

# Sardines

for amateur theatre... in-print, online, community



## *The Phantom of the Opera* *Tour Cancelled*

### **Cameron Mackintosh & Really Useful Group Shutdown New Tour Due to Covid-19**

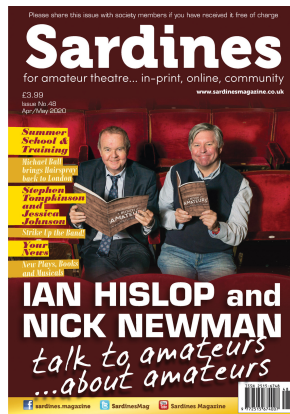
It has been announced this week that due to the current state of complete shutdown of the British theatre by the Government, because of Covid-19, Cameron Mackintosh and The Really Useful Group's new UK and Ireland Tour of Andrew Lloyd Webber's *The Phantom of the Opera*, which had only played its opening date prior to a marathon 14-month tour, will not re-open.

The great uncertainty around the duration of social distancing requirements and the perilous financial situation in which many regional theatres find themselves have conspired to make re-routing an entire major tour like *Phantom* impossible for some time as so many existing tours are needing to reschedule.

The production opened at Curve, Leicester at the beginning of March. Subsequent runs in Manchester and Dublin have already been cancelled. Following these dates, the tour was due to play Birmingham, Edinburgh, Sunderland, Cardiff, Plymouth, Southampton and Bradford.

In an official statement, we have been told that "Whilst it is heart breaking for us as producers as well as for our wonderful cast, orchestra and crew who had all worked so hard to create this truly spectacular but tragically short-lived reinvented staging of the original production, we are determined that the disappearance of the 'Phantom' from the British regional stage will not be forever and that when theatre is back thrilling audiences again. The *Music of the Night* will soar once more from the orchestra pit."

Ticket holders will all be contacted directly by their venue/point of sale in due course.



## Our pre-lockdown issue FREE and delivered to your door!

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*NOTE: Subscriptions are NOT affected by the unavoidable break in production.*

*Our next issue (no.49) will simply be delayed - rather than cancelled) until theatres begin to open once more.*

**Meanwhile, please keep sending us news of how your society is staying connected and keeping positive **HERE****



# LOCKDOWN UPDATE no.9

**With the future of 'theatre' hanging in the balance and the timing of our upcoming 'print' editions evermore uncertain, the new Sardines website has been given an urgent push to launch.**

When we are able to launch the new website - which has been a very long-time coming - visitors will be able to read articles and features in addition to posting their own topics for discussion (including embedding videos).

With the future of our own print publications somewhat up in the air right now, it is our intention that the website will become the new place to keep up to date with all the very latest news and information for the UK's amateur theatre sector.

The huge amount of finely linked data has caused no end of headaches in transferring all of the previously uploaded productions, societies, reviews etc. to the new platform BUT, we are assured, the finish-line is now in sight.

**So please watch this space for some more news very soon!**

## Our next issue...

We *were* hoping to pause our print production throughout June & July with a view to resuming activity in time for August/September. However, with the easing of lockdown presenting us with an uncertain future, social distancing continuing for some time to come, the re-opening of schools being far from straight forward, no vaccine available yet, and now, this year's pantomime season in jeopardy... it is looking more and more like Sardines will need to pause for at least another two months - perhaps until 1st October.

The simple truth is none of us know how things are going to develop because we haven't been in this situation before. Therefore, we can only make decisions based on how things look short-term. Even the big West End shows (which should have been playing to thousands of people this summer) that have recently rescheduled to 2021 will be crossing their fingers that things eventually get back to normal over the next few months.

**If you or your society have done something creative during lockdown and would like to share your news then please email us [HERE](#) and you could find yourself included in our next newsletter.**





# "Actors are just the tip of the iceberg"

by Bryan Raven - MD White Light

Over the last week or so, we have seen an increase in the number of articles in the mainstream media (TV and newspapers) about the plight of the theatre industry. Some of these have been excellent, such as playwright James Graham on *Question time* who spoke passionately about the practical help theatres need. There's also been the segments on ITV News, the articles in various newspapers (including one today in the *Financial Times*) and we've even had Royal support in the form of Prince Charles who said, and I quote, "we have to find a way to make sure these marvellous people and organisations are going to survive through all this."

