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Inside

This issue of Time Out in no time at all

Leap year

There's a ton of excellent stuff to look forward to in 2022, not least 'Fashioning Masculinities' at the V&A

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#winning

We had more than 100,000 votes in our Love Local Awards – for the venues and businesses you love

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All good

Never mind Veganuary – these plant-based plates are simply some of London's tastiest dishes

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FASHIONING MASCULINITIES: THE ART OF MENSWEAR AT THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, LONDON, 19 MARCH TO 16 NOVEMBER 2022. IMAGE: PERSHIMITH GIGGION. DUE TO LONDON, ENGLAND. A COLLEGE OF ANTHONY PATRICK HANMER. LOVE LOCAL AWARDS: NICK DOOR. REDBONS: PHOTOPALE. GAMBERT. VEGANUARY: BOB'S SUBS



Life is a cabaret, old chum

Our verdict on Eddie Redmayne's latest tricky stage outing (spoiler: it's good but he's not the best thing in it)

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Chaotic cabbages

Allison Katz's paintings feature naked men in fields of bulls, chickens and quite a lot of troubling brassica

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INTERNATIONAL BRAND OF THE YEAR
CAMPAIGN

Hello, London

Joe Mackertich
London Editor
@j_mackertich

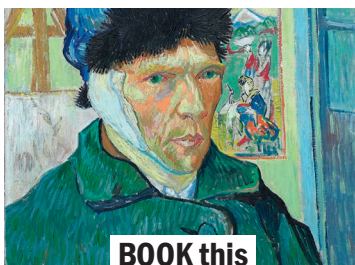


I came out of my house this morning and headed to the station (five minutes away). I said hi to Tony, who owns our local grocery; Gordon, who runs two bars nearby, pedalled past – I said we might be in later; I gave a quid to Nick who sits under the railway bridge every day. Honestly, it was like that scene in ‘The Godfather II’ with Don Fanucci in his white suit.

This is my neighbourhood. In 40 years of living in London, it’s the first place I’ve felt properly part of, not just a squatter. It repeatedly saved me over the last two years: if I felt alone, or alienated, or lost, there was always something happening, someone putting their heart and soul into their business, and there were always people wanting to support them. This issue, we reveal the winners of 2021’s Time Out Love Local Awards, celebrating the London restaurants, pubs, cafés, venues and shops that YOU nominated and YOU voted for (more than 100,000 times). As our cover star, artist Yinka Ilori, says: ‘These places are the fabric of communities. If we take away the independent brands and shops, what is London about?’

Couldn’t agree more, especially on this chilly winter morning.

THE EDITOR’S ESSENTIALS Three things you have to do in London



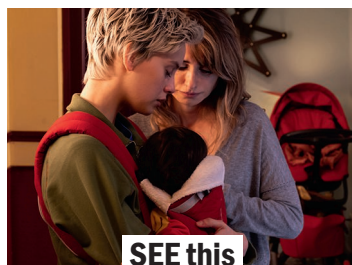
BOOK this

The exhibition ‘Van Gogh Self-Portraits’ at the Courtauld is one of 2022’s hottest art tickets. Hit that booking button right now.



EAT this

The nice people at Happy Face Pizza in Victoria are offering 50 percent off all their artisanal output throughout January – happy times indeed!



SEE this

Pedro Almodóvar’s latest movie, ‘Parallel Mothers’, is a total belter, and I advise you to go and watch it as soon as possible.

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VAN GOGH: SELF-PORTRAIT WITH BANDAGED EAR, 1889, THE COURTAULD, LONDON (SAMUEL COURTAULD TRUST)
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City life

Edited by Isabelle Aron
@timeoutlondon



Why 2022 is the year of making plans

Booking in advance used to be just for organised people, but after almost two years of uncertainty, *Chris Waywell* explains why we could all do with some things to look forward to



REMEMBER BOOKING STUFF?

Well, it's back. Restaurants, bars, exhibitions, trains, a weird countryside B&B, gigs, plays, maybe even – *gasp* – a holiday abroad...

In 2022, I want an inbox full of 'Your booking is confirmed' subject lines. I'm going to go and see 'Francis Bacon: Man and Beast' at the RA at least twice. I saw the last big Francis Bacon show in London and then booked to go and see it in Madrid, which was ace, because there was only one other person in the gallery. I might do that again. Meanwhile, I'm going to book a train to Cambridge and book to see an Ai Weiwei show at the brilliant Kettle's Yard. While I'm about it, I'll book somewhere for dinner.

Here's the thing. Booking ahead is great. Actually doing stuff is great too, of course, but nothing else delivers the mini endorphin rush of booking something. Whether it's a huge festival or a table for two in a local curry house, it always feels like a little lottery win. If I can book tickets to the revival of 'Jerusalem' in April, I'll feel like this year hasn't been in vain. If I can wander round the Royal Festival Hall with a floppy pint before one of the not-quite-loud-enough acts at Grace Jones's Meltdown, I'll have had a happy summer.

There was a time, not so long ago, when booking seemed to be falling out of favour. You went places on a whim and queued. Sometimes they'd let you leave the queue and they'd text you. Joy. But the forward-planning landscape has changed. And

that's a good thing, because who likes queuing? Now my ResDiary email is digital gold dust as I sweep past the poor saps being interrogated by front-of-house staff: '...sorry, have you *booked?*'

The point of a booking is that you're investing a bit of your present self in something yet to come. It's a keyhole glimpse into a brighter future. And that, in a city which always offers endless possibilities, is a great and glorious thing.

So go nuts. Repeatedly hit that big red 'book now' button. See the 'please complete ALL the fields' error messages glow like runway landing lights. Every lame advert – whether for SUVs or bladder-leak protection – urges us to be 'spontaneous' or we're failing to be fun. Well, sod that. This year, we should all have a plan. ■

HYPE DISH
Manteca's glorious pig skin ragù
DISSECTION

What goes into the London plates that everyone bangs on about

NO PARTS OF the pig are left behind at Manteca, Shoreditch's show-stopping nose-to-tail restaurant. 'We try to minimise waste as creatively as we can,' says founder Chris Leach. Its pig skin ragù – a burst of savoury goodness buried in shavings of parmesan – was born as a

solution to use up the skin. 'People have said they could be in the hills in Northern Italy when eating it, but that it also works in Shoreditch,' says Leach. 'It's familiar and new at the same time.' He explains what goes into it. ■ *Chiara Wilkinson*
 → 49-51 Curtain Road. £7.



The texture

'The crispy pig skin is similar in texture to Quavers or prawn crackers. You can eat it however you want, but it's fun if you dip the skin directly into the ragù.'

The crispy skin

'We boil the skin until it's really soft, dehydrate it, and then deep-fry it so it triples in size. It's lighter than pork scratching, and spicy. We season it with chilli and fennel salt.'

The parmesan

'We keep parmesan rinds and ferment them with koji to make an intense parmesan- and-soy-sauce-like seasoning. We add a little to the ragù, and top with parmesan.'

The taste

'The ragù has quite a deep flavour. There's a sweetness to it, but when the chilli salt hits your tongue, there's a real fiery moment too – so there's a lot going on.'

The ragù

'The sofrito vegetable base is cooked for a long time before adding the pig skin, creating a rich taste with a lot of umami. It will stick your lips together when you eat it!'



OLD COMPTON STREET W1

THE STREET THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

'Drag Race UK' star *Kitty Scott-Claus* on working and playing in Soho

WHEN I MOVED to London in 2010, my first gay night out was on Old Compton Street. We went to G-A-Y Bar and drinks were £1.80. I was like a kid in a candy store. It felt like worlds apart from Birmingham.

Once I started doing drag, suddenly I was working around that area. I worked at Freedom Bar, Ku Bar, Phoenix Arts Club – everything led back to Old Compton Street. I got into drag on a whim, for attention and free drinks. Me and my friend did 'The Promise' by Girls Aloud and we were *bad*. We wore black leotards that we'd rhinestoned ourselves, looking really hodgepodge. But with drag it's the delusion that gets you through. I'm a bit more polished these days.

I have so many memories of that street. I told my friend I was going away for 'Drag Race' while walking down it. I've been on so many dates there. I've been on so many nights out. And the number of times I've gone to Balans and had a full english at 4am... If in doubt, Old Compton Street it out. It made me learn that you can be exactly who you want to be and it will be celebrated and loved. You just have to go for it. ■ *Interview by Chiara Wilkinson*

→ Kitty Scott-Claus is performing in 'Drag Domination' at The Clapham Grand on Feb 9.

Explore more of the city at timeout.com/thingstodo

PIG SKIN RAGÙ: BEN ROWE; KITTY SCOTT-CLAUS: MATTY PARKS

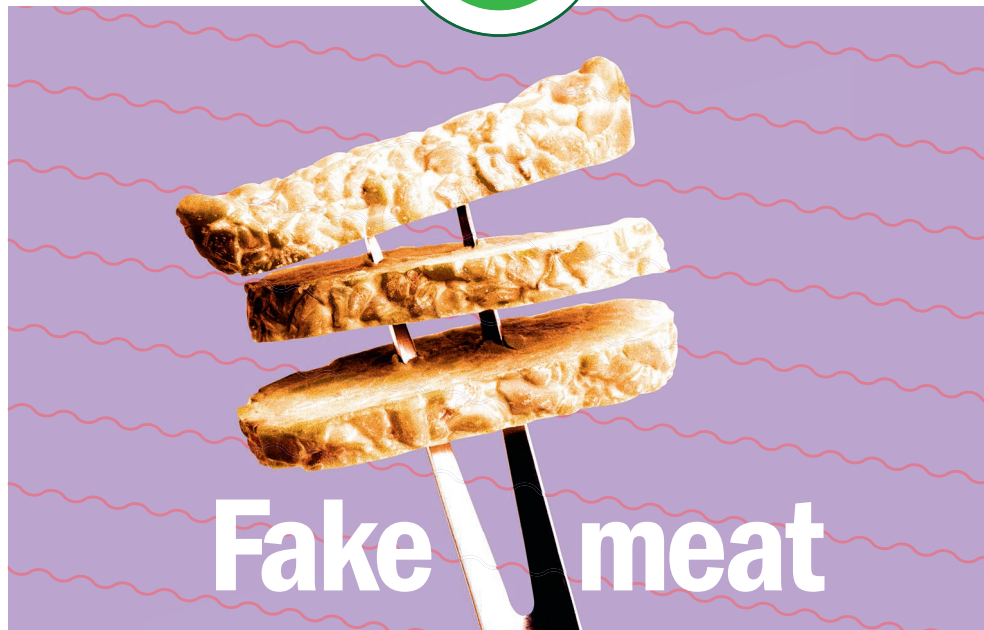
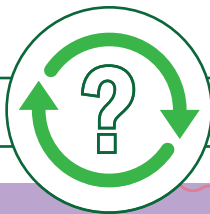
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HOW GREEN IS IT REALLY



Cutting back on meat? We ask experts how sustainable the alternatives are

Wait, all those vegan burgers I've been eating aren't destroying the planet, are they?

Well, no. But it's worth looking into the eco-credentials of meat alternatives. Carbon footprint expert Mike Berners-Lee says that a burger made out of soya, oil, water and flavourings, creates 'dramatically less carbon emissions' than a beef burger. 'It's a colossal loss of efficiency by putting animals in the supply chain,' he says.

Great, I'll just get back to my burger then...

Hold up. For Sustainable Food Trust founder Patrick Holden, things are more complicated. 'It depends how the crop was grown or how the beef was produced,' he says.

Oh... Anything else we need to consider?

