

Director



CARDIFF
CUTS^{PG.6}

BEVERLEY KNIGHT

STARRING IN

AM 55 60 70 80 100 120 140 160 180

MEMPHIS

THE MUSICAL

BROADWAY'S TONY AWARD-WINNING 'BEST MUSICAL'

FROM THE EDITOR

Protecting talent is becoming difficult. It's as hard as catching Peter Pan's shadow or putting the Genie back into the bottle.

These are dark days as holding on to the theatre is becoming increasingly more difficult.

We are seeing cuts across theatres all over the United Kingdom. Directors are finding it harder to fund their productions. Actors can't find enough work. Musicians are fighting to perform. The culture in this country is taking a harsh beating, is it likely to survive?

Director is about discovering everything possible there is to know about culture across the country.

In this month's issue Director has looked at the people behind theatre. We want to know who directs the show? Who starred in the show? We want to know who is affected by the cuts.

2014/15 will also bring another year of ambitious actors exposing themselves to the real world auditions for a further education in music and drama.

Is that the only step to achieving your theatrical goals? We've searched for an answer in this issue.

We love to explore how we are evolving through technology and media, on stage and off. Take a look at some of our research into the technology we associate ourselves with every day but never think about.

With 2015 on the horizon we have a lot to ponder and prepare for. Let Director show you what is current and important in arts and culture.



Photo by Helene Marie Svelokken Paalsrud

Michael Amatt, Editor

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To save £50m Cardiff council have cut funds to the arts in Cardiff. Does this effect anyone? Was there a better way to save money?

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What's coming up in Cardiff. When is the next art exhibition? Who's performing in the next musical? Who's acting in the next play? Find out in our events page.

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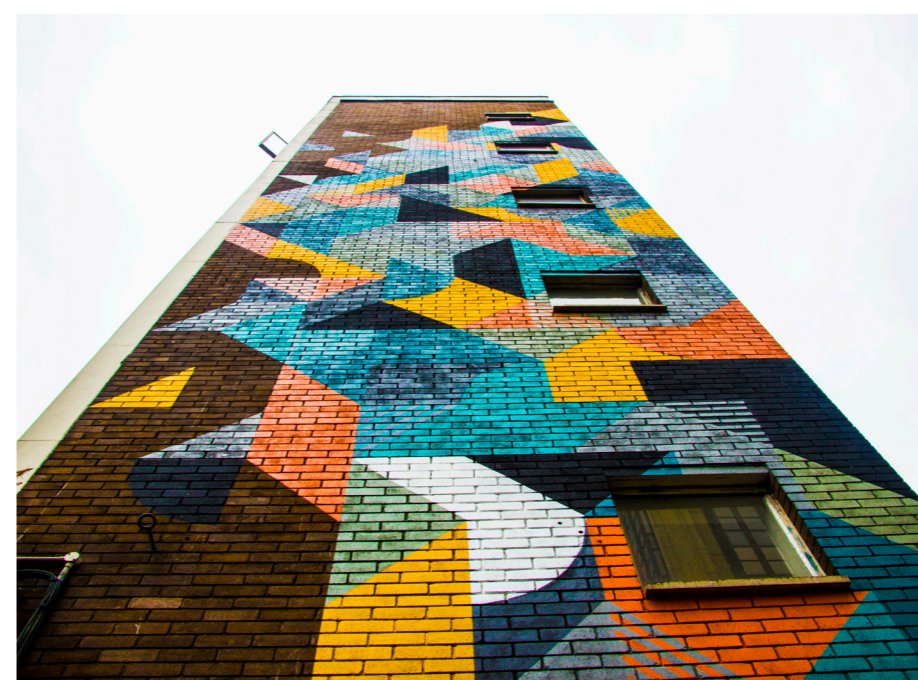
See which talented professional we have picked from the stage we call Earth. Find out their story and how they made it in the arts industry.

