



Grimethorpe concert cancelled

THE Grimethorpe Colliery Band concert at the Colston Hall on Saturday 24 has been cancelled.

On the same afternoon The Elgar Society meet at Bristol Music Club for a talk on his chamber music by Philip Lancaster at 2.15pm. Ffi 01454 776503.

On Sunday at St George's the Vida Guitar Quartet present a Spanish evening at 8 pm. Tickets £11-£20/Concessions from £9 from 0845 344 2012.

On the same day at 2.30 in the Colston Hall John James presents another All 4 Music session discussing the music at the BSO concert on Thursday. Tickets £5 from 9223686.

On Tuesday the lunchtime recitals continue at the Colston Hall at 1.05 when Kate Walter (flute) is accompanied by Jennifer Carter (piano). Tickets £5 from 9223686.

The same evening the Emerald Ensemble with young musicians present a concert at St George's at 7.30pm where the main work is Tchaikovsky's 5th Symphony. Tickets £11 - £26 (including refreshments) from 0845 3442012.

Wednesday sees two free lunchtime recitals: at the Vic Rooms with two quartets at 1.15 and Jonathan Price gives an organ recital at Christchurch at 1.10pm with music by Mendelshon & Bach.

REVIEWS

Crackerjack

Songs are sad, but still great

Slaid Cleaves: St Bonaventure's SLAID Cleaves is a singer-songwriter known for writing exceptionally well-drawn and well-observed narrative songs about ordinary people whose lives have gone wrong.

But the new songs that featured prominently in his set list had a much darker and less romantic edge to them than we have heard before from the Maine-born Texan, taken from his latest and arguably best ever album, *Everything You Love Will Be Taken Away*.

For instance, *Hard To Believe*, his opening song on this very welcomed return to this venue, told of a town going into decline as the factories close down, told by a man watching his girlfriend drive away.

And *Cry* contained heartache, lost dreams, disillusionment, and a lot else besides. It was, he told us, a song he was really proud of, and you could see why.

Sounds like a really depressing night doesn't it?

Actually it was far from that. His lyrics may be dark, but he never sounded like he was piling on the angst. Indeed, his delivery was actually very restrained and his melodies were so very gentle that they almost disguised the pain and sadness of his stories.

He was also a very witty performer and kept the mood very light between songs, chatting and joking easily with the audience and with Michael O'Connor, the exceptionally fine guitarist who is accompanying him on this tour.

Cleaves even yodelled during a version of the late Don Walsler's song *Rolling Stone From Texas*.

And he wasn't going to get away without singing the classic *Broke Down*, written with his old buddy Rod Picott who is another regular visitor to this venue.

"I don't have any happy songs" he announced, rather unnecessarily, before his final encore, leaving us with a version of Adam Carroll's upbeat *Race Car Joe*.

Nice guy, great songs, an excellent performer, and a thoroughly enjoyable night.

Starting the whole proceedings off extremely well was a young London singer songwriter, Dan Raza, with a Jackson Browne haircut, a Nick Drake breathy voice and some very fine songs that had a distinct Sixties feel to them. A name to watch out for.

8/10

KEITH CLARK



Wods are streets ahead

THE Worle Operatic and Dramatic Society (Wods) returns to Weston's Playhouse Theatre next month with a true musical classic.

42nd Street follows the story of Peggy Sawyer (Natalie Kessell), a young dancer who arrives too late to audition for a new Broadway musical, but is hired when the producers discover they are one dancer short.

Everything is going well until Peggy collides with the leading lady, who breaks her ankle, and Peggy is sacked. With no leading lady the show will have to close, but there is one person who can save the day. Will Peggy be convinced she can learn the role and be ready to open on Broadway in time?

This all singing, all dancing musical boasts fabulous sets, wonderful costumes, beautifully choreographed dance numbers and such memorable

songs as *Lullaby of Broadway*, *We're In The Money*, *Shuffle Off To Buffalo*, *Keep Young And Beautiful* and, of course, the spectacular title number *42nd Street*.

This timeless, electrifying tale of small town girl to Broadway star is sure to be a hit for Wods.

42nd Street is on at the Playhouse Theatre, Weston-super-Mare, from Thursday, November 12, until Saturday, November 14. Tickets cost £10-£12 - call 01934 645544.

Legend shows his class

Terry Callier, Metropolis

SOMETIMES you just know you're in the presence of a legend.

Soul and jazz singer Terry Callier may not be as well known as his childhood friend Curtis Mayfield, but he is certainly in the same class.

Between 1963 and 1983 he plugged away, releasing half a dozen albums but failing to achieve the recognition he deserved.

It was only in the late 1990s he began to gain more attention, with a helping hand from the singer Beth Orton and more recently Massive Attack.

While Bristol support act Lou Stefari impressed with his acoustic guitar work in a low-key warm-up set, from the second Terry came onto the Metropolis stage, the 64-year-old just oozed gravitas.

His voice is unmistakable, and whether whispering or soaring was never less than passionate.

Backed by six impressive musicians Callier played for nearly

two hours to a mostly mesmerised crowd.

Much like Mayfield, his watchwords are peace and understanding, neatly summed up in the title track of his 1998 come back album *Timepeace*.

But this wasn't a po-faced affair, with some endearingly understated anecdotes breaking up the songs.

The strongest material of the night came from his newest album *Hidden Conversations*.

John Lee Hooker and *Live With Me* are both collaborations with Massive Attack, and retain the group's moody edge to great effect.

Not since Horace Andy has there been a singer who so perfectly matches their music and hopefully there will be more to come on their long-awaited fifth album.

Legends don't always get the recognition they deserve, but you can't argue with a standing ovation.

8/10

SAM RKAINA

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Hole without a doughnut has Jam

Bristol Jam: Theatre Royal, Bristol

THE Great American critic George Jean Nathan was not a fan of improvisation, describing an actor without a playwright as being like a hole without a doughnut.

Bristol Old Vic's new artistic and executive directors, Tom Morris and Emma Stenning, obviously disagree and all this week with *Bristol Jam*, the UK's first festival of improvised performance, set out to prove their point.

This audacious playful mix of spontaneity has achieved many of its aims, attracting audiences of all ages, with performances ranging from improvised versions of *Hamlet*

and *The Seagull* to contemporary jazz and art pop.

I caught up with two very different presentations *Beardyman's Complete and utter shambles* and *Showstoppers! The Musical*.

Double Beatbox champion Beardyman, a man who can conjure up a whole orchestra with his wonderful vocal mimicry, drew a team around him full of technical and musical talents. Between them they made terrific use of an audience who were very ready to be drawn into their antics. It was all so slickly done that you were left with the feeling that quite a bit of rehearsal had gone into making it look so spontaneous.

There seemed to be a great deal of

doughnut around this improvised hole.

The Sticking Place obviously had a framework in place before they set out to create a new improvised musical but from the moment they invited the audience to give them a theme and a title they were flying on a wing and a prayer.

Betrayal was the chosen theme and *F... Me!* won the audiences vote for a title! What emerged in the next 75 minutes was a dramatic musical worthy of a full production.

If you haven't yet caught up with any Jam productions you can do so at 7pm today in a 29 hour improvisation marathon.

GERRY PARKER