

● Theatre

There's a killer on the loose

MK THEATRE

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A classic 'whodunnit' murder mystery will get minds racing at MK Theatre from Monday and it comes from the combined pen of a winning team.

Richard Levinson and William Link are the same fellas behind small-screen classics like the unsurpassable *Murder She Wrote* (which is enjoying re-runs just now) and award-winning detective series *Columbo* and they are responsible for *Rehearsal for Murder*.

Playwright Alex Dennison is left heartbroken when his fiancée and leading lady Monica Welles is found dead from an apparent suicide after the opening night of her stage debut.

On the anniversary of that ill-

Sit back and enjoy a devious cat and mouse chase to uncover a killer

fated night, Alex assembles the same cast and crew in the same theatre, for a reading of his new play.

But as the reading progresses, the play's similarity to actual events becomes ever more uncomfortable for the participants.

Alex you see, believes that his beloved Monica had her life taken, and his new work is a devious cat-and-mouse chase to uncover her killer...

Talk about a night of stars – this is an extravaganza of television and stage favourites. Alex Ferns got the nation talking plenty for his terrifically executed role as Trevor Mor-

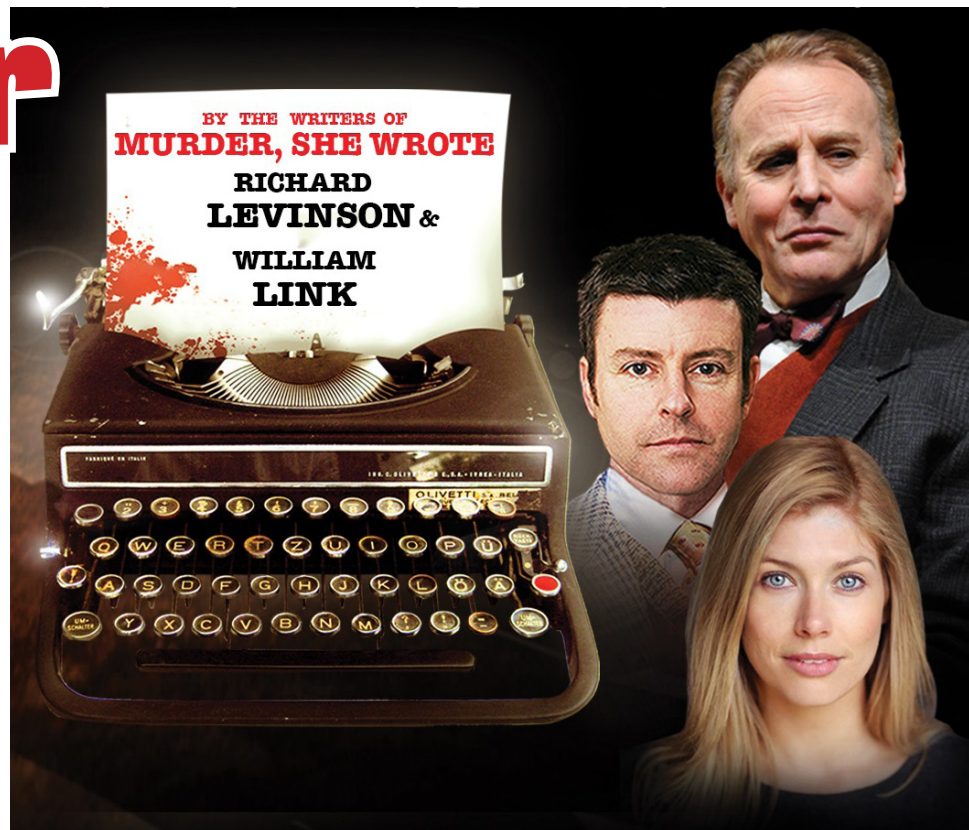
gan in *Eastenders*, and he has since enjoyed guest roles in *Wallander* and *Taboo*, and 24, alongside Keifer Sutherland. Alex was also in one of our most favoured films in recent times, *Legend*, the Tom Hardy headed Kray twin biopic and we still recall his marvellous role as the dentist in *Little Shop of Horrors* right here on the MK Theatre stage. Didn't do much to allay fears of the dreaded dental chair, though...

