

The diary

Linda Seward's diary of the best of what's on in theatre, music, exhibitions, arts and the countryside.

Theatre

Richmond Theatre

Richmond

Tickets: atgtickets.com/richmond

Monday 4 to Saturday 9 March
Art

Comedy with Nigel Havers, Denis Lawson and Stephen Tomkinson.

Sunday 10 March

Tim Vine – Sunset Milk Idiot

Punmaster on his latest tour.

Monday 11 to Saturday 16 March

The Lady Vanishes

Classic thriller.

Monday 18 March

Trust Fast Health with

Dr Michael Mosley

Inspirational doctor on his first theatre tour.

Tuesday 26 to Saturday 30 March

Wise Children

Unique, exuberant musical.

New Victoria Theatre

Woking

Tickets: atgtickets.com/woking

Monday 4 to Saturday 9 March

The Rocky Horror Show

Cult musical classic.

Tuesday 12 to Saturday 16 March

Madagascar the Musical

Live musical spectacular.

Monday 18 to Saturday 23 March

Dirty Dancing –

The Classic Story on Stage

Baby and Johnny live on stage.

Sunday 24 March

Trust Fast Health with

Dr Michael Mosley

See listing for Richmond above.

New Wimbledon Theatre

Wimbledon

Tickets: atgtickets.com/wimbledon

Saturday 9 March

Brainiac Live

Volatile science based on the television show.

Thursday 21 to Saturday 30 March

Hair the Musical

50th anniversary production of this psychedelic rock show.

Cranleigh Arts Centre

Cranleigh

Tickets: cranleighartscentre.org

Friday 15 March

The Noise Next Door

UK's premier improvisation comedy troupe.

Epsom Playhouse

Epsom

Tickets: epsomplayhouse.co.uk

Saturday 16 March

Lucy Porter – Pass It On

New stand-up from TV favourite.

Farnham Maltings

Farnham

Tickets: farnhammaltings.com

Thursday 7 March

Truth

A fusion of song and choreography using testimonies from around the world. For ages 12 and over.

Thursday 14 March

Beowulf

An interactive performance exploring a legendary story from the ancient past. For ages 14 and over.



Madagascar the Musical, New Victoria Theatre, Woking PHOTO COPYRIGHT: SCOTT RYLANDER



Russell Kane, G Live PHOTO COPYRIGHT: RUSSELL KANE



Mark Steel, Rose Theatre Kingston PHOTO COPYRIGHT: MARK STEEL

G Live

Guildford

Tickets: glive.co.uk

Thursday 21 March

An evening with The Hairy Bikers

National treasures on tour.

Thursday 4 April

Russell Kane: The Fast and the Curious

Multi award-winning comedian performs a brand new show.

Rose Theatre Kingston

Kingston-upon-Thames

Tickets: rosetheatrekingston.org

Tuesday 12 to Saturday 16 March

Rebus: Long Shadows

Written by Ian Rankin and starring Ron Donachie and Cathy Tyson.

Saturday 30 March

Mark Steel: Every Little Thing's Gonna Be Alright

Engaging and very funny stand-up.

Thursday 4 to Saturday 6 April

Rotterdam

A bittersweet comedy by Jon Brittain.

The Electric Theatre

Guildford

Tickets: electric.theatre

Wednesday 13 March

Salon du Chocolat

Intimate storytelling celebrating the relationship between cocoa nibs and forbidden literature.

Yvonne Arnaud Theatre

Guildford

Tickets: yvonne-arnaud.co.uk

Thursday 7 to Saturday 9 March

The Cat in the Hat

Based on the anarchic and much-loved book by Dr Seuss.

Monday 11 to Saturday 16 March

Rough Crossing

Comedy on the high seas written by Tom Stoppard.

Saturday 23 to Saturday 30 March

Shrek the Musical

Based on the Oscar-winning DreamWorks Animation film, a must-see musical for all the family.

Music

Boilerroom

Guildford

Tickets: theboilerroom.net

Throughout the year

A community hub showcasing music, events and the arts.

See website for gig details.

Epworth Choir

Holy Trinity Church, Guildford

Tickets: epworthchoir.org

Saturday 6 April, 7.30pm

Fairest Isle: The English Pastoral

Joyful and rousing music.

G Live

Guildford

Tickets: glive.co.uk

Tuesday 19 March

The Stranglers

Dr Feelgood as support.

Tuesday 26 March

KT Tunstall

Critically-acclaimed musician.

Leith Hill Musical Festival

Dorking Halls

Tickets: lhmf.org.uk and

dorkinghalls.co.uk

Sunday 10 March, 7.30pm

Bach-St John Passion

A performance of choral music.

Surrey Music

Cornerstone the Church,

Walton-on-Thames

Tickets: mayorsconcert.co.uk

Saturday 23 March, 7pm

Music with a Heart!

Choral celebration raising funds for Elmbridge Rentstart, chosen charity of the Mayor of Elmbridge.