Think about where your food is coming from. 'It's not sustainable or secure to be dependent on food

from the other side of the planet,' says Holden. Berners-Lee agrees: 'The classic example is Peruvian asparagus. That has to come here on an aeroplane, which is a carbon disaster.'

Where does lab-grown meat fit into all of this?

Manufacturing carbohydrates or proteins in the lab is around '50 times more efficient with today's technology', says Berners-Lee. From a carbon perspective, he says plant-protein burgers are 'a big improvement on beef'. But ultimately, using solar panels to 'grow' meat in the lab is way more efficient than waiting for natural photosynthesis.

The verdict

Vegan burgers are a solid option if you're trying to eat more sustainably. But eventually, the lab-grown stuff will be good for meat-eaters *and* the planet. ■ *Chiara Wilkinson*

WORD ON THE STREET

The most ridiculous things we've overheard in London this week

'Bacon is overrated. It's so salty and fatty but what else has it got going for it?'

'I just need to invest in my future mouth-health.'

'I think I've found a way to introduce crickets into our normal meals.'

'Who the hell is using Times New Roman in this day and age?'

'If there's a Bavarian honey cake on the menu, order it.'

'You just don't see grappling hooks any more.'

'Fish-and-chip shops don't do dessert, do they?'

'Would you eat a crisp before midday?'

'When would you say that you first became aware of kale?'

'These profiteroles are sweating profusely.'

LONDON MAKERS

Eco takeaway **DabbaDrop** serves up ace vegan curries without plastic packaging. Not in the delivery zone? You can now perk up your meals with its newly launched condiments, including a fiery ginger jam and a gunpowder spice mix.

→ £24 for a set of four condiments. www.dabbadrop.co.uk



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Five really, really good new things to see around the world

As restrictions ease and travel gets simpler, this lot should definitely be on your radar

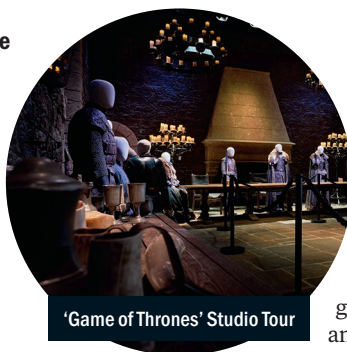
NEW YEAR, NEW stuff to do. Despite the shitshow of the pandemic, a load of cultural venues are opening around the world in 2022. And we're buzzed about it. Here are five of the best places to visit across the globe this year.

1 Budapest's super-stylish music venue

Set to open next week, **House of Music, Hungary** is a massive concert hall featuring two performance spaces, exhibition areas and a library. Perhaps the most striking thing about it is the 100 holes in the roof that allow natural light, trees and sound to infiltrate the venue.

2 New York's Broadway museum

If you're heading to a Broadway show this summer, you may want to get there a few hours early. That way, you'll be able to explore the brand-new **Museum of Broadway**, the first institution dedicated to the history of the Great White Way. The 'backstage' area, which spotlights the unsung pros who make the shows happen every day, sounds especially enlightening.



'Game of Thrones' Studio Tour

3 Belfast's ultimate 'GOT' experience

There's a new Westeros pilgrimage to saddle up your dragon for. The official **'Game of Thrones' Studio Tour** opens next month at Linen Mill Studios outside Belfast, which was a 'GOT' filming location. It will offer props, costumes and sets, like Winterfell's Great Hall.

4 Istanbul's epic art museum

The return of **Istanbul Modern**, the city's museum of contemporary art, in a new state-of-the-art complex designed by Renzo Piano, will enliven a neglected stretch of the Bosphorus waterfront. The museum will have expanded gallery space, along with a cinema and design store.

5 Japan's Studio Ghibli theme park

Gear up for Hayao Miyazaki's upcoming 'final' film at the world's first **Ghibli Park**, set to open in autumn near Nagoya (three hours by train from Tokyo). You can expect rides, shops, exhibitions and gardens, all themed around hit animes like 'Spirited Away'. ■ *Huw Oliver*

CITY

ENVY

Great things that we love in other cities

Gothenburg's hypnosis experiment



The Gothenburg Film Festival has fun coming up with ways to keep moviegoers challenged. Previous editions have seen audience members locked in coffins and sent alone to North Sea islands. This year, the festival is inviting people to look deep into its eyes... and fall into a trance. The Hypnotic Cinema screenings start on January 30 and are billed as a unique experiment in which audiences at the Swedish city's Stora Teatern will be hypnotised before three of the festival's films. The idea is to surrender to the power of the movie. What could possibly go wrong? ■ *Phil de Semlyen*

For more unique looks at London life, head to [timeout.com/news](https://www.timeout.com/news)

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Local C



London artist Yinka Ilori is single-handedly brightening up our city. He tells us why local places are so important. Portrait *Adam Fussell*

'LONDON HAS a willingness to be open to people, and to learn from differences,' says artist Yinka Ilori, who was born and lives in the capital. 'Every place in London has its own pocket of culture. You can go to Brick Lane and get your curry, or go to south [London] and get your jollof rice. These places are the fabric of communities. If we take away the independent brands and shops, then what is London about?'

For Ilori, a British-Nigerian artist known for splashing pops of colour across the grey metropolis, community is all about openness, collaboration and unity – an ethos that is very much reflected in his work.

Last year, Ilori won the accolade of 'Social Saviour' in Time Out's Best of the City Awards for his work that literally brightens up our environment. Who better, then, to introduce the winners of our Love Local Awards, which are all about championing the city's most loved independent businesses, and are voted for by Londoners? These are the kinds of places helping local communities thrive.

Community is at the heart of everything Ilori does. 'The biggest thing for me is seeing kids and families play in those places [where my work is] and creating memories,' he says. 'I always felt empowered as a kid, so the work

I try to do now is about empowerment, love, community and togetherness.'

His art isn't hidden in galleries, it's part of the city. '[Art and] design should be for everyone,' Ilori says. 'People who can't access galleries should be able to experience an installation or mural in a public space that might make them feel a certain way.'

Ilori's public artworks – from a pastel-hued basketball court in Canary Wharf to a rainbow tunnel in Wandsworth – will make you stop and smile. You'll want to take a picture, tell a friend, or just pause and *think*. They revisualise the city in slathers of paint and remind you what's so special about a particular local area in the first place.

Growing up on an estate in Islington, Ilori spent a lot of time going to Chapel Market and Dalston's Ridley Road to buy fruit and veg with his parents. 'Markets were always where I felt most comfortable,' he says. 'They were such inclusive spaces. I think that's the beauty of growing up in a multicultural environment. You can't buy that experience.'

Now turn over to find out the winners of this year's Love Local Awards. From beloved boozers to favourite cafés, these places make this city what it is. ■ *Chiara Wilkinson*

→ See more of Yinka Ilori's work at shop.yinkailori.com

champion 





And the winners are...

Londoners *really* love their city. In this year's Love Local Awards, there were a whopping 100,000 votes as you guys championed your favourite places in the capital. Now, we can finally reveal who's won... Photography *Alex Lambert*

North London's most-loved pub or bar

The Faltering Fullback Finsbury Park

What's that, on a residential backstreet, hidden behind loads of delightful foliage? Why, it's north London's legendary sports pub The Faltering Fullback. The same one that made headlines last year when hundreds of people queued up to get in, from the crack of dawn. That's how sought-after its walk-in-only tables were then and still are. A properly bubbly atmosphere and one of London's nicest beer gardens are the icing on the pub cake.

→ 19 Perth Rd, N4.

off Oxford Street on Friday nights – with the sense that some chaotic fun is about to go down hanging in the air around them. Regulars love its retro jukebox, with a changing line-up of more than 20,000 singles.

→ 42-44 Hanway St, W1.

London's most-loved live-music venue

The Roundhouse Camden

Perhaps no building in the capital charts the ups and downs of London like Camden's Roundhouse. A superb piece of Victorian civic engineering, it fell into disuse, then by the 1960s it was hosting happenings and gigs by The Doors

South London's most-loved restaurant

Naughty Piglets Brixton

Despite its mystifying name, Brixton's Naughty Piglets is tremendous. Its USP is allowing natural and orange wines to shine by carefully choosing Anglo-French dishes to serve them with. Margaux Aubry, the Lyon-born proprietor, dishes up mussels, duck rillettes and other Gallic classics alongside a consistently intriguing selection of vins naturels. *Chapeau!*

→ 28 Brixton Water Lane, SW2.

Your favourite central London pub or bar

Bradley's Spanish Bar Soho

Yes, this joint might have 'Spanish' in its name. Its signage might be painted in the colours of the Spanish flag. But Bradley's is a London joint through and through. You can always expect to find punters spilling out of the tiny dive bar just



YOU SAY:

'One of the last freehouses left in central London. Glad they survived lockdown.'





LONDON'S MOST-LOVED CAFÉ

The Dusty Knuckle Dalston

'There will probably be paint peeling off the walls and the radiator might be broken,' says co-founder Max Tobias of Dalston fave The Dusty Knuckle. 'But ultimately, you're going to get fed – and the person serving you will be smiling.' It might be a little chaotic, but that's part of what makes it so treasured.

If there is paint peeling off the walls, you probably haven't noticed, because the baked goods at this beloved café are so damn good. Its sourdough, pastries and loaded sandwiches are all made in-house with quality ingredients.

The bakery is also a training organisation and social enterprise. It works with young offenders to develop them into professionals. Tobias came up with the concept in 2014, after ten years of working with young people engaged in gang-related offending. 'I wanted to involve young people in bigger-picture projects,' he says.

Along with co-founder Rebecca Oliver – a friend and chef – Tobias started up a bakery in a shipping container in Hackney, selling bread to local restaurants and cafés.

Three years later, The Dusty Knuckle moved to its current Dalston site and partnered with prison rehabilitation charity Switchback to get more young people on board. 'People come because it's not pretentious,' says Tobias. 'They can see there are real people behind the brand and that hard work and passion have gone into it.'

Chiara Wilkinson
→ Abbot St Car Park, E8.



and Pink Floyd, before becoming derelict again in the 1980s. It has since had a new lease of life, and is once again a landmark music venue with an outstanding programme of education and workshops for young Londoners. A true survivor.
→ Chalk Farm Rd, NW1.

East London's most-loved restaurant

Bistrot Walluc Shoreditch

It's an indisputable fact that being presented with a pot of hot molten cheese and a load of carbs to dip into it makes everything better. It's no wonder, then, that Londoners love fondue specialist Bistrot Walluc. Decked out in vintage finds (think: massive flamingos, porcelain dogs, miscellaneous instruments), this gem serves up platters that come with a shot of limoncello as standard. It also hosts live music

and comedy, so you'll be entertained while you gorge, 'Asterix in Switzerland'-style, on melty cheese.
→ 40 Redchurch St, E2.

London's most-loved independent shop

Stone Mini Market Leytonstone

London's mini marts and cornerstores have always been integral to our city but, during the pandemic, we've become especially grateful for their existence. So it makes sense that the winner of London's best indie shop wasn't a bougie ceramics store or posh fashion spot: it was a slightly-fancier-than-the-average cornerstore in Leytonstone. Stone Mini Market is known by locals for its wide-ranging selection of tasty produce and friendly vibe.
→ 721 High Rd Leytonstone, E11.





YOU SAY:

‘Fantastic vibe! Great DJs, awesome beers and cocktails and lovely staff.’

LONDON'S MOST-LOVED MULTITASKER
Next Door Records
 Shepherd's Bush

With the buzz of an LP that needs flipping whirring through speakers and shelves stocked with arty bottles of orange wine, Next Door Records is the sort of place you might expect to find in Hackney – but probably not in Shepherd's Bush.

‘We stand out in the area,’ says Thom Parris, the co-founder. ‘When we opened, the reaction was: “We’ve always needed something like this.”’

