# The Stables SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER 2017



**Hastings Fringe** 



Nell Gwynn



Let the Right One In



Flamenco Express



The Thrill of Love



Tom's Midnight Garden

Plus: Bowler Crab's production of "Othello" and Rotary Club of Senlac's "Musical Showcase"



Sponsored by





# Bookings, membership, parking and access

#### Box office: 01424 423221

Mon to Fri: 10.30am to 1pm; 6pm to 8pm. Sat: 10.30am to 1pm; also prior to performances. See website for full details and to book online (no booking fee): www.stablestheatre.co.uk

#### Payment options

Offline: cash, cheques (payable to Stables Trust Ltd), major debit/ credit cards and Stables gift tokens.

Online at www.stablestheatre.co.uk: major debit/credit cards.

#### Ticket collection and postage

Tickets booked by telephone can be collected from the box office in advance or just before the performance. There is a postage charge of  $\pounds 1$  if you wish us to send your tickets by post. When booking online you can also print your own tickets.

#### Refunds and resales

Please check the details on your tickets carefully. We cannot make refunds, but exchanges are sometimes possible. Tickets are accepted for resale only when all other tickets are sold.

#### Group bookings

Group discounts are available for most shows and apply to groups of five or more booking together for the same performance. Usual price is  $\pounds 10$  per person (non-members) and  $\pounds 8$  (members).

#### Membership

Membership costs £10 for your first year when paying by direct debit, £15 in subsequent years. Members enjoy a £5 discount on most shows. Full details from the box office.

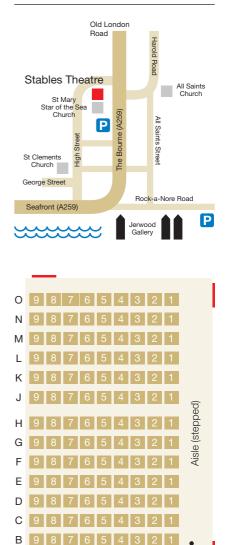
#### Parking

The theatre car park is free to patrons attending the theatre. To avoid a parking charge, please register your vehicle details in the parking book on arrival. There is a public car park on the Bourne and on-street parking, to which regulations apply.

#### **Disability access**

Rows A and B are suitable for disabled people (with mobility, visual or hearing impairments) and their helpers. There are spaces for wheelchair users in row A, which can be accessed without any stairs. There are two steps up to row B. There is a wheelchair-accessible toilet on the ground floor. Platform lifts, for a wheelchair user or one seated person, enable access to the Gwen Watford Gallery and bar.





Stage

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# StageWrite



### Chairman's Column



After a dark and turbulent spring and early summer it is something of a relief to turn to the programme for the Stables for the Autumn of 2017. We have a packed and varied programme – so much that we are having to turn away outside companies who want to book our facilities.

Aside from running this year's programme we have also been busy planning for 2018 and beyond, and already we have in place productions for the first half of the year.

Friday 2 to Saturday 10 February

#### Arsenic and Old Lace

by Joseph Kesselring.

The classic black comedy directed by Leslie Adams.

Friday 9 to Saturday 17 March

#### A Doll's House

by Henrick Ibsen. A new adaptation by Simon Stephens, directed by Sandra Tomlinson, a new director to us but very well known and respected in both Lewes and Eastbourne.

Friday 6 to Saturday 14 April

#### Collaborators

by John Hodge. A dark comedy about Stalin and Mikhail Bulgakov directed by Maureen Nelson.

Friday 4 to Saturday 12 May

#### **Diary of a Nobody**

by George and Weedon Grossmith adapted for the stage by Hugh Osborne and directed by Rob Hustwayte.

A very theatrical version of a classic comic novel, similar in style to *Three Men in a Boat*.

Among other treats to come later in 2018 will be:

Friday 1 to Saturday 9 June

#### **Pride and Prejudice**

Adapted for the stage by Simon Reade, based on the novel by Jane Austen and directed by Carol Hunt.

Friday 28 September to Saturday 6 October

#### It Runs in the Family

Classic farce by Ray Cooney, directed by Lyndsey Meer.

Friday 2 to Saturday 10 November

#### The Wipers Times

by lan Hislop and Nick Newman. A comedy drama based on a true story, marking the end of the First World War and celebrating the spirit of the men on the front line. Directed by Chris Lacey.

# Friday 30 November to Saturday 8 December Season's Greetings

A classic comedy by Alan Ayckbourn directed by Adrian Bowd.