In my personal view, the line we should all be taking is that everyone (friends, family, the media and wider society) should think of the visible members of the performing arts as the tip of the iceberg. We should never forget that, for every single member of the industry the public sees (actors, directors, producers), there are as many as 100 others who also earn their living from that person's performance. These include technicians, suppliers, front of house staff, drivers, costume makers, set builders and that's before you've even looked at manufacturers. We need to make the world aware of this informal economy behind the theatre industry and we need to find ways to support the industry until it is safe (and more importantly until people feel safe) to return.

We should also take heart from the new task force and its subsidiary working groups that has been created to aid the sector to recover. Many of the names involved and the organisations they represent are very aware of the whole theatre ecology and that gives us hope we won't be forgotten! So, ultimately, it is small steps that are being taken but at least they are finally being taken. As such, alongside our usual updates and links to various resources, we've also included in this newsletter the ways in which you can get behind the various initiatives out there and show your support. So whilst many of us still remain in isolated, at least collectively we can make our voices heard as one.



## Focusing on the Positive



*Click above to nominate somebody*

## **Jack Petchey's Community Awards programme recognises young people contributing to their communities during lockdown.**

Anyone aged between 11 and 25 from London or Essex can be nominated.

You can nominate someone for many reasons. Some of the nominations the Foundation has received have helped large groups of people whilst others had a big impact on one person. If you know someone who has done something special nominate them! Every nomination is read, and, so far, over 300 have been received!

Several winners are highlighted every week, who will receive £50, a certificate, an award and a letter from Sir Jack. As well as sharing the news with local papers, some have even appeared on radio!

Trudy Kilcullen MBE, CEO of the Jack Petchey Foundation said: *"At the Jack Petchey Foundation, young people inspire us all the time with the incredible work they do and that has not stopped in the current situation. We want to recognise more young people across London and Essex doing inspirational things to help their community and hope these community awards will motivate others and truly showcase the positive things young people do every day."*

## **Let's Make a Den!**

**With their national tour postponed, poet Simon Mole and musician Gecko are running free online workshops for children and families during lockdown, taking inspiration from 9-year-old Lula to create a new song about dens.**



*Click on the video to watch it*

Poet Simon Mole and musician Gecko were due to tour their family performance Mole & Gecko: THE SHOW this Spring, sharing songs, rap stories and instant poems with children in theatres and libraries across England. With the tour postponed due to Covid19, the duo are reaching out to children and families in their own homes through online poetry sessions, leading to one participant inspiring a new song and video about building dens.

Whilst in lockdown, Mole and Gecko have been connecting to their audiences with the free weekly workshops, with participants Zooming in from Beckenham to Barbados!

One workshop attendee, 9-year-old Lula from Somerset, had the opportunity to ask the pair to write a song about anything she liked. She chose 'making dens', always a popular activity but especially at the moment for children stuck inside. This struck a chord with Mole and Gecko resulting in Our Den. Lula said: "Hearing my ideas turn into a proper song was really exciting. I even sung a little bit of a tune which ended up being used in the final version."

Mole and Gecko appreciated having the support of North London theatre venue artsdepot, with the video for Our Den created in their scheduled residency week there, but with them working remotely instead of in the building as originally planned.

