

# spot light

## STAR OF STAGE & SCREEN RETURNS TO THE GRAND

THE GRAND'S NEW  
SEASON 22/23



Aladdin

WE SPEAK TO ZOE BIRKETT & MICHAEL GRECO ABOUT OUR UPCOMING PANTO!

Ian McKellen

IAN MCKELLEN, JOHN BISHOP & MEL GIEDROYC  
STAR IN MOTHER GOOSE



Lesley Joseph

SISTER ACT RETURNS,  
AND IT'S GOING TO BE  
FABULOUS, BABY!



Jack Ryder

JACK'S BACK IN THE  
DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

*Adrian Jackson*  
CEO & Artistic  
Director

# Welcome

*Welcome to  
our fourth issue  
of SpotLight*

**A**s we enter the autumn season, the excitement is building for the many festivities ahead in this very varied and full programme of entertainment.

This year's magical pantomime **ALADDIN** is already flying high, and the script, music and great comedy is very near to completion, the production promises to be spellbinding! We are delighted that **Zoe Birkett** will star as the Spirit of the Ring, alongside **Michael Greco** as Abanazar and

**CBeebies** presenter **Ben Caje**, who will play Aladdin! **Ian Adams** will return as Dame and Wolverhampton's own **Sofie Anné** will play Princess Jasmine. They join the previously announced **Tam Ryan** in the role of Wishee Washee.

After the magic of **ALADDIN** begins to fade, we are thrilled to be one of just a few theatres in the country to host a special February production of **MOTHER GOOSE**, starring stage and screen legend **Sir Ian McKellen** in the title role!

As we look further into the new year, the Grand Theatre will return to producing with another production exclusive to Wolverhampton. Our first in-house offering, following the critically acclaimed *The History Boys*, will be a brilliant comedy, **THE SECRET LIVES OF HENRY AND ALICE** from the

pen of Black Country playwright, **David Tristram**. The production will reunite one of our very talented creative teams as we welcome back **Jack Ryder** as Director of this brand-new production. Star casting will be announced soon.

In our commitment to bringing the best of the West End to Wolverhampton, we look forward to welcoming **MAMMA MIA!**, **JERSEY BOYS**, **THE BODYGUARD**, **SISTER ACT** and **THE OCEAN AT THE END OF THE LANE** to the Grand Theatre in 2023.

From the entire team, I extend my thanks to you for your continued support and I'm sure you will find something within these pages to enjoy at our beautifully opulent Grand Theatre.

I look forward to welcoming you back during our very busy new season.

# SECURE MY BOOKING

Secure My  
Booking

**TICKET REFUND  
PROTECTION ALLOWS  
YOU TO RECOVER  
100% OF THE PAID  
TICKET PRICE,  
INCLUDING ALL FEES!**

*Book today with full peace of mind that should anything happen before the show you will be able to gain a refund for sickness (inc COVID), travel issues, adverse weather, redundancy, plus much more.*

*Secure My Booking costs just £1.95 per ticket and can be added when you purchase online so don't delay and book today!*

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# Last Chance to Book

**Tue 1 Nov**      **She's Royal**

**Wed 2 - Thur 3 Nov**      **Jon Richardson – The Knitwit Tour**

**Fri 4 - Sat 5 Nov**      **Dara O'Brian – So... Where Were We..?**

**Tue 8 - Sat 12 Nov**      **Bilston Operatic Company Presents Peter Pan**

**Mon 14 Nov**      **Sing-Along-A Gareth**

**Wed 16 - Sat 20 Nov**      **Gary Barlow – A Different Stage**

# INSPIRED BY DESIGN..



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WOLVERHAMPTON GRAND THEATRE PRESENTS  
IN ASSOCIATION WITH EVOLUTION PRODUCTIONS

**ZOE BIRKETT MICHAEL GRECO**  
**BEN CAJEE**  
**TAM RYAN IAN ADAMS**  
AND INTRODUCING  
**SOFIE ANNÉ**



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



#WOLVESGRANDPANTO



**EVERYTHING YOU COULD WISH FOR IN A PANTO!**

**TICKETS FROM  
£16.50\***

It's all you could ever wish for in a pantomime – **ALADDIN** flies into Wolverhampton this December packed with a lamp-load of laughs and genie-us special effects! Join West End leading lady **Zoe Birkett** (*Pop Idol/Moulin Rouge The Musical/The Bodyguard*) as Spirit of the Ring, **Michael Greco** (*EastEnders/The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes*) as the evil Abanazar and *CBeebies'* **Ben Cajee** as Aladdin in the ultimate pantomime adventure for all the family!

Returning favourites **Tam Ryan** (*Wishee Washee*) and **Ian Adams** (*Widow Twankey*) are joined by Wolverhampton's own **Sofie Anné** as Princess Jasmine, West End star **Duane Gooden** as the Genie and panto legend **Ian Billings** as The Notary!

The unmissable production of **ALADDIN** will feature all the magic you've come to expect of the Grand Theatre pantomime! The Midlands' family-friendly festive spectacular will once again have laugh-out-loud comedy, sensational song and dance and create magical memories you'll cherish forever!

Join us for the ultimate festive treat as Aladdin fights to conquer the cave of wonders and win the heart of the princess in the most spellbinding battle of good versus evil!

**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 <sup>R</sup>	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 <sup>AD</sup> <sup>BS</sup>	7pm <sup>BS</sup>
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 <sup>R</sup>	7pm
FRI	06 <sup>th</sup> JAN 2023	2.30pm	7pm
SAT	07 <sup>th</sup> JAN 2023	2pm <sup>AD</sup> <sup>BS</sup>	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

**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.  
Excludes gold seats.

A LAMP-LOAD OF  
LAUGHS AWAIT IN OUR

# Genie-us

NEW PANTOMIME!



Our cast tell us more about making the magic this year...

The magic of pantomime has been at the heart of Wolverhampton Grand Theatre throughout its entire 128 year history. Only two weeks after opening in 1894 a pantomime production of *Sinbad The Sailor* opened on Christmas Eve. It wasn't until 1947 that *Aladdin* was first staged as a pantomime here, but the firm audience favourite is now being staged for a thirteenth time, with an exciting new production currently being created! Scott Bird chatted to this year's stars **Zoe Birkett** and **Michael Greco** to find out more about the show!

Pantomime is perfect for the entire family, every generation coming together and for our stars, their earliest memories of panto begin very young too!

**Michael Greco:** "My earliest memory of

pantomime was going to my local theatre and I really couldn't make out if the Dame was actually a woman! I was so naive and young that I wasn't aware that the Pantomime Dame was always played by a man. I remember thinking that lady had a very deep voice!"

**Zoe Birkett:** "My Mom and Dad used to take me to the panto as little kid. We used to go to the Theatre Royal in Newcastle on a coach and the first one I saw was *Peter Pan* – I remember Tinkerbell flying across the theatre and it was so magical! It was one of the things that made me fall in love with theatre – before I knew it, I was one of the little kids in *Joseph* sitting next to the narrator and any time a show that required kids came along to our local theatre in Darlington, I'd be in it!"

The magic of panto is deep rooted in tradition and is one that here at the Grand Theatre we love to help uphold...

**MG:** I think the special thing about panto is the Great British sense of humour that sets it apart from all other theatre productions. From the Panto Dame to the Evil Wizard, we all love to be drawn into their world and equally be a part of their life when they break the fourth wall. No other country in the world has the uniqueness that panto brings... the fact that it's in and around Christmas time where spirits are high make it even more magical! Tradition is upheld for at least a few weeks and I think each and every one of the audience from young to old will come away from **ALADDIN** feeling exceedingly satisfied."

**ZB:** "I love pantomime because it ticks all the boxes for everything a family needs in a visit to the theatre. Everyone can come together and enjoy it from the grandparents through to the kids. Often families won't have seen each other for ages but the panto is a great excuse to come together. A friend of mine always brings her family to the panto I'm doing and it's her gift to them – every Boxing Day they know they're going to come together and see a panto and uphold a tradition and that's lovely!"

It has been said time and time again that the Grand Theatre is perfect for pantomime because of its intimate design – everyone feels close to the magic and our cast are excited to get on stage to make it happen!

**ZB:** "I'm so excited to do panto here in Wolverhampton. I've done panto for years and I've played the Grand in musicals twice, but I've never done panto here. I know what a gorgeous theatre it is and the people here have always been so lovely. The staff are great and so welcoming and that's really important when you're here for a long time – we're going to have so much fun! I had a great

experience here in *The Bodyguard*, I did the matinees as Rachel Marron and the audiences were always so warm. It's a great



*I think the special thing about panto is the Great British sense of humour that sets it apart from all other theatre productions*

theatre to have on a tour, when you see Wolverhampton on the tour list it's a good feeling because you know you're going to have a good week and be looked after! Especially being Northern myself, it's nice to be up north... I know it's the Midlands but anything north of London feels like home enough for me!"

**MG:** "This is my first time performing at the Grand and I am beyond excited to appear on stage here. On the day of our poster photoshoot, I walked onto the stage and immediately fell in love. Wolverhampton Grand is such a beautiful theatre that obviously has a tremendous history. I think every seat in the auditorium is as good as the rest!"

This panto season is going to be extra special – a magical Christmas in Wolverhampton awaits both Zoe and Michael and the youngest members of their families!

**MG:** "Being a recent dad, it will be extra special for me to have my young boy in the audience. Although I'm not sure he will be old enough to recognise daddy as the evil Abanazar, let's wait and see! I've played Abanazar before and it's a hugely demanding role as the emphasis is greatly focused on saving your voice. Trying to be heard over the top of the boos can give a lot of strain to your voice and with 65 shows to do, knowing how to control your voice is essential. I'm sure the children will love and hate me, let's face it. The more scared they are then that means I've done my job! I will try and make him the greatest Panto Villain that Wolverhampton has ever seen!"

**ZB:** "We're huge Christmas fans in our house! For me, it's always about getting the family together and eating good food! Christmas as I've gotten older has changed now I'm a mother

but that makes it even more magical experiencing it with my daughter, prepping for Santa to come! We're going to have Christmas in Wolverhampton this year, all the family are going to be here and we're going to make it very special. My daughter's going to come to the panto a lot too! I did *Wicked Queen* when she was very young but we've had lockdown since then and last Christmas I was doing *Moulin Rouge* in the West End so for her this will be the first proper panto that she understands and I know it will bring a lot of magical memories for her, as it will the children who come to see it!"

Tickets for **ALADDIN** are flying out of the box office! You won't need a magical lamp, everything you could wish for in a panto is right here at the Grand Theatre from 3 December!



BENNY ANDERSSON & BJÖRN ULVAEUS'

# MAMMA MIA!

THE SMASH HIT MUSICAL BASED ON THE SONGS OF ABBA®



© LITTLESTAR



## 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

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.

**Tickets from £19.50\***  
Age Guidance: 8+



BSL Interpreted



Audio Described



Family Friendly



1025



1025



Family Friendly

## Calling Planet Earth

**Tuesday 31 January '23 - 7.30pm**

A new romantic symphony that goes on a journey through one of the greatest musical eras of all time – The Electrifying '80s. Featuring songs from legendary artists such as *Duran Duran*, *Spandau Ballet*, *The Human League*, *Ultravox*, *Depeche Mode*, and many more. Performed by an incredible live band with awesome symphonic arrangements combined with stunning vocals, it's the must see show that simply defines a decade.

**Tickets from £19.75\***

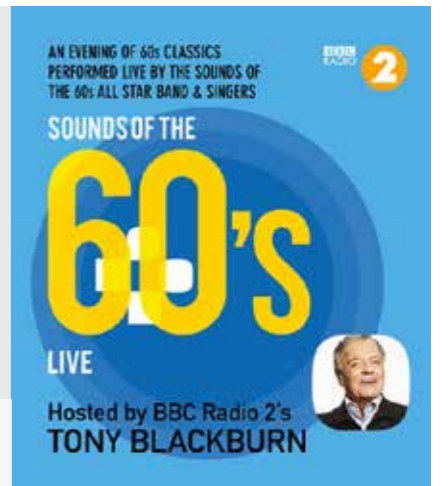


## Sound Of The 60s Live With Tony Blackburn

**Wednesday 1 February '23 - 7.30pm**

An evening of 60s classics performed by the **Sounds Of The '60s All Star Band & Singers**, hosted by *Radio 2's* legendary DJ, **Tony Blackburn**. The show features stories and songs from the most loved decade. Every week, more than a million people tune in to *BBC Radio 2* to hear **Tony Blackburn** wax lyrical about the biggest stars of the '60s.

**Tickets from £20\***



## Sweet Caroline - The Ultimate Tribute to Neil Diamond

**Thursday 2 February '23 - 7.30pm**

It's time for that night out you have been dreaming of – with *Stars in Their Eyes' Gary Ryan*. Featuring 50 years of the greatest music ever written, enjoy all the hits; *Forever In Blue Jeans*, *America*, *Love On The Rocks*, *Song Sung Blue*, *Hello Again*, *Cracklin' Rosie*, *I Am... I Said*, *Beautiful Noise* and, of course, *Sweet Caroline*. The good times never seemed so good!

**Tickets from £18.50\***



## Lost In Music

**Friday 3 February '23 - 7.30pm**

Get ready to get **LOST IN MUSIC!** The show that everyone is talking about, now even bigger! Relive some of the greatest songs of all time from artists such as *Donna Summer*, *Gloria Gaynor*, *Earth, Wind & Fire*, *Sister Sledge* and *Chic*. Join us as we recreate the Magical '70s and let us take you on a musical journey straight to the heart of Disco!

**Tickets from £18.50\***





## Varna International Ballet & Orchestra Presents The Nutcracker

**Sunday 5 February '23 - 2pm & 6.30pm**

This most famous of fantasy ballets for all the family begins as night falls on Christmas Eve. As snowflakes fall outside, the warm glow of the open fire sends flickering shadows across the boughs of the Christmas tree and all the presents beneath. When midnight strikes we are swept away to a fairy tale world where nothing is quite as it seems, toy dolls spring to life, the Mouse king and his mouse army battle with the Nutcracker Prince and we travel through the Land of Snow to an enchanted place where the magic really begins...

Founded in 1947 and currently celebrating their 75th anniversary, the critically acclaimed **Varna International Ballet** comes to the UK for the very first time. Renowned for its award-winning soloists and magnificent corps de ballet, the company has been delighting audiences for decades at home and abroad with its performances of the highest quality.

**Daniela Dimova** Artistic Director

**Peter Tuleshkov** Music Director and Chief Conductor

'We are thrilled to be bringing our highly talented company of dancers and musicians to the UK for the very first time. We can't wait to perform for British audiences and to bring these magical ballets to life on stage.' *Daniela Dimova*



**Tickets from £19.75\***

## Giovanni Pernice - Made In Italy

**Saturday 4 February '23 - 7.30pm**

*Strictly Come Dancing* 2021 champion and dance heart-throb **Giovanni Pernice** invites you to join him on a journey to his homeland for his brand new 2023 production **MADE IN ITALY**.

Joined by an outstanding ensemble of dancers and singers from the Ballroom and theatre world, this show promises to be a fantastic night out! It features an incredible soundtrack, stunning choreography and beautiful costumes. Be warned... in Italy, it can get HOT HOT HOT!

VIP Package available, please contact Box Office for details.

**Tickets from £25\***



**GIOVANNI PERNICE  
MADE IN ITALY**

## The Classic Rock Show

**Monday 6 February '23 - 7.30pm**

**THE CLASSIC ROCK SHOW** is back in the UK in 2023, bigger and even better, and celebrating, once again, the very best of Classic Rock.

Paying tribute to its favourite rock heroes **THE CLASSIC ROCK SHOW** thunders through legendary performances from the likes of *Led Zeppelin, Dire Straits, The Who, Eric Clapton, AC/DC, Queen, The Eagles, Fleetwood Mac* and many more.

Performed with note-for-note precision, bringing the original iconic and era defining recordings back to life on stage, with an amazing sound and light show to match.

**Tickets from £19.50\***



## The Diana Ross Story

**Tuesday 7 February '23 - 7.30pm**

The world's premiere show in celebration of *Diana Ross and The Supremes*, theatre audiences prepare to be taken on a spellbinding journey visiting one of the greatest musical stories ever told.

A chronological history of hits from a career culminating in over 100 million record sales fronted by two international *Diana Ross* performers **Cheri Jade** (*The Supremes*) and **Tameka Jackson** (Solo Career).

**Tickets from £19.50\***



## Spirit Of The Dance

**Wednesday 8 February '23 - 7.30pm**

The International smash hit **SPIRIT OF THE DANCE** celebrates 21 fabulous years as one of the most successful dance shows ever and now, their new spine-tingling anniversary show is touring the world.

Seen by more than 20 million people worldwide, the blockbuster hit show is Irish in origin and bursting with raw energy. One of the most exciting dance shows ever, this high-octane extravaganza takes dance to the next level, in an explosive fusion of heart pounding Irish Dance combined with dance styles from round the world.