More to come in the next few weeks and months.

We are already planning for 2019, our Diamond Jubilee, with guest visitors, the return of the American Exchange and a special season of plays. One possible idea is to revive a popular production from each of the past six decades, together with four never-performed plays – at least never performed at the Stables. What do you think? Let me or Carol Hunt, our incoming co-ordinator of the Programme Advisory Group, know over the next couple of months.

We will be holding our meeting for 2019 directors later in the Autumn.

**Thank you to our Community Engagement Group** led by Jo Flay, Victoria Fay and Zoe Morgan who, this year, have organised a number of events including Stables Day, Jackin-the-Green Family Fun Day (see below) and our appreciation of the Emergency Services on 24 June. Many thanks to them and all who supported them. Of course we still need more volunteers – young and old, male and female – to help run the bar, front-of-house and backstage so that all the profits we make can be ploughed back into the work of the theatre, allowing more ambitious productions and the purchase of the latest equipment.

To paraphrase a certain JFK, the centenary of whose birth fell on May 29 this year: "Ask not what your theatre can do for you, ask what you can do for your theatre."



# StageWrite



### Nell Gwynn

#### **Opens Friday 29 September**



A new play about a fantastic real-life figure who is a central part of the history of both the British monarchy and British theatre, that premiered at the Globe and went on an Olivier Award-winning West End run. How could I say no?

Of course, once I'd said yes,

the realisation of just how much needed pulling together to make this wonderful play come to life hit home. Particularly once I'd seen it performed by the English Touring Theatre and realised just how vibrant and fast-paced it really is. All hugely daunting. But I am lucky enough to have a rather talented partner in Viv Wormley-Healing who has taken on the task of teaching the cast to sing and dance. I have also been lucky to have met Kate and Raeph, our musicians, who not only know heaps about 17th-century music but also have their very own hoard of period instruments. They have sourced original music from the period and added a real touch of authenticity to the production. To add to all this, I have assembled a fantastic cast of very talented actors, lead by Zola Thomas as Nell, complemented by our wonderful back-stage team. Good fortune indeed!

And now a little about the central character. Eleanor "Nell" Gwyn was one of the first women to appear on the English stage and she went on to become the long-time mistress of King Charles II. Called "Pretty, witty Nell" by Samuel Pepys, she is regarded as the living embodiment of the spirit of Restoration England and has become a folk heroine, in the true meaning of the word. The daughter of "Old Ma Gwynn", a brothel keeper, Nell went on to become an orange seller at the Drury Lane Playhouse where she was discovered by actor-manager Thomas Killigrew who put her on the stage. Her natural talent blossomed and she went on to become the most famous actress of her day. Nell was also famed for her wit and she could hold her own in the company of the likes of John Dryden and Aphra Benn as well as amongst the court of Charles II. One example of her wit recounts the day in when her coach was passing through the streets of Oxford and a mob, mistaking her for her rival Louise de Keroualle (somewhat unflatteringly known as the Catholic Whore), greeted her with many a ripe epithet. Nell put her head out of the coach window. "Good people", she said, smiling, "you are mistaken; I am the Protestant whore."

### Let the Right One In

#### Opens Friday 20 October



#### I'm not that. I live on blood. But I am not ... that ... can I come in?"

From Dracula and Nosferatu to the Vampire Chronicles and the Twilight Saga, vampire stories have been a feature of our bookshelves and TV screens since such things existed.

Vampire legends go back millennia: the Hebrews, Mesopotamians, ancient Greeks and Romans all had tales of demonic entities and blood-drinking spirits – precursors to "modern" vampires. Bram Stoker's Dracula was said to have been influenced by Vlad the Impaler, the 15th-century prince of Wallachia who was imprisoned in Transylvania, and whose alleged acts of cruelty were published in Germany, at the time becoming one of the first "bestsellers" in Europe.

That said, *Let the Right One In* is a vampire story of a very different blood-type. John Ajvide Lindqvist's novel, *Låt den rätte komma in* (2004), became a bestseller in his native Sweden before receiving acclaim when translated into several other languages, including English. The Swedish film version, penned by the author (2008) quickly gathered a cult following that saw it remade as the American/British film *Let Me In* (2010). Lindqvist again adapted the piece with his Swedish stage version (2011) whilst the English stage version we will present was adapted by playwright Jack Thorne and directed by John Tiffany. This premiered at the National Theatre of Scotland in 2013 before a sell-out run at London's Royal Court, a West End transfer to the Apollo Theatre and a New York outing at St Ann's Warehouse.