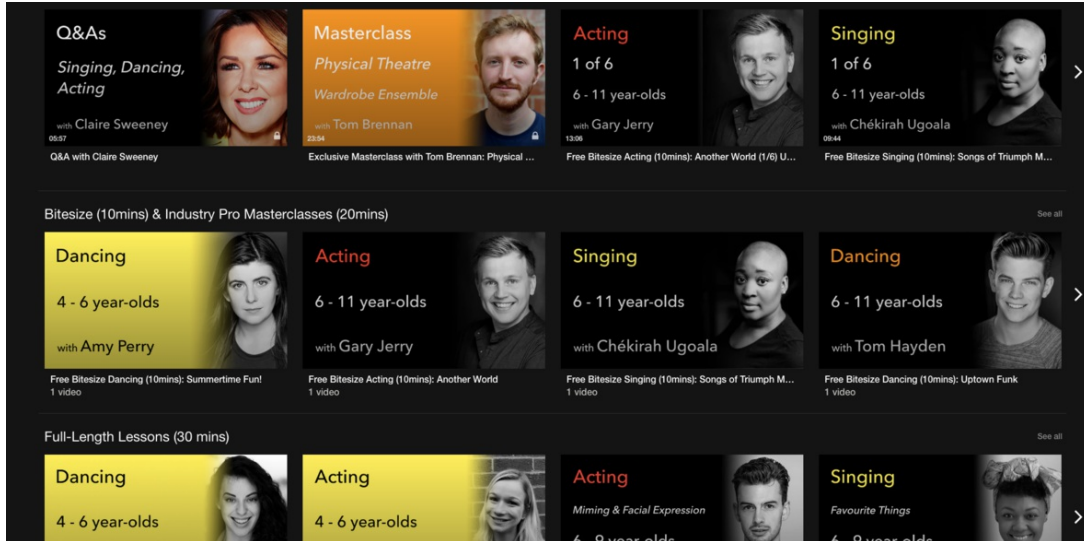
Anyone can join Simon Mole's workshops for 5-8 year olds and 8-11 year olds which run online every Tuesday, click [HERE](#).

As a poet and educator, Mole facilitates workshops in schools and community settings, having also created resources for the National Literacy Trust and BBC. His [YouTube channel](#) is an online resource with more than twenty videos to engage young people with poetry and literacy. The videos have proved extra popular during lockdown, with the [Write a Poem in under 10 Minutes](#) video reaching nearly 100,000 views so far.

## Stagecoach at Home

**With social distancing continuing, the 'new normal' sees Stagecoach Performing Arts launching its own online platform for students – featuring**

## some famous faces!



Stagecoach Performing Arts has launched a brand-new consumer platform, jam-packed with virtual learning resources and materials that students can access at home. This new website, [stagecoachathome.com](http://stagecoachathome.com), offers new and existing students an Online Learning Studio, home to over 100 lessons with many of the videos delivered by some pretty recognisable faces.

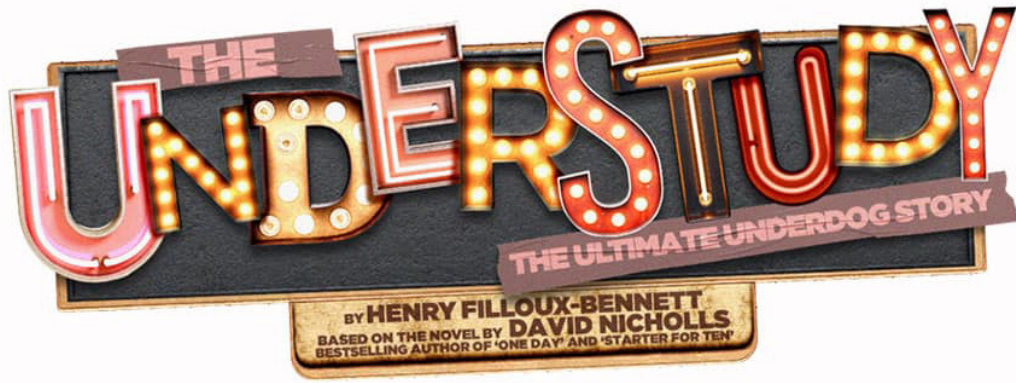
The new Online Learning Studio will see Stagecoach teachers joined by stars of stage and screen, such as **Simon Callow**, **Lily De La Haye** and **Amy Oxley**, as they share their unique insights and experiences of working in the creative industry, as well as delivering more in-depth classes.

The site has been created to support existing franchisees, by providing a resource that families can access from the safety of their homes. The Online Learning Studio is available to young people for a monthly subscription fee of £19.99. Users then have unlimited access to a library of full-length pre-recorded lessons, masterclasses and shorter activities, which they can work through at their own pace. New content is added weekly, encouraging repeat sign-ups from new and existing students.