**Tickets from £15.50\***







# 40

## 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.

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

£50 per year

## Anniversary Dinner Celebrations

On Friday 13 May 2022 we were joined by the Barricade Boys and Christopher Biggins at the Molineux as we celebrated 40 years of Friends of the Grand.



BOOK NOW

### FUTURE EVENTS

#### 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.

The Gala Performance of Aladdin 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)

## An Evening With Tim Rice - Circle Of Words

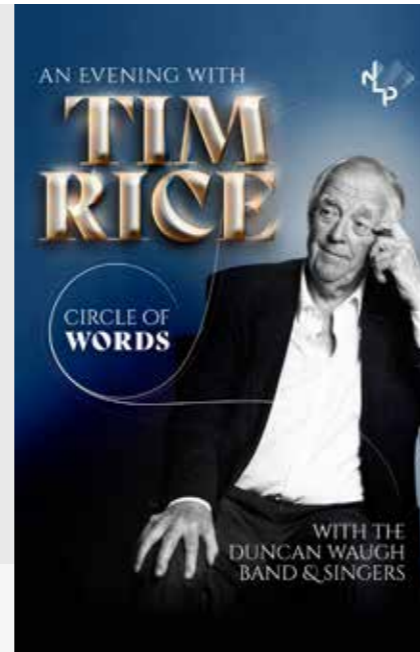
Thursday 9 February '23 - 7.30pm

NLP Ltd are incredibly proud to announce that international renowned lyricist **Tim Rice** is set to embark on a unique theatre tour in 2023, but who better to explain what audiences can expect than the eminent wordsmith himself?

"Circle Of Words is a show in which I reveal all (well, nearly all) of the secrets behind the creation of some of the best-known songs featuring my lyrics. I have had the good fortune to work with some of the greatest composers of our time, including Andrew Lloyd Webber, Bjorn Ulvaeus and Benny Andersson, Elton John and Alan Menken, without whose wonderful melodies I'd be at home watching television.

You'll probably know quite a few of the songs – and will therefore be relieved to hear I won't be singing them. All musical aspects of the show I hand over to the outstanding **Duncan Waugh Band and Singers**. There will be plenty of stops in between the hits during which I'll tell you how they happened and, in some cases, nearly didn't. Actually, I might sing a little – but not *Don't Cry For Me Argentina*." - **Tim Rice**

Tickets from £20\*



## The Rocket Man

Friday 10 February '23 - 7.30pm

Catch a star if you can and wish for something special as we ask you, are you ready for love? **Jimmy Love!**

This is the world's favourite celebration of a musical icon. Join us as **Jimmy** and his amazing live band take you down the *Yellow Brick Road* with two hours of glorious *Elton* hits, including *Saturday Nights Alright*, *Crocodile Rock*, *I'm Still Standing*, *Philadelphia Freedom*, and many more.

We take you on a journey through *Elton's* life and career, the highs and the lows with many a laugh brought to life, live on stage.

**THE ROCKET MAN** - a magical night in tribute to *Sir Elton John*.

Tickets from £19.50\*



## Sing-a-long-a The Greatest Showman

Saturday 11 February '23 - 2.30pm

Look out 'cause here it comes...

From the producers of *Sing-a-long-a Sound of Music* and *Sing-a-long-a Grease* comes the smash hit film musical that nobody can stop singing!

Sing your heart out with our live host who will teach you dance moves and show you how to use your free props bag.

It couldn't be easier or more fun. The first rule of Sing-a-long-a is **THERE ARE NO RULES!** Fancy dress is strongly encouraged and full audience participation essential.

**YOU** the audience will rewrite the stars!

Please note this is a screening of the movie not a live stage show.

Tickets from £12\*



## Stewart Lee: Basic Lee

Sunday 12 February '23 - 7.30pm

After a decade of ground-breaking high concept shows involving overarched interlinked narratives, massive sets and enormous comedy props, Lee enters the post-pandemic era in streamlined solo stand-up mode.

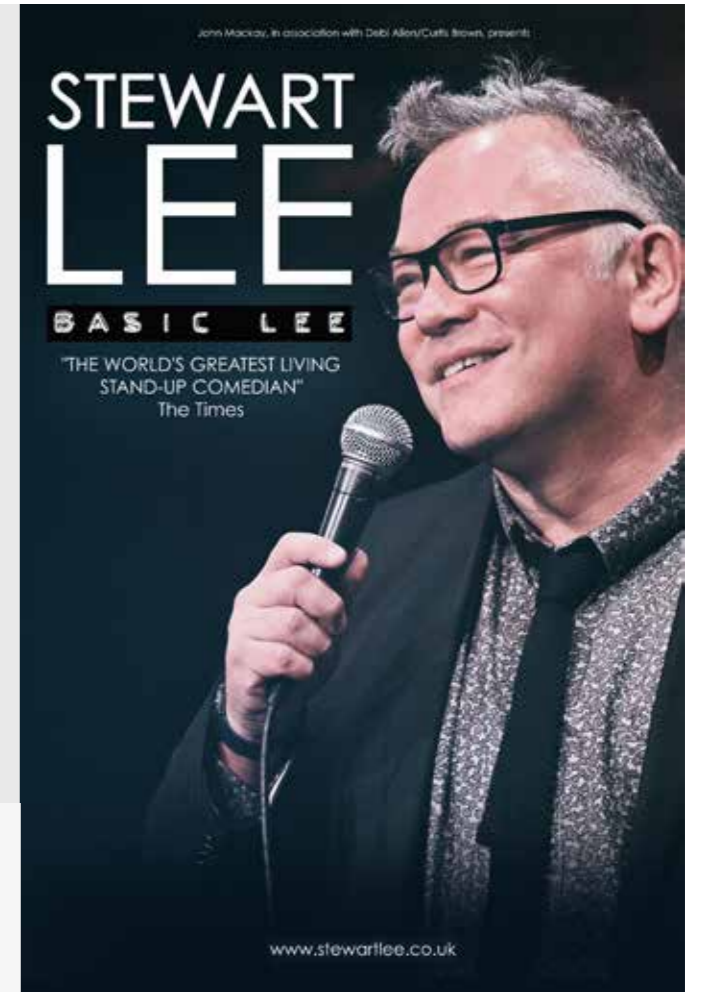
"One man, one microphone, and one microphone in the wings in case the one on stage breaks. Pure. Simple. Classic. Basic Lee. "The world's greatest living stand-up" (Times)

★★★★★ "Lee remains one of the best stand-ups in the country" (Metro)

★★★★★ "There's no-one else to touch him" (Mail on Sunday)

Tickets £28\*

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



## The Rock Orchestra By Candlelight

Thursday 2 March '23 - 7.30pm

Featuring the classical reimaginings of a 13-piece Chamber Orchestra, guests will be able to re-live and experience some of the most well-known and well-loved Rock & Metal songs from the last 40 years, including the likes of *Metallica*, *Led Zeppelin*, *Rage Against the Machine*, *Linkin Park* and more.

Audiences can expect the soul-stirring sounds of orchestral instruments fused with the vivacious energy and distorted tones of Rock and Metal - all performed live, in stunning, candlelit surroundings.

So, crack out those headbands, dust off your leather jackets and join us for an unforgettable evening, as **THE ROCK ORCHESTRA** takes you on a musical journey from the tear jerkers and fist pumpers to the all-out sing-alongs!

VIP package available.  
Please contact Box office for more details.

Tickets from £20\*





## Strictly Ballroom: The Musical

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

Evenings at 7:30pm,  
Wednesday and Saturday matinee at 2:30pm

Based on Baz Luhrmann's award-winning worldwide film phenomenon, **STRICTLY BALLROOM: THE MUSICAL** is heading out on a brand-new UK and Ireland tour starring *Strictly Come Dancing* favourite **Kevin Clifton** and BBC's *EastEnders*' **Maisie Smith**!

Directed and co-choreographed by Britain's best loved TV Judge, **Craig Revel Horwood**, **STRICTLY BALLROOM: THE MUSICAL** follows arrogant, rebellious young ballroom dancer, Scott Hastings (**Kevin Clifton**). When his radical and daring dance style sees him fall out of favour with Australian Federation, he must dance with beginner, Fran (**Maisie Smith**). Together they find the courage to defy tradition and discover that to win, your steps don't need to be strictly ballroom!

Featuring smash-hit songs *Love is in the Air*, *Perhaps Perhaps Perhaps* and *Time After Time*, and all new music written by internationally acclaimed artists including *Sia*, *David Foster* and *Eddie Perfect*. This feel-good ballroom sensation is sure to make for an unforgettable evening under the glitter ball that will send your heart soaring and toes tapping!

**STRICTLY BALLROOM: THE MUSICAL** will waltz around the UK and Ireland from September 2022.

'A JOYOUS BLAST. STRICTLY BRILLIANT' - *The Sun*



**Tickets from £19.50\***



# KEVIN CLIFTON & MAISIE SMITH

From *Strictly Come Dancing* to **STRICTLY BALLROOM**, the duo tell us why they're excited to be back dancing together.

**W**hen Kevin Clifton was ten years old, he watched **STRICTLY BALLROOM** and, as a budding competitive dancer, immediately saw himself in the character of Scott Hastings, recalling: "He was a hero to me and such an inspiration."

Kevin was being taught ballroom and Latin by his parents and told the four times British Latin American Champions: "I guarantee you that one day they're going to make a musical out of this and I'm going to play Scott Hastings."

Three decades later Clifton's dream has come true. The 39-year-old former *Strictly Come Dancing* star is headlining the UK and Ireland tour of **STRICTLY BALLROOM: THE MUSICAL** and beams as he says: "It's been a lifelong ambition of mine and I'm so excited that I'm getting to be in the stage version of my favourite film of all time."

His co-star **Maisie Smith**, with whom he danced on the *Children In Need Strictly Come Dancing* special in 2019, is just as excited to be playing fledgling hooper Fran. "It combines all my favourite things: Singing, dancing, acting, sequins and a bit of glitz and glamour," says the former *EastEnders* actress and *Strictly Come Dancing* finalist who is making her musical theatre debut.

"It's such an amazing role to play in my first ever musical. It's such a feel-good show, and of course it's got such great dancing and music in it - Latin flavours, modern tracks and some real classics."

Adapted from the film by creators Baz Luhrmann and Craig Pearce and directed and co-choreographed with Jason Gilkison by Craig Revel Horwood, **STRICTLY BALLROOM: THE MUSICAL** revolves around rebellious Australian dancer Scott, who causes a commotion

with his radical moves and raises eyebrows when he opts to dance with absolute beginner Fran.

**Kevin Clifton** remembers relating to Scott's desire to dance his way rather than following the rulebook. "I'm not sure whether it was something in me or whether it was totally inspired by the movie but I always felt the same way," he recalls. "I was always more obsessed with entertaining an audience than winning a competition." He notes of *Strictly Come Dancing*: "Even on the show I would always chase an audience reaction instead of a 10 from the judges. I've always had that in me."

The show's first-ever UK and Ireland tour will feature a cast of more than 20 world-class performers, familiar songs *Love is in the Air* and *Time After Time* and new music from artists including *Sia*, *David Foster* and *Eddie Perfect*.

The central message of 'A life lived in fear is a life half-lived' chimes with Clifton. "I left my comfort zone of *Strictly Come Dancing* to do more theatre, and that's the message of *Strictly Ballroom* - doing what you love and going after the life you want to live."

Smith is happy to be reunited with her *Children in Need* dancing partner three years after they bagged the Glitterball trophy. "We got on so well and that was the start of my *Strictly* journey," she says, having gone on to compete on *Strictly* itself the following year when she eventually came second.

Clifton concurs. "We worked really well together, it's great to be reunited. I can't wait for people to see what Maisie can do. We've seen her dancing and acting but she's also a really good singer."

"As for the show itself, it's as good as musical theatre gets, with great singing, great dancing and a love story at its heart."

*'I left my comfort zone of Strictly Come Dancing to do more theatre, and that's the message of Strictly Ballroom - doing what you love and going after the life you want to live.'*



## Mother Goose

**Wednesday 22 – Sunday 26 February '23**

Wednesday at 2.30pm & 7.30pm, Thursday at 7.30pm, Friday at 5pm, Saturday at 1.30pm & 6.30pm and Sunday at 12pm & 5pm

The whole nation is flocking to see **Ian McKellen** and **John Bishop** as they join forces to bring you a hilarious family-friendly panto. With **Mel Giedroyc** also starring as a goose with a gift, **MOTHER GOOSE** is the ultimate theatrical feast - full of fun, farce and surprises that will make you honk out loud.

Meet Mother Goose (McKellen) and her husband Vic (Bishop). Running an Animal Sanctuary for waifs and strays, they live a wholesome life inside an abandoned Debenhams. But when a magical goose (Giedroyc) comes a-knocking, will fame & fortune get the better of them?!

Will Ma's feathers get ruffled? Will Pa tell everyone to get stuffed?! And is their humble life about to turn fowl? Get ready for fairies with hefty vocal chords, puppets with tap dance qualifications and impeccably constructed mayhem that will quack up the whole family.

From the imaginations of Jonathan Harvey (*Coronation Street*, *Gimme, Gimme*) and Cal McCrystal ('Britain's funniest director' *Guardian*) comes the MOTHER of all pantos – so don't be a goose.

Book your **MOTHER GOOSE** tickets today and get ready for take-off!



**Tickets  
from £15\***

Information is correct as of October 2022

\*A £4 booking fee applies to all purchases. Book online at grandtheatre.co.uk

# Ian McKellen & John Bishop

*get together to tell us what we can expect from Mother Goose!*

An egg-citing pantomime is hatching in the heart of London's West End. Starring **Ian McKellen**, **John Bishop** and **Mel Giedroyc**, **MOTHER GOOSE** plays a London season before travelling to a very select few cities in the UK and Ireland. In its only Midlands date, the show will play here at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre in February. Scott Bird sat down with the stars to discover more about the magic being made...

**Some might say that Mother Goose is the Hamlet of pantomimes, so it seems like a fitting return?**

**Ian McKellen:** "Very much so! Mother Goose is thought to be a very special part... although all pantomimes have a dame, this story revolves around the dame which isn't true of most of the other pantomimes. She's the Dame of Dames! I thought that this pantomime would indeed follow tradition and then I learned that I've got to share the limelight..."

**John Bishop:** "Sorry..."

**John Bishop:** "I'm married to Ian McKellen... let's start there... how amazing is that!? This panto is going to throw so much at you that you'd never believe!"

**Ian McKellen:** "I'm married to John Bishop... at least until February anyway, when we get to Wolverhampton Grand and that beautiful theatre! I have only played Wolverhampton once so I'm very excited to return to that gorgeous theatre. I played the Grand in 1971 with *Hamlet* and it was a long tour. By that I mean a very long tour and it was such a long time ago... much of it now I can't remember but to this day, the image of the gorgeous auditorium remains in my mind. At Wolverhampton Grand the auditorium wraps itself around you when you're on stage and then there's those plush red seats... it is indeed very Grand!"

**Ian McKellen:** "Yes, I don't mind, not when I'm in such good company as John Bishop and then Mel Giedroyc dressed as a giant goose all for the purpose of entertaining the good folk of Wolverhampton! Let me tell you, that's just the start – there's going to be so much magic in this! Has it sold out yet? If you're reading this, I'd book now..."

**John Bishop:** "And not just magic... laughs! There's so much laughter already and I know Wolverhampton loves a good laugh! I've played every room of the Civic Hall from the tiny one upstairs when I was starting out, right through to the big one but now, the Grand Theatre! I love Wolverhampton, I can't wait to bring this show there."

**Ian McKellen:** "My good friend Frances Barber still speaks with a Wolverhampton accent...so I know I'll

*'Let me tell you, that's just the start - there's going to be so much magic in this!'*

feel right at home, she's a dame of Wolverhampton!"

**But what about the 'Ian McKellen' dame?**

**Ian McKellen:** "There are lots of sorts of Dames... there are men in frocks who look nothing like women and that's very funny, right through to the other end of really convincing women, like RuPaul and Danny La Rue who are hugely entertaining and altogether the most glamorous things you've ever seen. What am I doing in this panto? I asked Jonathan Harvey who has written this pantomime, who has written so beautifully for *Coronation Street*, to create me a strong woman. He created the part that I played in *Coronation Street* for 10 episodes, I have every faith in him and I know that he has come up with something equally brilliant for my Mother Goose, think *Coronation Street* housewife, she's a strong woman but she's flawed..."

What's the point of a man playing a pantomime Dame? I don't know but there's plenty of feminine stuff inside me and that will come to the fore...she can't wait to meet you all, that's for sure!"

# HOSPITALITY



Enhance your booth experience with our **Grand Grazing Platter**.  
£50 for up to six people

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*Add a touch of elegance to your visit with an exclusive booth and personal waiter service. A sure way to make your Grand Theatre experience truly memorable. You and up to 5 guests can enjoy your own private space pre-show and during the interval with packages designed to suit everyone.*

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For up to six people and includes the following: hot or soft drink, bar snacks, show programme\*, waiter service & complimentary cloakroom.

