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MUSIC

Tribute act to go Gaga on the big stage



Treat for fans of guitarists at Institute

THERE'S a treat for music fans at Blackwood Miners' Institute on Tuesday, July 23, at 7.30pm, when The Fingerstyle Collective perform as part of their national tour.

Four of the world's finest acoustic guitarists from Canada, the US and the UK take to the stage in a not-to-be-missed show.

Don Alder is a modern-day acoustic guitar Renaissance man.

Don's phenomenal finger style playing and rich voice captivate and he brings an unparalleled dynamic intensity to the stage.

Dan LaVoie is one of the few musicians in the world actively composing and performing on the rare harp guitar, bringing a unique sound and texture to fans of acoustic music.

Justin King is recognised as a pioneering guitarist for his percussive tapping playing style, consisting of a variety of influences ranging from Flamenco to Celtic music.

Stuart Masters combines Western and Indian classical, folk, and Celtic influences to create a unique, hybrid style, with pure, haunting vocals.

The Fingerstyle Collective will be performing at Blackwood Miners' Institute on Tuesday 23 July at 7.30pm.

Tickets cost just £8 in advance (£11 on the day) and are available from the box office on 01495 227 206 or online at www.blackwoodminersinstitute.com

Turin Brakes at The Globe

DUBBED 'the group that made folk-rock fashionable again', acclaimed duo Turin Brakes will play Cardiff as part of a long-awaited autumn tour.

Formed in London in 1999, Turin Brakes is the combination of two friends Olly Knights and Gale Paridjanian, who took influence from artists such as Sebadoh, Truman's Water, Prince, and The Black Crowes.

Their indie-laced melodic musings and perfectly hummable tunes have earned them more than one million international record sales and 10 charting singles in the UK, including a top five hit with their song Painkiller (Summer Rain).

Often compared to Coldplay and Travis, they are currently signed to the hugely respected Cooking Vinyl label, which has represented the likes of The Prodigy and Blondie.

They have toured consistently over the past decade, delivering countless esteemed performances including numerous appearances at Reading/Leeds Festival, and building an exceptionally devoted fan-base.

On stage the duo are boosted by band members Rob Allum and Eddy Myer.

Turin Brakes play Cardiff Globe on November 3. For ticket information visit seetickets.com

Ahead of her return appearance to St David's Hall next month, Lady Gaga tribute DONNA MARIE talks to ANDY HOWELLS about going Gaga

FEW tribute acts can claim to sell out Cardiff's St David's Hall, but that's exactly what Grangetown born and raised Donna Marie did last year when she was invited to bring her Lady Gaga show to the venue.

"It was pretty cool," said Donna Marie.

"I was so nervous, I didn't think we'd sell a hundred tickets never mind over a thousand."

"It's quite shocking as you stand on the stage looking out," she continues,

"What's amazing is you know they've bought those

tickets just to see you, not like a festival or an event where there's loads of acts on.

"It's just my act they've come to see that and I find that very exciting."

Donna Marie has always had performing in her blood, from accompanying musicians as a singer in her parents' pub as a youngster through to stage appearances as an Olivette in The Olive Guppy School of Dance.

She also did a stint as a club singer but it was Lady Gaga that would ultimately change her career path.

"I was working in a bar in Cardiff," said Donna

Marie. "On a Wednesday evening we used to have theme nights.

"Gaga was playing at the Motorpoint Arena so they asked me if I would dress up as her to host the evening. I was like 'yeah not a problem', then two weeks before they asked if I would learn a set of songs.

"I didn't have time, so I suggested they get a tribute which they did and on the evening I remember looking in the mirror and thinking 'wow you look quite good as Gaga'.

"The tribute went on and did their bit and I sort of stood there next to the manager and said 'if I was doing this I'd have maybe done that different' and the manager said 'why don't you do it?'

"My husband ran through the crowd and said, 'you could be doing this' and we discussed it on the way home.

"I woke up the following

morning feeling pretty determined with this life I could see for myself and that's what happened."

Donna Marie has gone on to be a big attraction with her Lady Gaga show, which returns to St David's Hall on August 2.

Critically acclaimed as the world's best Lady Gaga tribute and impersonator, she will recreate some of Lady Gaga's most memorable performances such as the 'spark bra' moment at the Much Music Awards in 2009 and routines from The Monster Ball and Born This Way tours.

"I try to give a total experience with some of her new and old stuff," added Donna Marie.

"Everyone's got a certain part of Lady Gaga they remember, I just hope that I choose one of the best parts for that person when someone comes to see."

Donna Marie has researched and recreated

every aspect of the Gaga phenomena - from album tracks to stage costumes via dance routines and of course the look.

Her likeness to the star even got her into a bit of bother with Lady Gaga's management.

"We had a letter to say that some photos on my logo were of her," said Donna Marie.

"Obviously we argued the point and had to prove it was me.

"It was quite exciting, but at least we knew we were doing our job correctly"

Donna Marie even wears a replica of Gaga's spark bra for one dance routine.

She said: "If it's an outdoor event you've got to make sure you're facing the right way, it could burn your eyebrows off."

Catch Donna Marie in The Lady Gaga Experience at St David's Hall on August 2. Call 029 2087 8444 for ticket details.



BRIGHT SPARK: One of Donna Marie's Lady Gaga costumes

An evening of sparkling pop music

Acclaimed as the world's best Lady Gaga tribute and impersonator, Donna Marie takes you on a journey recreating some of Lady Gaga's most memorable performances such as that "Spark Bra" moment at the Much music awards 2009. This tribute show will leave even those who are not Gaga fans screaming for more.

We have a pair of tickets up for grabs for the show on August 2, at St David's Hall, Cardiff. For a chance to win, just tell us at which of the following awards ceremony did Lady Gaga unleash the Spark Bra? a) More; b) Much; c) Many. Send your answer, name

and address on a postcard to Gaga Competition, Editor's PA, South Wales Argus, Cardiff Road, Newport, NP20 3QN or you can enter by text. Start your message with GAGA, leave a space and then send your answer, name, address and telephone contact details to 80360.

Messages cost 50p plus your normal operator text charge. Service provided by Newsquest Media Group. Terms and Conditions at www.southwalesargus.co.uk/competitions. Closing date: July 28.

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