Thorne's adaptation focuses on the close bond between the two misfit teenagers as their friendship blossoms into a tentative romance. This is a dark and visceral coming-ofage vampire love story tackling issues of teenage loneliness, bullying and sexuality.

In every incarnation, this is a story that has exerted the hold on me that so many experienced from this compelling tale: its expansion of the vampire myth into a piece that presents a world simultaneously brutal yet hauntingly beautiful.

I am delighted to have assembled a magnificent team to bring this story to life, and hope you will join us for what I hope will be a truly unique and memorable experience.

There will be blood.

Time Wormley-Healing

# StageWrite



### The Thrill of Love

#### **Opens Friday 17 November**



In 1955, when newspapers revelled in the trial and execution of Ruth Ellis, this director was 13 years old. I can't pretend that it impinged much on my childhood in St Leonards – a deeper impression had been made by the Coronation of a new Queen

and by the ascent of Everest three years earlier.

*Oklahoma!* was on at the Ritz cinema and at home we had a brand-new television set! All a world away from the seedy milieu of London nightclubs.

But the events playing out in Knightsbridge, the Old Bailey and Holloway prison signalled a profound change in the conscience of English society. Murder is no longer a "hanging offence"; that is, we don't kill people who have killed. But then it was generally believed that killers must be executed: doesn't the Bible prescribe "an eye for an eye"? But there had been cases where "murderers" had been executed, only for doubts to be cast on their guilt, or their capacity for responsibility. The examples of Timothy Evans, hanged in 1950 for a crime almost certainly committed by John Christie; and Derek Bentley, described in a medical report as "borderline retarded" but nevertheless hanged in 1952, began to trouble legal and public consciousness.

Arguably, Ellis had acted under extreme provocation in killing a man who had brutally beaten her. Evidence suggested that she had been incited to shoot Blakely by another of her lovers. Had this rival given her the gun and abetted the crime? And was she mentally competent at the time of the shooting? A petition was raised to acquit, or at least to commute the sentence to life imprisonment. It failed, and on 13 July 1955 Ruth Ellis was hanged – the last woman in England to be executed. There were, subsequently, further death sentences passed on murderers, male and female, but most were commuted to "life" and in 1965, following much argument and pressure, the law concerning execution for murder was repealed.

When "Thrill" came to my attention two years ago, and after reading *A Fine Day for a Hanging* (an account of Ruth's unhappy and unfortunate life and the events which led up to the murder, trial and execution), I knew that I must try to bring it to the Stables. I am grateful for being able to do so.

### Tom's Midnight Garden

#### Opens Friday 15 December



"Then and now ... time no longer." "And the grandfather clock still went on striking, as if it had lost all count of time; and, while it struck, Tom, with joy in his heart, drew the bolt, turned the doorhandle opened the door and walked out into his garden, that he knew was waiting for him."

We are so thrilled to be directing this year's Christmas production *Tom's Midnight Garden*. It is a vibrant adaptation, first produced at London's Unicorn Theatre in which David Wood worked closely with Philippa Pearce to develop a play that echoed the novel perfectly, "capturing the essence of one of the best children's stories ever written." *Time Out* 

Following our recent Stables productions *1066: Three Kings* (Michael Punter's specially commissioned play for the ROOT 1066 Festival) and *The Railway Children*, we are looking forward to producing this timeless classic – a familiar story that will appeal to audiences of all ages. The challenge for us has been to combine two time periods on stage, to create a magical world where the Victorian era parallels the 1950s – and we will be working with actors of all ages to create our visually compelling production.

As directors, we have worked together over a number of years both with our own theatre company and at the Stables Theatre. In addition to recent productions we have also collaborated on *Of Mice and Men* and *What The Butler Saw*.

Having both trained at Mountview Theatre School and been professional actors and directors as well as teachers, we have a similar outlook on performance and expectations and enjoy giving actors the freedom to develop their roles whilst creating a strong ensemble and creative team.

Whether you are familiar with the story or are discovering it for the first time *Tom's Midnight Garden* is certain to weave an enchanting spell. This production promises to be a highlight of the 2017 Christmas season and an unforgettable theatrical event.

Niall Whitehead and Barbara Ward



#### Tuesday, 5 September, 7.30pm 94 Strings Harp Duo

Harpists Fiona and Alex met in 2014, bonding over a mutual appreciation of harp repertoire, cats and gin.