## GOLD\* PACKAGE

For up to six people and includes the following: bottle of wine, bar snacks, show programme\*, waiter service & complimentary cloakroom.

## PLATINUM\* PACKAGE

For up to six people and includes the following: a bottle of Prosecco, chocolates, bar snacks, show programme\*, waiter service & complimentary cloakroom.

**PRICES START FROM £50**

\*show programme not available on all shows

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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.

*"I highly recommend treating yourself to this experience, it's worth every penny"*

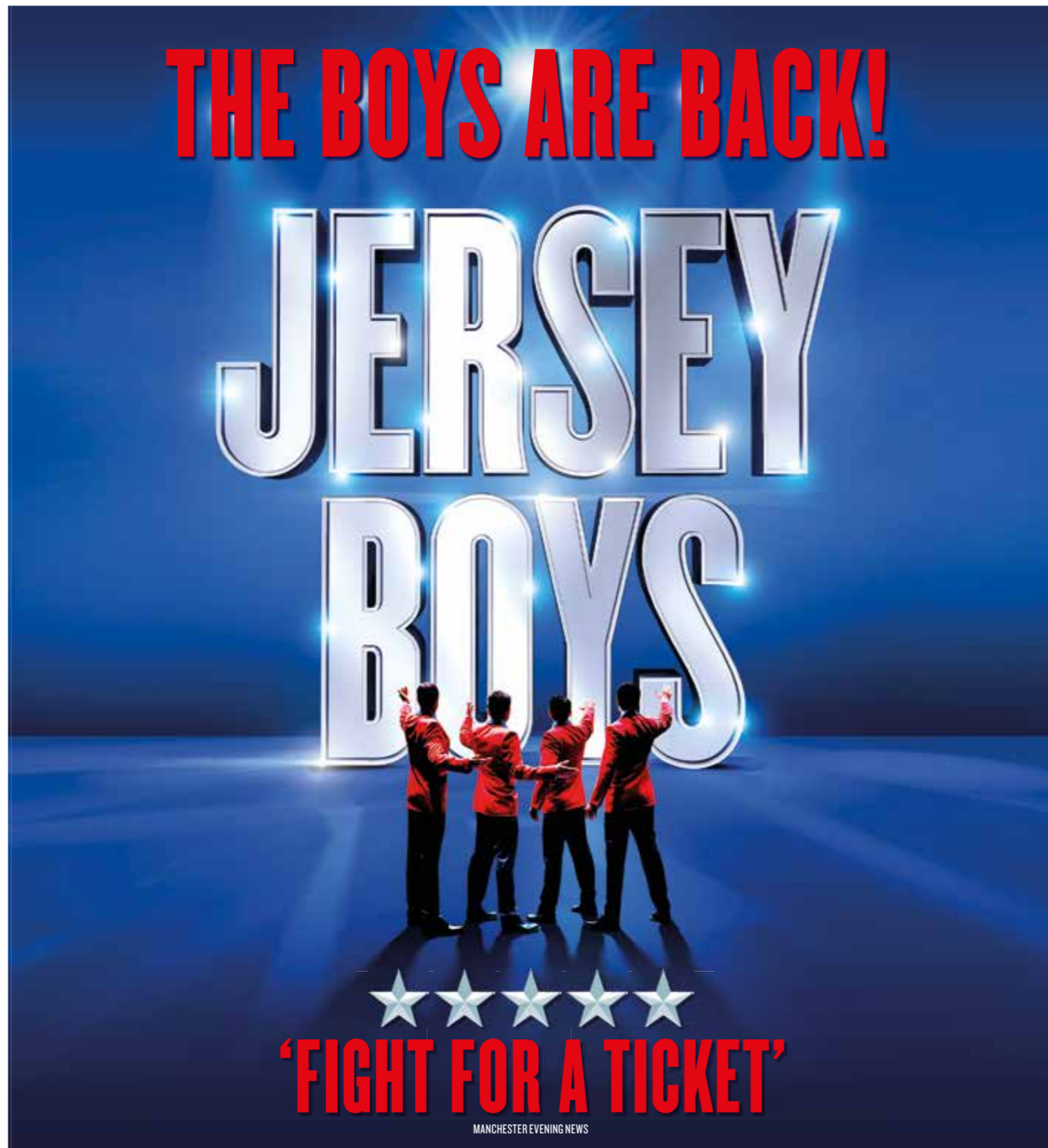
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Available on Android and Apple, search **WGT Click & Collect** in your app store OR scan below for direct download.





## Jersey Boys

**Tuesday 7 - Saturday 18 March '23**

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



The internationally acclaimed stage sensation is returning to Wolverhampton!

The smash-hit musical has won 65 major awards and has been seen by over 30 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.

**Tickets from £23\***



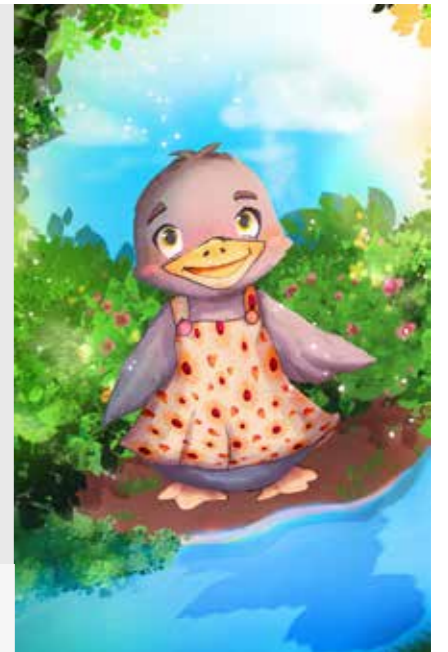
## Ugly Duckling

**Sunday 2 April '23 - 2pm & 4pm**

Northern Ballet presents **UGLY DUCKLING**. Ugly Duckling is lonely and fed-up, ignored by those around her who think she is too ugly to fit in. She tries to make friends with fellow ducklings as well as with frogs, cats and even a fox, but realising she is not like any of these animals, she is left sad and alone. Follow the duckling on her journey as she overcomes her troubles and realises that she was beautiful all along.

Retelling the famous Hans Christian Andersen fairytale, **UGLY DUCKLING** is the perfect opportunity for your little ones to enjoy live ballet, music and theatre for the first time.

**Tickets from £8.50\***



## Rumours of Fleetwood Mac

**Tuesday 4 April '23 - 7.30pm**

**RUMOURS OF FLEETWOOD MAC**, the world's finest tribute to *Fleetwood Mac*, returns to the stage in 2023 with a brand new show celebrating the very best of *Fleetwood Mac*, including a very special blues set paying tribute to *Fleetwood Mac*'s legendary Peter Green era.

Channelling the spirit of *Fleetwood Mac* at their very best, **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.

Personally endorsed by *Fleetwood Mac* founding member, Mick Fleetwood, **RUMOURS OF FLEETWOOD MAC** is the ultimate tribute to one of rock and roll's most remarkable groups.

**Tickets from £19.50\***



RUMOURS  
OF  
FLEETWOOD MAC  
— LIVE IN CONCERT —



## Dave Gorman - Powerpoint To The People

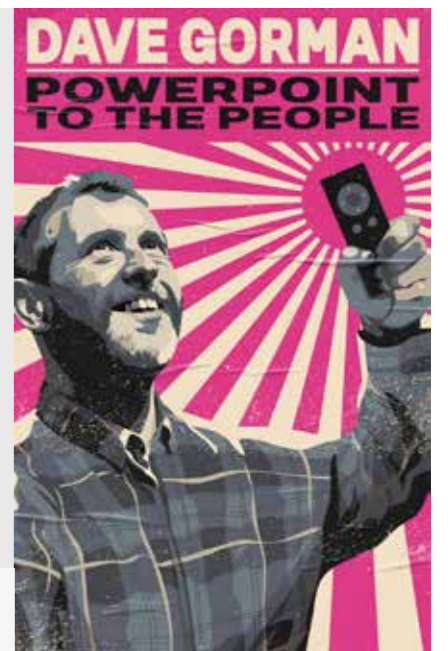
**Wednesday 5 April '23 - 7.30pm**

**Dave Gorman**, the man behind the hit TV shows *Modern Life Is Goodish*, *Are You Dave Gorman?* and *Googlewhack Adventure*, is back on the road with a brand new live show, **POWERPOINT TO THE PEOPLE**.

The 'high priest of the comedy Powerpoint talk' (*The Times*) is touring again to demonstrate that a powerpoint presentation doesn't have to involve a man in a grey suit standing behind a lectern and saying 'next slide please'. We've all had enough of that, so let's put it all behind us and never speak of it again - there are far more important things to analyse. Well... they're more important in Dave's head anyway.

**Tickets from £16.25\***

Age guidance: 14+ - likely to be swearing and adult content



WORLD PREMIERE ✨ PRIOR TO WEST END



# The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel

BY DEBORAH MOGGACH  
BASED ON THE NOVEL THAT INSPIRED THE HIT FILM  
DIRECTED BY LUCY BAILEY

## The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel

**Tuesday 28 March - Saturday 1 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.

Major UK Tour, prior to West End.

"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



Tickets  
from £15.50\*



# Deborah Moggach

WRITER OF THESE FOOLISH THINGS  
TELLS US HOW THE STORY HAS  
BEEN ADAPTED FOR THE STAGE!

**T**HE BEST EXOTIC MARIGOLD HOTEL, the beautiful story of love and new beginnings has found new beginnings on stage having hit the big screen in 2011 as a blockbuster smash based on Deborah Moggach's 2004 novel, *These Foolish Things*. Ahead of its arrival here in Wolverhampton before a run in London's West End, Deborah sat down to tell us how the story has been adapted for a brand new stage show.

"I've adapted the story from the novel and it's quite a different creature to both the book and the film. There are the same characters, the same dilapidated hotel and all of that, but it's a very different experience on stage.

The stagecraft is something I've had to work on, thinking 'How do we keep everything in one place?' They've built this amazing set for the hotel and downstage will be the street and call centre. And there's a lovely sound system featuring the sounds of India strumming in the background, with cars hooting in the distance and people selling their wares, and that will come to the fore sometimes."

Adapting the novel for the stage has been a whole new adventure for Deborah, a key theme of the story itself..

"It's never too late to have another adventure. 70 is the new 50 and we're not behaving in the way people used to behave when they were so-called 'old'. There's been a sea change in how we view older people in that you're not old, you're the same person you always were. You have the same loves, disappointments, resentments and joy as you ever

had, you're just a bit more wrinkly. Parcelling them off as old people, which is what I used to do when I was young, is not the case once you get old yourself. You're exactly the same. I wanted to write something about people who are just like everyone else, they're just a bit older. The world has changed so much. A lot of us would be dead by now but miracles of modern medicine mean here we still are. I'm living in Kent and swimming every day in the sea with my grandchildren. That's not what people are 'supposed' to do at this age."

Deborah's work has inspired many more stories about the older generation and has inspired a much more fun, adventurous outlook...

"Since the first Marigold Hotel film I think there are many more stories. They're about people who happen to be older but whose stories and adventures need not be about being towards the end of your life. The book changed things a bit and the film changed things hugely, by altering our perception of old age. There's much more coming out, although there's still not enough. There are many more examples of older people having interesting things happen to them rather than them being in the waiting room or departure lounge."

The play will inspire audiences too:

"I hope audiences will have a lot of fun and identify things in the play that they're experiencing or have experienced themselves, then go away happier and uplifted. Hopefully they'll be full of vim about maybe having another adventure. I'm longing to get young audiences in as well as the older and of course a very

diverse audience too. With a lot of the Indian characters I've given them bigger stories and one of the themes of the play is the meeting of East and West, the dissipating of prejudice and showing what we have in common along with the contrast between our cultures. To get young people and a diverse audience in would be absolutely great. I hope they'll have their sympathies enlarged, not just about what they might consider old people who are past it but also about other cultures. It's about ageing and mortality but it's also about fun and how we can get on with each other. There are quite a lot of messages hidden in there."



*It's never too late  
to have another  
adventure.  
70 is the new 50  
and we're not  
behaving in the  
way people  
used to behave.*

## Dreamboys

Thursday 6 April '23 - 7.30pm

**DREAMBOYS** are ready to give you a night of fun, fantasy and no holding back with their **NO STRINGS ATTACHED** UK tour! Join us for an epic party with off-the-charts dance routines, ripped torsos to tease and please, and audience participation throughout. Featuring double the dance moves and more skin on show than ever before, **NO STRINGS ATTACHED** is the ultimate night of carefree fun.



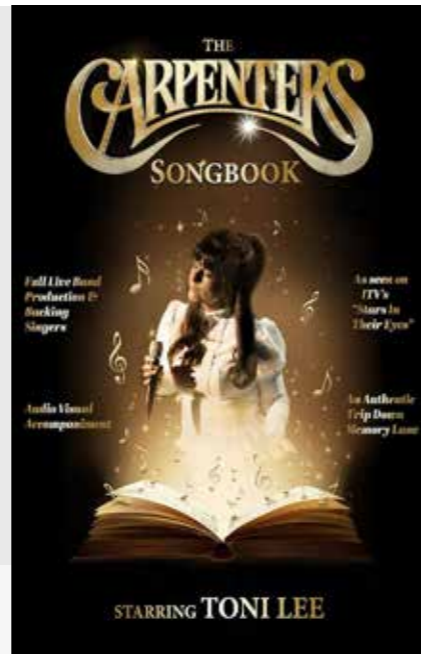
**Tickets from £14.75\***  
Strictly over 18s only

## The Carpenters Songbook

Friday 7 April '23 - 7.30pm

**Toni Lee** is 'mesmerising', she recreates the voice of *Karen Carpenter* like no one else and it is simply the best celebration of *The Carpenters'* music to be heard anywhere in the world.

**THE CARPENTERS SONGBOOK** is packed with the fantastic songs of *The Carpenters*, **Toni Lee's** sensational voice will take you on a musical journey through *The Carpenters'* wonderful hit songs, including *Close To You*, *We've Only Just Begun*, *Top Of The World*, *Mr. Postman*, *Only Yesterday*, *Rainy Days and Mondays*, *Goodbye To Love*, *Solitaire*, *Sing* and more.



**Tickets from £19.50\***

## Sing-a-long-a Encanto

Saturday 8 April '23 - 1pm

Gather la Familia! It's time to celebrate something truly magical. From the producers of *Sing-a-Long-a Frozen* comes the brand new smash hit film musical of 2021 about the Family Madrigal, with lyrics on screen!

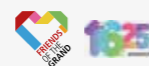
Sing your heart out with the live host, who will teach you some dance moves, help you create some magic and show you how to use your free interactive props bag.

You the audience are the stars, and remember we don't talk about *Bruno*, *no no no!*

**Please note this is a screening of the movie not a live stage show.**



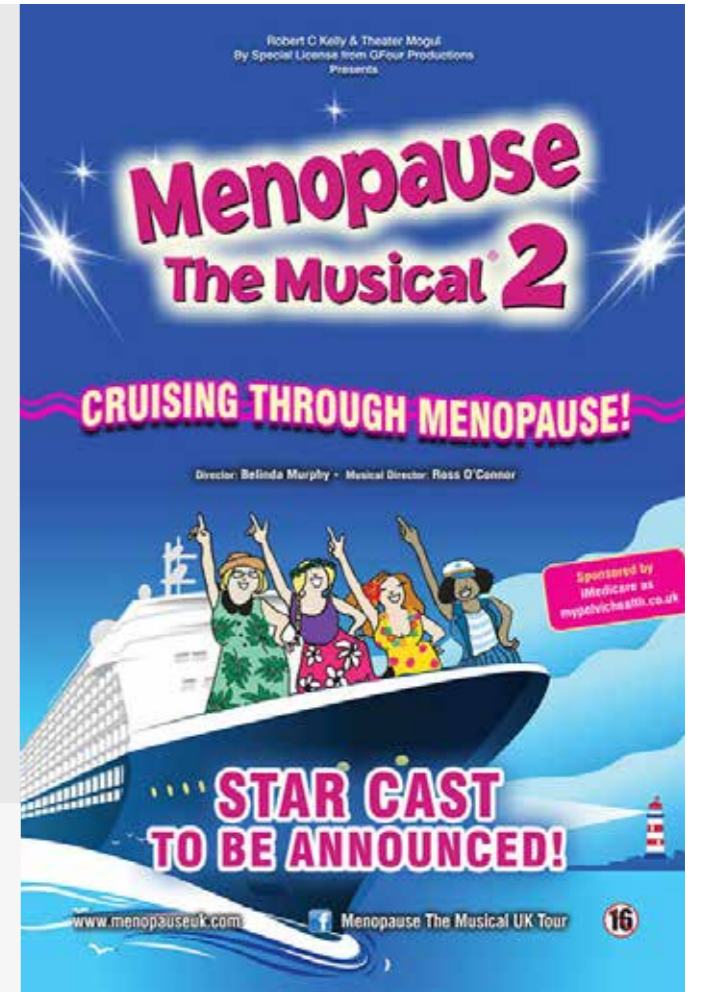
**Tickets from £12\***



## Menopause the Musical 2

Thursday 13 April '23 - 7.30pm

With an all-star cast to be announced, we present **MENOPAUSE THE MUSICAL 2 - CRUISING THROUGH MENOPAUSE**. In this hilarious sequel to our smash-hit *Menopause the Musical*, we fast forward five years to catch up with the same four characters for tales of their lives, loves and losses as they set off on the high seas.



