

Welcome to the first of two festive E-zines, with details of what's on during December.

And we kick off with a reminder about the Buddle Arts Centre's Christmas show for children and families. "**THE STORY GARDEN**", specially created by Buddle Arts Centre-based company State of Play, celebrates the bicentenary of Hans Christian Andersen. Welcome to a magical place where stories come to life, where a pea can reveal a real princess, where emperors sport daring new clothes and a tinder box might just contain unimaginable treasures. Performances are from 8 to 22 December (23 shows in all) - details in the Events Summary at the end of this E-zine. Tickets £6 (£5 concs & Buddle Arts Centre Supporters Card holders) from the box office 0191 200 7132. For details of school and group bookings phone State of Play on 07887 566919 or e-mail Natalie@stateofplay.info

Whatever else you do in December, make sure "The Story Garden" is on your Christmas shopping list!

To add to the atmosphere, AdHoc Gallery has been turned into a **PUPPET DEN** - a specially designed space to exhibit some of the most interesting and quirky puppets that have appeared in theatre productions here at the Buddle Arts Centre and in other venues around the UK. The Puppet Den has been created by set designer Andy Stephenson, who has been involved in some of the top children's theatre in the region through his work with Monster Productions and Northern Stage - both companies have loaned puppets for this exhibition, along with Norwich Puppet Theatre.

"The Story Garden" is part of **STOOGIE!** - the Buddle Arts Centre's programme of the best in clowning, mask, puppetry and object theatre. Also in the season is puppetry for adults with Blind Summit's "Low Life", set in the world of deadbeats and losers (7 Feb 2006); "A Clean Sweep" by Plutot La Vie, a brilliant blend of clowning, dance and visual storytelling (21-25 Feb 2006); and for the little ones there's Tell Tale Hearts with "A Story for all Seasons", mesmerising installations and engaging puppets in a show loosely based on "The Ugly Duckling" (29-31 March 2006). For a programme leaflet, contact 0191 200 7132 or e-mail the.buddle@northtyneside.gov.uk

The Buddle Arts Centre's final music event of the year is on Saturday (3 Dec), when local favourites **THE CAFFREYS** return - but please note that at the time of writing we are very nearly sold out, so if you don't want to miss out on what is guaranteed to be a great live experience contact the box office on 0191 200 7132 to see if there are any tickets left or to put your name on the reserve list.

Another sell-out performance caps an excellent autumn at the Buddle Arts Centre - Monster Productions' children's show "Hogwash" played to packed houses all last week, and there was barely an empty seat to be seen during the folk/roots gigs by Seth Lakeman, Francis Dunnerly, Nick Harper and Martyn Joseph. Incidentally, Seth Lakeman is one of a number of our 'regulars' who've been nominated for the 2006 **BBC RADIO 2 FOLK AWARDS** - he's in the running for Folk Singer of the Year, up for Best Duo are Chris While & Julie Matthews, and Johnny Dickinson and Martin Simpson are competing for Musician of the Year. The awards will be announced in February, and E-zine will keep you posted of the outcome.

Buddle Arts Centre **SUPPORTERS CARD** members are receiving their new 2006 cards about now - which makes it a good time to suggest that, if you are not already one of the 950 or so Cardholders, you give yourself an early Christmas present and join them! Membership is free, and Cardholders get discounts on ticket prices for selected events, invitations to all AdHoc Gallery exhibition openings, and regular mailings. To join, either fill in an application next time you're in the Buddle Arts Centre, or e-mail your name, full postal address and telephone number to the.buddle@northtyneside.gov.uk with 'Supporters Card request' in the subject box.

Very much in the Christmas spirit are two local events coming up -

The **ST NICHOLAS FESTIVAL** in Whitley Bay town centre is now in its seventh year, and this Friday & Saturday (2 & 3 Dec) offers a wide ranging programme - French and Northumbrian markets, music and street entertainment from the likes of North Tyneside Steelband and Whitley Bay Pantomime Society, and a schools' lantern procession. Full details from North Tyneside's town centres website in the 'latest news' section.

Weblink: www.tynetown.co.uk

The following weekend (10 & 11 Dec) sees the return of the ever-popular **VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS MARKET** in Northumberland Square in North Shields. As well as a plethora of stalls for the ideal Christmas gift, there's a full programme of musical entertainment on the bandstand, organ music, fairground rides and street entertainment including Punch & Judy, plus activities in the library. Check the website for full details.