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We hate it when our nerves get the better of us in performances and auditions. Find out how to battle against them.

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We use technology as an aid through some of the chores in life, but how would we have looked 100 years ago? How much further will we advance?



Empty Walls

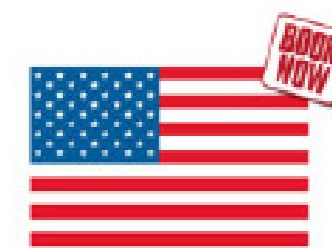
The Empty walls project has taken further steps this year In Cardiff. Last year we saw some amazing designs in and around Roath. The Dragon on the side of The Poets Corner. The woman with her hair blowing in the wind on the wall of Guy Christian Salon. The designs this year are spectacular and beautiful. See if you can find some of the artworks that have transformed Cardiff into a huge space for artists to paint on to.



BILLY ELLIOT THE MUSICAL



LONDON
'A THEATRICAL MASTERPIECE'
DAILY MAIL



NORTH AMERICA TOUR
'MUSICAL OF THE DECADE'
TIME MAGAZINE

WINNER 10 2009 TONY AWARDS® INCLUDING BEST MUSICAL

Theatricut!

By Michael Amatt

Some are born wealthy, some achieve wealth, and some have poverty thrust upon them.

Imagine a boardroom in a tower block of offices; grey walls, grey suits, grey emotions. The councillors file in and slump into their seats with a look of despondency. They stare at a mountainous range of paperwork, signatures, stats and statements. After hours of nays and ayes, a decision is made and your most beloved interest has been cut.

The performing arts in Cardiff have taken quite the hit as the council made cuts to save £50 million across 2014/15. Among the cuts are Sherman Cymru that lost all of its £160,000 grant, Hijinx touring company that do work with the disabled, lost £8,000. The Chapter Arts centre also lost £13,000 of its subsidy. The council is also making decisions to release ownership of either St David's Hall or the New Theatre.

Of course, in reality these cuts are supposed to benefit the city. In an economy like ours, cuts are presented as a way of safeguarding the future. However, there is a feeling of fraudulence and deceit when such a large amount of money is withdrawn from an area of culture that regularly provides joy, confidence and talent.

Music and drama within the performing arts are rather often made to be the martyr in government cuts, it creates a ripple effect across performances, jobs and lives and this is how.



Cardiff has a lot to boast about in the music industry. It is a city of musical excellence with a purpose built opera house, conservatoire, arena for global live performers. It houses the BBC National orchestra and opera of Wales and has a history of huge musical talent.

So with all this to show off, is it possible that music in Cardiff experiences any fallbacks?

Vicky Guise, 27, studied a master's in music at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. She is an incredibly talented flautist that works both part-time in performance and in music education.

For a freelance performer, jobs can be lurking around every corner, but more often that not there is no knowing when they will present themselves.

"The cuts aren't just affecting the company that loses money, it's everybody else that uses that environment", Vicky said. "It

Music

carries on through lots of organisations. It's bound to have an impact on the amateur groups that hire spaces that are limited financially".

The cuts have created a damaging ripple affect across performance in Cardiff. Within these, the council cut allowances to the Welsh Proms.

Now in its 29th year, the Welsh Proms present a diverse range of musical talent in Cardiff every summer.

"The council and Cardiff as a whole are trying to portray Wales on a national scale", Vicky added. "They were very big on pushing NATO, but when orchestras come from all over the world and they restrict it, it restricts what they are trying to do with other areas showcasing Wales".

The Welsh Proms do not only feature national and international orchestras, they also give up and coming orchestras from across the United Kingdom the chance to promote themselves and gain lots of publicity.

Tom Jones first felt the music as a child, immersing from the curtains in his house to perform dazzling shows for his family.

As a girl, Shirley Bassey sang her heart out in the school choir. When a child feels a passion for music, it should be nurtured and encouraged.