**Tickets from £20\***

## La Bohème

Saturday 15 April '23 - 7.30pm

**Senbla** presents Opera International's award-winning **Ellen Kent Production** featuring the **Ukrainian Opera & Ballet Theatre Kyiv**, with international soloists, highly-praised chorus and full orchestra.

Directed by Ellen Kent, this brand new production is traditionally staged and features beautiful sets and costumes. **LA BOHÈME** is one of the most romantic operas ever written, it tells the tragic tale of the doomed, consumptive Mimi and her love for a penniless writer. The set reflects the Bohemian art of the period and will include a local brass band, snow effects, and Muzetta's dog.

This classic tale of Parisian love and loss features many famous arias including *Your Tiny Hand is Frozen*, *They Call Me Mimi* and *Muzetta's Waltz*.

Welcoming back the fabulous Korean soprano **Elena Dee**, French soprano **Olga Perrier** and Ukrainian mezzo-soprano **Natalia Matveeva\***

Sung in Italian with English surtitles.

\*Cast subject to change.



**Tickets from £21.50\***





## The Secret Lives Of Henry & Alice

**Friday 21 April - Saturday 6 May '23**

**Previews:** Friday 21 April at 7.30pm and Saturday 22 April at 2.30pm & 7.30pm

**Performances:** Tuesday - Saturday evenings at 7.30pm, Wednesday & Saturday matinees at 2.30pm

For Henry Smith - actor, raconteur, sporting hero, leading socialite, business tycoon, secret agent, casanova and acting President of the United States - life was rarely dull. For Alice Smith, housewife - life was rarely anything else. Enter Michel - French waiter - tall, dark and available. Exactly what happened next, no-one's quite sure. Except that it involved a rotting melon, a deckchair and a bottle of neck-rub. Fantasy blurs into reality. Secret passions explode. And two worlds which seem a million miles apart are suddenly on a collision course. It could only happen to Henry & Alice. And only their pet goldfish, Orca, and you, will ever know the true story.

From the pen of Black Country playwright **David Tristram** comes a brand new production of **THE SECRET LIVES OF HENRY AND ALICE** produced by Wolverhampton Grand Theatre. **David Tristram** is one of the UK's most popular and performed comedy playwrights. Directed by **Jack Ryder** (*The History Boys/ The Band/Calendar Girls The Musical*) with exciting casting to be announced soon, book early to get the best seats in Henry and Alice's front room and the world of imagination that awaits!

**Tickets from £10\***



The secret life of a comedy writer...

An interview with:

# DAVID TRISTRAM

**T**HE SECRET LIVES OF HENRY & ALICE is a touching, highly inventive and bittersweet black comedy by local author, David Tristram.

It's often a secret life, being a writer. For example, most people probably wouldn't realise that David Tristram was actually the man behind the creation of the hugely popular Black Country comedy character *Doreen Tipton* (note, the same initials – no coincidence). Working anonymously in the background, David devised, wrote and produced *Doreen's* stage shows, songs, books and viral videos.

*Doreen* quickly became a comedy legend in the Black Country and went on

to be voted 'Best Midlands Entertainment Personality' by What's On readers. She also appeared in The Grand Theatre's prestigious pantomimes, winning 'Best Newcomer' at the Great British Panto Awards.

But there's much more to David Tristram than his infamous *Doreen* creation. Over a long career, he's also established himself as one of the UK's most popular playwrights. In fact, his comedies have now been performed more than 10,000 times by professional and amateur companies all over the world. To put that in context, it means that for the past 30 years or so, on average, someone somewhere in the world has been ▶



performing a David Tristram play every single night.

"It's an interesting milestone," quipped David, "which can only be achieved if you're either quite successful, or, as in my case, very old."

#### A BLACK COUNTRY LAD

Despite the success, David remains a proud Black Country man through and through. He was born in Quarry Bank, educated at Dudley Grammar School and Birmingham University, and now lives in Wolverhampton – so he's never strayed far from his roots.

#### How does it feel to see your work performed at The Grand?

"Seeing Henry and Alice open at my local theatre is a dream come true. And that's especially apt, because dreams coming true is one of the central themes of the play. The Grand is also actually a fantastic venue for comedy, because despite its scale and splendour it still remains a very intimate space, so you're able to properly connect with the actors."

In 2016, David Tristram was nominated by his peers as one of the Black Country's prestigious '100 Masters' - an award-winning initiative honouring those considered to be at the very top of their craft.

#### What is it about Black Country humour that inspires your writing?

"The Black Country is one of the least pretentious places you could ever wish to live, and it has a wonderful, robust sense of self-deprecating humour that harks back to the days when life for working folk around here was extremely tough indeed. People often turn to humour to alleviate the stress of everyday life."

#### You published the play in 2001, yet it still feels completely relatable to today's audiences. Why do you think that is?

I think it's because the themes explored in the play are so universal.

One of the amazing things about the audience reactions is the way that people seem to recognise themselves so vividly in the characters of Henry and Alice, and relate so strongly to their habits, annoyances, yearnings, foibles, hopes and dreams. People I've never met before have actually come up to me and said: "You wrote that about us – didn't you?"

This is a bittersweet comedy with a surreal twist, as Henry & Alice attempt to privately fantasize their way out of their domestic boredom. The play's fantasy sequences are further enhanced by clever use of stage projection, helping

to transport us in a blink of an eye from a living room to the beach, from the pub to the TV studio, from the American Super Bowl to the police station, from the office to the Oscars, the hospital to the fairground. So apart from the verbal fireworks, there's also a visual surprise around every corner.

For most of the action, the audiences tend to know what's going on far more than the characters themselves do – but will they see the extraordinary twist that's coming at the end?"

#### What will audiences take away from The Secret Lives of Henry and Alice?

"The Secret Lives of Henry & Alice is, in the end, a reflection of all our lives. Funny, sad, precious, sometimes chaotic, far from perfect - but ultimately hopeful. I hope audiences will come away laughing, asking questions, rewinding sections of the action in their minds, and ultimately – most importantly – communicating with each other. Because above all else, this is a play about connecting.

As Bob Dylan once said: You can be in my dream, if I can be in yours."

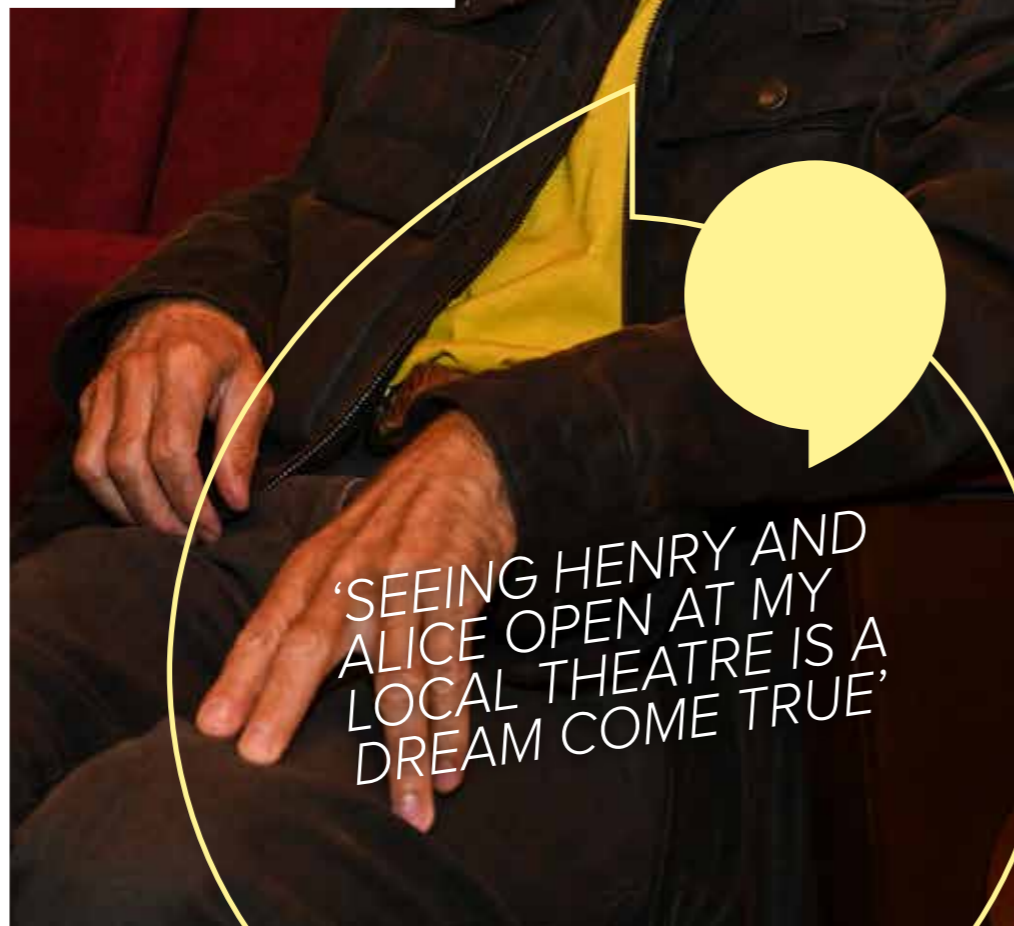
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www.davidtristram.uk



'SEEING HENRY AND ALICE OPEN AT MY LOCAL THEATRE IS A DREAM COME TRUE'

# JACK RYDER

We talk to Jack Ryder ahead of his return to the Grand to direct our in-house production of *The Secret Lives Of Henry & Alice*.

**K**nown to many for his TV roles such as Jamie Mitchell in *EastEnders* and Evan Crowhurst in *Holby City*, Jack Ryder also has an impressive theatre career both on stage and off. His directing credits include *The Take That* musical *The Band*, *Calendar Girls*, *The Full Monty* and more recently, the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre production of Alan Bennett's *The History Boys* in February 2020. Now, Jack is back to direct our new production, *THE SECRET LIVES OF HENRY & ALICE* and he sat down with Scott Bird to talk about our latest project.

"When I first started directing, I was working with two magnificent producers in London and one of my jobs was to sit and read through the scripts that were submitted to us. I read a lot of material in that time, much of it was great, but you always notice and remember the plays that make you laugh out loud. When I read *THE SECRET LIVES OF HENRY & ALICE* by David Tristram recently, I got the same feeling. When you begin laughing out loud, there's obviously something in that writing and there were many moments where I was sat at home doing exactly that... I'm not a big laugher, I tend to chuckle in my head, but I couldn't help laughing and that told me that this is something I need to work on."

The play is from the pen of the Black Country's own David Tristram, whose comedy writing is known for its observational and very witty take on life. Everyone has encountered one of David Tristram's characters within someone they know, whether it's a family member, the

person next door or at the hairdressers... David's creation Doreen Tipton is the perfect example, as are the characters Henry and Alice.

"David told me how this play is an accumulation of humorous stories, situations and anecdotes from friends and people he'd met over the years that have now shaped the lives of this married couple. So many people will relate to having a partner who, after many years together, have settled into a groove where they wind the other person up slightly with their habits and rituals and I can imagine they will sit there watching this play, knocking each other and saying 'you do that!' – it's all taken very light heartedly and humorously but there's a lot of truth in it, particularly in people's ways... you'll see someone you know in Henry or Alice."

Casting the parts will require Jack to find actors with the most versatile of skills.

"It's two actors on stage playing multiple roles... Henry and Alice take on the personas of many different parts as they drift off into dream worlds in their heads. I read it and thought this is a tough call, you need magicians to play these parts... The accents, the physical comedy elements, the more tender moments. It has it all and the casting is the final bit of the jigsaw and when you get it right, it's a masterpiece."

On returning to Wolverhampton, Jack realises the importance of local theatres producing their own work.

"I think it's superb that the Grand are producing. This theatre provides an environment to create, encourage and develop talent and puts it in front of a

'It was a wonderful atmosphere so the opportunity to come back to Wolverhampton and direct anything with the team there is a privilege.'

home crowd. I'm delighted to be back after such a great time directing *The History Boys*. I quickly learned that it's a very well-run theatre, the staff are lovely and we've kept in touch over the lockdown and remained friends - there's a good vibe and it all felt very healthy and enjoyable. It was a wonderful atmosphere so the opportunity to come back to Wolverhampton and direct anything with the team there is a privilege. People often ask me what I prefer, TV or theatre, and I always say it's about the people. It's not about the job, it's about the place and Wolverhampton Grand has a great creative vibe, a determined drive and it's a great environment to make theatre in. This production will blend every theatrical element, including projection and sound, utilising all of the skill within the Grand Theatre team. We all saw the magic that happened with *The History Boys*, it was a wonderful feeling and I couldn't be happier to be back working at the Grand Theatre and continuing that creative journey here."

# ACCESS A WORLD OF Theatre

Here at Wolverhampton Grand, we believe that everyone should be able to enjoy the *magic of live theatre*. To make this possible, we regularly schedule a range of accessible performances throughout our programme including Audio Description, BSL Interpreted, Captioned and Relaxed.

We had the pleasure of chatting to UK audio description pioneer, Anne Hornsby from Mind's Eye. Anne provides most of the Grand's audio description, and we couldn't wait to hear what she had to say...

**Q: Can you give us a brief description of what audio description is and how it can benefit customers?**

A: Audio description makes sure no-one misses out. It gives blind and partially sighted customers information about the visual aspects of a show or a play. This can include details about, for example - the appearance of characters and their costumes; about the design for a show – the sets and the lighting; and about movement and visual jokes and comedy. Description enables blind and visually impaired people to feel included and part of the theatre experience.

The audio description experience begins with a touch tour of the set and costumes, where we take people onstage for a close up discovery tour; the customers are then given a discreet headset, and can hear an introduction lasting ten to fifteen minutes, with details about the set, the costumes and the characters; and then they hear the description, which is woven around the dialogue and songs of the show, keeping everyone up to speed with what is unfolding onstage.

**Q: How long have you been working with Wolverhampton Grand Theatre?**

A: Around twenty-five years and possibly even longer!

**Q: What's the best part about being an audio describer?**

A: I love knowing I have made a real difference to people's experiences and enabled them to enjoy their visit. I also relish the performative element of the job, getting the timing and the emotion of the scene just right, and I've always been a writer, so audio description seems to draw on the skills that I enjoy using.

**Q: What's your favourite show to describe and why?**

A: I tend to enjoy whatever show I am working on currently! I like Chicago because it's stylish and slick; I like Les Misérables because it's epic and you feel as if you have taken your audience on a journey with you; I like shows which have a challenge and offer real opportunities for description – where it is really needed in terms of understanding the plot and the characters.

**Q: We know that you love to dress up for touch tours, talk us through some costumes:**

A: For Rocky Horror I usually have to find a pair of stockings, a red basque and a feather boa! or if it's a bit chilly maybe just a black dress! I also have a white satin dress and white boots which I like to wear for Mamma

*Did you know: Assistance dogs are welcome in the auditorium, or we can organise a verified volunteer to take care of them when needed.*



Mia!, and the boots do for Kinky Boots as well. For Chicago it's usually a Matron Mamma Morton black trouser suit!

**Q: Finally, as we approach panto season what is your favourite Pantomime to describe?**

A: I do love all pantomimes so it's hard to choose. Like a big kid, I enjoy watching the transformations, and then of course describing them so that the magic is conveyed to the listeners. Maybe

Cinderella is my favourite, because that always has a great transformation scene, and Aladdin's cave of wonders usually merits some sparkly description too.

One of the highlights of my year is the annual Grand pantomime where we welcome families supported by Guide Dogs for Blind People and the RNIB. Introducing those young people to pantomime and taking them on the stage for the touch tour is an absolute joy!

For more information about our accessible services, please contact Remy by calling 01902 57 33 20 or email [remyl@grandtheatre.co.uk](mailto:remyl@grandtheatre.co.uk)

**mind's  
eye**

**THERE'S A NEW STAR IN TOWN!**  
**PUSSYCAT DOLL**  
**MELODY THORNTON**



**The Bodyguard**

**Tuesday 9 - Saturday 13 May '23**

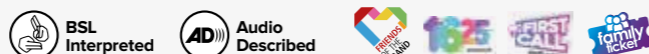
Evenings at 7.30pm,  
 Wednesday & Saturday matinee at 2.30pm

The award-winning, smash-hit musical **THE BODYGUARD** is back! Starring *Pussycat Doll*, and multi-platinum Grammy nominated **Melody Thornton\*** as Rachel Marron.

Former Secret Service agent turned bodyguard, Frank Farmer, is hired to protect superstar Rachel Marron from an unknown stalker. Each expects to be in charge—what they don't expect is to fall in love. A 'BRILLIANT!' (The Times), breathtakingly romantic thriller, **THE BODYGUARD** features a whole host of irresistible classics including *One Moment in Time*, *I Wanna Dance With Somebody* and, of course, the legendary *I Will Always Love You*.