Vivace Chorus

Dorking Halls

Tickets: vivacechorus.org

Saturday 30 March, 7.30pm

Vaughan Williams Sea Symphony

A remarkable choral symphony.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MANUEL HARLAN, COPYRIGHT: RSC



WIN tickets to Shakespeare's hilarious comedy, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*

The Royal Shakespeare Company's London Season at the Barbican continues with the hilarious comedy *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Directed by Fiona Laird with more than a hint of reality TV, this is just the show you want to see this Christmas.

Down on his luck in the suburbs, Sir John Falstaff plans to hustle his way to a comfortable retirement by seducing the wives of two wealthy men. Unknown to him, it's the women of Windsor who really pull the strings, orchestrating Falstaff's comeuppance amidst a theatrical smorgasbord of petty rivalries, jealousies and over-inflated egos. For a fat Englishman, a Welshman and a Frenchman, the only way is Windsor...

For a chance to win a pair of tickets for *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, simply visit www.essence-magazine.co.uk and answer the following question:

Who wrote *The Merry Wives of Windsor*:

- a) William Shakespeare
- b) Oscar Wilde
- c) Harold Pinter

Closing date Wednesday 19 December 2018.

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The Royal Shakespeare Company's *The Merry Wives of Windsor* will be at the Barbican from Friday 7 December to Saturday 5 January. For more information or to book tickets (from £10) visit the Barbican website.

Terms and conditions: One reader will win a pair of tickets to see *The Merry Wives of Windsor* at the Barbican. Tickets are valid for Monday to Thursday evening performances until Thursday 3 January 2019 only, subject to availability. The tickets are non-transferable and there is no cash alternative. Travel and accommodation not included.

★★★★ "Ablaze with energy...a delight" *Independent*

★★★★ "Shakespeare meets *The Only Way is Essex*" *Daily Telegraph*



The Cat in the Hat, Yvonne Arnaud Theatre



Rinky Dick (section) by Philip Ryland, McAllister Thomas



Goslings at Claremont Landscape Garden, National Trust PHOTO COPYRIGHT: NT/JOHN MILLAR

Festivals

Cranleigh Literary Festival
Cranleigh Arts Centre

Tickets: cranleighthartscentre.org

Tuesday 5 to Saturday 9 March
Pop-up book store, theatre, talks, comedy and lots more.

Innovate Guildford: Science & Arts Festival
G Live, Guildford

Tickets: glive.co.uk

Saturday 23 March
Showcasing advanced technologies.

spark 2019
Farnham Maltings

Tickets: farnhammaltings.com

Saturday 30 to Sunday 31 March
Children and young people's multi-arts project.

Exhibitions

McAllister Thomas
High Street, Godalming
Information:
mcallisterthomasfineart.co.uk

Throughout March
The Winter Exhibition plus exhibitions from Bob Aldous and Philip Ryland

Artwork by Gallery artists, abstract paintings by Bob Aldous and artworks with a personal meaning from Philip Ryland.

New Ashgate Gallery
Farnham

Information: newashgate.org.uk

To Saturday 13 April
Spring craft collection
Ceramics, jewellery and textiles.

Saturday 2 March to Saturday 13 April
Monoprints: Tessa Pearson and Louise Davies
An exhibition of bold colour.

Saturday 2 March to Saturday 13 April
Rising Stars
Emerging makers in many formats.

Ramster Gardens
Chiddingfold
Information: ramsterhall.com

Saturday 16 to Sunday 31 March
Embroidery Exhibition 2019
Over 200 pieces of fine textile art.

The Lightbox Gallery and Museum
Woking
Information: thelightbox.org.uk
To Sunday 31 March
Cyril Mann: Light and Shadow
An exhibition of the painter's work.

Spotlight on...

Painshill Park: World Book Day and Mother's Day
Cobham

Sunday 10 March and Sunday 31 March

Painshill Park celebrates **World Book Day** (Thursday 7 March) on **Sunday 10 March** by inviting children to visit dressed as their favourite book character. There will be a prize for the best dressed character and lots of book themed activities, including a special trail around the landscape garden. In addition, don't miss the Big Book Exchange: bring a book to exchange for a different story. For those who have children's books to donate to the Exchange, these can be dropped at Painshill's Visitor Centre and would be appreciated. On **Sunday 31 March**, Painshill plays host to a **Mother's Day Afternoon Tea**, 12.30 to 4pm, in its enchanting eighteenth century walled garden. Treat mum and enjoy a walk around the garden to see carpets of daffodils, beautiful scenery and follies. Advanced booking is required on 01932 868113 or email info@painshill.co.uk.

Information: painshill.co.uk



Painshill Park PHOTO COPYRIGHT: GRAHAM DASH

To Sunday 2 June
Women in Photography: A History of British Trailblazers
Showcasing achievements of female photographers working in Britain.

Watts Gallery
Compton, Guildford
Information: wattsgallery.org.uk

To Sunday 17 March
Christina Rossetti: Vision & Verse
The poet's connection with visual art.

To Tuesday 30 April
Fire and Earth: The Compton Pottery
Exploring materials and advances.

