

How about a little top up?

MK THEATRE

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Suburban satire reigns at Milton Keynes Theatre this week with audiences invited to 1970's classic Abigail's Party.

Donna Summer is playing on the stereo, dishes of cheese and pineapple are on the coffee table and the social get together from hell is about to begin...

Beverly, together with estate agent husband Laurence, has invited new neighbours Tony and Ange round, along with nervous divorcee Sue (who is more concerned by the party her 15-year-old daughter Abigail is throwing back at her house over the road).

As Beverly plies her guests with alcohol ("How about a top up?"), cigarettes and nibbles, this horribly compelling evening descends into drunken debauchery.

Comedy, drama and tragedy combine for iconic theatre moments, displaying a ruthlessly accurate and painfully funny observation of the pretensions of the 1970s' emerging middle class.

Following a triumphant West End season, Mike Leigh's classic play is being welcomed to the new city with a cast including Hannah Waterman (best known for her role as Laura Beale in EastEnders and theatre including The Vagina Monologues and Calendar Girls) and Martin Marquez (televi-

'A ruthlessly accurate and painfully funny observation...'

sion credits include EastEnders and Hotel Babylon and he was most recently seen in the West End in Billy Elliot). Abigail's Party sees forced pleasantries give way to sour grapes as marital tensions come to the surface - indulge your inner nosy neighbour and book a ticket for this classic suburban drama.

Performances are at 7.30pm until Saturday, with matinees on Wednesday and Saturday at 2.30pm.

Call 0844 871 7652 or visit www.atgtickets.com/miltonkeynes to book.

>But first, for something completely different...

Self-proclaimed Lord of Mince Julian Clary will welcome a selection of eligible bachelors onto the stage to win his hand in marriage at the theatre on Sunday.

Audience members are invited to attend a wedding when Julian sets off on his mission to look for love - promising to leave no straight unturned.

As befits a national comedy treasure unashamed to flirt in the face of conformists everywhere, Julian Clary Position Vacant: Apply Within, is packed full of double enten-

dres and plays on his camp and quirky personality and on-stage warmth.

As he scours the land in search of some smoochy, Julian announces: "Because I'm still considered quite a catch and because your town is noted for its heterosexuals on the cusp, there's bound to be stiff competition."

"Therefore I will be hosting ruthless elimination games.

"We can be sure of one thing: by the end of the evening we'll all be celebrating my new partnership."

Given the recent headlines about gay marriage, the show is actually very topical - something the comic is proud of.

"People told me they found it very moving.

"It's given them something different to think about on the way home," he added.

Position Vacant: Apply Within is, of course, a really funny parody of conventional game shows - allowing Julian to be in control of everything and manipulate matters to get the most comedic effect.

His career so far - stand-up comedian, best-selling novelist, Celebrity Big Brother winner and Strictly Come Dancing contestant, has been a blast.

"I'm very grateful that I'm allowed to do all these things," he considers.

"Lord knows, I wouldn't have lasted five minutes if I'd had to grow up and do something sensible."

Have you got your tickets yet? Don't miss this comedy blast. Call 0844 871 652 or visit www.atgtickets.com/miltonkeynes



TENSIONS BREW WHILE THE CHEESE AND PINEAPPLE WILTS: Suburban satire with Hannah Waterman, at MK Theatre from Monday



HOSTING 'RUTHLESS ELIMINATION GAMES': Julian Clary visits MK Theatre on Sunday with Position Vacant: Apply Within



Karine Polwart, performs at The Stables on Wednesday

Polwart's pure and perfect pitch

THE STABLES

OK, so time for a Show of Hands - who likes them?

Plenty, apparently - this evening's gig at The Stables by the duo is all sold-out.

Friday night marks a return to the Wavendon venue for Barisons Swing Band, ready to entertain with their new Glenn Miller show, Glenn & Friends. Expect to hear Tuxedo Junction, Little Brown Jug and String of Pearls and you'll not be disappointed.

Big news - Bowie is coming back to Milton Keynes... or

rather Ultimate Bowie is. A visually stunning and vocally impressive show is lined up on Saturday courtesy of Ed Blaney - who appeared on Stars in Their Eyes.

Presumably, he'll make you go all Ziggy, Zig-aah...or are we getting our icons confused with 'girl power' rubbish? Currently celebrating their 25th anniversary, poppy-rock sorts T'Pau promise a fantastic evening of music on Sunday.

Fronted by the instantly memorable Carol Decker, the band had a plethora of worldwide

hits, including Heart & Soul which stayed on the US billboard chart for six months. And who doesn't remember the 1987 track China in your Hand which occupied the UK number one slot for five weeks?

The original line-up split in 1991 but Carol continues to tour and record under the banner of T'Pau and former co-founder Ron Rogers is among the line-up. Support comes from singer-songwriter Chris Corney.

Bringing this week to a melodic close is Scottish singer-

songwriter Karine Polwart, who returns on Wednesday with regular touring collaborators, brother Steven Polwart (guitars/vocals) and Fair Islander Inge Thomson (accordion/percussion and vocals). We last saw her with her band of collaborative musical disciples, Burns Unit. She was superb then, and will be every bit as engaging this week.

Her voice is pure and perfect. Book seats on 01908 280800.

> Carol Decker takes on our Cue and Play challenge this week. Visit www.miltonkeynes.co.uk and click on leisure