DISCLAIMER: \*Melody Thornton will perform the role of 'Rachel Marron' at all evening performances only. Cast and performance schedule subject to change without notice.

**Tickets from £20\***



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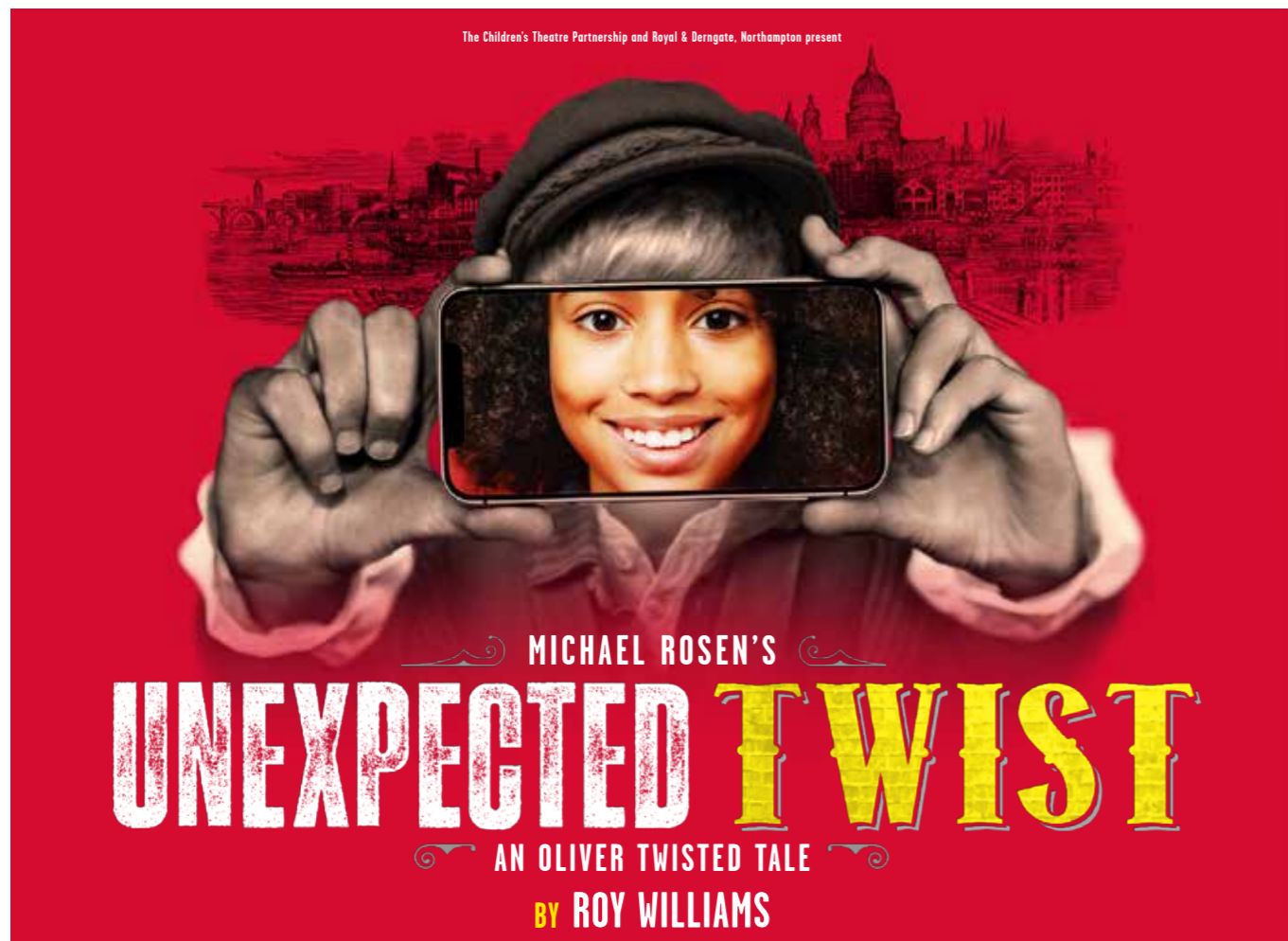
[www.paycare.org](http://www.paycare.org)

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## Unexpected Twist

**Tuesday 16 – Saturday 20 May '23**

Tuesday, Friday & Saturday at 7pm, Wednesday & Thursday at 10.30am & 2pm, Saturday at 2pm

**UNEXPECTED TWIST** is the re-telling of the Charles Dickens classic, *Oliver Twist*, by one of the best-loved figures in the children's book world, Michael Rosen. Combining two stories in one; Rosen's story and the Dickens classic that inspired it. Two stories that twist together, unexpectedly!

Shona and her class are studying the book, *Oliver Twist*. She's the new girl in school and is finding it hard to stay out of trouble – much like Oliver himself! When she's given a new phone by a stranger, she begins to suspect there's something unusual about the new boys she's met.

Michael Rosen is the English children's novelist, poet, and the author of 140 books. He served as Children's Laureate from June 2007 to June 2009. He has been a TV presenter and a political columnist, and his books include *Carrying the Elephant: A Memoir of Love and Loss* and *Uncle Billy Being Silly*.

This thrilling production is brought to vivid life by **The Children's Theatre Partnership**, whose shows have included *Animal Farm*, *Holes* and *The Jungle Book*. Directed by James Dacre (2020 Olivier Award nominated *Our Lady of Kibeho*), Rosen's novel is adapted for the stage by BAFTA award winning playwright Roy Williams and original music by rising R&B star Yaya Bey and BAC Beatbox Academy's Conrad Murray and with design by Frankie Bradshaw.



Age Guidance: 8+

**Tickets from £9.75\***

# Roy Williams

*"I want a young audience to recognise their own abilities from an early age. There's strength in our kids and I want them to know they have that inner power."*

From page to stage, but with an unexpected twist...



**N**ow one of Britain's most successful playwrights, Roy Williams grew up surrounded by Charles Dickens. His West London council estate was named in honour of Henry Dickens, local Councillor and grandson of the famous author. Roy's own block was Dombey House. "I was always a sucker for Dickens," Roy says. "My mum was a huge fan, so from a very young age I loved his stories."

An avid reader, happier to have his nose in a book or to be listening to a story than working out a spreadsheet or a maths problem, Dickens' characters fuelled Roy's imagination. "Dickens was a real man of his time. He told stories about what he was seeing, and he wrote about what he was unhappy with. *Oliver Twist* is driven by the ill treatment of children that he witnessed."

With *Oliver Twist* being one of his favourites, when Roy was approached to adapt Michael Rosen's *Unexpected Twist*, he was excited by the challenge of using his imagination to give the worlds of Victorian London and Rosen's modern story a unique, theatrical life. **UNEXPECTED TWIST** centres on Shona, a young girl arriving at her new school, trying to find her way in challenging new circumstances, while managing an equally challenging family life. Alongside Shona's story, the corresponding tale of *Oliver Twist* unfolds. "I loved the idea of two parallel stories as a way to examine if some things have really changed. The play means we can look at that through the characters of Shona and Oliver, even though they are 200 years apart. I love the use of time and how distant moments resonate from each other."

"Adapting this book for the stage gave me license to be as imaginative as possible. It's been a challenge and I knew it would push me as a writer, but in a really exciting way. I've needed to

discover theatrical moments where both worlds collide in one. I want Dickens to be hovering around the contemporary world so that we have the sense that the world of 200 years ago is still around us."

"The show will also have a lot of music, which is a first for me. I'm excited by that and I love what I've heard from Yaya Bey and Conrad Murray. My job is to give them something to work with so they can sprinkle their own magic."

Roy is passionate about the importance of theatre for young people. "It's become a cliché that young people are the future, but clichés are there because they are true!" For Roy there were few opportunities to experience theatre, and he didn't see live performance until he was in his late teens. "As a young, black, working-class boy, there wasn't anyone around saying, have a look at this". Watching a recording of *Macbeth*, starring Judi Dench and Ian McKellen on an old fashioned black and white TV in the school hall had a big impact. "I was gripped. I thought, I like this!"

Above all Roy hopes he can encourage his young audience to think about themselves and the world they are living in. To remind them that when they leave school they have to take part in that world, to have an opinion and to be actively involved in what they currently see the 'grown ups' doing. "I want them to look at themselves and start questioning. So much of what Michael Rosen and Dickens were writing about has relevance now. The news of food banks, rising poverty, the energy crisis – has been grist to the mill of my writing."

"But what we also see is how Oliver and Shona develop their own resilience. I want a young audience to recognise their own abilities from an early age. There's strength in our kids and I want them to know they have that inner power."

# GETTING SOCIAL

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



Adrian Jackson, Christopher Biggins and Richard Bourne at the Friends of the Grand 40th Anniversary party



Aeron James and Micky-Jo Boucher at the press night for Bedknobs And Broomsticks



Press launch of the Stages Exhibition celebrating our work with young people



Rob Madge with Norton The Fish at the press event for Bedknobs And Broomsticks



David Hunter at the press night for Waitress



Costumier Laura Leo, Graffiti Artist Jack Sankson, Speak Up & Audiences Manager Lucy-Ellen Parker and Freelance Performing Arts Practitioner Fran Richards at the launch of Stages



George Crawford and Aimée Fisher at the press night for Waitress



Evelyn Hoskins, Chelsea Halfpenny and Wendy Mae Brown from Waitress visit Medicine Bakery in Wolverhampton



Stars of panto meet Diego Costa on his first day at Wolves with Goncalo Guedes & Jose Sa



Connor O'Hara, Charles Brunton and Dianne Pilkington at the press night for Bedknobs and Broomsticks



Friends of the Grand at the organisation's 40th Anniversary Party



Jay Osmond at the press night for The Osmonds Musical



Creative activities were aplenty at the launch night for our Stages Exhibition



Ben Elton at the press night for We Will Rock You



Sofie Anné (Princess Jasmine) and Ben Cajee (Aladdin) at a press day for this year's pantomime.



Mayor Sandra Samuels joined us for Just Naach, a celebration of South Asian dance



West Midlands Fire Service welcomed Fireman Sam to the Grand Theatre and taught fire safety to audience members



Apphia Campbell greets audience members and ambassadors at Black Is The Color Of My Voice



The Barricade Boys Kieran Brown, Scott Garnham, Simon Schofield and Craig Mather at the Friends of the Grand 40th Anniversary



Just Naach judges Jaivant Patel, Vicky Price, Satnam Rana, Sajida Carr with host Manpreet Durooch (centre)



Ben Cajee and Tam Ryan at the press launch for Aladdin



Joshua Hawkins and Jake Quickenden celebrate the opening of Footloose



Markus Shabbing and Matt Tait at the Animal Farm press night



Mayor Sandra Samuels with Consort Karl Samuels and Reuben Campbell at the Joyous Jamaican Conversation film screening



Michael Greco meets the Lorikeets at Dudley Zoo



Animal Farm press photo call



Sofie Anné meets a snake at Dudley Zoo



Ben Cajee reads a bedtime story to Meena the Tapir at Dudley Zoo



Shrek The Musical Press Night



Rayo Patel and Michael Jean-Marain at the Animal Farm press night



Paul Herrington prepares John Wetherall for the Shrek The Musical photoshoot



Blood Brothers Press Night



Ian Billings at the press launch for Aladdin



Jack Sankson celebrates artwork by James Chaplain at the Stages press launch



The King Of Reggae press night



The cast of Aladdin on stage at the press launch



Theo Pitter transforming into Donkey for the Shrek The Musical photoshoot



Jay Worley and Melissa Potts at the Blood Brothers press night



John Bishop, Mel Giedroyc and Ian McKellen at the Mother Goose press launch



Shrek The Musical Press Night



Wesley Griffith at the Cluedo press night

# UNISON

*the public service union*

**W**hat is a trade union?  
 A trade union is a group of employees who join together to maintain and improve their conditions of employment. The typical activities of trade unions include providing assistance and services to their members, collectively bargaining for better pay and conditions for all workers, working to improve the quality of public services, political campaigning and industrial action.

Nearly seven million people in the UK belong to a trade union. Union members include nurses, school meals staff, hospital cleaners, professional footballers, shop assistants, teaching assistants, bus drivers, engineers and apprentices.

Most trade unions are independent of employers but have close working relationships with them.

With more than 1.3 million members, **UNISON** is one of the UK's largest trade unions and Europe's largest public service union. Our members work in the public services, for private contractors providing public services and for utility companies.

**UNISON** represents and acts for members working in a range of public services and utilities. We represent members, negotiate and bargain on their behalf, campaign for better working conditions and pay and for public services.

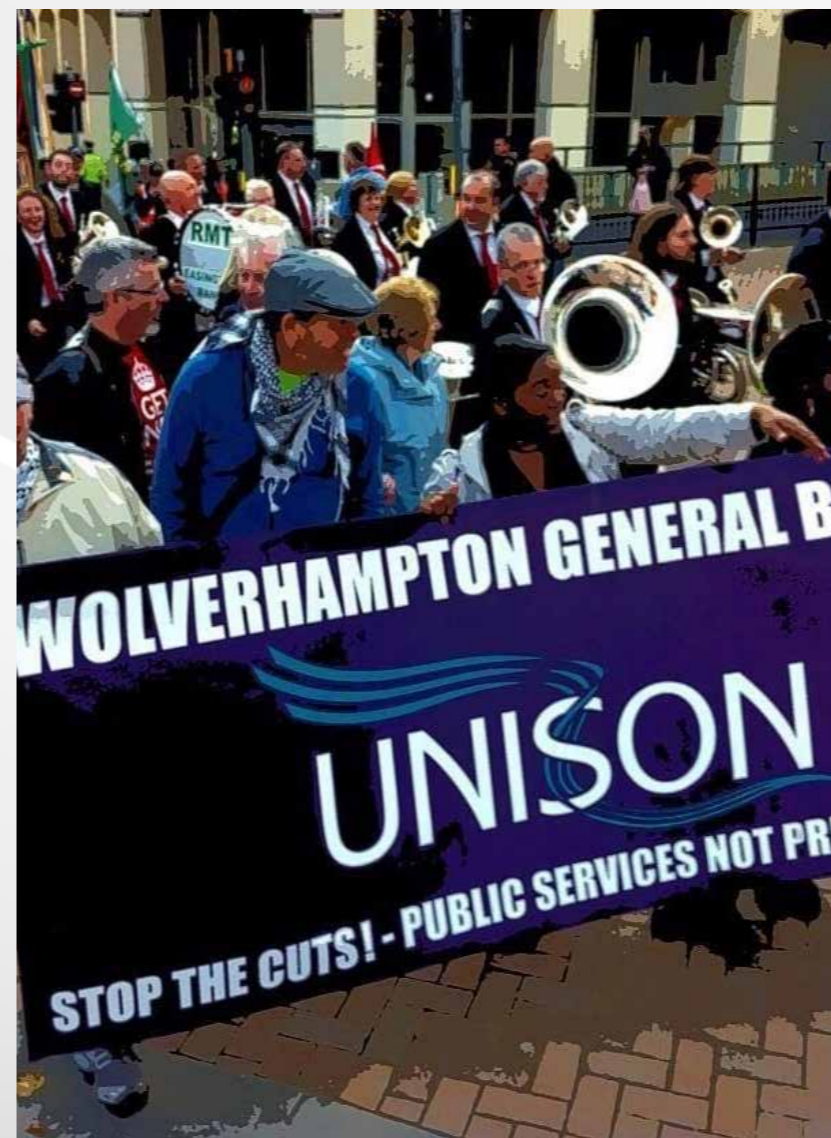
There are more than 1,000 **UNISON** branches spread over 12 UK regions and the City of Wolverhampton branch was formed in 1996, following the national amalgamation of three public sector unions. As a Branch, we campaign on the issues that matter to our members such as pay and the protection of public services.

We represent members working for Wolverhampton Council, Wolverhampton Homes and the private sector in Wolverhampton. We also offer welfare and benefits for members and their families.

Most of those families live in the city and they are part of the fabric which makes Wolverhampton. As such we recognise the vital role of organisations, such as the Grand, have in promoting the diversity and culture which makes Wolverhampton such a vibrant city.



To join Unison today, visit [unison.org.uk](http://unison.org.uk)



WITH MORE THAN 1.3 MILLION MEMBERS, UNISON IS ONE OF THE UK'S LARGEST TRADE UNIONS AND EUROPE'S LARGEST PUBLIC SERVICE UNION



## Rat Pack - Swingin' At The Sands

**Sunday 7 May '23 - 7.30pm**

Take three great singers, add a dash of comedy and rousing camaraderie with a pinch of the greatest songs ever written and what do you get? A perfect night's entertainment with **RAT PACK - SWINGIN' AT THE SANDS!**

This homage to the greatest performers in history features favourites such as *I've Got You Under My Skin*, *Mr. Bojangles*, *New York, New York*, *That's Life* and of course *My Way*.