Parris started selling secondhand records with his pal Alfie Aukett in 2015. After meeting fellow music-lover Louis Ray, they found the space and launched a crowdfunder to get started. With lots of DIY and ‘taking a shot whenever there was a disagreement’, Next Door Records was born.

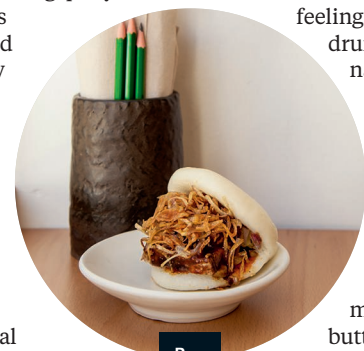
It has DJ decks, a bar serving coffee, natural wine and local beer, and a record store specialising in jazz, indie and drum ‘n’ bass. At the back, there’s an area for intimate gigs, DJ sets, supper clubs and a rotating kitchen residency. ‘There are people who come in for a coffee, or to dig for records, who’ve been part of our journey from the start,’ Aukett says. ‘They feel an emotional connection with us.’ Parris agrees: ‘We’ve met amazing locals,’ he says. ‘People are excited that something like this exists. If we had done it in east London, maybe it wouldn’t have had as much of an impact.’ *Chiara Wilkinson*

→ 304 Uxbridge Rd, W12.

Central London's most-loved restaurant
Bao Various locations

Where Bao goes, ravenous Londoners follow. The effortlessly refined, handmade steamed-bun specialist no longer exists solely in its original (charming) poky Soho venue. King's Cross, Borough and Shoreditch all now have impressively unique iterations. But to all of the city's true Baoheads, it is that Lexington Street branch that will always be the mini-franchise's spiritual home. It's genuinely hard to think of many restaurants that inspire as much affection in so many Londoners. That famous combination of braised pork and peanut powder is still the taste of this city in 2022.

→ Various locations



West London's most-loved restaurant
Fed & Watered Acton

Chris and Elly Walsh, the husband-and-wife team behind Acton restaurant Fed & Watered, have one simple aim. They want punters to leave their neighbourhood eatery feeling they've eaten and drunk well (hence the name) – a throwback to Chris's mum's approach to having people over when he was a kid. With a creative cocktail list and a comforting menu including buttermilk chicken bites with gravy mayo, roasts with all the trimmings and toasted marshmallow crumble, we reckon they've got that well and truly covered. It's the kind of local restaurant you'd be very, very happy to live down the road from.

→ 46 Churchfield Rd, W3.



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at a genuinely excellent
London restaurant.**



LONDON'S MOST-LOVED CINEMA

Ritz Brixton

One of London's oldest purpose-built picturehouses, the Ritz has been an iconic Brixton institution since it opened in 1911, and even survived the Blitz. 'It's stood the test of time,' says manager Wayne Hall.

It's the kind of place that brings people together, and not just strangers in the café who bond over their shared love of niche film genres. Its unmissable readograph (the signboard on the front of the building), which was salvaged from a deserted cinema in Hammersmith, has facilitated romcom-style wedding proposals over the years, spelling out 'Will you marry me?' for all of Windrush Square to see. 'The thing that I love the most is the community engagement,' says Hall. 'People stop and stare and take pictures.'

The cinema's film offering ranges from big blockbusters to specialist fare (Icelandic folk-horror, anyone?), and Upstairs at the Ritz hosts events like Reggaeoke, rare-soul nights and the regular Tuesday evening Queenstown Sessions. The Ritz is way more than just a cinema, it's a cultural hub, where, as Hall says, 'there's something for everybody'. *Ellie Muir*
 → Brixton Oval, Coldharbour Lane, SW2.

YOU SAY:

'Love this cinema. Beautiful building, great staff, comfy seats and tasty snacks.'

London's most-loved art gallery
 Dulwich Picture Gallery

Even without its world-class collection of Old Masters (including three Rembrandts), Dulwich Picture Gallery would be a London gem. The building, by neoclassical genius Sir John Soane, is the oldest purpose-built public art gallery in the country and a masterpiece in its use of light and space. It has interesting temporary shows, a nice (newish) café and that world-class art collection.

→ Gallery Rd, SE21.



Dulwich Picture Gallery

West London's most-loved pub or bar
 The Churchill Arms

Kensington

Part pub, part London legend, The Churchill Arms is famous for its incredible display of baskets and

planters. In full bloom, this boozier looks like a psychedelic take on one of those dystopian films where flora take over a city. The interior, often filled with a gratifying mix of young and old punters, is exactly what you'd want a 271-year-old-pub to look like: dark wood, plenty of space and lots of shiny brass beer taps. Long live London's most colourful and leafy drinking spot.

→ 119 Kensington Church St, W8.

South London's most-loved pub or bar
 The Selkirk

Tooting
 There are some pubs where you get a pint of warm ale and a bag of pork scratchings and that's your lot. But The Selkirk

does things differently. From a seasonal menu made with high-quality ingredients to a function room that hosts weddings and birthdays, to pub quizzes and board



games, to cracking Sunday roasts, this place has all bases covered. In fact, if you like the idea of WFP (working from pub), it welcomes punters to use the space as their very own office on weekdays, with bottomless coffee, decent wi-fi and even use of their printer.
→ 60 Selkirk Rd, SW17.

East London's most-loved pub or bar
Pub on the Park
London Fields

Pub on the Park by London Fields is a classic of the 'lazy summer drinks venue' genre. With its vast outdoor drinking terrace, it's always been a top choice for post-picnic bevs on long hot days. And, with all the bans on indoor hangs we've had over the past couple of years, it's become even more of a firm favourite. The best thing about this pub, though? It has a bloody boules set-up. Game on.
→ 19 Martello St, E8.

London's most-loved theatre or comedy venue
Soho Theatre
Soho

Sure, there would be a London comedy scene without Soho Theatre. But its heart would be ripped out. The Dean Street venue has a virtual monopoly on critically acclaimed midsize acts, and has launched the careers of superstars such as Phoebe Waller-Bridge. With three lively venues and regular late-night shows, plus an intriguing bill of theatre and cabaret, it's probably the busiest and vibiest programmed venue in London, a veritable one-building Edinburgh Festival.
→ 21 Dean St, W1.

YOU SAY:
✓
'This is where to go for authentic and incredible laksa. It's the real deal!'



NORTH LONDON'S MOST-LOVED RESTAURANT
Sambal Shiok
Highbury

Lemongrass, chilli, coconut – these are the smells that fill your nostrils when you step inside Sambal Shiok on Holloway Road. 'It's busy, loud and casual,' says general manager Gabi Cekaускаite. 'You can see the kitchen, and if you sit outside you feel the buzz of the street. It's what you'd expect in Malaysia.'
Sambal Shiok was born in 2013, when founder Mandy Yin, who's Malaysian-born Chinese of Peranakan Nyonya heritage, decided to ditch her career in law and serve up delicious Malaysian food to Londoners instead. Yin began doing pop-ups around the city and her food was a hit. In 2018, she opened her first permanent restaurant on Holloway Road. 'There was a queue outside for six months,' Cekaускаite says. 'One customer, who used to live in Singapore, was never able to find anything like the laksa there in London. When he ate here, he was like: "This is exactly how I remember it." It's a story that sums up the essence of Sambal Shiok. 'It's not all about business,' says Cekaускаite. 'People come here and have a laksa because it brings them good memories.' Chiara Wilkinson
→ 171 Holloway Rd, N7.

DULWICH PICTURE GALLERY: ANTHONY WEBB

Read more about the awards at [timeout.com/lovelocalondon](https://www.timeout.com/lovelocalondon)

Love Local

Edited by Kate Lloyd
timeout.com/lovelocal

The South Bank's new LGBTQ+ community centre

Nearly 60 percent of queer spaces in London have closed in the last decade, but this one is reversing that sad trend

SOMETIMES ALL WE really need is a place to be our authentic selves. That can be harder for some to find than others. Nearly 60 percent of LGBTQ+ spaces in London have closed in the last decade. The London LGBTQ+ Community Centre, which opened a six-month pop-up on the South Bank in December, is looking to buck that trend.

'It's about creating spaces that complement the ones that currently exist,' says Jay Crosbie, co-director of the project. From the London Lesbian and Gay Centre in Farringdon that existed until the early '90s, to The Outside Project, a community centre and homeless shelter, to Elop, an LGBTQ+ centre offering social and emotional support, London has been home to a rich network of spaces serving queer people. 'So many others have been lost,' says Crosbie. 'We want to bring one back.'

The first meeting for what became a years-long mission was held in an east

London pub in 2017. The goal was to create an intergenerational, sober, safe space for members of the LGBTQ+ community, 'The party scene will always have its place,' says Sarah Moore, another co-director. 'But we're trying to build somewhere that people can just *be*, with no pressure on them to spend money, perform or drink.'

As well as a café and lounge, the centre provides event space and resources for mental and sexual health. 'We're trying to create a first port of call for anyone with questions,' says Moore. Not just the LGBTQ+ community, but friends and family looking to be better allies and 'people who might not have any connection to the community but suddenly become immersed in it'.

Above all, the centre feels like a warm hug, a sigh of total relief. 'I want people to feel like it's a family,' says Moore. 'And that you're supported here, no matter what.' ■
Nicole Garcia Merida

→ 60-62 Hopton St, SE1 9JH. londonlgbtqcentre.org



South Bank



Picked by South Bank local *Wendy Birch*, owner of family-run specialty coffee shop *Sista Barista*.

LGBTQ+ CENTRE: MARTINA BANA INSON;
STICKY MANGO: NITIN KAPOOR; CUBANA:
MARTINA O'SHEA

Welcome back. Tube it. Bus it. Train it.



Beany Green

'There's a little kiosk called Beany Green up by the Royal Festival Hall. It's a cool spot and the coffee's really good there. Originally, it just did coffee but now it does cocktails as well. It's got a nice little seating area too.'

→ Belvedere Rd, SE1 8XX.

Covent Garden

Charing Cross

Embankment

Temple

Southbank Centre Food Market

'It's on at the back of the Royal Festival Hall every weekend. There's a stall called the Curry Shack, run by two local guys who sell different kinds of curries made in huge pots. It's really good stuff: I like going for a curry and a chat.'

→ Southbank Centre, Belvedere Rd, SE1 8XX.

Waterloo

Lambeth North

Southwark

Waterloo East Theatre

'It's quite small and intimate, under the arches on Brad Street right near Waterloo East station. They put on nice little productions.'

→ Brad St, SE1 8TN.

Archbishop's Park

'It's a really nice park if you want to sit and relax. It's got a great children's area too. It's somewhere I used to go as a child and still go to now. It's very popular and really well kept.'

→ Carlisle Lane, SE1 7LE.

Cubana

'This is a really popular Cuban bar. It's always busy and fun. There's good music and good vibes. It's a really good place to get a jug of mojitos.'

→ 48 Lower Marsh, SE1 7RG.



Sticky Mango

'A really lovely restaurant serving Asian-fusion food. It does a really good monkfish dish. It doesn't look busy from the outside but when you go in there's a huge basement area: it's like walking into a secret party. It's pricy but really nice!'

→ 33 Coin St, SE1 9NR.





Cellar Door

'Cellar Door is a really tiny bar-venue on the corner of The Strand and Waterloo Bridge. It used to be an old public toilet. It has drag shows and singers, and it always feels very private. The cocktails are really good, and you get free popcorn with your drink. It's really atmospheric.'
→ Wellington St, WC2R 0HS.