Music education in Cardiff has experienced large cuts meaning that

lessons are becoming increasingly more expensive. A large quantity of mainstream, respected and talented musicians came from working class backgrounds. Their musical passion that began as children, in this day and age, would not have been able to grow and develop into careers.

As a person who has seen the benefits of a strong music education, Vicky told Director, "The opportunities it gives you and the confidence it can bring you, can just knock on to every other part of your education".

Vicky stated, "I know those cuts had to be made, but I think groups like councils and other departments in the government see arts as a quick money saving cut. It never seems to be just taking a bit out of the pot".

These decisions have to be made for the greater good, but there is a common feeling amongst individuals in the arts, that a more careful consideration could be taken before implementing cuts, to see if there is a better way of working with organisations to save money.

"The cuts aren't just affecting the company that loses money, it's everybody else that uses that environment"



Photo by Port Studio

Drama

Cardiff is a set for Doctor Who, Sherlock and Casualty, meaning that all the city is a stage, each man and woman playing their part.

St David's Hall presents a huge array of comedy; the New Theatre and Sherman Cymru produce multitudes of excellent plays. Theatre in Cardiff, at a glance, seems to be at a constant high, which raises the question, is it experiencing any damage from the cuts?

Steve Bennett, 24, executive director of Clock Tower Theatre Company studied Drama at the University of Glamorgan. He is a creative, intuitive director and performer, working on a range of excellent quality projects and in performance education.

The theatre companies and spaces that have lost money in the cuts have not necessarily lost all of it. The council funding was only part of their income, but what was this money going towards? Steve told Director, "The biggest affect it has on things, is jobs. Majoritively that money will go in salaries and wage bills. It's the people that run places. What is the second biggest expense after the building? It's the people".

For one single play to make it to the stage, a whole team of people must work together. On an amateur scale the actors must first find and afford a space to rehearse. The director must find a suitable and affordable theatre to stage the show. The administration team must create adverts to boost ticket sales. Stage managers have to create an effective setting, lights and sound.

Every city needs something to boast. A sports team to show off, an orchestra to send worldwide, theatres to produce sell-out shows.

Having a rich culture isn't a necessity to a city, but the

attention and tourism skyrockets when the culture is highly flavored and encouraged.

"People say you either can or you can't sing", Steve said. "In Wales, everyone can sing, it's like it's in the blood". He added, "To take such a large amount from a City that is rich on the arts, to take that £50 million from there so publicly, something positive will have to be done with it".

The council may be releasing ownership of St David's Hall. It's situated in the centre of the city, it's a purpose built concert hall and performance venue, but it is in serious need of care and development.

Steve's thoughts are, "I think if a company like Live Nation took it on, that can fill five thousand seats in the Motorpoint Arena, it could be a wake up call for it".

Anger, sadness, joy, are a small fraction of the emotions that can be so perfectly understood, captivated and fashioned on the stage.

For children, the performing arts can be a gateway to a deep understanding of literature, phycology, health, fitness and so much more.

Steve has worked with children

The ripple effect is a strong force. Even if one single job is cut, the services that job provided will be altered. The people that service helped will be affected.

Should we thrust the arts upon people or should it be something

"...to take that £50 million from there so publicly, something positive will have to be done with it".



Photo by Jonathan Dunn

in various workshops with Sherman Cymru and his thoughts are, "The thing the cuts affect is the people and if the people get taken away then there's no one to run workshops.

There's no one to administrate and organize trips. If those people get taken away, then so do those opportunities for the kids".

Theatres in Cardiff have taken a tough blow and they will be working harder than ever to produce sell out shows. Steve added, "Theatre, arts, music need to be financially savvy. We need to put on things people will want to come and see".

He did say however, "If people want the arts to happen, they need to do their bit by filling the seats. If they don't come, it will stop happening".

they discover for themselves? In these monotonous meetings where drastic cuts are made to save the future by picking at the present, is there a protection for the arts? We need engagement for them continue, and perhaps that is where we need to look next.