Alongside faithfully recreating the style, panache and vocals, **RAT PACK - SWINGIN' AT THE SANDS!** also brings its own brand of comedy leaving audiences wistfully wishing for the bygone days of the 'Kings of Cool'.

**Tickets from £16.75\***



## The Sensational '60s Experience

**Sunday 14 May '23 - 7.30pm**

Join us for the musical phenomenon of 2023 with this festival of nostalgia. The show with the feel-good factor will transport you back to the magical decade that was the 1960s.

Whether you come to relive your childhood memories or you just simply want to see what your parents have been raving about for all these years, this is the show to see.

Starring **Dozy, Beaky, Mick & Tich**, **The Fortunes**, **Mike d'Abo** (former lead singer with *Manfred Mann*), **The Swinging Blue Jeans** and **Vanity Fare**.

Full of timeless classics, hits include *The Legend Of Xanadu*, *Storm In A Teacup*, *Mighty Quinn*, *Hippy Hippy Shake*, *Hitchin A Ride*, and more!

**Tickets from £20\***



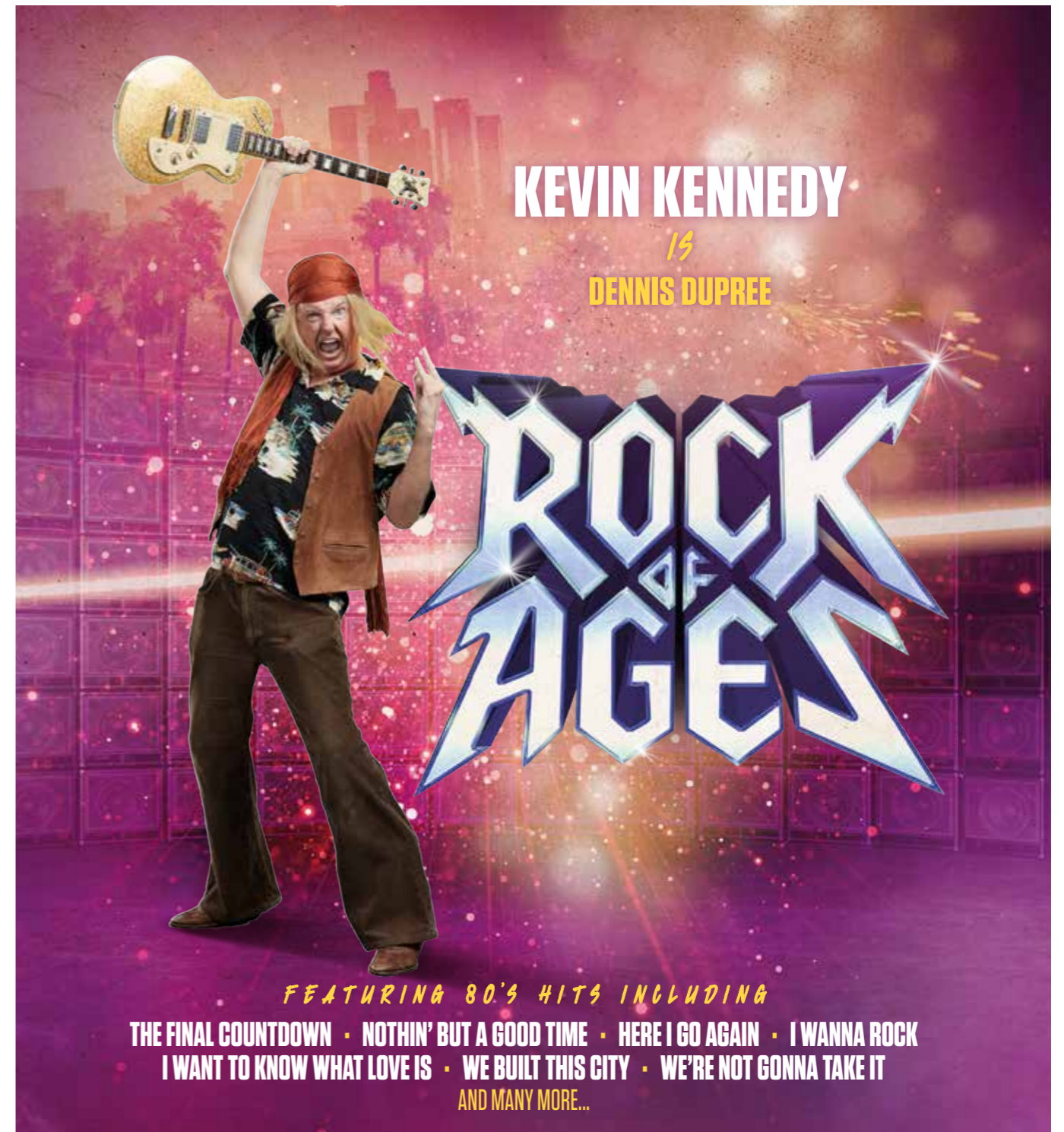
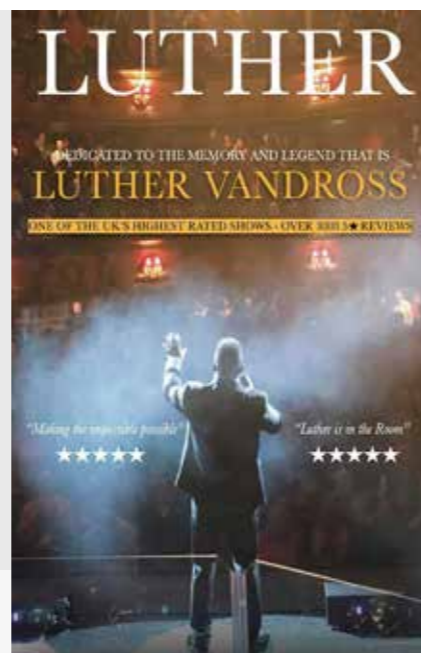
## Luther - The Luther Vandross Celebration

**Wednesday 31 May '23 - 7.30pm**

The world's premier show in celebration of 'The Velvet Voice'. Experience all the hits from his amazing career, culminating over 40 million album sales and eight Grammy awards including many of the greatest dance anthems and love songs ever written, fronted by international *Luther Vandross* tribute **Harry Cambridge** and his 10-piece band.

Including the songs; *Never Too Much*, *Here and Now*, *Give me The Reason*, *I Really Didn't Mean It*, *Stop To Love*, *So Amazing*, *The Best Things In Life Are Free*, *Always And Forever*, *Endless Love*, *Ain't No Stopping Us Now*, *Your Secret Love*, *Shine*, *The Closer I Get To You* and many more.

**Tickets from £19.50\***



## Rock Of Ages

**Tuesday 23 - Saturday 27 May '23**

Tuesday – Friday evenings at 7.30pm, Saturday at 4pm & 8pm

**Tickets from £19.50\***  
Age Guidance: 12+

The West End and Broadway smash-hit musical is back!

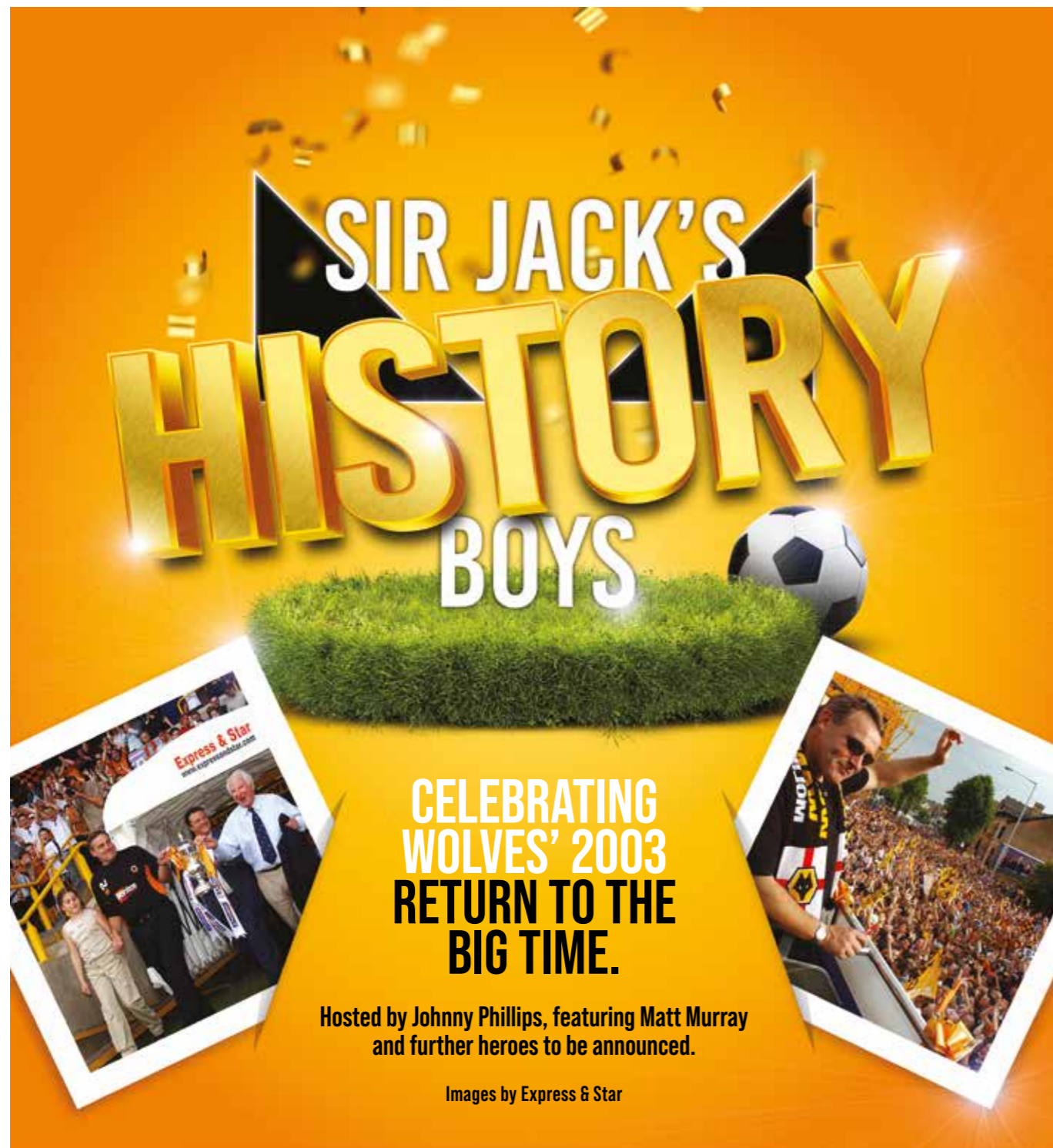
**ROCK OF AGES** is the hilarious musical comedy starring **Kevin Kennedy** (*Coronation Street's 'Curly Watts'*) as Bourbon Room owner Dennis Dupree!

Lavished with over 25 classic rock anthems, including *Don't Stop Believin'*, *We Built This City*, *The Final Countdown*, *Wanted Dead or Alive*, *Here I Go Again*, *Can't Fight This Feeling* and *I Want To Know What Love Is*, played loud and proud by an awesome live band.

Leave it all behind and lose yourself in a city and a time where the dreams are as big as the hair, and yes, they can come true!

Now a global smash hit with seasons on Broadway, London's West End and Las Vegas, and a star-studded Hollywood movie, we promise you the best night out around! Book now and let's get ready to rock!





## Sir Jack's History Boys

Monday 22 May '23 - 7.30pm

It's been 20 years since the mighty wanderers made a triumphant return to the Premier League led by manager Dave Jones. The promotion ended a 19-year absence from the top level of English football a dream come true for owner Sir Jack Hayward.

Sky Sports presenter Johnny Phillips will be joined live on stage by former Wolves Goalkeeper Matt Murray to reminisce on the iconic season with other more heroes to be announced.

VIP package available, contact box office for details.

**Tickets from £20\***  
Age Guidance: 14+



## Dragons & Mythical Beasts

Sunday 28 - Tuesday 30 May '23

Sunday - Tuesday at 2pm  
and Tuesday at 11am

Calling all brave heroes! Enter into a magical world of myths and legends in this fantastical Olivier Award Nominated show for all the family.

Unveil a myriad of dark secrets and come face to face with some of the most magnificent monsters and terrifying beasts ever to walk the earth. Discover the colossal Stone Troll, the mysterious Indrik and Japanese Baku; the Tooth Fairy (not as sweet as you'd think), an adorable Unicorn and majestic Griffin. Take your place among legendary heroes, just don't wake the Dragon...

From the creators of the international smash hit *Dinosaur World Live*, who bring spectacular puppets to life, don't miss this spell-binding adventure, live on stage!

**Tickets from £10.50\***  
Age Guidance: 3+



# DANCING

## OUR WAY TO THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY



Jodi Dancers performing in *Just Naach*

Following a successful initiative in collaboration with the National Theatre in 2019, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre's engagement with the local South Asian community has improved notably. This can be seen in a number of areas, from the programme of events and the new audiences that have been welcomed into the theatre, to the South Asian ambassador group that has been assembled as a result.

By working directly with a group of ambassadors, the theatre has been able to make programming and communications decisions to reflect desires and expectations of the South Asian community more accurately.

The latest project in collaboration with the ambassador group was a celebration of South Asian dance in Wolverhampton and the Black Country, *Just Naach*. Although the first South Asian dance event of its kind hosted at the venue, the competition was part of a successful return to in house productions for the Grand. The theatre is pleased to have connected with the

audience that the event attracted and consider it to mark a significant moment in their history.

Ambassador Kash Kumar explains "I shared the idea during an ambassador meeting after having discussed the topic with friends and family who agreed that it would be great to see talent from within the South Asian community in Wolverhampton and surrounding areas performing on the stage in this format".

Following the meeting, a plan was put together for the production of the event and it wasn't long before it was ready to announce. The panel of judges, who were seated in the Dress Circle boxes on the evening, were Artistic Director of award-winning Jaivant Patel Dance – **Jaivant Patel**, Director of Operations and Development at Creative Black Country – **Sajida Carr**, GBSLEP Director of Communications and External Affairs and Freelance Broadcaster – **Satnam Rana**, and Wolverhampton Grand Theatre's Associate Director of Audiences and Communications – **Vicky Price**.



The first stage following the announcement was to find and choose acts. A call out was put on social media and advertised throughout the city, and a host of acts sent in their audition tapes for the judges to choose from. It was narrowed down to eight finalists – **Jodi Dancers**, **Colton Hills Community School**, **Avneet Kaur**, **Dancing Queens**, **Ultimate Bhangra**, and **Aaja Nachle Let's Dance's** Adult Group, Teen Group and Juniors.

Following this successful start, the event was advertised with support from **Radio XL**, **Punjab 2000**, **Aap Ki Awaz Radio**, **Gulshan Radio** and **Roq Raw Radio**, and tickets began to sell. The audience was made up of both brand new and returning visitors, who enjoyed a diverse range of South Asian dance styles from the talented groups who were hoping to become the *Just Naach* champion.

Radio XL Presenter **Manpreet Darroch** hosted the evening, and the acts were interluded by performances from Wolverhampton based Bhangra dance group **Back2Back**, who are known for their signature intricate choreography style and creative storytelling through a fusion of Street Dance, Hip Hop and Bhangra; and from West Midlands dance company **Bollywood Dreams Dance**.

The event was a huge success and attracted a significant audience who enjoyed the performances and the celebratory nature of the competition. Between the judges' comments, audience feedback and the atmosphere in the building during the evening, it is fair to say that *Just Naach* stirred up a feeling of hope and excitement for the current shape of South Asian dance in Wolverhampton and the Black Country.

**Ultimate Bhangra** were crowned the winners after a dance off with runners up **Dancing Queens** and were awarded the *Just Naach* trophy and 50 tickets to the 2022-23 pantomime **ALADDIN**. As noted by the judges, every finalist that took part brought something different to the competition and the dance showcased throughout the entire evening was as beautiful as it was impressive.

Kash Kumar, who watched her initial idea become a reality, explains "The idea was not so dissimilar from *Britain's Got Talent* and it had the same uplifting, entertaining vibe. Everybody enjoyed the evening and the Grand showcased itself as a diverse theatre for all communities to enjoy."



Winners Ultimate Bhangra performing in the dance off



Just Naach judges Jaivant Patel, Vicky Price, Satnam Rana, Sajida Carr with host Manpreet Darroch (centre)



Performers Aaja Nachle Let's Dance getting ready backstage



Bollywood Dreams Dance Company



Ultimate Bhangra getting ready for their performance



Wolverhampton based Bhangra dance group Back2Back



Participant Avneet Kaur performing for the first time on stage



Runners up, Dancing Queens, talking to host Manpreet Darroch after their performance



## Sister Act The Musical

**Monday 5 - Saturday 10 June '23**

Evenings at 7.30pm,

Wednesday & Saturday matinee at 2.30pm

Don't miss this eagerly anticipated brand new production of the Broadway and UK smash hit musical **SISTER ACT** direct from London.

All of your prayers have been answered with a stunning cast, including TV and West End legend **Lesley Joseph**, West End sensation and *Hairspray* favourite **Lizzie Bea** and *Emmerdale* and *Waitress* star **Sandra Marvin** as Deloris, everyone's favourite nun on the run!