Strand Lane Baths

'One of my friends read this article about these supposedly Ancient Roman baths in one of the side streets off The Strand, where you can go and press a light switch to see them. I looked it up and found out where it was. It's just on Strand Lane and you wouldn't notice it unless you know about it. It's not the most amazing thing but it feels really secret!'
→ 5 Strand Lane, WC2R 1AP.

Mister Fogg's Society of Exploration

'Mister Fogg's invited us to a night for people who work in other bars. There were free canapés, and we got to try a few of the cocktails. It was great, because otherwise it's really impossible to get in!'
→ 1a Bedford St, WC2E 9HH.

Rosetta

'Everyone at Gordon's really likes this Italian place. It mainly does sandwiches with this special bread called rosetta. They're different from other sandwiches because here they cut all the cheese and ham on the spot, so you can really taste the quality. They also do a tiramisu that's to die for. It gets polished off quite quickly. In fact, we all fight for it if we don't buy enough.'
→ 38 William IV St, WC2N 4DD.

Temple



Somerset House

'It hosts really interesting exhibitions. One of my favourites was during Fashion Week, where you could also buy what they had on show. It's also a really cool place to go and relax, browse the shop or sit in the café. I've always really liked the building itself and the architecture. There's also a bar overlooking the river.'
Interview Lauryn Berry
→ Strand, WC2R 1LA.

Charing Cross

Xi Home Dumplings and Buns

'We discovered this Chinese place quite recently. It's very quiet, which is generally what we like after the hustle and bustle of Gordon's. It does amazing dumplings. We buy loads and bring them back to Gordon's and share them: it's a nice way to enjoy food.'
→ 43 Chandos Place, WC2N 4HS.

Victoria Embankment Gardens

'Victoria Embankment Gardens are really nice. The flowers are always beautiful. Most people just walk through it but it's a great place to sit and relax, and the café there is also nice.'
→ Embankment Place, WC2N 6NS.

Embankment



Embankment



Picked by *Maria Brandani*, marketing and social media co-ordinator at Gordon's Wine Bar.

Time Out
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MR FOGG: JOHNNY STEPHENS PHOTOGRAPHY; SOMERSET HOUSE: BRUNO MA NELLI/SHUTTERSTOCK; GARDENS: SHUTTERSTOCK; MARIA BRANDANI: PAUL MARC MITCHELL

The busiest lifeboat team in the UK



Tower Lifeboat Station has rescued nearly 2,000 people. Now it needs your help

THAMES RIVER BUS worker Holly McGlinchey was on her lunchbreak when she received a call from another boat asking for help. Someone had fallen into the river and couldn't be reached. McGlinchey and her sister, with whom she was working that day, managed to find the man but couldn't lift him from the water.

'We held on to him until the Tower lifeboat arrived,' she says. 'I remember how hard it was, and how helpful they were. We wouldn't have been able to save him without them. I signed up as a volunteer after that.'

Tower Lifeboat Station, the busiest Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) station in the UK, sits on the north side of the

Thames under Waterloo Bridge. Ten full-time crew members and 55 volunteers work shifts to staff it 24/7, 365 days a year. It takes just 90 seconds after a call for help for the team to be ready to launch.

It might surprise you that, while the RNLI has lifeboat stations in many coastal towns, a whopping 5 percent of its launches take place here in central London. In fact, the Tower lifeboat team has rescued nearly 2,000 people and its service extends beyond just human lives. One weekend, a man and his dog went for a walk along the Thames. The tide was quite low, but rising fast, and suddenly Romeo, a staffordshire bull terrier, found himself stranded on the beach with

his owner unable to get to him. 'I have two dogs myself, so it was nice to reunite them,' says McGlinchey.

The team's work could be in trouble, though. The constant ebb and flow of the Thames has caused irreversible damage to the RNLI building and the pier it sits beside. The institution has now launched an appeal to raise funds for a new station. 'We need one that is comfortable enough for the crew to basically live in,' says McGlinchey. She and other team members work in 12-hour shifts. 'A room for CPR, a kit-drying room, but also a better kitchen: an environment where we can have our meals. It's like being a family.' ■ *Nicole Garcia Merida*

→ Donate at www.rnli.org

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Temple and Covent Garden

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Covent Garden (Underground) Zone 1
Embankment (Underground) Zone 1

Waterloo and South Bank

Waterloo (Underground) Zone 1
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MAYOR OF LONDON

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Coco di Mama

What is it? Five coffees for a fiver, it doesn't get simpler than that.

Why go? Because it's January, it's cold out and the only good thing about commuting is the coffee. Plus, Coco uses Allpress speciality beans roasted in Dalston, so you know it's the proper good stuff.

Wait, how much? It's £1 per cup – good enough reason to hold off stealing your mate's Pret subscription for the week

→ Various locations. www.timeout.com/coco5



Static

What is it? A month or two-week trial at this music-thumping cycling studio.

Why go? Cycling on London streets calls for expert bus-dodging, and doing it in the gym means fighting for a machine. Sack 'em both off and enjoy motivating rides to movie soundtracks, plus access to a hot tub.

Wait, how much? £19 for a fortnight or £38 for a full month. Whichever, you'll get more than 50 percent off.

→ 47 Nine Elms Lane. www.timeout.com/static

The Gate

What is it? Three courses and a glass of wine at this veggie specialist.

Why go? Vegans, this is your time to make the most of food deals, as the average Joe gives a month of plant-based eating a try. Head to this swish chain for some of the best plant-based grub in town. There's even a glass of wine thrown in.

Wait, how much? The entire meal comes in at £25, which is a delicious £15 off.

→ Various locations. www.timeout.com/thegate

Noom

What is it? A health-and-fitness platform that uses psychology to influence behaviour.

Why go? Flat-tummy teas, milkshake meal substitutes and carb-cutting just make you miserable. Ditch them in favour of something a little more cerebral.

Wait, how much? You'll get a 14-day trial for £1, which allows enough time to be matched with a coach and figure out if it's for you.

→ Online. www.timeout.com/noom

Leong's Legend

What is it? Bottomless dim sum and a glass of bubbly at this, erm, legend.

Why go? Life would be boring without a little indulgence. Enjoy eating as many dumplings as you can handle while soaking up the vibes at one of Chinatown's most popular restaurants.

Wait, how much? More than 50 percent off, so that's just £22 for unlimited baskets and the fizz (sorry, Dry January). *Gānbēi!*

→ Gerrard St. www.timeout.com/leong22

Theatre, music, events: get the best deals in town. **Search 'Time Out offers'**

Edited by Rosie Hewitson
timeout.com/thingstodo @timeoutlondon

Things to Do IN 2022



'Fashioning Masculinities: The Art of Menswear'

Big exhibitions

C 'Legacies: London Transport's Caribbean Workforce'

Between 1956 and 1970, London Transport ran a huge recruitment drive in Barbados, Trinidad and Jamaica, resulting in hundreds of Caribbean people uprooting their lives to come and help rebuild post-war Britain. Through artefacts, photographs and first-person interviews with three generations of Caribbean Londoners, this exhibition examines their struggles and triumphs, from the racism and discrimination they suffered, to the cultural legacy they created through iconic events like Notting Hill Carnival.

→ London Transport Museum. Feb 11-2024.
Free with museum entry.

C 'The World of Stonehenge'

Few landmarks inspire as much fascination and speculation as the mysterious Stonehenge. This exhibition seeks to shed some light on the secrets of the iconic monument through fascinating objects like the Nebra Sky Disc, which at 3,600 years old is believed to be the oldest map of the stars in the world. Bronze Age Britain was clearly a place of big ideas, as well as big stones.

→ British Museum.
Feb 17-Jul 17. From £18.

C 'Fashioning Masculinities: The Art of Menswear'

The V&A's timely exhibition on male fashion seeks to dissect the

concept of masculinity by tracing trends in menswear from the sixteenth century to the present day. Hundreds of looks will feature, from pieces by contemporary designers like Harris Reed, Wales

Bonner and Raf Simons, to a wealth of historical treasures from the V&A's collections. And outfits worn by Harry Styles, of course.

→ V&A. Mar 19-Nov 6. £20.

W 'Weird Sensation Feels Good: The World of ASMR'

Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response (or ASMR) has taken the internet by storm in recent years, with millions of users experiencing the weird

tingly sensation brought about by sound, touch and movement. This world-first exhibition explores the emerging field of creativity that has sprung up around the phenomenon via an 'acoustically tuned physical environment'. We're not exactly sure what that means, but it sounds cool as hell.

→ Design Museum. From May 13. £tbc.

C 'Science Fiction: Voyage to the Edge of Imagination'

Take part in an interactive story set on an extraterrestrial spaceship at this ambitious new exhibition at the Science Museum. On board the ship, you'll have a chance to get up close to real scientific artefacts and pieces from major works of science fiction to see how scientists and writers have inspired one another over the years. Beam me up!

→ Science Museum. Oct 6-May 4 2023. £20.



'Legacies'

Things to Do

Film fests

London Short Film Festival

See hundreds of British and international short films at the nineteenth edition of the London Short Film Festival, a celebration of mini-movies taking place across loads of cinemas and arts venues around the city. We like the sound of 'Otherness Archive', a screening of found material documenting the trans masc experience, and TAPE Collective's 'Black Country', a cinematic exploration of Black lives outside London.

→ Various venues. Until Jan 23. Prices vary.

📺 BFI Flare

After being online-only for the last two years, Flare returns IRL too this March to showcase the best new LGBTQ+ cinema from around the world. Tune into the BFI's YouTube and Facebook channels on February 15 to catch the programme announcement and make your picks ahead of the general ticket on-sale on February 24. Get those dates in your diary!

→ BFI Southbank. Mar 16-27. Prices vary.

📺 Sundance Film Festival: London

America's largest independent film festival is vacationing in London once again this summer, bringing some of the top picks from its US edition to us. Watch this space for programme and guest info.

→ Picturehouse Central. Jun 9-12. £tbc.



Hackney Moves

Sporty stuff

🏃 Hackney Moves Festival

The UK's largest outdoor fitness festival returns to Hackney in May, with a three-day programme of activities that'll help you work up a nice sweat. As usual, there'll be plenty of free fitness classes taking place on the marshes, plus a free-entry 5k race for those who have made smashing Couch to 5k their new year's resolution. It all leads up to the Hackney Half on the Sunday, with the 21km route winding its way around the borough through crowds of cheering spectators.

→ Hackney Marshes. May 20-22. From free.

Women's Euros

England hosting the Women's Euros means that plenty of matches are taking place around London this summer, including the final at Wembley. This is especially exciting considering how well England have been playing under new manager Sarina Wiegman, setting a new national record by thumping Latvia 20-0 in qualifying. At this rate, they could go one better than Southgate's lads. And we'd be willing to bet there'll be no blokes setting off flares between their arse cheeks this time round.

→ Various venues. Jul 6-31. From £10.

Rugby League World Cup

For the first time in the sport's history, this autumn the men's, women's and wheelchair Rugby League World Cup tournaments will all take place at the same time with a handful of fixtures taking

place in the capital. East London's Copper Box Arena will host many of the wheelchair fixtures, while Arsenal's home ground, the Emirates Stadium, will see some of the quarter-final action in the men's tournament. Even if you're unfamiliar with rugby union's northern cousin, with tickets from a tanner it's definitely worth a try (pun absolutely intended).

→ Various venues. Oct 15-Nov 19. From £10.

Cultural hits

📺 Lewisham Borough of Culture 2022

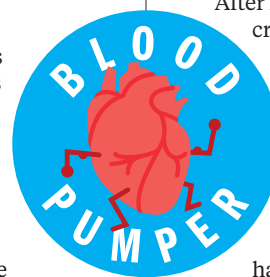
After its successful bid to be crowned 2021 Borough of Culture, everything was delayed thanks to you know what, so it's finally Lewisham's chance to shine in 2022. There'll be plenty of great (and mostly free) activities happening across the borough over the coming months, starting with the Day One opening celebration on January 28, involving live music, dance performances and workshops.