NOW AND FOREVER.



CATS™

Coming up in Cardiff



Wales Millennium Centre. 06 Nov 2014 - 11 Jan 2015

The Lion King begins performances at the Millennium Centre in just a few weeks - and while ticket sales have been record-breaking, there are still good seats available for some performances.

Set against the majesty of the Serengeti Plains and to the evocative rhythms of Africa, Disney's The Lion King is a worldwide theatrical phenomenon. It has been seen by over 70 million people worldwide and is still drawing sell-out crowds at London's Lyceum Theatre in its 15th year.

This award winning production will begin its long anticipated run at the Centre in November 2014.

A spectacular visual feast, this adaptation of Disney's classic film transports audiences to a dazzling world that explodes with glorious colours, stunning effects and enchanting music. At its heart is the powerful and moving story of Simba - the epic adventure of his journey from wide-eyed cub to his destined role as King of the Pridelands.

Puccini Madama Butterfly.



St David's Hall. Monday November 10th 7.30pm

Opera & Ballet International proudly presents an Ellen Kent Production featuring The Chisinau National Philharmonic Orchestra with international guest soloists. Starring the Korean soprano Elena Dee.

Back by overwhelming public demand, this award winning, fully staged Opera returns with exquisite sets and includes a spectacular Japanese garden and fabulous costumes including antique wedding kimonos from Japan.

Highlights include the melodic Humming Chorus, the moving aria One Fine Day and the unforgettable Love Duet. Sung in Italian with English surtitles

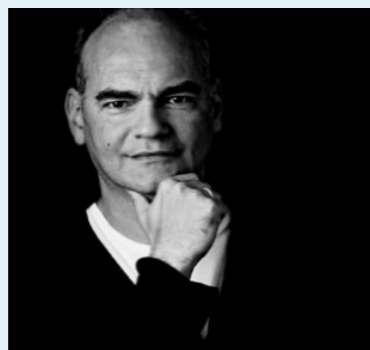
Steve Hackett - Genesis Extended.



St David's Hall. Thursday October 30th 7.30pm

Legendary guitarist Steve Hackett has announced his Genesis Extended Tour, featuring a selection of classics to include some of the gems he had to sacrifice on the Award winning Genesis Revisited live shows.

Welsh National Opera Orchestra-International Concert Series.



St David's Hall. Friday October 31st 7.30pm

The Symphony is the culmination of a concert which is itself a journey from darkness to light, beginning Beethoven's brooding Grosse Fugue and Zimmermann's Trumpet Concerto, evoking the struggle against oppression.



Wales Millennium Centre. 08 Dec 2015 - 10 Jan 2016

Based on the award-winning DreamWorks animation, Shrek The Musical is the perfect family show for Christmas 2015. Join our unlikely hero and his loyal steed Donkey as they embark on a quest to rescue the beautiful (if slightly temperamental) Princess Fiona from a fire breathing, love-sick dragon. Add the diminutive Lord Farquaad, a gang of fairytale misfits, and a biscuit

with attitude, and you've got the biggest, brightest musical comedy around! Featuring all new songs as well as cult Shrek anthem I'm a Believer, Shrek The Musical brings all the much-loved DreamWorks characters to life, in an all-singing, all-dancing extravaganza.



Be Gracious

When we are born, our minds are like gardens. There are seeds that have been planted by our parents that will grow into ideas, talents and passions. There are acres of land ready for new seeds to be planted and as we mature, so does the garden. Our aim is to succeed in our endeavours and grow mighty forests that we can eventually admire and take pride in.

As a child, Grace Firth from Bolton, Greater Manchester, planted a performance seed.

She elegantly learnt to play the piano, which rooted itself and spread into a harmonious and remarkable ability to sing. Amongst this she crafted acting skills, enough to reduce audiences to overwhelming joy and empathy.