Weblink: www.victorianmarket.co.uk

There's a busy programme ahead at **SAVILLE EXCHANGE** in North Shields - box office for all these events is 0191 252 3505 -

Tomorrow (1 Dec), there's **CONTEMPORARY JAZZ** with guitar duo James Birkett & Rod Sinclair, drawing on the acoustic guitar repertoire of jazz and blues artists of the 1920s and 1930s such as Eddie Lang, Lonnie Johnson and Carl Kress. Presented by Jazz Action, the show starts at 8pm - tickets £6 (£5 concs).

A **LUNCHTIME RECITAL** featuring pianist Evgeny Samoilov is on Friday (2 Dec, 1pm). Born in Russia, he has won many international competitions and performs throughout Europe. For this recital, he'll be performing works by Tchaikovsky including "The Seasons" and "Sleeping Beauty". Tickets £4.

On Tuesday (6 Dec), Saville Exchange hosts NTC Touring Theatre's Christmas show, "Alex, the Warrior and the Winter Star" - see below for details.

Then **JAZZ AT THE EXCHANGE** is back on 12 December, with a special "Santa Claus Blues" festive bash featuring the West Jesmond Rhythm Kings, the debut performance of Band of Brothers, blues and boogie piano from Mac Rae, an outbreak of Clarinetitis, and much more. Starts 8pm, tickets £9 (£8 concs).

And what is now an annual event for the Christmas season returns on 13 December, with "**CHRISTMAS BRASS & CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT**". Presented by the acclaimed ensemble Sounds of Trumpets with the Vivace Singers, a traditional yuletide music programme is in store. Starts 7.30pm, tickets £11 (£9 concs).

As mentioned earlier, **NTC TOURING THEATRE** are bringing their new seasonal show to North Tyneside. In 2003, their Christmas production "Alex and the Warrior" was a big hit at the Buddle Arts Centre and other local venues - well, now Alex is back and the story continues in "Alex, the Warrior and the Winter Star". Having been granted his wish to conjure his favourite game character, the Warrior, from out of his computer, Alex is delighted when he returns. But the Warrior's old enemy the Skarg have followed him, with a plan which could change the face of the world for ever. Will Alex be able to stop their evil plans - find out in an adventure full of magic, danger, music and laughter. There are five performances, at Saville Exchange, White Swan Centre in Killingworth, St John's Church in Percy Main and Springfield Community Centre in Forest Hall - details in the Events Summary at the end of this E-zine. Ticket details from the box office 0191 252 3505.

The big Christmas offering at **WHITLEY BAY PLAYHOUSE** is Birmingham Stage Company's production of "The Jungle Book", which starts on Tuesday and runs until Saturday (6-10 Dec). This is the first major theatrical version of Rudyard Kipling's classic tale, and is touring prior to a West End transfer. This magnificent adventure for all the family comes from the company who have previously brought "James and the Giant Peach", "George's Marvellous Medicine" and "Tom's Midnight Garden" to delighted Whitley Bay audiences. Contact the box office 0191 252 3505 for ticket details - performance times are in the Events Summary below.

A reminder that you can get details of the full Whitley Bay Playhouse programme, including cinema listings and events they stage at other venues such as Saville Exchange - and you can also join their mailing list online as well.

Weblink: www.whitleybayplayhouse.co.uk

If you're looking for a special Christmas gift, then pop along to **NORTHERN PRINT STUDIO** on North Shields Fish Quay. They have a wide range of original, limited edition prints for sale by local, national and international artists, with prices starting at £20 - and they can also arrange for purchases to be framed up until 16 December. While you're there, check out their current exhibition, by leading Japanese printmaker **KATSUNORI HAMANISHI**, who is recognised as one of the foremost mezzotint artists in the world. His work displays a wide range of tones and depth of colour, achieved through painstaking burnishing of the plate, and enhanced by the use of metal plates and gold leaf. The limited edition prints in this exhibition are also for sale, from £130 framed. For more info and opening times, contact the Studio on 0191 259 1996 or e-mail enquiry@northernprint.org.uk

In the next E-zine, due out in a couple of weeks, we'll continue our Christmas round-up, and look ahead to 2006 - including news of why a grant from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund means the Buddle Arts Centre will be getting the builders in!