→ Various venues. Jan 28-Dec 31. Prices vary.

📺 London Art Fair

Traditionally the city's first big art event of the year, the London Art Fair was postponed earlier this month owing to that pesky new variant, but will finally return to Islington's Business Design Centre in April with a programme of talks, workshops and curated displays from more than 100 galleries.

→ Business Design Centre. Apr 20-24. £tbc.



Festies galore

E 📞 **Dialled In**

This new festival made history when it debuted last September with a line-up exclusively dedicated to South Asian artists like Manuka Honey, Pxsy Palace and Yung Singh. It returns in April for a takeover of Hackney arts venue EartH, featuring more than 30 acts across three stages, as well as open decks, South Asian snacks and 'a few surprises'. Intriguing.
→ EartH. Apr 9. From £29.

E 🏠 **DIY Alive**

The good folk at monthly music mag *DIY* have put on plenty of cracking gigs in recent years, so it makes sense that they've decided to get in on the festival scene too. The inaugural DIY Alive takes place across multiple east London venues, and features big-hitters like Self Esteem and Shame alongside the mag's favourite new artists.
→ Various venues. Apr 23-24. From £28.25.

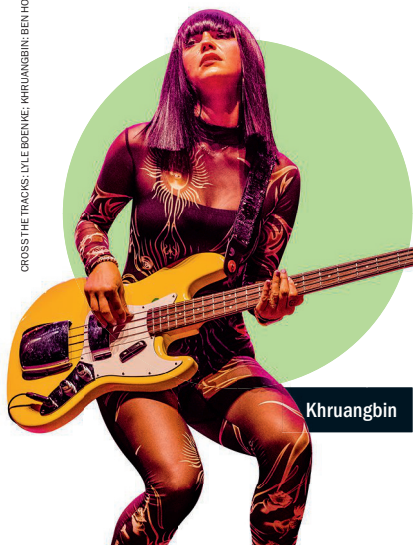
S 😊 **Wide Awake**

This South London newbie bills itself as a 'musical melting pot', and it's easy to see why. Bicep and Primal Scream headline the first two-day edition of the festival, with the line-up also including acts as disparate as Peckham punks Fat White Family, deep-house DJ Leon Vynehall and jazz-rock outfit The Comet Is Coming. Very eclectic.
→ Brockwell Park. May 27-28. From £39.50.

S 😊 **Gala**

Peckham Rye Park's three-dayer was one of the first festivals to return post-lockdown, so naturally it sold out in seconds. This year, its house- and techno-heavy roster includes the likes of Dan Shake and Shanti Celeste, while live instrumental acts like Children Of Zeus and Ezra Collective's Joe Armon-Jones bring the jazzy vibes.
→ Peckham Rye Park. Jun 2-4. From £40.

CROSS THE TRACKS: LYLE EBDEING; KHURANGBIN: BEN HOUDJIK/SHUTTERSTOCK



Khurangbin



Cross The Tracks

S 😊 **Mighty Hoopla**

This joyful antidote to the city's more studious festivals is expanding to two days in 2022, with Steps, Jamelia, Sugababes and Anastacia all featuring on the typically pop-centric and nostalgic line-up. There'll also be campness and cabaret from the likes of Ginny Lemon and Charity Shop Sue.
→ Brockwell Park. Jun 3-4. From £59.50.

W 😊 **Junction 2**

Hounslow's Boston Manor Park will host a spectacular roster of big names from a range of dance music genres in early June. Weekend tickets are already on their fourth release (how many releases are there??), so act now if you want to see Jon Hopkins, Saoirse, Four Tet, Nina Kraviz and Seth Troxler in one place.
→ Boston Manor Park. Jun 3-4. From £45.

S 😊 **Cross the Tracks**

With tasteful, groove-heavy curation across soul, funk and jazz, as well as a focus on street food and craft beer, this relative newcomer

to the London festie circuit is already making waves. It returns to Brockwell Park for a third time in June, with headliners including south London singer-songwriter Joy Crookes and psychedelic Texan trio Khurangbin.
→ Brockwell Park. Jun 5. From £45.

E 😊 **Body Movements**

Hackney Wick's queer festival won our award for Best New Event last year, so we're thrilled to see the glorious celebration of London's LGBTQ+ nightlife returning in 2022. Stay tuned for ticket and line-up announcements soon.
→ Various venues. Jul 30. £tbc.

E 😊 **All Points East**

James Blake, Gorillaz, Nick Cave And The Bad Seeds, The National and Disclosure are just some of the long-cemented favourites coming to east London over six (hopefully sun-kissed) days in August. But it's not all people your dad has heard

of: there'll also be hyped newbies like Elkka, Remi Wolf, Greentea Peng, Dry Cleaning and Sherelle for the cool kids.
→ Victoria Park. Aug 19-28. From £49.95.

E 😊 **Field Day**

This stalwart of the London live music scene turns 15 in 2022, with festival heavyweights Kraftwerk and The Chemical Brothers taking to the Vicky Park stage for the occasion, along with electronic acts like Haai, Daniel Avery and Floating Points.
→ Victoria Park. Aug 20. From £70.

N 😊 **Maiden Voyage**

Established last year as a more intimate and affordable alternative to some of London's bigger festivals, Maiden Voyage is back in north London for its, er, second voyage in August, bringing loads of stellar DJs like India Jordan, Jayda G, Jeff Mills, Marcel Dettman and Ross From Friends along for the ride.
→ Lee Valley Showground. Aug 28. From £30.



Film

Edited by Phil de Semlyen
timeout.com/film @timeoutfilm

TIME OUT MEETS

Pedro Almodóvar

The legendary Spanish auteur talks through the dark secrets of his new opus 'Parallel Mothers'

PEDRO ALMODÓVAR IS talking via video from his office in Madrid, his unmistakable shock of white hair filling the frame of my laptop. On his shelf is one of his four Baftas and the Oscar he won for 2002's 'Talk to Her'. He's upbeat and slips between English and Spanish as we chat about his latest, 'Parallel Mothers'. Like many of his films, from 'Volver' to 'Julieta', it's about women and motherhood. It tells of two women (Penélope Cruz and newcomer Milena Smit) whose lives cross after they give birth on the same day. Its masterly handling of fate and high emotion is as expected from Almodóvar as its vivid design and photography. But it also has a less familiar political edge as its story also tackles the legacy of Spain's 'disappeared': the thousands who were murdered and buried in mass graves during the Civil War of the 1930s.

You put Spain's 'disappeared' in the spotlight with 'Parallel Mothers'. Had you always wanted to tackle this subject in a film?

'I always had the feeling that I wanted to make a movie with a more political point of view than I had in the past. All my movies are political – for example, the sense of freedom in my movies – but this is more explicit. I didn't have any missing people in my own family, but I'd always been sensitive to the subject.'

You bookend the film with a story of a mass grave, but it's the contemporary narrative about two fateful mothers we spend most time with. Why?

'I wanted to speak about the mass graves through the main character, Janis, and her moral dilemma to find the historical truth in her life. She isn't free because she is harbouring a secret.'

Issues of maternity and paternity are key to the story and we see characters being swabbed in the nose for their DNA. You can't have known how Covid would make this process so familiar to us all?

'Yes, I couldn't imagine it! There was something so odd, but also visually interesting, about it. Of course, it's become part of our lives. We did PCR's three times a week on the set. Now it's not cocaine which goes up our noses but cotton swabs!'

Penélope Cruz's character, Janis, is a generation older than her friend Ana. You seem preoccupied with the idea of what gets lost between generations – what can be so easily and quickly forgotten.

'It's important to have a memory of the past. That's the intention with Janis's character: showing the need to have a historical memory. Today in Spain, the extreme right wing are rewriting the past. They're telling history as it wasn't. Vox, the extreme





right-wing party, is saying that it was the Republicans who declared the Civil War. That's just incredible! We need education to know what really happened.'

Janis's apartment in the film is like an artwork itself: the design, the objects, the colours. How did you go about creating it?

'So many of the things you see are mine. It was the same with my last film, "Pain and Glory". In that film,

Antonio Banderas's apartment was a replica of my house. The furniture was mine. The paintings were mine. When I buy something, besides the fact I like it, I know that it will find a place in one of my movies. I'm not a naturalistic filmmaker like Ken Loach or the Dardenne Brothers. I don't do that style. I always represent life, but it's also a kind of artifice. But even with this artifice, I try to reflect the characters.'

Did you model the apartment in this film on anyone's real home?

'I observed artists of Janis's age who live alone. I identified a painter, a photographer, a jewellery designer and I went to their homes and I copied the structure of one of them. Then I added elements that spoke of Penélope's character, like the books of rural photography of Spain. Then I add an element that belongs to me and my life. I make all those elements co-operate.'

Do you feel you've changed as a filmmaker in more recent years?

'I see a movement in my films since "Julieta" in 2016 to a more austere cinema. You see the same in "Pain and Glory". It doesn't mean I'm renouncing the vibrant colours and visual baroque that is so much part of my work. But I've been reducing the number of characters and locations, and I've been putting the word – dialogue, the psychology of characters – in a primary position. Of course, you can see it's me. I can't get rid of the me. Neither should I get rid of me!' ■

→ 'Parallel Mothers' is out Jan 28.



By Dave Calhoun

Who bought a top a bit like Pedro's at Christmas (from Zara, if you're in the market).

FILM OF THE WEEK



Parallel Mothers



ONLY PEDRO ALMODÓVAR could wrap a cry of pain about Spain's inability to reconcile with its recent dark past into a gorgeous melodrama about two mothers drawn by fate into a complex, painful and ultimately nourishing relationship.

Janis (Penélope Cruz, in her seventh collaboration with the director) is a stylish Madrid photographer who hires an anthropologist, Arturo (Israel Elejalde), to help recover the remains of her great-grandfather from a mass grave in her family's village. That quest then recedes from our view for a while as Janis has a brief relationship with Arturo, the result of which is a baby girl. It's in the maternity ward where she meets Ana (Milena Smit), a teenager also giving birth to a girl. From there, their lives cross, with various extreme twists of the sort that Almodóvar orchestrates so brilliantly, with the performances, music, design and photography all working in lockstep.

As always, entering Almodóvar's world is a pleasure – even when it brings pain and tough lessons. Cruz is terrific as Janis, a woman trying to mould reality around her own desires and suffering for it. As ever, the Spanish auteur is no great moral judge lording over all this. His films are exercises in empathy and in opening our eyes to how lives can be led differently and openly. But he has a lot to say here about the cost of sweeping hard truths under the carpet, on the personal level, but also – and back to those graves – on a national one.

Now in his fifth decade of filmmaking, Almodóvar still has a youthful, progressive eye on our world, and with 'Parallel Mothers' it results in another film of exquisite craft and yet more ideas immersed in bold, provocative storytelling. ■
Dave Calhoun

WHAT IS IT...

Pedro Almodóvar delves into Spain's troubled past.

WHY GO...

Penélope Cruz is flat-out great in it.

→ Director Pedro Almodóvar (15). 123 mins. Out Jan 28.

Film

Belfast



IT'S SUMMER 1969. Man has just walked on the moon and the British Army has just marched on to the streets of North Belfast. 'Star Trek'-mad nine-year-old Buddy (Jude Hill), who uses goals painted to the walls to emulate his footballing hero Danny Blanchflower, soon finds armed tommies patrolling his old penalty box. Reading his beloved 'Thor' comics outside his terraced house is suddenly fraught with hazard, not least from the broken glass left by sectarian rioting.

