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**Media Release**

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**Spring Season bursts into life at Theatre Royal**

**The Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds has launched its Spring season – in its 50th anniversary year or reopening - which features a huge variety of productions and performers.**

Drama features heavily in the season with a host of plays by well know playwrights including *The Business of Murder* by Richard Harris (2-7 March) starring Robert Gwilym, John Godber’s *Bouncers* (12-14 March*), The Mist In The Mirror* by the author of *The Woman in Black*, Susan Hill (17-21 March), Alan Ayckbourn’s *Absent Friends* (2-6 June) and celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Agatha Christie Theatre Company is *And Then There Were None* (3-8 August).

Another highlight will surely be Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, being brought to the Theatre Royal by Tara Arts in association with Queen’s Hall Arts and Black Theatre Live from 14 to 18 April.

Tara Arts bring Indian movement and live music to Shakespeare’s classic text, offering a powerful contemporary take on his darkest play.

Two of the country’s legendary entertainers take to the stage to recount tales from their decades at the top of their professions.

On 2 May, entertainer Jimmy Tarbuck OBE delivers a fantastically funny evening of comedy.

Join him as he uses photos and video footage to take his audience on a nostalgic trip down Memory Lane with a wealth of stories including being at school with John Lennon and playing golf with Bing Crosby.

And on 21 June Sir Michael Parkinson CBE returns to grace the stage in conversation with his son, Mike to celebrate a career spanning over 50 years.

He has interviewed over 2000 of the most important cultural figures of the 20th and 21st centuries and he looks at his journey from a pit village to one of the nation’s best loved personalities.

Or why not enjoy a girls night out with Claire Sweeney’s *Sex In Suburbia* combining comedy and music for a perfect night out (30 April).

Children are being well looked after with some lively, colourful productions including a retelling of the classic *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* (19-20 February), *Robin’s Winter Adventure* (21 February) *How The Koala Learnt To Hug* (8-9 March), *Stick Man* (7-8 April) and *I Believe In Unicorns* (5-9 May).

Two more children’s classics are brought to life in *The Wind In The Willows* (30-31 March) and *The Elves And The Shoemaker* (26-28 May) while lovers of the Disney hit film *Frozen* can come and sing-a-long with the film (9 April).

A Children’s Festival is planned for Bury St Edmunds from 22 June to 4 July when the Theatre Royal and other venues will be packed with shows, workshops and music events.

We also welcome back Theatre Royal favourites Ballet Theatre UK with their production of *Aladdin* (15-16 June), OperaUpClose with *The Marriage of Figaro* (24 February) *A Barber of Seville* (20 May) and Lipservice return with the hilarious *Withering Looks* (28 May).

Music fans can enjoy the Nick Ross Orchestra’s *Sounds of the Glenn Miller Era* (15 February) *Big Girls Don’ Cry* (21 February) celebrating the music of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons, *Cody Pennington* (4 April), *Hits From The Blitz* (10 April), an homage to four rock n roll greats in *Be Bop A Lula* (11 April), Grammy-nominated singer Stacey Kent (29 April) and a tribute to Abba in *Thank You For The Music* (22 May).

Comedy comes in many forms including *The Only Way Is Downton* (27 February) courtesy of Luke Kempner, *One Man Breaking Bad* (10 March), *Steve Richards’ rock n roll Politics Elections Special* (1 May), Dylan Moran (9 May) and Stewart Lee (19 May).

And fans of S*pringwatch* and *Autumnwatch* will want to catch Welsh naturalist Iolo Williams on 1 April who takes us on a wildlife tour of his Welsh homeland while leading environmentalist, George Monbiot launches the inaugural Suffolk Festival of Ideas with his take on climate change including a question and answer session on 18 May.

This packed and varied season is the perfect start to the Theatre Royal’s 50th anniversary year.

Funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to the tune of £65,200 will be used for an exciting new project to celebrate the anniversary of the reopening of the theatre.

Funding will help to tap into local people’s recollections of 1965, when the building was transformed from Greene King’s barrel store to a working community Theatre.

This anniversary project will create an archive of living memories through the collection of stories from the local people and groups who campaigned to reopen it.

A 50th anniversary exhibition at the Theatre will complement a series of talks and tours and the archive collection will be digitalised to be presented online and through social media.

This will all be added to the Theatre Royal’s own archive, as well as those belonging to a range of amateur societies, Greene King and other individuals, thus bringing it all together, for the first time, into one unique archive for the future.

**For tickets and further details please call the Box Office on 01284 769505 or visit** [**www.theatreroyal.org**](http://www.theatreroyal.org)

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**For press enquiries, images or review tickets, please contact Nicki Dixon, Press and Communications Officer via** **nicki@theatreroyal.org** **or 01284 829947.**

**Notes to Editors:**

The Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds is the UK’s last surviving working Regency playhouse.

Under the care of the National Trust, it is a Grade I listed building which underwent a £5.3million restoration in 2005 to return it to its original 1819 layout and design.

The Theatre Royal is owned by the Greene King brewery, leased by the Brewery to the National Trust which in turn leased the Theatre to Bury St Edmunds Theatre Management Ltd to run it as a working theatre.