

Folk duo are 'crowned' at The Song Loft

ARTS ROUND-UP

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Acclaimed British concert pianist Ashley Fripp is taking centre stage at this weekend's show by the MK City Orchestra.

He will be special guest for Sunday's performance at MK Theatre, called simply Powerful Piano.

Beethoven's Consecration of the House Overture will be aired, alongside pieces by Mendelssohn and Brahms, and the date certainly won't faze Fripp, who has displayed his talents at prestigious venues including Birmingham Symphony Hall, the Royal Festival Hall and New York's infamous Carnegie Hall, a highlight for many an esteemed musician.

Speaking about the programme set to play, MKCO founder conductor Hilary Davan Wetton said: "Beethoven's Consecration of the House is a thrilling overture which is undeservedly neglected.

"Its driving energy is matched by the finale of the Brahms symphony: one of the most dynamic movements in the repertoire.

"The earlier movements, though more restrained, include some of Brahms's finest music, written at the height of his maturity.



"The Mendelssohn concerto, by contrast, is a youthful work, exuberant and poetic."

The show is being held in support of the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association (SSAFA) and tickets are on sale at £20 and £10. Under 18s pay just £5.

"A great concert for seasoned music lovers and first-timers alike," enthused Hilary. Call and book on MK 558311.

Husband and wife duo Stu and Debbie Hanna are more familiar to folk lovers as the outstanding duo Megson.

This Friday night they will bring their acclaimed mix of 'heavenly vocals, lush harmonies and driving rhythmic guitars and mandolas,' to Stony Stratford for a session of sound at The Song Loft.

Their style most definitely impresses too: They have received a four-star thumbs-up from Mojo, and favourable words from The Financial Times, Uncut and The Guard-

ian. Oh, and let us not forget the three nominations at the BBC Folk Awards.

A big gig, this one, but don't go along to the usual venue expecting to get your fill – Megson won't be at The Cock Hotel, but will instead hold court at The Crown in the Market Square.

Tickets are £10 in advance, £12 on the doors.

Visit www.thesongloft.co.uk

Milton Keynes Society of Artists is moving from its Westcroft venue to the Buszy in Central Milton Keynes.

"We are very excited about joining all the other groups using this creative hub and having the benefits of this beautifully equipped venue," says Caron Higgins, chairman of MKSA.

Wednesday's meeting at the new venue will welcome artist Stan Kaminski (that's one of his pieces, inset), who worked in a variety of advertising agencies before becoming a freelance illustrator.

His work has appeared in national poster and TV campaigns for major clients and on programmes like Black Adder.

Kaminski will be giving a demonstration in gouache showing how to produce a successful painting using only three colours, plus white.

The meeting will be held at the Buszy at 7:30pm, followed by a workshop day next Thursday (April 25).



A FAVOURITE WITH FOLK LOVERS: Megson will play under The Song Loft banner tomorrow night, at The Crown in Stony Stratford



ASHLEY FRIPP: The acclaimed pianist will be the soloist at Sunday's MK City Orchestra show, Powerful Piano, at Milton Keynes Theatre

For an udderly funny night out

ROUND-UP

The Cowper and Newton Museum will be hosting a Spring Quiz tomorrow evening at the Olney Centre, with buffet food provided.

Then, on Saturday the museum will be celebrating World Book Night, giving away free page-turners during its normal opening hours.

A 'Luminous Noises!' evening of Humorous Verse will be tak-

ing place from 8:30pm at York House in Stony Stratford tomorrow evening.

Entry is free, and real ale available at the bar... start your weekend the right way.

Anyone wishing to perform, whether it be their own or someone else's jolly poetry, please email clayton@cock-andbull.org.uk and get connected.

> The Comedy Cow invites more funny folks to chew the

cud this Sunday, at Newport Pagnell venue The Watershed.

Glen 'Lenny' Sherman is scorchio on the London scene, and a trip to this event will show why.

Joining Glen, catch Ben Adams, Mark Cram and the Rev Henry King.

Jimmy James Jones is your MC and the show will get-go from 8.30pm.

Admission is free and one presumes a moo-vellous time is for the taking.

THEATRE EXTRA

For theatre at its most memorable, don't miss Lilies on the Land by The Chameleons at Aspley Guise Village Hall, from tonight until Saturday.

The moving story charts the personal journeys of five women who sign up to become Land Girls, celebrating Britain's pluckiest unsung heroes.

Torn from their families and all different walks of life, they are determined to work back-breaking hours to do their bit for the war effort.

But bereft of basic home comforts and forced to deal with the hardships of farming life, how will they cope?

Tickets are £8 (conc £6) with performances at 8pm tonight, tomorrow and Saturday. Book tickets at <http://www.chameleonsdrama.co.uk/> or call 0844 8700887.

> If you are planning your nuptials, visit the Henry Allen Charity Wedding Fair and Auction on Saturday at Bletchley Leisure Centre.

Entry is just £2 (50p for youngsters) and with 30 stalls,

every aspect of the big day will be covered.

> A pop-up cinema screening of ARGO (2012) tomorrow will help a team from Olney raise money for Oxfam.

Enjoy the film in the heart of the village – and wish the team luck for their Oxfam Trailwalker challenge (walking 100km in 30 hours over the South Downs) in July.

Tickets for the Carlton Club screening are £7, email production@autonomy-mulimedia.com or call 01234 240552.