**The full portal of lessons is now live, via the new website**  
[www.stagecoachathome.com](http://www.stagecoachathome.com)

## We Have a New Review!

Read the Sardines 4-star review of *The Understudy* radio play by our regular critic, John Chapman... (it even has a link to watch it yourself)



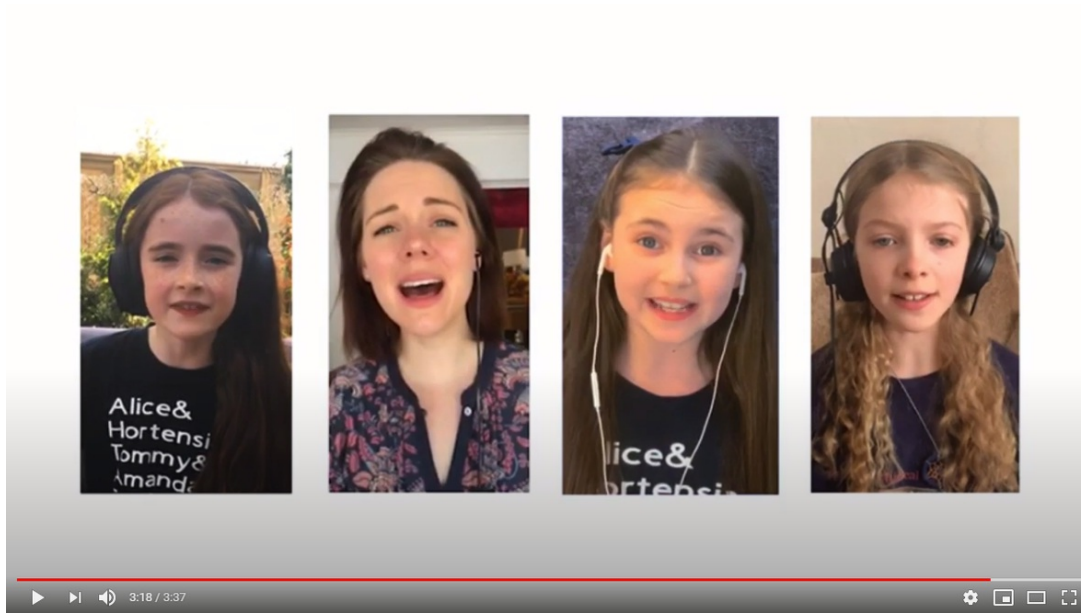
The play stars an impressive cast list including Stephen Fry, Emily Atack, Sheila Atim, Layton Williams, Russell Tovey, Sarah Hadland, Mina Anwar and many more.

If you would like Sardines to review an online performance or, if you would like to become a Sardines reviewer, let us know [HERE](#)



## When I Grow Up

The Royal Shakespeare Company's production of *Matilda The Musical* has released a video of some of the current young performers along with Miss Honey (Gina Beck) singing *When I Grow Up* from their homes during theatreland shutdown.



Winner of 99 international awards including 24 for Best Musical, *Matilda The Musical* has been seen by over 10 million people across more than 90 cities worldwide. It has become the Cambridge Theatre's longest running production and one of the top twenty longest running



musicals in the West End having now welcomed over 3.5 million audience members in London.

Written by Dennis Kelly, with music and lyrics by Tim Minchin, and direction by Matthew Warchus. The production is designed by Rob Howell, with choreography by Peter Darling, orchestrations, additional music and musical supervision by Christopher Nightingale, lighting by Hugh Vanstone, sound by Simon Baker and the special effects and illusions are by Paul Kieve.

*Matilda The Musical* is still widely considered to be one of the most innovative British Musicals of the century. Adapted from Roald Dahl's much loved 1988 book and commissioned by the Royal Shakespeare Company, the musical premiered at the RSC's Stratford-upon-Avon home in 2010, before transferring to the West End in 2011, where it opened to rave reviews.

Bursting with revolting fun and naughtiness, it tells the story of Matilda, the strong, determined heroine, who stands up to her bullies. This brave bookworm outwits her ghastly parents The Wormwoods and horrible headteacher Miss Trunchbull using her vivid imagination, intelligence and magical powers. Dahl's themes of rebellion, bravery, protest and standing up for what you believe in are more relevant in 2020 than ever before.