Possibly the most uplifting film ever made about a time of unending violence, Kenneth Branagh's 'Belfast' comes with a bruised heart and an unquenchable spirit of optimism. Like its young hero, it keeps its eyes on the stars even as the hell of the Troubles breaks out in its midst.

You may not need telling that Buddy, played with lovable chops by Hill, is based on Branagh's younger self – or reminding that Branagh grew up to support Blanchflower's team, Spurs, and make a movie about Thor. All that autobiographical detail underpins a film that radiates sincerity and warmth, even as its family are buffeted by grim events outside their front door and friction inside.

Painful rows break out between Ma and Pa (Caitriona Balfe, a revelation, and Jamie Dornan) over unpaid tax bills and a future shrouded

in uncertainty. Pa, a joiner, regularly heads to England to earn his corn, and his absences cause resentment. It's not his fault there are no gigs closer to home, but 'Belfast' is great at showing how misery breeds in the absence of choice. Luckily, Granny (Judi Dench) and Pop (Ciarán Hinds) are on hand to make sense of it all, like a pair of wise old owls with bus passes.

It all moves to the sounds of Van Morrison, whose songs lend a timeless quality that sits

perfectly alongside cinematographer Haris Zambarloukos's crisp black-and-white images.

Somehow, Branagh conjured all this up during the pandemic, digging into his memory banks to tell the story of a different kind of lockdown. At times, he borrows the grammar of westerns – the flicks Buddy gazes up at in his local cinema – to show us this tough world through a child's eyes: a place where heroes strive to keep villains in their place – and get you in for tea. ■ *Phil de Semlyen*



WHAT IS IT...
Kenneth Branagh's memoir of childhood during the Troubles.

WHY GO...
Judi Dench and Ciarán Hinds are the dream movie grandparents.

→ Director Kenneth Branagh (12A) 98 mins.



BFI MEMBERS BOOK EARLY

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Image: Titane

BELFAST: ROB YOUNGSON / FOCUS FEATURES

LONDON ON SCREEN

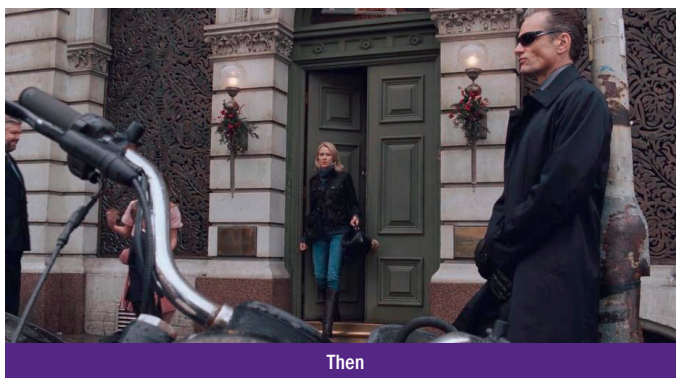
The mob restaurant in 'Eastern Promises'

The location The Farniloe Building, Clerkenwell, EC1.

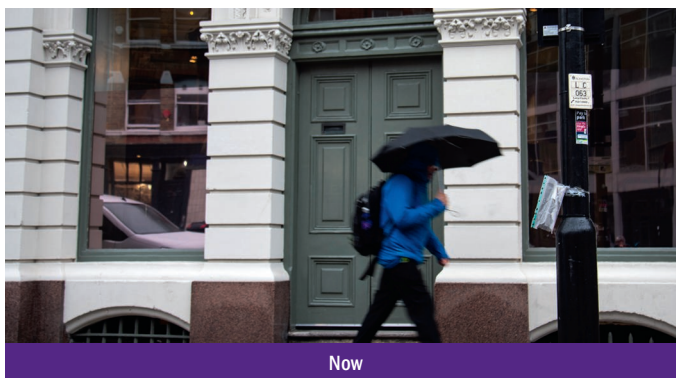
The scene Midwife Anna (Naomi Watts) delivers the baby of a 14-year-old girl, who dies while giving birth. Anna spots a card for the mysterious Trans-Siberian Restaurant on her body, which is owned by Russian gangsters. She goes to investigate, where she's observed by heavy Nikolai (Viggo Mortensen).

Then Farniloe's mysterious Italianate entrance makes it the perfect frontage for a mobster hideout. (The restaurant's interiors were filmed at London's Three Mills Studios, meanwhile). David Cronenberg isn't the only Hollywood director to make use of the building: it appears frequently in Christopher Nolan's films, from 'Inception' to the Batman trilogy, where it doubles as Gotham City Police Station.

Now Renovation work on this Grade II-listed warehouse was completed last year. It has resulted in a six-storey extension and a brick-for-brick restoration of its Victorian façade. The green door has survived but you can now peer into the building from the street, making it a less enticing spot for bruisers to plot a murder. Bloody windows, eh? ■ *Thomas Hobbs*



Then



Now

ALSO OPENING



NIGHTMARE ALLEY

★★★★★

Full of glorious period detail, Guillermo del Toro's remake of a 1947 noir prioritises craft over moral complexity. Bradley Cooper makes for a clammy, grasping huckster in a role that silver-screen star Tyrone Power once made his own: Stanton Carlisle, a scheming loner who works his way up from Midwestern carnival hand to spiritual medium for big-city high rollers. There's more technique in Cooper's turn, and his modulations of Carlisle's seedy arc, from downplayed and taciturn, to suavely persuasive, to desperate and boozy, are expertly executed. The carnival scenes are great, and Cate Blanchett was born to play a purring psychologist with all the angles covered, but there's no sense of a man caught between his better instincts and a nose for an opportunity – a crucial beat in the '47 version – leaving a vacuum at the film's heart. Like one of its carny tricks, it's a heady but fleeting pleasure. *Phil de Semlyen*

→ Out Jan 21.



HOSTILE

★★★★★

If media perception alone defined what it meant to be classed as an illegal immigrant in Britain, it would be a picture of criminals who took what wasn't theirs and made no contribution to society. Within its opening scenes, this raw, unshowy doc exposes that myth to show that the only crime these people have committed is the mere act of existence. It's told through the lens of four people from Black and Asian backgrounds, each harrowing account revealing that citizenship isn't a house that you live in but a rug that can be pulled from under your feet without warning. Director Sonita Gale powers it all with archive footage and emotional interviews with members of the Windrush Generation, as well as those who have fled conflict. The result is a plea for humanity that cuts through bureaucracy and politicians' weaselly words to spotlight the local heroes fighting against a cruel system. *Whelan Barzey*

→ Out Jan 21.



AMULET

★★★★★

For her first directorial effort, 'Atonement' actress Romola Garai has concocted a savagely karmic fever dream of a horror movie. It's set partly in the backwoods of a central European war zone, where Alec Secareanu's lonely soldier, Tomas, is stationed, and partly in the decaying London pile where he later washes up, an immigrant given lodging with a young woman, Magda, and her dying mum. Soon he's freaking out to the screams coming from the attic and the evil bat-type critter he's fishing out of the loo. Toilet bat, it turns out, is the least of his problems. 'Amulet' takes a little while to get going, but the grisly, twist-filled payoff is worth the wait. With the faintest debt to 'The Exorcist' and HR Giger, and a barnstorming turn from Imelda Staunton as a brisk nun with secrets of her own, Garai has found an arresting way to position male sexual violence: as an age-old evil with the bitterest consequences. *Phil de Semlyen*

→ Out Jan 28.

EASTERN PROMISES: THEN: PAVLE DIMITROV; NOW: BEN FOWE; NIGHTMARE ALLEY: 20TH CENTURY STUDIOS; HOSTILE: GALEFORCE FILMS; AMULET: ROB BAKER, ASHTON

Theatre & Dance

Edited by Andrzej Łukowski
timeout.com/theatre @timeouttheatre

The best theatre to book for in 2022

All being well, 2022 will be the first full year London's theatres have been open since 2019. That means a lot of shows: here are the biggest and best

The Glow

What is it? Alistair McDowall's long-awaited new play is a cryptic chiller about an incarcerated Victorian woman with mysterious powers.

Why book? McDowall is a master of daring leftfield horror of the sort nobody else makes.

→ Royal Court Theatre. Jan 21-Mar 5.

A Number

What is it? Caryl Churchill's visionary cloning drama is back.

Why book? The play is a masterpiece, but the big lure is the casting. Lennie James is back on stage after aeons, playing the devious Salter, and Paapa Essiedu takes his first big post-'I May Destroy You' roles as Salter's unhinged clone 'children'.

→ Old Vic. Jan 24-Mar 19.

Wuthering Heights

What is it? Emily Brontë's classic novel about doomed love on the wily, windy Yorkshire Moors is coming to the National Theatre.

Why book? It's adapted and directed by eccentric genius Emma Rice, with transgressive performance artist Lucy McCormick as Cathy – a combo that has scored glowing reviews on the show's UK tour.

→ National Theatre. Feb 3-Mar 19.

Henry V

What is it? Shakespeare's ever-popular war play gets a fresh outing at the tiny Donmar Warehouse.

Why book? 'Game of Thrones' man Kit Harington provides star power in a show that promises to be a consideration of nationalism, not the standard patriotic blowout.

→ Donmar Warehouse. Feb 12-Apr 9.

The Collaboration

What is it? A new drama about the 1984 collab between Jean-Michel Basquiat and Andy Warhol.

Why book? It's a fascinating subject with a great cast: rising US star Jeremy



Jerusalem

Pope as the ultra-hip Basquiat, and bona-fide Avenger Paul Bettany as a washed-up Warhol.

→ Young Vic. Feb 16-Apr 2.

Cock

What is it? Mike Bartlett's sardonic sex drama gets its first revival since Ben Whishaw and Andrew Scott starred in the original run.

Why book? Taron Egerton and Jonathan Bailey are the name draws now, but really the play's the star, as so few people actually got to see it the first time.

→ Ambassadors Theatre. Mar 5-Jun 4.



The Glass Menagerie

To Kill a Mockingbird

What is it? Aaron Sorkin's smash-hit Broadway version of Harper Lee's timeless Civil Rights-era novel.

Why book? Even a big Covid delay and change in the actor playing the role of heroic lawyer Atticus Finch – from Rhys Ifans to Rafe Spall – hasn't cut into the US-begat buzz.

→ Gielgud Theatre. Mar 10-Aug 13.

The Human Voice

What is it? The great Ivo van Hove directs Ruth Wilson in an intense revival of Cocteau's monologue.

Why book? Van Hove and Wilson formed a winning partnership when

she starred in his 'Hedda Gabler' a few years back: and this one's only on for three weeks.

→ Harold Pinter Theatre. Mar 17-Apr 9.

The Burnt City

What is it? Immersive theatre legends Punchdrunk return with their first large-scale show in eight years: an epic retro-sci-fi evocation of the Trojan War, staged in two huge buildings in Woolwich.

Why book? Because there is nobody like Punchdrunk: their immersive worlds are bigger and better than anybody else's. London needs them. à One Cartridge Place. Mar 22-Aug 28.

"Daddy"

What is it? The UK debut for the extremely hotly tipped US playwright Jeremy O Harris.

Why book? Harris is one of the most exciting playwrights of his generation, and this semi-autobiographical 'melodrama' should help get us in the mood for the inevitable UK debut of his opus 'Slave Play'.

→ Almeida Theatre. Mar 26-Apr 30.

Prima Facie

What is it? Playwright Suzie Miller's hit Aussie drama about a brilliant, young, working-class barrister whose ascent is suddenly stalled when a colleague rapes her.

Why book? It's the West End debut for Jodie Comer, whose rapid screen ascent has deprived us of the chance to see her on stage.