Grace told Director, "I have always wanted to be a performer or entertainer whether that's in music or acting. It changes on a year-to-year basis depending on what current job I am in".

Through her secondary school and sixth-form education, Grace harnessed her talents and displayed wondrous performances through music and Drama. She played the lead roles in High School Musical, We Will Rock You, The Tempest, Fame and many more productions. She has a proud collection of memories, she added, "one that sticks out was performing scenes from Billy Elliot on the actual West End Stage where the original show is performed".

After taking a year out to focus on her abilities and strengthen them, she decided to audition for drama school. She was not

successful in this endeavour but the whole process adds to her experiences. She didn't see any of this process as a mistake, "I believe that mistakes are a part of learning and growing stronger", she explained.

In our lives we won't succeed every single time. Our gardens will experience events that plough the seeds from their deep roots and force us to give up, or start again stronger and wiser.

Grace took a moment, and started again. She teamed up with her partner Lee Meadows, auditioning and performing across the country. She was then offered a singing contract at a hotel in Lanzarote. She stated, "I was very excited. Some people would see it as cocktails and tanning sessions however I was excited to actually work as a musician and expand my skills".

Our growth and development through life will never work like a straight line. There will be bends, twists and plenty of loops.

Two years on and Grace in her singing duo, 'His and Hers' (pictured right), now works in a hotel in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt. The duo delights the guests with an incredible range of songs, using their brilliant dedication and musical charm.

Grace wanted to leave our readers with some wise words, and so she said, "Be as versatile as possible. If you are a singer, try and learn an instrument to support yourself. If you are a musician maybe take some dance lessons. From doing this you can slot into more jobs and contracts. Try not to put your career into one basket and take any opportunity you can".

By Michael Amatt

"I was excited to actually work as a musician and expand my skills".



Photos Canon Slade



Photo creative-camera





“In your own time” By Michael Amatt

The idea of judgement by strangers creates knots in our stomach.

The overwhelming silence on a stage can buckle the knees and freeze the mind. Even a second of eye contact can make us feel like we're having an x-ray, scanning through the depths of our anatomy. All these feelings can occur having just entered an audition, but they do not have to.

Anyone who has spent a length of time on stage and enjoyed it knows how addictive that feeling is. The heart pumping at record speed, the chills across the body, as if someone not only has walked across your grave, but they are also enthralling themselves in a full tap routine across it. The pure passion and excitement for a performance stays with an actor for their entire career.

Once again, budding actors from across the country will travel up and down, and side to side, wishing and hoping for a chance to prove themselves in auditions for drama schools and universities.

Some will stand up and search through every emotion in their soul, turning a monologue into a piece of art. Others will dance so delicately that they appear to be flying through the air. A few will create sweet melodies and a dazzling diction to make the simplest song spring to life.

Through all these people, there is something they all share and it challenges our structure. It snakes through our physique starting at the feet. It begins cold, moves upwards and forces the knees to feel weak, as it climbs up it makes the back tense and rigid. It squeezes itself around the heart and presses itself against the lungs. Climbing higher it absorbs all the moisture. Finally, it approaches the brain preparing to leave, before it does, it leaves a drop of doubt.

This beast appears when we least expect; however, there is a cure.

When you are preparing for your audition, do some research about the character you are portraying; the song you are

singing; even the dance you are performing.

When you step in front of the panel, take a sip of water, a breath and relax your body - back straight, feet shoulder length apart.