*Matilda The Musical* swept the board at the 2012 Olivier Awards, with a record-breaking seven awards, and won four Tony Awards and a Tony Honor for Excellence in the Theater for the four girls sharing the title role on Broadway. It has since toured to Australia, New Zealand and China and played its first non-English language production in Seoul, South Korea in 2018/19.

## National Theatre at Home Latest Streams

***This House* (Streaming now until 4 June) and *Coriolanus* (Streaming from 7pm Thursday 4 June until 11 June) are the latest shows to watch for free on the NT at Home's YouTube channel**



It's 1974, and Britain has a hung Parliament. The corridors of Westminster ring with the sound of infighting and backstabbing as the political parties battle to change the future of the nation.

*This House* is a timely, moving and funny insight into the workings of British politics by James

Graham (Ink, ITV's Quiz) and directed by Jeremy Herrin (People, Places and Things). This much-loved production enjoyed two sold-out National Theatre runs, a West End transfer and national tour as well as being filmed by National Theatre Live.

You can watch *This House* now until 7pm UK time on Thursday 4 June 2020. It was filmed live on stage at the National Theatre in 2013.

The running time is 2 hours 40 minutes with a very short interval. It is subtitled.

The play is suitable for ages 14+ with some strong language throughout.

## Harry Potter at Home

**Chapter 7 and 8 of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* are both now available**



**Chapter 7: *The Sorting Hat*** is read by none other than Olivia Colman, with cameos from Jonathan Van Ness and Kate McKinnon.

**Chapter 8: *The Potions Master*** (available to watch now) is read by Alia Bhatt with a cameo from Alec Baldwin and a 'special' guest.

## Socially Distanced Cinema

**Could socially distanced Cinema, Raves, Comedy and more be set to take-off across the UK?**

As we begin the easing of lockdown it has become clear that social distancing will still exist for many months into the future - leaving both those who enjoy culture and events and those who work in it without part of the fabric of their lives.

The prospect of the summer without theatres, music festivals, cinemas, stand-up comedy and nightclubs has led to both artists and promoters needing to reinvent themselves with many moving online to the world of virtual streams.

However, three promoters believe that they have a better solution and **Drive In Events** is set to offer safe and socially distanced entertainment across the UK – including Edinburgh, Bristol, Glasgow, Leeds, London, Cardiff, Aberdeen, Nottingham, Oxford and Newcastle.



As far back as 1910, drive in events have occurred, though famously credited to Richard Hollingshead who patented the concept in 1933 to accommodate those for whom cinema seats were too small, this form of drive in gathering is proving ideal for the current Covid-19 context with music and cinema events starting to take off in Europe.

With the loss of the *Edinburgh Fringe Festival Drive In Events* could offer Drive-In Comedy throughout the whole month of August as well as Drive-In Cinema for families, Drive-In Raves for young people and Drive-In Concerts for live music fans.

There are a great number of safety precautions that each show will have to meet but from initial discussions with venues, Police, and relevant local councils, the team believe that this will be a valuable solution to boost everyone's mental health.

**What's more, two free car places will be available to NHS workers at every performance.**

Sign up for more [HERE](#)

## Keep Our Doors Open

**Hugh Dennis, Mel Giedroyc and Soul Sanctuary Gospel Choir announced for Keep Our Doors Open benefit concert**



More than 10 million people have enjoyed their music from home since lockdown began and now St Martin-in-the-Fields are holding a one-off digital concert this Sunday via YouTube. This will support their work with homeless and vulnerable people, and help sustain their work with talented young musicians. Sunday's digital concert will help to keep their doors open.

Would you be interested in running a news story about the amazing artists coming together in celebration of St Martin-in-the-Fields?

Hugh Dennis, Mel Giedroyc and Arthur Smith will be joining the evening's festivities with soaring performances from St Martin's Voices, The Amanzi Quartet and the Soul Sanctuary Gospel Choir. Warren Mailley-Smith, the last person to perform at St Martin-in-the-Fields before lockdown, will perform as well as soprano Katharine Dain, and the St Martin-in-the-Fields choral scholars.