Disco diva Deloris' life takes a surprising turn when she witnesses a murder. Placed under protective custody she is hidden in the one place she shouldn't be found – a convent! Encouraged to help the struggling choir, she helps her fellow sisters find their true voices as she unexpectedly rediscovers her own.

Featuring original music by Tony® and 8-time Oscar® award-winner Alan Menken (Disney's *Aladdin*, *Enchanted*) and songs inspired by Motown, soul and disco, this heavenly musical is joyous and uplifting in equal measures. A musical sent from above, **SISTER ACT** is the brilliant, must-see show which raises the spirits and warms the soul time after time.

★★★★ 'The most joyful show I've seen all year, bar nun!' (*The Sun*)



**Tickets from £19.75\***



# LESLEY Joseph

*We're taking you to musical theatre heaven, and it's going to be fabulous, baby!*

**You're well known to many as Dorien Green from *Birds of a Feather* alongside your stage work, which includes an Olivier-nomination for *Young Frankenstein*. What are the key differences between the disciplines of stage and screen, and do you have a preference?**

If you asked me why I came into the business, it would be because I love theatre. I went to drama school in the '60s, and it was a very different world then. I grew up doing theatre and started first when I was seven. Theatre was always what I was destined to do and then gradually television took over. *Birds of a Feather* came along in 1989 and has never been off since! I love television, I love the opportunities television brings, but if I had to choose it would be theatre because I love the connection with the audience. With television you can always do it again, whereas with theatre it's a question of doing it that night and that's your one chance.

I think theatre is where my heart is. I love the atmosphere and the family you build. I love to stand in the wings and watch other people work. I also love what theatre can do to an audience. Live theatre can change people's lives.

**SISTER ACT is a much-loved movie as well as a musical. Were you aware of the show before joining?**

I saw Craig Revel Horwood's *Sister Act* revival with Alexandra Burke, so I was very aware of the show before I joined. The musical doesn't have the music from the film, but it's Alan Menken's music - who is a genius. He's been to see our show twice and loved it! I think people love the production because of the great music, and it's very much an audience show. You leave feeling so uplifted. We were playing in London to 3,000 people per night, with every show packed full of

people waving their arms in the air at the end and just having a fantastic time.

**Can you briefly summarise the plot (without spoilers), and tell us about your character, Mother Superior?**

Well, Deloris Van Cartier witnesses her boyfriend shoot someone and gets put into hiding in a convent. Mother Superior who runs the convent is a very religious person, and suddenly into her world comes this woman who is a singer, who wears short skirts, who's full of bling and very over the top. It's about how these two worlds combine and ultimately rub off on each other.

*"I think theatre is where my heart is. I love the atmosphere and the family you build. I love to stand in the wings and watch other people work. I also love what theatre can do to an audience. Live theatre can change people's lives."*

Mother Superior is quite strict and holy. She provides the juxtaposition of strict religious beliefs against this entirely over the top being, which is Deloris Van Cartier. You need the two extremes to rub up against one another, and quite a lot of sparks fly.

**You appeared on *Pilgrimage: The Road to Rome* and met the Pope, what was that like and were there any elements of that experience that you've drawn on when playing Mother Superior?**

Funnily enough whenever I'm in the show I do always think of this moment. I had half an hour with the Pope and I blessed him and made him laugh, and he gave me a medal to celebrate his six years in the

papacy. I've always had a spirituality about me. I love going in churches. Whenever I go into a church I will always light a candle for both of my parents and Linda Robson's mum, and say a quiet prayer. That's a spiritual thing more than an actual religious thing. I always find churches very healing in a way. It's a place to sit, contemplate and meditate, and you can come out feeling a slightly better person.

**SISTER ACT features a fantastic score by the multi award-winning Alan Menken (*Beauty and the Beast*, *The Little Mermaid*). How would you describe the soundtrack, and do you have a favourite number to perform and/or watch?**

I think the soundtrack is amazing. I must say, the audience responses so far have made me feel like we're doing a pop concert. My favourite song is one that Mother Superior has called *Here Within These Walls* where she describes what life is like in the convent, and how the outside world is full of sin, but inside you find God and you find yourself. It's a beautiful number, but probably the most serious number in the show to an extent. The other number I love is when Deloris first takes over the choir and she teaches them to sing and brings out their voices. It's called *Raise Your Voice*. The audience just go wild. Up until then you've only heard the nuns sing very badly. It stops the show!

**What do you hope audiences take away from this new production?**

I think audiences will take away a reinvigorated love for live theatre. It's a production that also says something about community, and that's one thing that the lockdown showed us was important – caring about your neighbours, caring about your friends, and helping those in need.

It's an absolutely joyous musical! To see the audiences at the end, where they stand waving their arms and singing along, they rediscover the joy of theatre.



## Sucker Punch

**Monday 12 – Saturday 17 June '23**

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

A Theatre Nation Partnerships production, produced by Queen's Theatre Hornchurch

'Packs a knockout punch' The Guardian

**Tickets from £12.50\***

Two best mates, Leon and Troy, have spent their youth growing up in a boxing gym, figuring out a place in the world, vying for the approval of Charlie, their trainer.

Soon Leon and Becky, Charlie's daughter, are trying to keep a big secret. In a ruthless world. But there can only be one winner, and it's time everyone stepped into the ring to face up to who they really are...

This tender, bruising and funny play by leading British dramatist Roy Williams, brilliantly explores being young and black in the 80s. Winning the Alfred Fagon Award, The Writers Guild Award for Best Play and nominated for an Olivier for Best New Play, it first opened in a sell-out production at London's Royal Court.

A regional premiere of thrillingly staged event theatre, from an exciting partnership of theatres, touring nationally.



# Nathan POWELL

*Sucker Punch* director Nathan Powell: 'Taking this type of work out to the regions is at the heart of this project. That's the thing that feels really important and empowering at the moment.'

**R**oy Williams' tale of two young black teenagers against a backdrop of Thatcherite politics and the simmering racial tensions in the 1980s struck a chord with the 31-year-old director. He tells Claire Lishman why he'd like to ignite conversations with audiences at Wolverhampton Grand.

Just like policemen are getting younger, so, it would appear, are theatre directors. "I'm a '90s baby!" laughs Nathan Powell when talking about the challenges of being a black man in 1980s Britain. "But I think there's a very interesting conversation to be had between generations, and for black men in particular. My brother and my father were in London in the '80s when this play was set, and they had a tough time, and I think their experiences have been very different to mine. Sometimes the different generations would clash. But the story in *Sucker Punch* just brings it down to a very human level. It explores what it actually is that we experience as black men in this country. And it opens up a really useful dialogue between different generations of black people who grew up in Britain. The challenges now compared to the '80s are different but the same, if that makes sense? There's a difference in terms of what the things we experience today look like, but they're the same challenges. And it's all about how we approach those challenges."

**SUCKER PUNCH** which will visit the Grand next year. The play is being

produced by Queens Theatre Hornchurch and funded by a consortium of theatres including Wolverhampton Grand Theatre. All the theatres in the consortium are part of the National Theatre's TNP (Theatre Nation Partnership) which has been active for the last five years. **SUCKER PUNCH** is a first in terms of producing as a group. One of the main aims is create quality drama for regional venues, which is something that is very close to Powell's heart: "I'm a Londoner who's moved out of London and I live in Liverpool at the moment. I have a real commitment and drive to create excellent work outside of the capital. This Theatre Nation Partnership with Wolverhampton Grand and all the other partners allows us to tour an amazing piece of work outside of London, and that's really powerful. It's very special to be able to share that with as many audiences across the country as possible and to celebrate talent from across the country. And that's an incredibly important part of this project as well - we'll be casting and recruiting the creative talent from all across the nation."

Powell immediately knew that this project was a good fit for him. Firstly, he's a big fan of the play: "I love *Sucker Punch*. I think it's such a brilliant piece." And he's also a huge admirer of playwright Roy Williams: "I think Roy is amazing at telling really detailed and intricate yet big and vast stories for everyone in the audience. He's such a wonderful creator of characters, but also a great creator of stories."

In **SUCKER PUNCH**, the relationship between the two boys, Leon and Troy, is so well written. The picture Roy paints through Leon and Troy of being a black man in the 80s will clearly resonate with people today."

Throw into the mix the fact that Powell is also a boxing fan- "I like to think of myself as a casual boxing fan, because real boxing fans will get angry if I don't know the answer to a boxing question!" – and this is a bit of a dream project for Powell: "It's early days, but I'm enjoying lots of different elements of it. I'm enjoying talking to the producers and dreaming up what this could be, and how we can make this a wonderful event for people to experience. It's all crazy and interesting to see how you find the place that you eventually end up at. I guess I'm really enjoying the joy of being in that 'dreaming' phase where nothing's off the table. No-one's said "no" yet, no-one's said "we can't afford that" yet. It's the fun bit! No-one's ruled out a full-size boxing ring just yet..."

*'My brother and my father were in London in the '80s when this play was set, and they had a tough time, and I think their experiences have been very different to mine.'*



Professional Practitioner, Fran Richards



*Grand Arena Youth Theatre, in collaboration with the Arena Theatre, offers young people a chance to explore the world of stage and drama in a fun and friendly environment.*

**O**ur professional practitioner, Fran Richards, teaches drama techniques in weekly sessions to enhance acting skills, covering everything from improvisation through to physical theatre. The year culminates with a performance by members at the Arena Theatre.

The sessions offer young people, some of which are new to the world of drama altogether, an impressive range of skills. Fran explains of her students "I have seen them make numerous new friends, grow in confidence, and gain both performance skills and important life skills. To be able to equip performers of the future with the skills they need to succeed is truly a highlight of my career".

The project is overseen by the Grand Theatre's Outreach Manager for Creative Learning, James Collins, who says "I came on board a year after the Youth Theatre formed and could clearly see how beneficial the sessions were to our members, it's amazing to see them gain such confidence within months of joining us. The end of year performances are always emotional, to see the result of all the hard work that our members have put in over the year, as well as all of the friendships that have developed, is why we do this."

Members agree, Ada promises "You get to meet lots of new people and have a good time creating new ideas, short plays and characters. You get a brilliant opportunity to experience what it's like to perform in a big production. It really is fantastic!"

Since the group started, members have produced five incredible shows. From their adaptations of Disney classics *Cinderella* and *Sleeping Beauty* to George Orwell's *Animal Farm*,

*The Changing Room*, and a devised production titled *Check In*. All of which have showcased their new skills and given them the opportunity to perform on stage in front of an audience.

The breadth of the project is recognised by Ada's dad Stuart who explains "During her time in Grand Arena Youth Theatre, I have seen my daughter grow in confidence, developing new life-skills and gaining incredible experience – which has been amazing to watch. The support and encouragement from all the staff is just fantastic. They truly nurture talent at every step, creating an environment where each participant can truly be themselves and shine with confidence."

*Weekly workshops take place on Monday evenings at the Arena Theatre on Wulfruna Street, from 6.00pm – 7.30pm for Juniors (aged 9 – 13) and 8.00pm – 9.30pm for Seniors (aged 14 – 17).*

The year begins in September and ends the following July and is split into 3 terms: Autumn, Spring and Summer. All sessions take place every Monday, with the exception of school and bank holidays.

For more information please contact James Collins (Outreach Manager – Creative Learning) at [jamesc@grandtheatre.co.uk](mailto:jamesc@grandtheatre.co.uk).

# Grand Arena Youth Theatre

*'it's amazing to see them gain such confidence within months of joining us'*





SIXTEEN 25

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



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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 one 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...



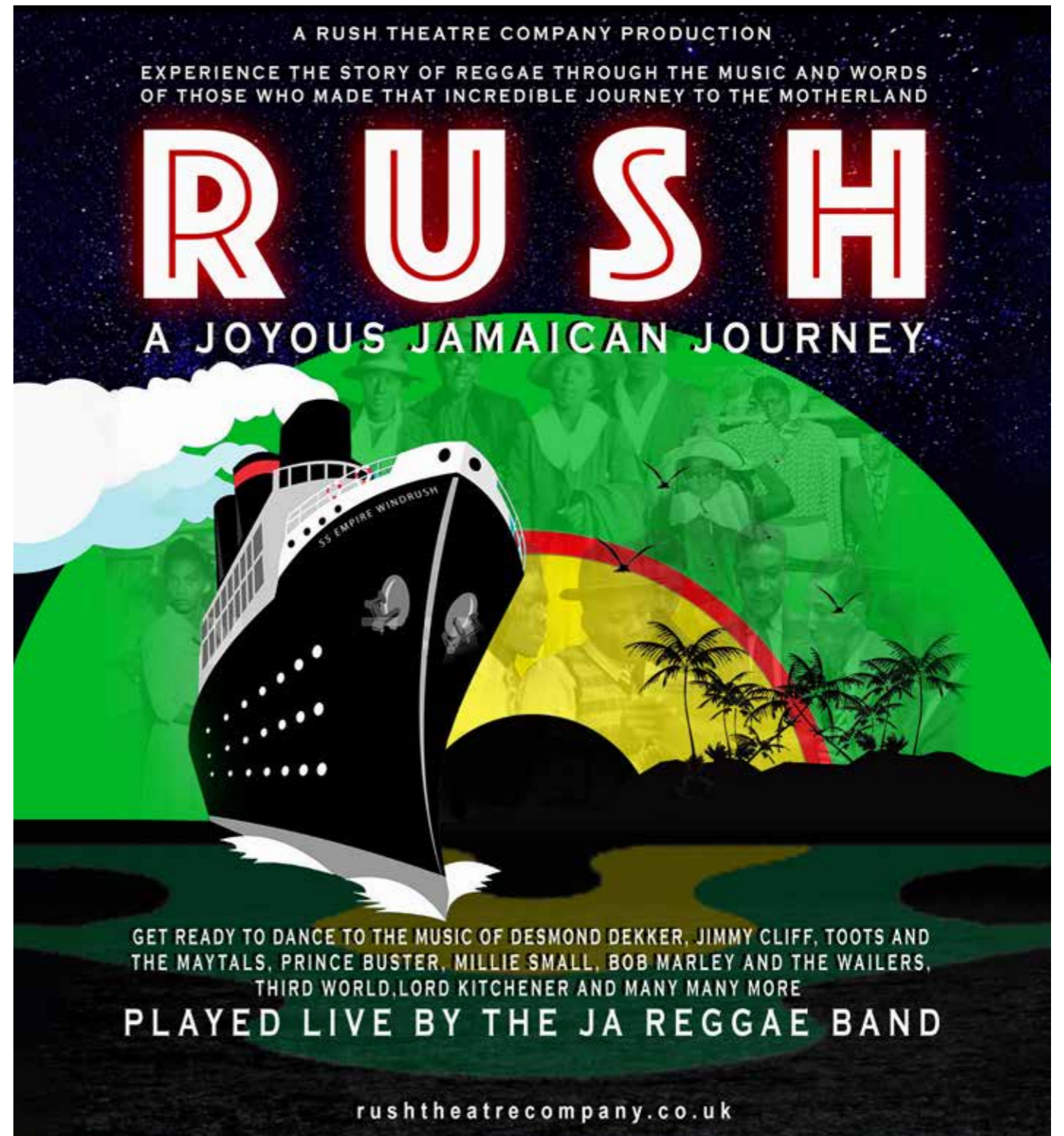
Standby tickets are not available for every show. Standby ticket availability is announced on the Grand Theatre's Facebook page on the Wednesday before the show run starts.

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



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## RUSH – A Joyous Jamaican Journey

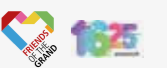
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Narrated by comedian **John Simmit** and featuring ska, rock steady, calypso, gospel, lovers rock, dancehall and Reggae played live by the **JA Reggae Band**.

Get ready to dance to the music of *Desmond Dekker, Jimmy Cliff, Bob Marley, Lord Kitchener, Millie Small* and many more.

**Tickets from £15\***  
Age Guidance: 12+



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## The Spongebob Musical

**Tuesday 27 June – Saturday 1 July '23**

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

Who lives in a pineapple under the sea and became the hottest star on Broadway? Why, it's SpongeBob and now he's getting ready to entertain and delight audiences all over the UK, in this brilliant, bright, hilarious and brand-new musical production.

Prepare to plunge into this stunning all-singing, all-dancing, dynamic stage show as SpongeBob and his friends in Bikini Bottom face the total destruction of their undersea world. Chaos erupts. Lives hang in the balance. And just when all hope seems lost, a most unexpected hero rises up. The power of optimism really can save the world!

With book by Kyle Jarrow and wave after wave of original songs by the world's most iconic rock and pop artists, including Yolanda Adams, Steven Tyler and Joe Perry of Aerosmith, Sara Bareilles, Jonathan Coulton, Alex Ebert of Edward Sharpe & The Magnetic Zeros, The Flaming Lips, Lady A, Cyndi Lauper, John Legend, Panic! at the Disco, Plain White T's, They Might Be Giants, T.I. and David Bowie, Tom Kenny & Andy Paley.