Tonight they amalgamate their individual styles of playing, alongside their own solo work. Tickets £10: £8 concessions

Wednesday 6 September, 7.30pm Sparkly Bird



Written by Kat Lee Ryan and performed by members of the Fabulous Red Diesel, this unique jazz fusion of song, and dance is the deeply moving emotional journey of a young woman's battle with depression.

Tickets £10; £8 concessions

Thursday 7 September, 7.30pm The Cocktail Pianist

A play written and performed by Mike Hatchard



*The Cocktail Pianist* is a one-man play that premiered at the Brighton Festival 2017 to rave reviews.

Bernard Halfpen, the almost invisible pianist at the Luton Skyport Hotel, reveals a dark past: an illogical fear of numbers, untimely seductions, too much education, a dabble into alcoholism, and an inability to cope with piano competitions.

Musically compelling, often amusing, always deeply serious and tender. Tickets £10; £8 concessions

#### Friday 8 September, 7.30pm Yes, Prime Minister



The UK is in crisis. Debt is spiralling, unemployment is on the rise and a fragile coalition cabinet is at breaking point. But salvation may exist in the form of a complex pipeline deal with the oil-rich country of Kumranistan that would entitle the government to a multi-trillion pound loan. *Presented by Bootcamp Productions.* **Tickets £10: £8 concessions** 

# Saturday 9 September, 7.30pm Oh, Carol!



What would you do if someone you cared for fell in love with the wrong person? When Martin throws a dinner party to introduce his not-so-typical girlfriend to his friends and family, comedy and catastrophe all ensue. *Oh, Carol* contains strong language and adult themes.

Presented by the Ad Hoc Players. Tickets £10; £8 concessions

Sunday 10 September, 7.30pm Private Peaceful By Michael Morpurgo Adapted by Simon Reade



"I've had nearly 18 years of yesterdays and tomorrows, and tonight I must remember as many of them as I can. Tonight, more than any other night of my life. I want to feel alive!" Private Peaceful relives the life of a voung WWI soldier awaiting the firing squad at dawn. He looks back at his short but joyful past: his exciting first days at school: the accident in the forest that killed his father; his adventures with Molly, the love of his life: and the battles and injustices of war that brought him to the front line. A Hastings Fringe Festival production. Tickets £10: £8 concessions

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Friday 29 September to Saturday 7 October at 7.30pm Sunday 1 October at 3pm · No performance Monday Members £8 · Adults £13 · Under-18s and groups £10 · £2 off first night tickets



# Nell Gwynn

by Jessica Swale

"They've disgraced our trade. Ruined our art. They've put a woman on the stage."

It is 1660. The Puritans have run away with their drab grey tails between their legs. Charles II has exploded onto the scene with a love of all things loud, French and sexy. And at Drury Lane, Nell Gwynn is selling oranges for sixpence. Little does she know who's watching.

Nell Gwynn charts the rise of an unlikely heroine, from her roots in Cheapside's Coal Yard Alley to her success as Britain's most celebrated actress, and her hard-won place in the heart of the king. But at a time when women are second-class citizens, can her charm and spirit protect her from the dangers of the court? And at what cost?

This exhilarating take on the heady world of Restoration theatre premiered at Shakespeare's Globe in 2015. It transferred to the West End in 2016 going on to win the Olivier Award for Best New Comedy.

> A Stables production directed by Tim Wormley-Healing

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Friday 20, Saturday 21 and Tuesday 24 to Saturday 28 October at 7.30pm Members £8 · Adults £13 · Under-18s and groups £10

right

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in

by Jack Thorne

Oskar is a lonely, bullied teenage boy living with his mother on a housing estate at the edge of town; Eli, a girl who has just moved in next door. She doesn't go to school and never leaves the flat by day. Sensing in each other a kindred spirit, the two quickly become devoted friends. What Oskar doesn't know, however, is that Eli has been a teenager for a very long time. As their friendship deepens, a series of sinister killings shock the neighbourhood.

Jack Thorne's adaptation of *Let the Right One In* is based on the novel by John Ajvide Lindqvist (*Låt den rätte komma in*, 2004) and the subsequent Swedish-language film version.

This is a truly rare piece of theatre; an enchanting, brutal vampire myth and coming-of-age love story.

Please note: this play contains scenes of violence and is not suitable for those of a nervous disposition.