[Watch HERE](#)

## Good Morning, YouTube!

**This Friday, 29th May - that's TODAY! - *The Shows Must Go On* takes you to Baltimore so prepare to welcome the 60's from 7pm - and available to watch for free for 48 hours!**



*Hairspray Live!* tells the inspiring story of Tracy Turnblad (newcomer Maddy Baillio), a plump teen in 1962 Baltimore who wins a spot on a local TV dance program and ignites a campaign to integrate the show.

The three-hour live event is directed by Tony Award®-winner Kenny Leon and features choreography from Tony Award®-winner Jerry Mitchell. The all-star cast includes Kristin Chenoweth, Harvey Fierstein, Ariana Grande, Derek Hough, Jennifer Hudson and Martin Short. - 2016 Universal Studios. All Rights Reserved.

**Watch the show by clicking the image above**

## Twelfth Night Zoom in June

The Maltings Theatre presents the world premiere of their LIVE, online, musical, interactive version of Shakespeare's *TWELFTH NIGHT – LIVE!*

**JUNE 12th, 13th, 14th at 8pm LIVE on ZOOM**



*Twelfth Night by Maltings Theatre. Photo: Lou Morris*

The Maltings Theatre, the popular fringe theatre in the centre of St Albans, is famed for presenting richly re-imagined classical drama, contemporary theatre, and music to its loyal audience in and around Hertfordshire. In June the theatre will continue its run of the unexpected and entertaining when it presents – LIVE – the premiere of a musical, interactive version of Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night* online, via Zoom, on June 12th, 13th and 14th at 8pm.

This highly entertaining version of one of the Bard’s best loved romantic comedies is set on a luxury cruise liner at the height of the Roaring Twenties. 10 actors will welcome their Zoom audience on board the glamorous SS Ilyria for its maiden voyage where the action will take place amid singing, dancing, and a global online audience of Bright Young Things. Music will be provided by a talented troupe of actor musicians who will magically drop in songs by the likes of Rihanna, Britney Spears, Radiohead and more.

***“Ingenious, and hugely enjoyable, arrangements of hits from Rihanna to Radiohead. A delicious cocktail of hedonism, popular song and Shakespearean comedy.”***

Michael Gray

Read Michael Gray’s Sardines review [HERE](#)

**Book Here**



**Cancellations, Postponements &**

# Reschedules

## HELLO, DOLLY! postponed

Michael Harrison and David Ian have announced that their new production of *Hello, Dolly!* starring Imelda Staunton is postponed.



*Hello, Dolly!* was due to begin performances at the Adelphi Theatre in London on Tuesday, 11 August 2020 for a 30-week season. New season details and all further information will be announced at a later date. Ticket holders do not need to do anything. The point of purchase will be in touch with ticket holders soon about refunds.

Michael Harrison and David Ian said: "Whilst we are naturally disappointed that we aren't able to stage the show this summer, we are completely committed to *Hello, Dolly!* Dominic Cooke's new production is set to have a cast of 34 and an orchestra of 18 musicians. This, coupled with Rae Smith's stunning new designs, means we do not want to compromise the length of run, so postponing until the time is right and schedules permit is the best option, but plans are already underway for the new season which we will announce as soon as we can. Dolly will most certainly be back where she belongs."

With music and lyrics by the legendary Jerry Herman (*La Cage aux Folles, Mack and Mabel, Mame*) and book by Michael Stewart (*42nd Street, Mack and Mabel, Barnum*), *Hello, Dolly!* is one of the most iconic musicals of all time. Herman's timeless score includes *Put On Your Sunday Clothes, Ribbons Down My Back, Before the Parade Passes By, Elegance, It Only Takes a Moment* and, of course, *Hello, Dolly!*

Multi Olivier and BAFTA Award winning Imelda Staunton plays meddlesome socialite turned matchmaker Dolly Levi, as she travels to Yonkers, New York to find a match for the miserly, unmarried 'half-a-millionaire' Horace Vandergelder. But everything changes when she decides that the next match she needs to make is for herself.

This production of *Hello, Dolly!* will also reunite Imelda with director Dominic Cooke, who most recently worked together to spectacular effect with the critically acclaimed National Theatre production of Stephen Sondheim's *Follies*. Now *Hello, Dolly!* reunites star and director in this classic Broadway musical.