National Trust

National Trust properties offer perfect venues to explore any time of the year. We list a few, but visit nationaltrust.org.uk for more.

Clandon Park
near Guildford
Information: [01483 222482](http://01483222482)

Sunday 24 March, 10am–5pm
NGS daffodils at Clandon
Clandon House and garden open on Wednesday 20 March, and all garden admissions on 24 March go to the National Gardens Scheme.

Claremont Landscape Garden
near Esher
Information: [01372 467436](http://01372467436)

Wednesday 20 March, 5.30–8am
Sunrise Spring Equinox celebration
Explore the first signs of spring and the start of longer days.

Hatchlands Park
near Guildford
Information: [01483 222482](http://01483222482)
Sunday 31 March, 10am–5pm
Mother's Day
Treat mum to a day at Hatchlands.

Leith Hill Place
near Dorking
Information: [01306 711685](http://01306711685)
Friday 29 March to Sunday 28 April
Fired Earth, Sacred Wilderness
An exhibition by Clock Tower Studios exploring the natural beauty of Leith Hill with ceramics and painting.

Surrey Hills: Box Hill
near Dorking
Information: [01372 452048](http://01372452048)
Saturday 30 March, 10am–3pm
Mother's Day charity portrait session
With award-winning photographer Rachel Thornhill, a thirty minute session, including mounted print.



APPEAL

Disappearing Dawn Chorus

A preparation for the 85th anniversary of Wild Birds Protection

The Dawn Chorus is dwindling, and wild birds are rapidly declining in numbers; the planet may perhaps fall silent again.

This was a concern for Eric Parker (1870–1955), pioneer conservationist whose work helped push through the Wild Birds Protection Act that came into force in May 1934, 85 years ago next spring. Parker lived and worked in Surrey, near Godalming. Parker campaigned vigorously for legislation against the indiscriminate gathering of wild birds' eggs, alongside hunting and other destructive activity. He talks about the period that led to the passing of the Wild Birds act in 1934 as 'that year of blessed memory'.

David Lewiston Sharpe is a composer and has worked with the Royal Philharmonic. David has set verses by Eric Parker which give sad, soulful expression to the plight of song birds – his *Song of the Nightingale*. The plan is to present the new song cycle, sung by astounding mezzo soprano Phoebe Haines, in a programme with the Royal Philharmonic alongside works by Elgar, Delius, Butterworth and Respighi – all inspired by the natural world. The concert will aid the work of scientific research and practical activity to promote work towards avian conservation. I invite essence readers to get in touch – **please help to fund this concert and important conservation work.**

essence INFO

Birds on the Wire & the Waves
Wild Birds Protection – 85th Anniversary Concert,
Sunday, 12 May 2019, Cadogan Hall
Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra
Phoebe Haines (mezzo soprano)
David Lewiston Sharpe (conductor)
Programme: Lewiston Sharpe/Parker The Song of the Nightingale,
Butterworth Banks of Green Willow, Elgar 3 Songs, Sea-Pictures,
Chanson de matin & de nuit, Delius Summer Night on the River,
On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring, Respighi The Birds
Contact: davidlewistonsharpe@gmail.com/020 8362 9971



Spring Plant Fair, RHS Wisley PHOTO COPYRIGHT: RHS/LUKE MACGREGOR

Out and about

Brooklands Museum
Weybridge

Tickets: brooklandsmuseum.com

Sunday 24 March, 10am–5pm

Brooklands Mini Day

All types of Mini, including modern, are invited. Test Hill will be in action, subject to weather.

Sunday 7 April, 10am–5pm

London Bus Museum

Spring Gathering

Up to 200 visiting buses and coaches, old and new, alongside stalls, a collectors market and family entertainment.

Merrist Wood

Worlesdon

Tickets: merristwoodevents.co.uk

Saturday 9, 17, 23 and

Sunday 31 March, 10am–12 noon or 2–4pm

Animal encounter tours

Two hour tours by the experienced Animal Encounter Keeper Team of The Arid and Tropical Biomes, Nocturnal and Husbandry Rooms. See the Walled Garden for a chance to meet meerkats and red squirrels.

Ramster Gardens

Chiddingfold

Tickets: ramsterhall.com

Saturday 16 March to Sunday 9 June

Over 25 acres of peaceful woodland, lakes and hillside.

RHS Wisley

Woking

Tickets: rhs.org.uk/gardens/wisley

Saturday 9 to Sunday 17 March

Science week

Showcasing the research of the RHS with hands on activities, workshops and talks.

Tuesday 19 March

Spring Community Free Day

Spring gardening inspiration and free entry.

Friday 22 to Sunday 24 March

Spring Plant Fair

Plants from over 30 nurseries.

Sunday 31 March

Mother's Day

Celebrate and treat mum.

Surrey Scorchers

Surrey Sports Park, Guildford

Tickets: surreyscorchers.co.uk

Sunday 31 March, 2pm

Surrey Scorchers v London Lions

Something different for Mother's Day, why not take mum to experience a professional basketball match?