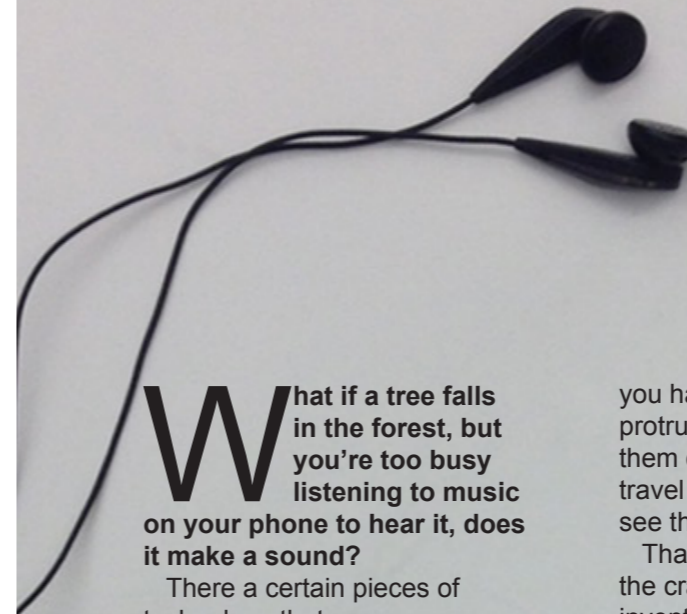
Remember what you are about to perform and picture your character.

If you make a mistake DO NOT worry, just carry on. If you need to take a moment to collect yourself, take a breath and find your place.

DO NOT rush to a finish; enjoy your performance and let the panel see just how much you love your art.

Even failure is an experience and a valuable lesson. DO enjoy the process and learn from it. Never let the nerves control your body. Find a way to relax that works for you. DO NOT just wish and hope. Make it happen, and see where the confidence can take you.

How does that sound?



What if a tree falls in the forest, but you're too busy listening to music on your phone to hear it, does it make a sound?

There are certain pieces of technology that we see every day but don't really notice. We don't walk down the street, stop and feel our bodies turn, our heads pivot, eyes widen and jaw drop at the sight of a cash machine.

Which is quite odd when you think about it, a great big hole in the wall dispensing money.

We don't faint at the exhibition of a metal box racing down the road. These are just examples of technology that we have become so used to and comfortable with that we never second guess them.

Music, sound, headphones and speakers are on show every day, but are they as subtle?

Imagine you've travelled back in time one hundred years. You're walking down the road in London in 1913. You decide to pop in your headphones and listen to some classical music to get you into the oldie timey mood. People are looking at you oddly, why? You're wearing a dark suit with a black top hat, you're fitting in so well.

They're pointing and look scared. Oh no! The headphones,

you have two pieces of wire protruding out of your ears. Take them out quick! Maybe time travel was a bad idea, but do you see the point?

That situation could point out the craziness of thousands of inventions.

Try to really think about headphones and speakers. Your computer or music device is sat in your pocket or on your desk, and with the click of a button, you're at the centre of a symphony. Adele is serenading you to sleep. The Proclaimers are screaming Scottish miles at you. Elton John has written a whole song for you and Carly Simon is calling you vain!

Music and sound may be part of the most expensive market in the world but they are also incredibly boundless. They are restricted in thousands of ways but they are also available on so many networks and platforms.

Music has thousands of genres, styles and audiences, but with such a wide demographic there is one feature that links punk lovers with Justin Bieber fans as well as classical enthusiasts and dub step ravers, one simple detail, sound. Clarity, pitch, rhythm and so much more have to be perfect for us to enjoy music. One hundred years ago, people would be happy to hear music from a squeaky

gramophone, but in this day we demand precision.

The market for headphones and speakers is humongous. There are designer brands of headphones worn as fashion. There are studio designs used in professional industries for editing and recording. Speakers range from the size of a tea pot to the height of a stadium. The mass effect of bass can either vibrate your coffee in the morning or make the ground shake.

Most of the people we pass each day will be wearing headphones, listening to their music, podcasts, maybe even their recorded memoirs.

There is constant development to the visual media but how are headphones, speakers and sound going to develop? Maybe we eventually have such high quality sound that we will be able to hear Elvis's knee shaking in old recordings.

Perhaps the sound from speakers will be so flawless that instead of seeing live bands we will just gather in stadiums to listen to an album. What will the future sound like?

M. Les Misérables