→ Harold Pinter Theatre. Apr 15-Jun 18.

Jerusalem

What is it? Jez Butterworth's 2009 dark comedy about the passing of England's mystical wildness is widely seen as the greatest British play of the twenty-first century.

Why book? The return of Mark Rylance as shamanic scally Johnny 'Rooster' Byron makes this essential: one of the greatest acting performances of all time.

→ Apollo Theatre. Apr 16-Aug 7.

Oklahoma!

What is it? This bold new take on the classic Rodgers & Hammerstein musical was a massive hit in the US.

More London theatre at timeout.com/theatre

Why book? Dubbed 'sexy Oklahoma!' by some wags, it ditches the usual aww-shucks trappings and turns it into something dark and brooding.

→ Young Vic. Apr 26-Jun 25.

Legally Blonde

What is it? The first major revival anywhere for the smash musical adaptation of the much-loved film about a ditzzy wannabe lawyer who takes on the establishment.

Why book? Lucy Moss – best known for her fizzy monarchical romp 'Six' – is a dream choice of director.

→ Open Air Theatre. May 13-Jul 2.

The Glass Menagerie

What is it?

This Tennessee Williams revival marks the UK stage debut of screen legend Amy Adams.

Why book?

Adams is a tremendously versatile actor and it'll be fascinating to see

how she tackles suffocating

matriarch Amanda Wingfield.

→ Duke of York's Theatre. May 23-Aug 27.

The Seagull

What is it? Jamie Lloyd's Emilia Clarke-starring production of Chekhov's first great play was forced to shut in March 2020. Now it's back.

Why book? The March 2020 word on the production – and 'Game of Thrones' star's Clare's West End debut – was that it's great. ■

→ Harold Pinter Theatre. Jun 29-Sep 10.



Prima Facie



By Andrzej Lukowski
Who has gotta catch 'em all

Cabaret



COME TO THE cabaret, old chums, and see the stage performance of the moment from Jessie Buckley! Gasp at the terrific supporting cast in Rebecca Frecknall's luxury revival of Kander & Ebb's musical masterpiece! Be wowed by Tom Scutt's spectacular design! Wonder at the free schnapps you're offered on the way in!

Also... there's Eddie Redmayne.

The presence of any hugely famous star is bound to distort the role of the Emcee. He's a vital supporting character: his sardonic songs map Weimar-era Germany's descent into darkness. But it's not the lead role. Casting by far the most famous actor in the show would be distracting even if they didn't do... this.

In the past, Redmayne has attracted flak for playing trans and disabled characters. At the heart of this, I'm sure, is his desire to throw himself into transformative, taxing roles, which is clearly what he's gone for here. When the Emcee first appears, he's a sort of gawky outsider, clumping about the stage with a dunce's hat on. He's hunched over, his limbs twisted and awkward, with a strange tremor to his voice... frankly it kind of feels like he's 'cripping up' again (perhaps as a polio victim?). In each scene he shapeshifts, as Berlin darkens. By the end he's a brownshirted, blond-haired matinée-idol Aryan.



WHAT IS IT...
Ultra-fancy revival of the musical masterpiece.

WHY GO...
Jessie Buckley is staggeringly good as Sally Bowles.

→ Kit Kat Club at the Playhouse Theatre.
Until Oct 1. £30-£325.

Because we never learn anything about the Emcee as a person, it is perfectly possible to embellish him with these details. But does it help the production? Do we need to see the biggest name push himself the furthest? Approaching the role as if it's Hamlet clutters up the show.

Still, even Redmayne's flashy excesses don't get in the way of 'Cabaret's true lead turn.

Jessie Buckley's nightclub singer Sally Bowles is the usual things: posh, inscrutable, oblivious to the rise of Nazism. But she's also a roaring

force of nature, a proper rock star, vamping about in a green faux-fur coat, absolutely not giving a stuff what anybody thinks about her.

Sally's singing is a little off-key. But the power behind her vocals is astonishing, and you can feel her come to life in the club scenes. Her final appearance, performing the title song, is absolutely astonishing: she's forcibly animated by the music, which rips through her deadened limbs like a torrent of electricity. ■
Andrzej Lukowski

Force Majeure



WHAT IS IT...

A stage version of Ruben Östlund's dark film comedy.

WHY GO...

A typically brilliant Rory Kinnear, plus LIVE SKIING.

→ Donmar Warehouse.
Until Feb 5. £10-£50.

'FORCE MAJEURE' WAS one of the handful of high-profile December theatre openings delayed by the ravages of the Omicron wave. But I'm glad it's soldiered on to a belated debut because, a) it's very good, b) January is normally dead as a dodo for new shows and c) live skiing!

Adapted by playwright Tim Price from Swedish director Ruben Östlund's acclaimed 2014 film, it follows Tomas (Rory Kinnear), a fragile, immature married man who goes on a skiing holiday in the French Alps with his wife and two kids and cravenly abandons them when it briefly looks like they're going to be hit by an avalanche.

It's a great story: cynical, excruciating but also empathetic. Kinnear is terrific as a successful businessman struggling to be a decent father and husband. When he legs it from the avalanche, the issue is less that he did it, than that he absolutely refuses to admit he did it. Kinnear looks like a big sullen baby as he hems and haws and tries to change the subject. Nobody does understated self-loathing like Kinnear – it is gloriously painful stuff.

And then there's the *skiing*. Designer Jon Bausor has turned the Donmar stage into a giant slope, covered in some sort of white cotton-type material. While Tomas and family largely just mime skiing, the supporting cast actually do it. It's slightly bonkers and utterly joyous: the fairly naturalistic main story is set against a faintly hysterical backdrop. It's strange mix, but a winning one. ■ *Andrzej Lukowski*



CABARET, FORCE MAJEURE, SPRING AWAKENING, MARGRETHE BREWER

Spring Awakening



WHAT IS IT...

First UK revival of the classic teen musical.

WHY GO...

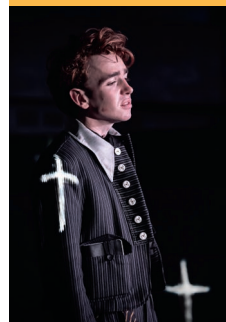
A great young cast and amazing songs.

→ Almeida Theatre.
Until Jan 29. £10-£55.

I WAS BLOWN away by the Almeida's revival of 'Spring Awakening', which comes just over a decade after Duncan Sheik and Steven Sater's musical tanked in the West End, despite ecstatic UK reviews and blockbuster success in the States. I didn't see it, but if the original was better than Rupert Goold's newbie then it must have been bloody incredible.

A surprisingly faithful adaptation of Frank Wedekind's 1891 tragedy of the same name, 'Spring Awakening' is blessed with intense, graceful, inventive songs, full of poetic rage. Ironically, for a musical about schoolchildren, it's very *adult*, tackling themes (sex, death) that other shows tend to blow up to operatic extremes or couch euphemistically. Yes, it's about teen angst. But its handling of adolescent nihilism feels raw and dangerous and honest in a way few musicals really are.

Set at an elite boys' school, the whole show is a constant, explosive collision of bright kids and their close-minded, conservative parents. Rising star Laurie Kynaston is great as the brilliant, impulsive Melchior, whose towering intellect and refusal to be cowed by the adults belies his innate sensitivity. But for me the star of the show was Stuart Thompson as the gently loveable Moritz, a kind, uncomplicated yin to Melchior's dazzlingly bright yang. Like all the young characters, it's his innocence that hurts the most. ■ *Andrzej Lukowski*



Art

Edited by Eddy Frankel
timeout.com/art @timeoutart



SHOW OF THE WEEK

Cabbage, chickens and chaos

Allison Katz: 'Artery'



WHAT IS IT...
Surreally weird paintings.

WHY GO...
There's order to this chaos, and we all need a little weirdness every now and then.

→ Camden Art Centre.
Until Mar 13. Free.

Chickens show up a lot, and eggs too: lots of eggs. Both hard and fragile, caught between conception and hatching, the egg is, once again, an ambiguous object.

One room here is made up of paintings seen from the inside of a mouth, the teeth and lips acting as a framing device for visions of a

woman sat on a floor (a self-portrait), a cat, a room of paintings and another chicken. Behind each work is a painting of a cabbage. It's an incessant clash of the super-weird with the super-mundane.

Another image here depicts a naked man in a field of bulls, and then there's one of a car seen from the

inside another car. You start to realise that everything is linked. The symbols here all repeat, you can draw lines between the works. All this chaos is connected.

I don't think these are necessarily brilliant paintings, but the show as a whole is so quietly unsettling that it leaves you feeling unnerved, like you've entered an impossibly tangled web that you can't escape. Katz's art lacks any solid meanings, there's no black and white here. And in a world where you're constantly surrounded by opinions, hot takes and hard facts, a little wobbly ambiguity is actually a really nice thing. ■



By Eddy Frankel
Whose favourite ingredients to cook with are also cabbage, chickens and chaos



Jamian Juliano-Vilani in 'The Stand-Ins: Figurative Painting from the Collection'

LAST-CHANCE ART

Time's running out to see these amazing exhibitions, so get your arty skates on and go gallery hopping

'Dürer's Journeys: Travels of a Renaissance Artist'

Renaissance master Albrecht Durer spent his life roaming across Europe. But this isn't just an exhibition about one man's travels, it's about how his ideas spread like a super-virulent form of cultural Covid and helped change the shape of art to come.

→ National Gallery. Until Feb 27. £20.

'The Stand-Ins: Figurative Painting from the Collection'

Painting was bloody *everywhere* in 2021. You couldn't go into a gallery in this city without having canvases shoved in your eyeballs. But this show of figurative works was one of the standouts, featuring big stars of the medium like Dorothea Tanning, Maria Lassnig and Rose Wylie, alongside some of the best younger artists in the game, like Issy Wood, Jamian Juliano-Vilani and Christina Quarles.

→ Zabludowicz Collection. Until Feb 13. Free.

Bloomberg New Contemporaries 2021

Every year, this show picks the best recent art graduates and whacks them in a room together. The results can be messy, but they're always interesting, and every year you get a glimpse of what young artists are making right now, and 'who might go on to bigger things. This is the best selection in years, full of gore and nightmares.

→ South London Gallery. Until Feb 20. Free.

Helen Cammock: 'Concrete Feathers and Porcelain Tacks'

Helen Cammock's latest show is a love letter to cooperation. Not just the idea of getting along and doing things together, but the pioneering 1844 Northern workers' rights movement The Rochdale Principles of Co-operation. Cammock juxtaposes painting, video, craft objects, tools and social history to show that those things are not distinct, separate entities, that there is no 'high' and

'low' culture, but that it's all just different versions of labour, it's all essential, and – more than anything else – it all works better when we do it together.

→ The Photographers' Gallery. Until Feb 13. £5, £2.50 concs.

Rachel Jones: 'SMIIILLLEEE'

Sometimes, a painting's eyes follow you around the room. But in Rachel Jones's new show, it's the teeth. Grinning out of every wall is a set of semi-abstract gnashers, twisted and pushed to a visual extreme, smiling menacingly at you wherever you go. Jones has gorgeous paint handling, a unique aesthetic and clever ideas. It's enough to put a smile on your face. ■

Eddy Frankel

→ Thaddaeus Ropac. Until Feb 5. Free.



Rafal Zajko in Bloomberg New Contemporaries 2021

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Food & Drink

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The vegan dishes you need to try

Veganuary's in full swing, so hunt down the best plant-based treats our city's restaurants have to offer

Mao Chow

LONDON'S VEGAN SCENE has gone from strength to strength over the last few years, with plant-based offerings expanding from processed meat-free junk food and ultra-healthy grain salad bowls to innovative dishes from around the world that deserve to be celebrated. Now, vegans have more eating options than ever in the capital, and even the most veg-phobic carnivores can eschew meat, dairy, eggs and honey knowing that the city will provide amazing alternatives.