EVENTS SUMMARY

1 Dec, 8pm - James Birkett & Rod Sinclair, Saville Exchange (0191 252 3505)

2 Dec, 1pm - Evgeny Samoilov, Saville Exchange (0191 252 3505)

2 & 3 Dec - St Nicholas Festival, Whitley Bay town centre (0191 200 5733)

3 Dec, 8pm - The Caffreys, Buddle Arts Centre (0191 200 7132)

6 Dec, 1.30pm - Birmingham Stage Company "The Jungle Book", Whitley Bay Playhouse (0191 252 3505)

6 Dec, 7pm - NTC Touring Theatre "Alex, the Warrior and the Winter Star", Saville Exchange (0191 252 3505)

7 Dec, 1.30pm - State of Play "THE STORY GARDEN", Buddle Arts Centre (0191 200 7132)

7 & 8 Dec, 10.30am & 1.30pm - Birmingham Stage Company "The Jungle Book", Whitley Bay Playhouse (0191 252 3505)

7 & 8 Dec, 7pm - NTC Touring Theatre "Alex, the Warrior and the Winter Star ", White Swan Centre (0191 252 3505)

8 & 9 Dec, 10.30am & 1.30pm - State of Play "THE STORY GARDEN", Buddle Arts Centre (0191 200 7132)

9 Dec, 10.30am & 7pm - Birmingham Stage Company "The Jungle Book", Whitley Bay Playhouse (0191 252 3505)

9 Dec, 7pm - NTC Touring Theatre "Alex, the Warrior and the Winter Star", St John's Church Percy Main (0191 252 3505)

10 Dec, 2pm - State of Play "THE STORY GARDEN", Buddle Arts Centre (0191 200 7132)

10 Dec, 2.30 & 7pm - Birmingham Stage Company "The Jungle Book", Whitley Bay Playhouse (0191 252 3505)

10 Dec, 7pm - NTC Touring Theatre "Alex, the Warrior and the Winter Star", Springfield Community Centre (0191 252 3505)

10 & 11 Dec - Victorian Christmas Market, North Shields Northumberland Square (0191 200 8909/1211)

12 Dec, 8pm - West Jesmond Rhythm Kings, Saville Exchange (0191 252 3505)

12-15 Dec, 10.30am & 1.30pm - State of Play "THE STORY GARDEN", Buddle Arts Centre (0191 200 7132)

13 Dec, 7.30pm - "Christmas Brass & Carols by Candlelight", Saville Exchange (0191 252 3505)

16 Dec, 10.30am - State of Play "THE STORY GARDEN", Buddle Arts Centre (0191 200 7132)

17 Dec, 2pm - State of Play "THE STORY GARDEN", Buddle Arts Centre (0191 200 7132)

19 Dec, 11am & 2pm - State of Play "THE STORY GARDEN", Buddle Arts Centre (0191 200 7132)

20 Dec, 11am & 1.30pm - State of Play "THE STORY GARDEN", Buddle Arts Centre (0191 200 7132)

21 & 22 Dec, 11am & 2pm - State of Play "THE STORY GARDEN", Buddle Arts Centre (0191 200 7132)

7 Feb '06, 8pm - Blind Summit "Low Life", Buddle Arts Centre (0191 200 7132)

21 & 22 Feb '06, 11am & 2pm - Plutot La Vie "A Clean Sweep", Buddle Arts Centre (0191 200 7132)

23 Feb '06, 11am - Plutot La Vie "A Clean Sweep", Buddle Arts Centre (0191 200 7132)

24 & 25 Feb '06, 11am & 2pm - Plutot La Vie "A Clean Sweep", Buddle Arts Centre (0191 200 7132)

24 Mar '06, 8pm - John Etheridge, Buddle Arts Centre (0191 200 7132)

29-31 Mar '06, 10am, 11.30am & 1.30pm - Tell Tale Hearts "A Story for All Seasons, Buddle Arts Centre (0191 200 7132)

EXHIBITIONS SUMMARY

8-23 Dec - Keith Armstrong & Peter Dixon "Like the Spanish City", Whitley Bay Library (0191 200 8500)

Until 17 Dec - Katsunori Hamanishi "Mezzotints", Northern Print Studio (0191 259 1996)

Until 8 Jan '06 - Nathan Coley "Show Home", British Art Show 6, Baltic (0191 478 1810)

Ongoing - Stephen Gregory "To Many Rivers", St Mary's Lighthouse (0191 200 8650)

HAVE YOU GOT NEWS FOR US?

Let us know if you've got anything to tell us about arts events and activities in North Tyneside and we'll do our best to include it - e-mail to the.buddle@northtyneside.gov.uk

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