

entertainment



Marvellous Manon brings steamy romance to town

Manon
MK Theatre

The dancers of English National Ballet are prepping their pointe shoes ready to thrill theatregoers with the timelessly romantic tragedy of *Manon* from Wednesday, writes *Georgina Butler*.

Legendary British choreographer Sir Kenneth MacMillan's *Manon* is a highlight of the ballet repertoire, yet it is rarely seen outside London.

Indeed, this season's latest presentation from English National Ballet is only the company's second regional tour of the production in 30 years. The late MacMillan choreographed the steamy three-act ballet of *Manon* in 1974.

He drew inspiration for the story from French author Abbé Prévost's controversial 1731 novel, *L'histoire du chevalier des Grieux et de Manon Lescaut*, and set the action to an expressive score by Jules Massenet.

Manon proved an instant hit with audiences and quickly became the paragon of adult, dramatic dance.

While waiting to enter a convent in eighteenth-century Paris, the beautiful and impulsive *Manon* is admired as a prospective courtesan.

Her brother, Lescaut, is soon approached by an old gentleman who begins bargaining for her.



Manon: Became the paragon of adult, dramatic dance

Meanwhile, *Manon* meets a handsome but penniless student, Des Grieux, and the pair fall in love.

When wealthy Monsieur G.M. asserts his own interest in *Manon*, she finds herself tragically torn between true love with her young beau and her desire for wealth and comfort as a kept woman to a much older man.

Now revered as one of the great ballets from the 20th century, *Manon* is a worldwide classic. The period piece features an exceptionally difficult lyrical solo for love-struck Des Grieux, passionate pas de deux passages aplenty and spectacular ensemble scenes. Add English National Ballet Philharmonic playing Massenet's score live and a mes-

merising performance is essentially guaranteed. English National Ballet's '*Manon*' runs at Milton Keynes Theatre until next Saturday (October 27).

www.atgtickets.com/miltonkeynes



Släpstick

The Stables, October 24
Flying violins! Speed-skating ballerinos! Släpstick is an ode to the timeless comedy of Charlie Chaplin, the Marx Brothers, and Laurel & Hardy, rooted in the slapstick tradition, but

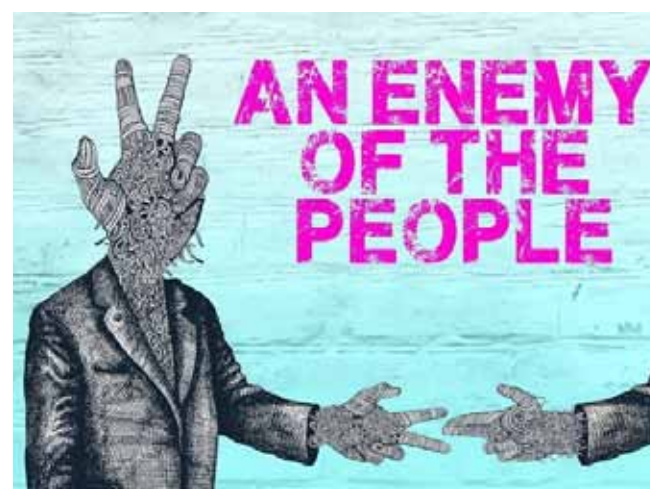
with a modern twist. A perfect blend of virtuosic musicianship, lung-bursting physical comedy and heartfelt nostalgia. The five performers bringing the show to the stage have mastered more than 100 instruments, too!
www.stables.oeg



Jackson Live

MK Theatre, October 21
Jackson Live in Concert now features the hugely talented 'CJ' recreating the Michael Jackson experience. 'CJ' is one of the most experienced, dedicated and well-respected

Michael Jackson tribute artists around, and perfectly captures the electrifying energy of Michael's live performances. He's got the look, the moonwalk and the voice, which is quite something!
www.atgtickets.com



An Enemy of the People
Stantonbury Theatre, October 22 & 23

Having rejuvenated the fortunes of a crumbling town, eminent doctor Tamsin Stockmann expects to be hailed as its saviour once again when she exposes a major public

health risk. But the town's prosperity hangs in the balance and opposition grows. Will she will lauded as hero of the hour or will Dr. Stockmann be declared an enemy of the people? Ibsen's reimagined classic will enjoy a two night stay
stantonburytheatre.co.uk