A Stables production directed by Matt Turpin

Sunday 29 October at 7.30pm · Members £8 · Adults £13 · Under-18s and groups £10

# Flamenco Express

The flamenco chemistry in this show combines the elemental forces of powerhouse dancer Emilio Ochando, a phenomenon from the Ballet Nacional de España and Ballet Nacional de Cuba, who took London apart in March this year; vocal virtuoso Juan Debel whose incredible versatility has taken him across five continents; sizzling soloist La Joaquina who combines vulnerability and tenderness with violence and aggression; and guitar maestro Chris Clavo who began playing the guitar at 14 and studied with flamenco maestros Carlos Heredia, Diego Amaya and Pepe Justicia.

We know roughly how big the bang will be, we just don't quite know the colour!

Friday 3 and Saturday 4 November at 7.30pm Tickets £15

Bowler Crab Productions present
Othello
by William Shakespeare

*Othello* is William Shakespeare's iconic tragedy about racism, betrayal, envy, love, hate, lust, revenge, repentance, manipulation and murder.

The play is one of Shakespeare's finest pieces, focusing on the love story of the black military general, Othello, and his white wife, Desdemona, who are ridiculed for their relationship because of racial prejudice. Othello's standard bearer, lago, is the antagonist of the plot, manipulating everyone around him to bring Othello's reputation down by any means possible.

This intense and gritty tragedy is brought to life by

Bowler Crab Productions, a professional Shakespearean theatre company based in East Sussex.

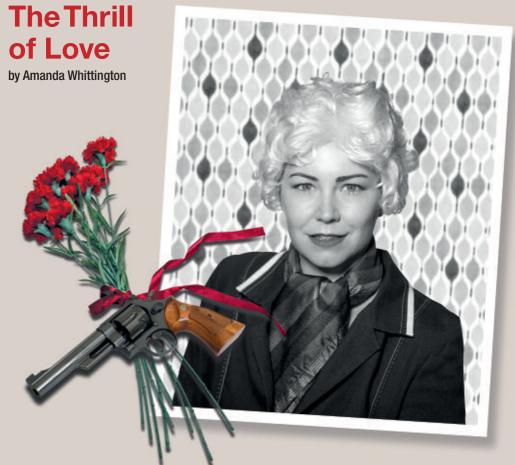
Whilst edited down for a more consumable running time, this production of *Othello* nonetheless sticks strictly to the original Jacobean language and storyline, a tale which (even 400 years after its first performance) is particularly relatable to our modern day society.

*Othello* is the company's 11th Shakespearean production to date since its founding in 2013 and will be on tour in Sussex and Kent throughout October, November and December 2017.

More Bowler Crab info at: www.bowler-crab.com.

Friday 17 to Saturday 25 November at 7.30pm Sunday 19 November at 3pm · No performance Monday Members £8 · Adults £13 · Under-18s and groups £10 · £2 off first night tickets





It is tempting to conclude that when

Ruth Ellis shot and killed her lover, David Blakely, he got no more than he deserved ... nevertheless, Ellis was tried, convicted of murder and executed.

From the outset, Ruth's life was on a fatal trajectory. Following an unhappy, abusive childhood and a series of mundane jobs, she chose the seedy world of "glamour" modelling and work as a hostess in London nightclubs.

A succession of bad choices took her from a married

American GI, to an alcoholic husband, to the fatal relationship with racing driver Blakely – and it was this almost manic obsession for Blakely which precipitated his murder.

Amanda Whittington weaves a fascinating fabric around the known facts, incorporating bitter humour and profound sympathy. You can decide for yourself, not whether she was guilty – the facts and her own admission convicted her – but whether Ruth Ellis deserved to die.

A Stables production directed by Rodney Figaro

Wednesday 29 November · Doors and bar open 6.30pm Tickets £19.50 to include finger buffet





An evening featuring a delicious Christmas finger buffet and a feast of music featuring some of our finest local singers and musicians, plus a grand charity raffle with lots of valuable prizes.

#### 7.45pm: CHIARA VINCI

Soprano Chiara Vinci (right) and pianist Laurence Panter present a selection of music from early 20th-century classical composers. A journey of exquisite music and storytelling through the art of french song.

#### 8.15pm: MELODIANS CHOIR

The Melodians Choir (above) love all music and include many different styles from popular classics to show tunes and pop songs, and some unusual items you may not have heard before.

#### Interval

#### 9.15pm: MARIE WHITE

Despite her youth, singer/songwriter Marie White has performed at parties, weddings and open mic nights – and can sometimes be found busking to great acclaim.

