

You can opt to receive your tickets as e-tickets when booking. E-Tickets can be presented on your mobile device when attending the theatre, or you can choose to print your e-ticket at home and present it as a paper copy when attending.

## Postage

If you would like hard copies of your tickets posting out to you there will be a £1 charge.

## Refunds, Exchanges and Conditions Of Sale

Full terms and conditions of purchase can be found at [grandtheatre.co.uk/terms-conditions-of-sale](http://grandtheatre.co.uk/terms-conditions-of-sale)

## Your Comfort and Safety

Please note that some productions may include smoking on stage.

Babes in arms are not usually admitted. Exceptions may be made for certain children's shows and pantomime.

Due to Fire Regulations a ticket must be purchased irrespective of the age of the child, tickets cost £3.

Please turn your mobile phone off in the theatre.

Please note bag searches are in operation at all performances.

On certain productions/performance additional security may be in place.

**Production, ticket and performance information is correct at the time of going to press. The theatre reserves the right to make alterations as necessary.**

**Wolverhampton Grand Theatre (1982) Ltd, Lichfield Street, Wolverhampton WV1 1DE Charity No. 515154. Registered in England No 1731876.**



Jan '23

Tue 31 Calling Planet Earth

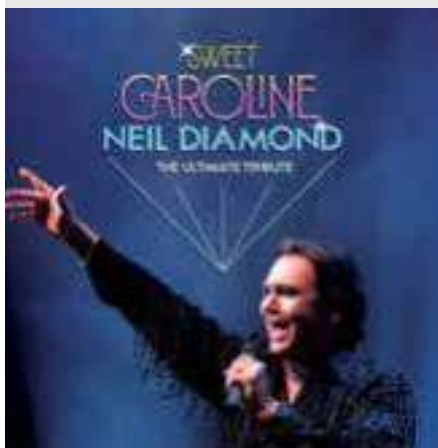


WOLVERHAMPTON  
**GRAND**  
THEATRE

**ALSO  
ON  
SALE**

Feb '23

Thur 2 Sweet Caroline



Sat 4 Giovanni Pernice - Made in Italy



Fri 3 Lost in Music



May '23

Tue 23 -  
Sat 27 Rock of Ages



Sun 28 -  
Tue 30 Dragons & Mythical Beasts



WOLVERHAMPTON GRAND THEATRE  
PRESENTS

**TAM RYAN**

AS WISHEE WASHEE



# ALADDIN



**SATURDAY 3 DECEMBER 2022 -  
SATURDAY 7 JANUARY 2023**

WOLVERHAMPTON  
**GRAND**  
THEATRE



**GRANDTHEATRE.CO.UK**

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