Peak Practice star Gary Mavers and *Footballers' Wives* actress Susie Amy also join all-familiar faces Mark Wyner, Lauren Drummon, Ben Nealon, Gwynfor Jones and Georgia Neville at play.

This really is an exceptionally talented roll call, and yours to enjoy during their weeklong stay.

Take a tickets to *Rehearsal for Murder* and find out just 'whodunnit'!

Visit www.atgtickets.com/miltonkeynes to book.



In Rehearsal for Murder: Casting suspicion, but who is the guilty one?

Enjoy a little bedlam with Kelly

THE STABLES

People can't get enough of his biting, satirical, political and funny verse, and so John Cooper Clarke's *Stables* show this evening is fully booked. But while you've missed out on the alt-lit chap, you can still get goodies from the venue – with a return appearance by rising songwriter Kelly Oliver.

Now with two albums under her belt – *Bedlam* was issued in 2015, a follow-up to *This Land*, Kelly has been winning over fans and critics with her contemporary take on the acoustic folk tradition.

The hours spent tipping her ears to Bob Dylan, Dolly Parton and Alanis Morissette as a youngster were well utilised. The Royal Holloway graduate spent a year working behind a bar, before shedding her clutter and roaming free, travelling Europe, Argentina and Brazil. That was in 2013, and while soaking in the culture, she also decided that her return home would see her apply herself to the sounds.

"Travelling made me realise what opportunities I had at home, opportunities that not everyone has, and it gave me the confidence to pursue my dream of becoming a professional musician," she recalls. Four star album reviews, shows with Cara Dillon and Barbara Dickson, a tour support with Thea Gilmore and dates at the Cambridge Folk Festival later, and it's clear she made the right decision. Kelly's *Stables* show will be

full of *Bedlam*, but without uproar, if you see what we mean...

Support is coming from 16-year-old Emma McGrath – in 2015 she bagged a PRS for Music award.

Another one to watch, and you get to do that from 8.45pm tonight.

Pete Long's *Echoes of Ellington* present *It Don't Mean A Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing!* on Friday.

At once visceral and elegant, the music is unique, exciting, earthy and refined.

Contemporary rockers Albany Down show up over on Stage 2, and they have the smartest of influences, spanning Zeppelin and Thunder to Maryland's finest, Clutch. Another returning hit is John Verity who is back in play on Saturday.

Join the stalwart bluesman at one of his most favoured venues as he launches his new CD.

A day later and the very cool Slambovian Circus of Dreams swing by.

How to describe this sharp bunch of New Yorkers?

'Surreal Americana' and 'a Hillbilly-Pink Floyd' have previously been used.

Contemporary fiddlers invade on Tuesday night when Blazin Fiddles do their thing – and with 15 years of play behind them, you'll be well catered for.

A real treat will be waiting when you erm, walk in the room on Wednesday night – Sixties survivors *The Searchers* are bringing their solo show to the stage, with the hits, album recordings and B-sides. Along with the songs, fans will get a smattering of anecdotes and reminiscences to boot.

Last up this week, on Stage 2, *The Hitman Blues Band* will entertain.

Stateside they have already been nominated for the blues Grammy's and been finalists in the Memphis International Blues Challenge. They've got it going on!

To book, call the box office on MK 280800.

Enjoy laughs, top tunes and big hair in The Wedding Singer

STANTONBURY THEATRE

tunes – and big hair!
Visit www.dreamsnwishes.co.uk/boxoffice.html to book your seat.

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Travel back to the eighties with Milton Keynes Amateur Operatic Society when they present their musical comedy interpretation of the hit film *'The Wedding Singer'* at Stantonbury Theatre, writes Georgina Butler.

From tonight, and through to Saturday a cast of talented performers will entertain with the tale of rock-star wannabe Robbie Heart, New Jersey's favourite wedding singer. He is the life and soul of the party until his fiancée Linda leaves him at the altar. Distraught, Robbie loses his pizzazz and ends up making every wedding he croons at as disastrous as his own aborted attempt.

Can an encounter with an admiring young waitress named Julia change his life for the better?

With a score that pays loving homage to the pop songs of the 80's, *The Wedding Singer* promises lots of laughs, top



He's showing out in *The Wedding Singer*: If you take a ticket to a performance by the MKAOS you'll be jumping for joy too!



Stables date: Kelly Oliver and (inset) Emma McGrath