As all vegans know, plant-based eating should be a habit to maintain beyond Veganuary, as it's one of the most effective (and delicious) ways you can do your bit to help tackle the climate crisis. Don't know where to start? Here's a bucket list of the best vegan dishes from London restaurants, including a luscious dessert, a pick-and-mix Caribbean feast, a mouth-widening, veg-packed sandwich and a cracking plant-based version of a Chinese classic. Eating your greens never tasted so good.

Vegan miso ramen at Itadaki Zen

At vegan Japanese joint **Itadaki Zen** in King's Cross, the miso ramen soup base is stewed with shiitake mushrooms and kombu seaweed. This helps create a thick, creamy, umami soup that complements the medium-thin ramen noodles that soak up all the flavour. The dish is finished with a generous sprinkling of yasai (vegetable) toppings: stir-fried veg, sweetcorn and spring onions. Slurp up the good stuff.

→ 139 King's Cross Rd, WC1X 9BJ. £9.

Vegan wontons at Tofu Vegan

The much-loved Xi'an Impression Chinese restaurant opposite Arsenal stadium has opened a plant-based place on Upper Street called **Tofu Vegan**. There you can dive face first into an inviting bowl of fat and juicy wrinkly wonton dumplings, filled with diced crunchy vegetables, wood-ear mushrooms and vegan mince. They come steeped in a spicy, fiery red, deeply flavoured broth that's guaranteed to set your tongue alight.

→ 105 Upper St, N1 1QN. £8.20.

Food & Drink

Eden platter at Eat of Eden

At all six of its branches (Brixton, Clapham, Shepherd's Bush, Croydon, Walthamstow and Lewisham), **Eat of Eden** serves up nutritious and tasty plant-based Caribbean-inspired food. Think: comforting curries, burgers and patties loaded with veg. First timers can try a bit of everything with the Eden platter, choosing seven items from a line-up that includes ackee, plantain, callaloo, macaroni pie, salads, dumplings, curries, stews, fritters and more. A taste of heaven. Or, indeed, a taste of Eden.

→ Various locations. £16.95.

Bánh xèo at Sen Viet

Bánh xèo is a thin, savoury, fried pancake from Southern Vietnam that looks like a giant stuffed omelette – but there's no egg, or any animal products, involved in making it, although it's traditionally

eaten with a pork or prawn filling. The version at vegetarian Vietnamese restaurant **Sen Viet** in Hoxton contains a mountain of tofu, beansprouts, onion, mung beans and mushrooms instead, all nestled in a crisp pancake made from turmeric, coconut milk and rice flour. The best way to eat it is to cut each one into small portions, wrap in a lettuce leaf with fresh herbs, dip in homemade soy sauce and tuck in.

→ 120 Kingsland Rd, E2 8DP. £9.90.

Vegetable momos at Fatt Pundit

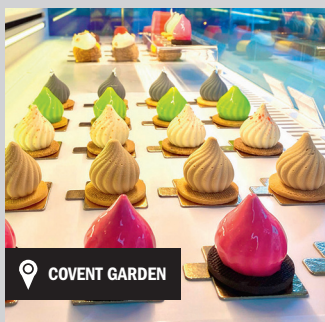
This January, Indo-Chinese restaurant **Fatt Pundit** has created a dedicated vegan menu featuring plant-based versions of popular dishes. Its hearty, flavoursome and colourful momo dumplings come in steel steamers and are a sight to behold, with their tiny wheat



Sen Viet

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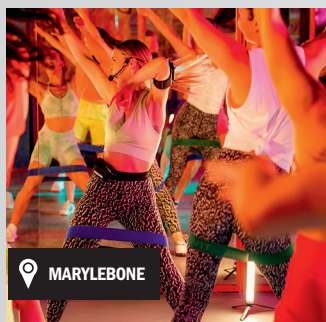
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COVENT GARDEN

Ô CRAQUELIN PÂTISSERIE SAYS:

'Founded by female Indian chef Ekta Gosain, Ô Craquelin will delight your senses. You can enjoy intricate mini gateaux, colourful canapés, paris-brest, chouquettes and specialty coffee. There are no compromises: pastries are baked on the day and ingredients like pralines, jam and compote are all made from scratch by the team.'
42 Tavistock St, WC2E 7PB.



MARYLEBONE

DAN'S SAYS:

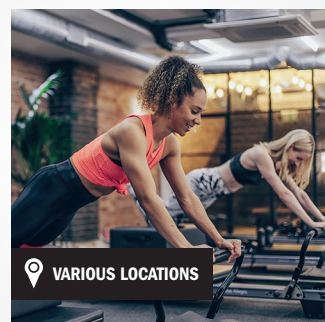
'Be transported to the streets of Rio with three DAN'S intensive, calorie-burning workouts to pulsating Latin beats for only £24 (usually £57). With small groups in an inclusive space, at DAN'S 95 percent of DAN'Sers feel the positive mental benefit of our classes. Try London's happiest workout! Visit checkout.timeout.com.'
5 Cavendish Place, W1G 0QA.



HOLBORN

COLONEL SAAB SAYS:

'Celebrate Valentine's Day at Colonel Saab on February 11, 12 or 14, with a love letter from India by owners the Choudhary family. Enjoy an extravagant sharing menu featuring delicious tandoori lamb chops and Gil-E-Firdaus, a dessert traditionally served at weddings, garnished with rose petals and fresh berries. Roses included!
193-197 High Holborn, WC1V 7BD.



VARIOUS LOCATIONS

TEN HEALTH & FITNESS SAYS:

'If you're starting your pilates journey, what better way than with Ten, London's top dynamic reformer pilates provider, six-time Tatler Gym Awards winner and home to some of London's most expert trainers? Especially with an introductory offer that gets you four classes for just £50. Book now at www.ten.co.uk.'
Various locations.



Mallow

some of the finest sandwiches in the capital, and this carefully crafted vegan masterpiece is no different. The Vegan Dom 2.0 boasts colourful layers and contrasting textures. It's made up of roasted aubergine marinated in chilli, ginger and garlic, a green bean salad, beansprouts, mint, Thai basil, coriander and salted black beans, all drenched in vegan mayonnaise and a spicy prik tum vinegar dressing, topped with roasted cashews and packed into a semolina sub roll that's baked in-house. Good luck trying to eat one without dislocating your jaw. ■
 → 262 Hackney Rd, E2 7SJ and 22b Bevis Marks, EC3A 7JB. £8.

that are making waves. Typically, a chocolate financier is made with brown butter and eggs, but this pud manages to boast an indulgent sponge and explode with chocolate flavour without the help of those classic baking ingredients. It's served with salty, crunchy hazelnuts to balance everything out. Properly transcendent stuff.
 → 1 Cathedral St, SE1 9DE. £7.

The Vegan Dom 2.0 at Dom's Subs

There are sandwiches and then there are **Dom's Subs**. The cult outfit has been quietly knocking out



By **Angela Hui**
 Who makes a mean vegan mapo tofu.

Dive face first into a bowl of fat and juicy wrinkly wontons

wrappers pleated to perfection. These plump parcels contain a spinach, mushroom, courgette and tofu filling that packs a punch, and are served with a selection of spicy chutneys.
 → 77 Berwick St, W1F 8TH and 6 Maiden Lane, WC2E 7NA. £5.50.

Crispy sesame 'prawn' toast at Mao Chow Express

Prawn toast, that classic Chinese takeaway dish, holds a special place in many people's hearts, but what if we told you that you can take the prawn out of it? At **Mao Chow Express** in Boxpark Shoreditch, chefs have been experimenting with flavours and textures to create a bold dish using OmniPork, vegan shrimp and toasted nori powder, mixed together with spices and vegan mayonnaise. The resulting deep-fried wonders are crisp, golden brown and loaded with sesame seeds. This is prawn toast, but not as you know it.
 → Unit 56 Boxpark, 2-10 Bethnal Green Rd, E1 6GY. £6.50.

Chocolate hazelnut financier at Mallow

The team behind vegetarian institution Mildreds has expanded its offering and opened vegan restaurant **Mallow** in Borough Market. Everything on the menu is enticing, but it's the desserts



Fatt Pundit

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The Plimsoll



THE LAST TIME I went to the space that is now The Plimsoll, it was an Irish pub with an old-man vibe. Now Ed McIlroy and Jamie Allan, the chef duo known as Four Legs, have taken it over. In some ways, it hasn't changed much, but what's obviously different is the shiny new kitchen you see when you walk in.

The menu is a mix of snacks, small plates and bigger plates. It's one of those where your brain goes 'yep, yep, yep' as you scan it. The snacks included chipolatas with dijonnaise, and chunks of octopus tentacle in a crispy, light batter. Both were simple and delicious, but really just a warm-up to the famed Four Legs dexter cheeseburger.

At this point, things took a turn. The waitress came over and uttered those doom-laden words: 'We need the table back in 15 minutes.' I wouldn't have minded, except a) no one told us how long we had the table for, and b) the burger hadn't arrived.

When it did turn up, about five minutes later, it was glorious, like a supercharged Big Mac: no lettuce, no bullshit, just a juicy patty with gherkins, onions, cheese and burger sauce, in a brioche bun. But because of the sudden time

pressure, I had to inhale it. I checked my watch: seven minutes to go. I tried to squeeze in dessert. I'd been eyeing up the chocolate mousse and the lemon cake. But my order was rejected: 'I'm afraid you don't have time for dessert.' Oh

All in all, the food was excellent; the service less so. Unfortunately, that meant the meal ended on a bad note. Maybe, when time has passed and my wounds have healed, I'll return and make it all the way to pudding. ■ *Isabelle Aron*



WHAT IS IT...
A neighbourhood pub from chef duo Four Legs.

WHY GO...
For the mighty Dexter cheeseburger.

→ 52 St Thomas's Rd, N4 2QW.

TimeOut OFFERS



Five coffees for a fiver
at Coco di Mama



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Carmel



WHAT IS IT...
A west London sister to Hackney's much-loved Berber & Q.

WHY GO...
For the charred hispi cabbage and other expertly smoked and grilled dishes.

→ 23-25 Lonsdale Rd, NW6 6RA.

BERBER & Q chef-owner Josh Katz's latest is a delightful all-day Eastern Mediterranean restaurant. The interior is mainly white – tiles and painted brickwork – and loads of plants dangle from the ceiling.

From the dinner line-up of small and large sharing plates, we started with zesty cured sardines with lemon verjus, and chunks of soft potato and sour cream, topped with onion, green chilli and radish. Each mouthful was a riot of complementary tastes and textures – a winning combination.

Then came a surprise for this carnivore: the cabbage. Perfectly charred, crunchy yet smooth hispi cabbage, smothered in ras el hanout and macadamia dukkah. A smoky, fresh, deeply moreish revelation. Cabbage!

We ordered two big plates between us – one would have been plenty, but where's the fun in that? The smoked lamb neck shawarma with shio koji (a fermented grain marinade), garlic labneh and pickled turnip, was beautifully cooked but the cut was a little fatty for my taste. The slow-grilled Urfa chilli chicken, however, was out of this world. Well, out of Turkey. It was pink and succulent with sticky, blackened skin. Outstanding.

The drinks and desserts – including a cocktail with strong undertones of cherry bakewell and a chocolate tahini tart with sesame brittle – were enjoyable enough. But these confections didn't turn our heads like the savoury offerings did. Especially that cabbage. ■ *Sarah Cohen*



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