#### 9.45pm: RX SHANTYMEN

There has been a renaissance in Shanty singing in recent years. Hastings in general and the RX Shantymen in particular have been at the forefront of this movement, entertaining audiences wherever they perform – and having a good time doing it!

#### The Rotary Club of Senlac is proud to present

# **A Musical Showcase**

Doors open 6.30pm with the first course finger buffet served at 7pm and the second served at 8.40pm.

Funds raised tonight will be divided equally between the Seaview Project and St Michael's Hospice. December 2017

Les In



Friday 15 and Saturday 16 December at 7.30pm.

Saturday 16 and Sunday 17 Dec at 3.00pm. Tuesday 19 to Saturday 23 Dec at 7.30pm Members  $\$8 \cdot Adults \$13 \cdot Under-18s$  and groups  $\$10 \cdot \$2$  off first night tickets



# **Tom's Midnight Garden**

Adapted for the stage by David Wood from the book by Philippa Pearce

As the old grandfather clock chimes thirteen, a lonely boy creeps down the Victorian staircase. He walks out of the 1950s and into another world, another time and a garden that shouldn't exist. Are the people there ghosts – or is the boy the ghost?

This beautiful and poignant story introduces the audience to Hatty, an orphan from the 1800s and Tom, a boy from the 1950s. Moving between time periods, Tom meets characters from Hatty's world and shares in her sorrow, joy and love of life. Adapted from the award winning novel, this haunting story explores friendship, love and loss, and enduring human spirit.

*Tom's Midnight Garden* is a magical, enchanting story which will delight audiences young and old.

"At last we get a Christmas play with a superb storyline which has everything – magic, suspense, ghosts, wonder!" *Birmingham Post* 

A Stables production directed by Niall Whitehead and Barbara Ward



# **Stables Art Gallery**

For opening times see page 2 (box office hours)



Monday July 31 to Saturday 30 September

### TN35 5PB Not Quite Over the Hill

One street overlooking Hastings Old Town enjoys more than its fair share of resident artists, designers, photographers and makers. They have come together to produce this eclectic collection of work.

## Monday 2 October to Saturday 25 November Baked, Boiled and Fried

Unexpected images from local artist lan Francis.

### Monday 27 November to Saturday 23 December Beneath the Twisted Cedar Tree

A winding path can lead anywhere. For digital artist Moxy Child it might be the shape and texture of a plant in the garden - or a twist in a familiar fairy tale.





# Diary page: what's on at a glance





#### September

Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat Sun	5 6 7 8 9	7.30 7.30 7.30 7.30 7.30 7.30	Hastings Fringe: 94 Strings Harp Duo Hastings Fringe: Sparkly Bird Hastings Fringe: The Cocktail Pianist Hastings Fringe: Yes, Prime Minister Hastings Fringe: Oh, Carol! Hastings Fringe: Private Peaceful
Fri Sat	29 30	7.30 7.30 7.30	Nell Gwynn Nell Gwynn

#### October

Sun Tue Wed Thur Fri Sat	1 3 4 5 6 7	3.00 7.30 7.30 7.30 7.30 7.30 7.30	Nell Gwynn Nell Gwynn Nell Gwynn Nell Gwynn Nell Gwynn Nell Gwynn
Fri Sat Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat	20 21 24 25 26 27 28	7.30 7.30 7.30 7.30 7.30 7.30 7.30 7.30	Let the Right One In Let the Right One In
Sun	29	7.30	Flamenco Express

#### November

Fri Sat	3 4	7.30 7.30	Othello Othello
Fri Sat Sun Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat	17 18 19 21 22 23 24 25	7.30 7.30 3.00 7.30 7.30 7.30 7.30 7.30	The Thrill of Love The Thrill of Love
Wed	29 embe	7.00	A Musical Showcase

Fri	15	7.30	Tom's Midnight Garden
Sat	16	3.00	Tom's Midnight Garden
Sat	16	7.30	Tom's Midnight Garden
Sun	17	3.00	Tom's Midnight Garden)
Tue	19	7.30	Tom's Midnight Garden)
Wed	20	7.30	Tom's Midnight Garden
Thu	21	7.30	Tom's Midnight Garden
Fri	22	7.30	Tom's Midnight Garden
Sat	23	7.30	Tom's Midnight Garden



Information contained in this publication believed to be correct at time of going to press but may be subject to change



The Bourne, Hastings TN34 3BD Telephone 01424 423221 www.stablestheatre.co.uk