*Hello, Dolly!* also reunites Imelda Staunton with producers Michael Harrison and David Ian. Their production of *Gypsy* at the Savoy Theatre was awarded the Olivier Award for Best Musical Revival, and for which Imelda also won the Olivier Award for Best Actress In A Musical for her acclaimed portrayal of Momma Rose.

More [HERE](#)

## Go, Go, Go, Joseph... to 2021

***Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* announces rescheduled Summer 2021 dates at The London Palladium**



Due to the current global situation and the uncertainty around the resumption of West End shows, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* will defer its dates exactly 12 months, and Jason Donovan and Jac Yarrow are both confirmed to star again in the acclaimed show next year. Performances will now begin on Thursday, 1 July 2021 (Gala Night: Thursday, 15 July 2021 at 7pm) and play a strictly limited 10-week season to Sunday 5 September.

All existing tickets will be moved to the same seats for the equivalent performances by day of the week in 2021. Performance times remain unchanged. If you are a ticketholder you do not need to do anything as your point of purchase will be in touch with you soon to confirm the new date for your booking. Public booking reopens on Friday 19 June.

Andrew Lloyd Webber said: "The team and I are working hard behind the scenes to get the world's most beloved theatre The London Palladium open and entertaining audiences this Autumn. We will leave no stone unturned in our efforts to find a safe route to provide access both backstage and front of house. I am delighted that Joseph will be back on The London Palladium stage next Summer."

Jason Donovan will return in the role of Pharaoh. He was originally in the show when he made his defining stage performance as the title character of Joseph in the 1990s, in a sold-out 18-month run which produced a No.1 single and best-selling soundtrack album. Jason raised the roof of the London Palladium this year as Pharaoh, who rocks *Song of the King* in the iconic musical by Tim



Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber.

Jac Yarrow caused a sensation when he made his professional stage debut playing Joseph, following in the footsteps of a line of stars who have previously played the title character. His portrayal of Joseph won him unanimous acclaim, with his rendition of *Close Every Door To Me* regularly stopping the show with standing ovations.

*Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* enjoyed a completely sold out season last year. Audiences and critics were unanimous in their acclaim for the legendary musical - the first major collaboration by Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber – as it returned to the London Palladium.

Released as a concept album in 1969, the stage version of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* has become one of the worlds most beloved family musicals. The multi-award winning show, which began life as a small scale school concert, has been performed hundreds of thousands of times including multiple runs in the West End and on Broadway, international number one tours, and productions in over 80 countries as far afield as Austria and Zimbabwe and from Israel to Peru! The show features songs that have gone on to become pop and musical theatre standards, including *Any Dream Will Do*, *Close Every Door To Me*, *Jacob and Sons*, *There's One More Angel In Heaven* and *Go Go Go Joseph*.

More [HERE](#)

## Selladoor Postpones to 2021



**Selladoor Worldwide has announced that it will suspend its 2020 touring productions – shifting the majority of shows to start in 2021. Major productions including *Footloose*, *We Will Rock You*, *9 to 5 the Musical* and *Bring It On* will be postponed as a result of Covid-19.**

The company behind productions such as *Fame*, *Avenue Q* and *American Idiot* – and operators of regional theatres in North Devon and Cambridgeshire, has confirmed it will temporarily close their offices during July and August to maximise government support during a period of extended inactivity.

Selladoor venues will extend the temporary closure of their venues until November with The Queen's Theatre Barnstaple, The Landmark Ilfracombe and New Theatre Peterborough planning to reopen pre-pantomime season.

### ***Footloose the Musical***

Due to open in April 2020 at New Wimbledon Theatre will now open at the earliest in Zurich Maag Music Hall November 2020 – with UK dates commencing from January 2021.

### ***We Will Rock You***

Due to open in August 2020 in Cape Town Artscape Theatre, South Africa will now open in February 2021 at the Solaire Resort Manila, Philippines.

### ***Bring It On the Musical***

Due to open June 2020 at the Birmingham Hippodrome is planning to open Autumn 2021.

### ***9 to 5 UK Tour***

Due to open May 2020 at the Aylesbury Waterside Theatre is planning to open Spring 2021.



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