Chameleons pay tribute to the Land Girls with moving story

Freight-fully good night out for choo

STARLIGHT EXPRESS

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If you have ever strapped on roller skates and wobbled around like a giddy drunk, you will have the utmost respect for the hugely talented cast of Starlight Express, racing back to the venue from Wednesday evening.

Andrew Lloyd Webber, a true stage genius, has credits like *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat* and *Cats* to his name, along with this one.

He wrote the futuristic story about love and hope in the face of adversity for his own children.

No disrespect to *Hornby*, but having a train musical written for you by the king of theatre-land does make a little choo-choo set pale into comparison, wouldn't you say?

Lloyd-Webber's ridiculously large gong collection includes seven Tonys, three Grammys, seven Oliviers, a Golden Globe, an Oscar, two

'A futuristic story about love and hope'

International Emmys and the Kennedy Centre Honor.

He owns seven London theatres too – including the Theatre Royal and Palladium.

But back to this production, and the pedigree shows itself with every facet; from the tremendously eye-catching costumes, the terrific soundtrack and the simply extraordinary choreography, which is again being overseen by Arlene Phillips, who choreographed the original West End production.

Another lady that theatre fans owe a debt to.

Join *Greaseball*, *Rusty*, *Poppa* and *Pearl* for speed, spectacle, energy, daredevil stunts and music nightly from 7.30pm until May 4.

For ticket bookings and details of matinee performances, visit www.atgtickets.com/

miltonkeynes Experience another roller-coaster of emotions when Creed Street Theatre hosts *The Rubenstein Kiss*, a tense and dramatic production from Pepper's Ghost and The Play's The Thing theatre companies, writes Georgina Butler.

The powerful play moves between the 1950s and the 1970s and tells the story of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg who were executed for espionage in 1953 in New York's Sing Sing prison. Exploring a family's anguish and their quest for answers and atonement, the story asks whether the Rosenbergs were victims of the greatest miscarriage of justice of the 20th century, or traitors who put lives at risk and deserved their fate? The Rubenstein's Kiss has been produced and directed by Rosemary Hill, with designer Kevin Jenkins and lighting designer Guy Jones. The show opens on Wednesday evening.

Performances run at 7.30pm nightly until Saturday, April 27, with an additional matinee on the Saturday.

Tickets are £12 and £10. Call the box office on MK 320179.



A ROLLER-WAY SUCCESS: Starlight Express arrives at Milton Keynes Theatre on Wednesday



THE RUBENSTEIN KISS: A 'tense, dramatic production' at Wolverton's Creed Street Theatre from Wednesday

Good folks Bellowhead return

THE STABLES

Playful accordionist Johanna Juhola is at The Stables tonight, 'conjuring a magical world that blends Buenos Aires tango halls with forest-dark Finnish landscapes'. Her style is well known on the Finnish scene, and one suspects that she'll have swelled her local set of fans after this performance too.

Panic Room play tomorrow, bringing 'epic grandeur, spine-tingling beauty and gutsy raw power' to the end of your week.

Alternatively, pop into the more intimate confines of Stage 2 and catch The Jimmy Brewer Band, the latest name

performing under the M1 Music Night banner.

A classic songwriter with some contemporary styling, you can check his style on the album *As Time Stands Still*. The Woburn Sands Band show up on Saturday night, with a show spanning classics from jazz and pop to brass band originals.

You're always promised a good show from the active aces.

On Sunday night, The Cavern Beatles come hither, as they mark the half century since the real Fab Four went on tour. Have you got A Ticket to Ride, so to speak?

Brian Houston and Robert Vincent team up for a show on Stage 2 the same night, while

Albert Hammond, last on the MK stage last year, returns on Monday evening.

He is responsible for the sales of a gargantuan 360 million records worldwide... and counting.

Bellowhead founders and all-round good 'folks' Spiers & Boden set up on Tuesday with *Backyard Songs*.

Fans have been invited to suggest folk songs with an MK significance for them to learn on this tour, so quite what to expect is anyone's guess, although it'll be quality assured. Last up, *World Party* with Karl Wallinger – for more on that gig, turn back to *City Nights*.

Call and book on MK 280800.

Don't get fidgety, go get stuck!

STANTONBURY CAMPUS

Stantonbury Campus Theatre presents the latest in its Theatre 4 Kids season this Sunday afternoon, from 2.30pm.

From the award-winning pen of Oliver Jeffers, the same name who has also delivered *How To Catch a Star*, comes *Stuck!*

This is the story of a little boy called Floyd, who gets his kite stuck in a tree.

He throws up his shoe to shift it, but then that gets stuck, so he throws up his other shoe... and that gets stuck too.

Along with the cat, a ladder, a pot of paint, the kitchen sink, an orangutan and a whale, and that isn't the list in its entirety. Will Floyd ever be able to get his kite back?

This is a lovely tale for families and clocks in at just 50 minutes long, so there will be no chance for little folks to start getting all fidgety!

Book on MK 324422.

> A quick reminder that Earl Carpenter, who starred in the title role in *The Phantom of the Opera* last autumn, will be appearing at Woburn Abbey on Sunday.

Earl will be joined by fellow West End stars for an exclusive night of musical entertaining and fine dining in the Sculpture Gallery. Tickets are £85.

Book tickets for the intimate event on 01525 292172.