

ARTS & CULTURE MENU 12

Performing Arts

Birmingham's Alexandra Theatre will be showing a socially distanced pantomime like never before, with its production of [Robin Hood](#) (with support from The National Lottery). Stars Craig Revel Horwood as the Sheriff of Nottingham, **15-31 January**.

Lockdown Theatre has a special Zoom event [For One Knight Only](#), on **29 November** (7-8.30pm) with Sir Kenneth Branagh talking to Dame Judi Dench, Dame Maggie Smith, Sir Ian McKellen and Sir Derek Jacobi. There is live Q&A and the event is to raise money for the charity, Acting for Others. Tickets: £45.

The **Arena Theatre**, Wolverhampton, is launching its first online, in-house production, Charles Dickens' classic Victorian ghost story, [Dark Tales in Winter: The Signal-Man](#), newly adapted for the stage – and livestream. Showing **18-20 December** at 7.30pm; on-demand from the 21st December - 4th January, tickets: £10.

This **Saturday 28 November** from noon Oxfam is presenting an online music festival: [Voxjam](#), hosted by Shaun Keaveny (BBC Radio 6 Music). It supports emerging talent and is run by volunteers, with all ticket sales going towards ending world poverty. Special guest Andy Bell (Ride, Oasis, Beady Eye, GLOK). Tickets: £5.

Beethoven fans can watch members of the **City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra** [play his Septet in E flat, Op. 20](#), on video: 6pm, **26 November 2020 until 1 January 2021**. Tickets: £5. From **3 December-1 January** at 6pm, you will also be able to hear [the Vaughan Williams Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis](#), along with some Bartok and Ireland (£10).

Singers, [VOCES8](#) present 16 concerts, LIVE From London. Featuring a starry line-up from the UK, the US and across Europe, the festival also supports the VOCES8 Foundation's global message of music education for all by giving young performers from across the world a stage for their singing. Their ['Bach for Christmas' with the Gabrieli Consort](#) will be performing in St John's Smith Square, London, between **25 December 2020** and **Wednesday 6 January 2021**.

Ballet fans can watch fifteen year old US dancer, [Ava Arbuckle at the World Ballet School Day 2020](#) here.

Elvis Costello brings together a 'Guitar Pool' in this recording of [Spectacle](#) – with Norah Jones, Kris Kristofferson, John Mellencamp and Rosanne Cash: a mix of songs and chat.

Ex Cathedra singers perform an online concert of music by Tallis, Byrd and other [composers of the English Renaissance](#). Recorded live to camera at the CBSO Centre on Wednesday 25 November, you can watch on **Sunday 29 November, 4pm** and help to create a sense of occasion during this UK lockdown. But you can begin watching the concert at any time to suit you until **13 December**. It will be available

across much of the world. For tickets (10 euros) Click [BOOK NOW](#) (or [BOOK UNTIL](#)) where you will be taken to the Idagio webpage for the concert.

Museums and Galleries

Through the Art Fund's [website](#), you can search for actual and online museum and gallery exhibitions, such as this [Rembrandt](#) exhibition at the National Gallery, in the company of Jeremy Paxman. Or this [Hokusai](#) film, exploring the legacy and impact of legendary Japanese artist's most iconic image, The Great Wave, as seen at the British Museum in 2017.

You can also have a virtual tour of the art in the Royal Academy's [Summer Exhibition](#) by clicking on the blue link.

And More..

Why not learn something new this winter? Here are some free or inexpensive options:

- The adult learning charity [WEA](#) offers a huge variety of short courses in arts, crafts, performing arts, languages, history and culture. For instance, this five week course [How to draw what you see: Observational Drawing \(starts 12 January 13.15\)](#); or two sessions on [Easy to Make Christmas Crafts](#), starting **27 November** at 13.00; or an [Introduction to Collage for Wellbeing](#) on **1 December**. There is a workshop on [Writing Seasonal Stories](#) on **2 December**, giving writers tips on how to write stories infused with the spirit of this festive season; [Spanish for Beginners](#); [The Art of Christmas](#): artists' interpretations of the Christmas story (**6 December**); [Drama for Wellbeing](#) (from **11 January**), [Dancing for Joy](#) starting **14 January**.
- **Future Learn** offers hundreds of [free online courses](#) from top universities and specialist organisations. Explore film, music, journalism, photography or theatre. Join online arts courses from renowned film schools, universities, cultural institutions. Learn from the experts in creative arts and media. With this [Film-making course](#) you can learn from award-winning filmmakers how films go from script to screen with this film production course from the BFI Film Academy. Or learn [Jazz Piano](#) in a Goldsmiths University of London course. Get an introduction to the wonderful world of playing jazz piano and learn to play and improvise on the blues and a jazz standard.
- [Skillshare](#) also offers free online classes, including sewing, knitting and jewellery-making, but also topics such as graphic design, fine art, [Animation for illustration](#) and [Song-writing and composing melodies](#).

Surely there must be something here for everyone!

Sending you our warm wishes for the Festive Season and for the New Year.

Do let us know what you would still like to hear about. Many of the links in earlier Culture Menus are still active (particularly Issue 11), so do check them out.