An exciting new production featuring irresistible characters, magical choreography and dazzling costumes; this deep-sea pearl of a show is really set to make a splash with audiences young and old as the must-see musical of 2023. The future is bright, the future is bold, the future is **THE SPONGEBOB MUSICAL.**



**Tickets from £15\***





MAKING

# MAGICAL

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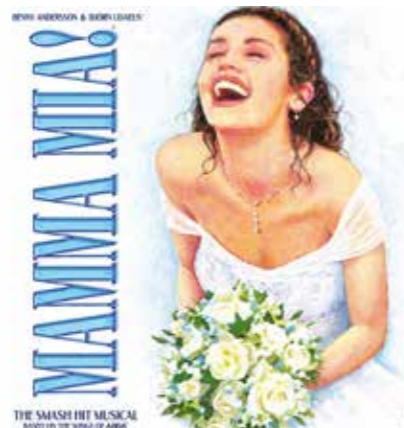
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# Nant Memory Tour

**T**he magic of live theatre can have a transformative effect on people's lives and wellbeing as they embark on a shared experience that enhances their individual experience. Theatre and music can prompt feelings, emotions and memories that last a lifetime. This shouldn't end because a person has dementia and here at Wolverhampton Grand we are doing all we can to keep enriching lives post-diagnosis.

We have been working towards becoming a dementia-friendly venue since joining the Wolverhampton Action Alliance back in 2016. In this time, we have held a dementia-friends session in our auditorium whilst BBC WM came to broadcast Sonny & Shay's afternoon show live from the Grand Theatre's

Encore Lounge. April 2019 saw the beginning of our monthly Memory Café's that continued virtually during the Covid-19 pandemic, reaching as far afield as Phoenix, Arizona and during the summer of 2021 we embarked on a 7 week care home tour bringing much needed live entertainment with vintage performer Miss Beth Belle.

This commitment to enhancing our dementia-friendly provision continues to develop our services and in 2022 we are reaching even more people thanks to generous sponsorship from Water Safety Specialists, Nant.

Nant have made it possible for us to offer free, 1-hour performances to those who otherwise may not be able to access the theatre by taking the magic on the road once more.

We began the tour in March this year and by November we will have visited 40 venues over 20 dates and anticipate to reach around 1800 people in the West Midlands and surrounding areas focusing particularly on people living with dementia.

Nant's support has ensured that our dementia-friendly offering has grown once again in 2022 and has been well received by the venues visited so far. For more information about services for those living with dementia, please visit our website or contact Remy Lloyd at [RemyL@grandtheatre.co.uk](mailto:RemyL@grandtheatre.co.uk) / 01902 57 33 20.



**Remy Lloyd**, Outreach Manager for Access and Inclusion at the Grand Theatre said; "We are incredibly grateful to Nant for their generous support, helping us to continue the hugely beneficial performances in care and residential homes this year. Thanks to the support of our existing sponsors, we have managed to reach thousands of people who would never have had the opportunity to engage with the Grand Theatre, providing them with the many health benefits that live music and performance can have on their physical and mental wellbeing."



**Richard Deakin**, Technical Director of Nant said; "As a leading Black Country business, we are pleased to support the Grand Theatre in their important Memory Café work for those living with dementia. We recognise the significant difference which the Memory Café team can bring to audiences at care and residential homes, helping with memory, speech and communication skills. Having grown our reputation for top quality service in Legionella control for 28 years, Nant works with leading care home groups. In delivering innovative systems to ensure care home water

supplies are as safe and secure as possible, our employees meet people with dementia, so we are building on our partnership with the Grand by training our staff to be Dementia Friends as part of our commitment to making a positive difference."

**Activities Co-ordinator, Hawthorne House** said: "Our residents thoroughly enjoyed the performance. They all enjoyed the singing and dancing and we even had some happy tears...Thank you again for the wonderful performance and making our residents day!"

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AND SING YOUR HEART OUT'**

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TAKE THAT MUSICAL  
**GREATEST  
DAYS**



ORIGINAL STORY BY  
**TIM FIRTH**

FEATURING THE MUSIC OF  
**TAKE THAT**

**Greatest Days**

**Monday 17 - Saturday 22 July '23**

Monday - Thursday evenings at 7.30pm,  
Friday at 5pm & 8.30pm, Saturday at 2.30pm  
& 7.30pm

"Achingly funny yet heartbreaking in equal measure" The Mirror

★★★★★ "An utter joy" Daily Mail

**Tickets from £19.50\***

Relight Your Fire with this sensational new production of *Take That's* smash hit musical **GREATEST DAYS**.

**GREATEST DAYS** features more than 15 record-breaking *Take That* songs, alongside a heart-warming and hilarious story of love, loss and laughter from award-winning writer Tim Firth that will make your heart *Shine*. The musical follows five boy band obsessed best friends in the 1990s, who reunite over 20 years later to see their heartthrobs one last time in what could be one of the Greatest Days of their lives. Previously titled *The Band*, the show broke box office records and delighted audiences around the United Kingdom when it performed from 2017 - 2019.

Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of *Take That's* first ever UK number 1 single *Pray* and coinciding with the summer 2023 release of the official movie of this smash hit musical - **GREATEST DAYS** is sure to be a night out at the theatre you will *Never Forget*.



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**MyWolves** [Ages 17+] **£38.00** +P&P for the season **EXCLUSIVE GIFTS**

**#Wolf Pack** [Ages 12-16] **£23.00** +P&P for the season **EXCLUSIVE GIFTS**

**Young Wolves** [Ages 3-11] **£23.00** +P&P for the season **EXCLUSIVE GIFTS**

**Wolves Dribblers** [Ages 0-2] **£18.00** +P&P for the season **EXCLUSIVE GIFTS**

**International** [Ages 17+] **£38.00** +P&P for the season **EXCLUSIVE GIFTS**

2022/23 Memberships are now available to purchase at [memberships.wolves.co.uk](https://memberships.wolves.co.uk).



## Illegal Eagles

Sunday 10 September '23, 7.30pm

Celebrating over 50 years since the legendary US west coast country rock band Eagles formed in 1971, **ILLEGAL EAGLES** return to Wolverhampton Grand Theatre for another outstanding show with the very best from the *Eagles'* catalogue of classics including; *Hotel California*, *Desperado*, *New Kid In Town* and many more!

Tickets from **£15.50\***



## What's Love Got To Do With It

Monday 11 September '23 - 7.30pm

After a fantastic sell out debut tour across the UK, *Tina Turner* fans will have the time of their lives as **WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT?** is back for 2023 celebrating the music of this incredible rock and soul legend. Expect a night of high energy as this joyous show features all the hits including *Private Dancer*, *Proud Mary*, *Simply The Best* and more.

Tickets from **£19.50\***



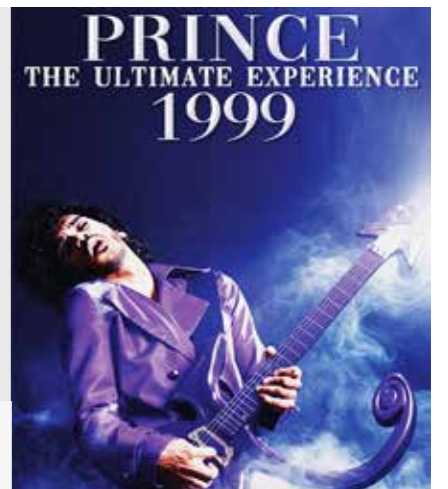
## Prince: The Ultimate Experience 1999

Tuesday 12 September '23, 7.30pm

Brought to you by the producers of *The Greatest Love of All*, experience the genius, innovation and grandeur of the one and only *Prince* in this immersive stage show that pays tribute and reverence to one of the greatest musical pioneers of our time.

Dedicated live performances from talented multi-instrumentalist **Dale Ray** on vocals, guitar and piano, are a fitting commemoration in this world-class production that evokes the wondrous and quixotic realm of *Prince* - his music, his art, his vision.

Tickets from **£15.75\***



## The Bootleg Beatles

Sunday 1 October '23 7.30pm

It's all here...the iconic mop tops and the Chelsea boots, the Sgt. Pepper tunics and the Chesterfield suits. Each tiny vocal inflection and each witty Beatle quip, all meticulously studied on this Magical Mystery trip.

With a little help from their orchestral ensemble and featuring a special set to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of the *Please Please Me* LP, this multi-media show is an absolute must-see for *Beatles* fans of all ages.

Tickets from **£15\***





‘Spellbinding.  
The National Theatre at its very best.’

Daily Telegraph



‘Shows like this don’t come  
along very often.’

Time Out

From the imagination of Neil Gaiman, best-selling author of *Coraline*, *Good Omens* and *The Sandman* (now a major Netflix series), comes the National Theatre’s major new stage adaptation of **THE OCEAN AT THE END OF THE LANE**.

This five-star spectacular from the producers of *War Horse* and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* is a thrilling adventure of fantasy, myth and friendship, taking audiences on an epic journey to a childhood once forgotten and the darkness that lurks at the very edge of it.

Returning to his childhood home, a man finds himself standing beside the pond of the old Sussex farmhouse where he used to play. He’s transported to his 12th birthday when his remarkable friend Lettie claimed it wasn’t a pond, but an ocean—a place where everything is possible...

Plunged into a magical world, their survival depends on their ability to reckon with ancient forces that threaten to destroy everything around them.



Illustration by Nicolas Delort. Photography by Manuel Harlan.

The acclaimed **National Theatre** production

# THE OCEAN AT THE END OF THE LANE

based on the novel by  
**NEIL GAIMAN**

adapted by  
**JOEL HORWOOD**

directed by  
**KATY RUDD**

## The Ocean At The End Of The Lane

**Tuesday 26 - Saturday 30 September '23**

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

Relaxed performance Thursday 28 September at 2.30pm



**Tickets  
from £15\***  
Age Guidance: 12+



# WOLVERHAMPTON GRAND THEATRE AND NATIONAL THEATRE LAUNCH SPEAK UP SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

**We hear from Lucy-Ellen Parker about what schools can expect from the speak up programme.**

**F**ollowing a successful pilot phase that began in autumn 2021, the National Theatre's Speak Up programme is working with young people in five secondary schools in Wolverhampton, Walsall, and Telford across the next three years. The schools are Ormiston New Academy, Colton Hills Community School, Tettenhall Wood School in Wolverhampton, Ormiston Shelfield Community Academy in Walsall, and The Charlton School in Telford.

Speak Up is the National Theatre's new national programme which sees young people, who have been most affected by the pandemic, working in collaboration with local artists and teachers to co-create artistic responses to issues that are most important to them. Responding to the current challenges in schools, the programme aims to develop young people's self-expression, wellbeing, and personal skills, with an open-ended offer to make creative projects in their local area. It is in partnership with Wolverhampton Grand Theatre as part of the national programme which is also being delivered in Doncaster, Greater Manchester, Havering, Sunderland, and

Wakefield, with the project extending into additional areas in 2023.

The National Theatre is collaborating with LUNG as Creative Associates to deliver the training of artists and teachers and to develop the creative ambitions of Speak Up. LUNG is a campaign-led verbatim theatre company which works closely with communities nationally to shine a light on political, social, and economic issues in modern Britain to ensure hidden voices are heard.

Speak Up is generously supported by the Mohn Westlake Foundation which shares the National Theatre's belief in the power of youth voice and working with young people to enable positive change in their lives, schools, and local communities. Through a £3.3million grant to deliver the programme nationally, Speak Up will reach hundreds of thousands of students, with most of the funding distributed to partners enabling local employment of producers and artists.

Lucy-Ellen Parker, Speak Up & Audiences Manager at the Grand Theatre said; "At Wolverhampton Grand Theatre we strive to reach and positively impact the young people of



"Speak Up is a crucial part of the National Theatre's work in levelling up, giving agency to young people nationwide whose voices often go unheard and that the Covid pandemic hit even harder."

Wolverhampton and the surrounding areas. We aim to ignite, excite, and inspire them to engage with the creatives from their regions and grow together in a cohort of peers who are committed to making a change and speaking up about what is most important to them. We are hugely excited to have begun the Speak Up programme which started in September and will work to provide a platform for local young people to make their vital voices heard."

Rufus Norris, Artistic Director of the National Theatre said, "Speak Up is a crucial part of the National Theatre's work in levelling up, giving agency

to young people nationwide whose voices often go unheard and that the Covid pandemic hit even harder. This innovative model will empower young people to share their views on current issues and put them at the heart of the creative process. We are excited to build on our in-depth relationships with our Theatre Nation partners across the country to deliver this new programme, guided by the creative vision of LUNG with invaluable funding from the Mohn Westlake Foundation. Together we will support young people to become leaders of the future and make positive change in their own lives and in their communities".



Wolverhampton Artist Jack Sankson demonstrates the art of graffiti as part of Stages exhibition at Light House, Wolverhampton



Local youngster tells us what 'Speaking Up' means to them



Speak Up starts at Colton Hills Community School with Tristan Jones-Smith



Speak Up session in progress with Speak Up representative Caris Jackson at Tettenhall Wood School

# 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 provide customers with disabilities or impairments with appropriate information and concessional rates? Application forms can be downloaded from our website or to request a form please contact the Box Office on 01902 42 92 12 or email [access@grandtheatre.co.uk](mailto:access@grandtheatre.co.uk).

Care homes, SEND schools or group bookings requiring access concessions, please 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



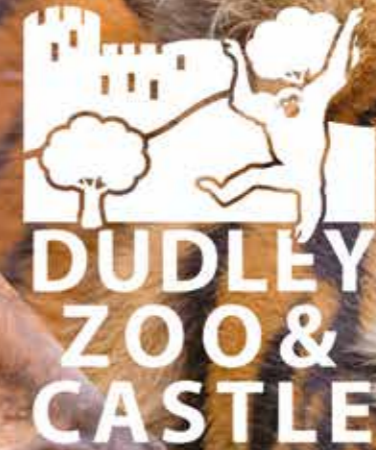
Dementia Friendly

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
The Secret Lives of Henry & Alice	Saturday 29th April - 2.30pm
The Secret Lives of Henry & Alice	Wednesday 3rd May - 2.30pm
The Bodyguard	Thursday 11th May - 7.30pm
The Bodyguard	Saturday 13 May - 2.30pm
Sister Act	Thursday 8th June - 7.30pm
Sister Act	Saturday 10 June - 2.30pm
The Ocean at the End of the Lane	Wednesday 27th September - 7.30pm
The Ocean at the End of the Lane	Thursday 28th September - 2.30pm
The Ocean at the End of the Lane	Saturday 30th September - 2.30pm
Everybody's Talking About Jamie	Thursday 25th January
Everybody's Talking About Jamie	Saturday 27th January

2022

2023

'24



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[www.dudleyzoo.org.uk](http://www.dudleyzoo.org.uk)

Paula Jones -  
Head of  
Commercial  
& Events

"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

# PUTTING YOUR BUSINESS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

## The Grand Theatre can help put your business in the spotlight.

With over 250,000 visitors per year we have a captive audience for you to promote your brand at one of Wolverhampton's most iconic venues.

Our Advertising, Sponsorship and Business Club Membership packages can be tailored to suit your requirements. Our Commercial & Events team is here to create a partnership that suits your objectives and budget. We offer a wealth of opportunities for businesses from all sectors.

Packages include premium show tickets, branding, marketing opportunities across multiple digital and printed platforms, advertising opportunities, PR opportunities and staff engagement.

As a registered charity your membership can also fulfil corporate social responsibility objectives as it supports the Grand's ongoing work, enabling us to run projects for the community

We have private event space where you can host a meeting or event and entertain your guests with choices ranging from a relaxed buffet to an intimate private dinner, the Grand Theatre combines a range of corporate entertainment choices with the opportunity to enjoy some of the UK's best live theatre.

Business Club Memberships start from **£2500 +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







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# Law.

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and your business**

FBC Manby Bowdler are proud sponsors of The Grand's Dementia Programme.

Working with you now **to protect your future.**

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S O L I C I T O R S

☎ 0800 111 6144

✉ [info@fbcmb.co.uk](mailto:info@fbcmb.co.uk)

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

# 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.

Saturday & Sunday 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. The Box Office is closed to in person counter sales on non-performance days. Please visit [grandtheatre.co.uk/whats-on](http://grandtheatre.co.uk/whats-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.

## 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.**

## October

Mon 02 Anton Du Beke



## October

Thu 05 Just My Imagination



Fri 06 The Greatest Love Of All



Sat 07 An Evening of Burlesque



## January 2024

Tue 23 - Sat 27 Everybody's Talking About Jamie



## June 2024

Tue 25 - Sat 29 Mousetrap



WOLVERHAMPTON GRAND THEATRE PRESENTS

# THE SECRET LIVES OF HENRY AND ALICE

A COMEDY BY  
DAVID TRISTRAM

DIRECTED BY  
JACK RYDER



WOLVERHAMPTON  
**GRAND**  
THEATRE

FRIDAY 21 APRIL -  
SATURDAY 6 MAY 2023  
GRANDTHEATRE.CO.UK