

SOUNDS OF THE CITY

As famous faces, from Adele to Elton John, take to the stage, **Sarah Riches** finds which gigs are hitting the right note

London has been immortalised by so many musicians, from The Beatles' *Abbey Road* album cover to The Kinks' ode to the city in *Waterloo Sunset*.

This month sees London legends take to the stage. Whatever you do, don't miss the finale of Adele's world tour (from 29 Jun), which is at Wembley Stadium. Born in Tottenham, north London, and an alumni of The BRIT School for Performing Arts and Technology in south London, the star has won 15 Grammy Awards and an Academy Award.

Adele will perform in the round, giving you a 360-degree view. As she is keen to stay close to her son once he starts school, rumour has it this world tour might be her last. No wonder the concert's sold out – but you may get lucky if you call for returns.

After a period of ill health, Elton John continues his worldwide *Wonderful Crazy Night* tour, which celebrates the rock star's 33rd album of the same name (3 Jun). The outdoor show is in the stadium bowl of Twickenham Stoop and is the venue's first concert.

Back in town, you can see another legend, Phil Collins, perform on his *Not Dead Yet* tour at the Royal Albert Hall (9 Jun). After a 10-year hiatus, the ex-Genesis star has come out of retirement to perform.

ADELE HAS WON FIFTEEN GRAMMY AWARDS AND AN ACADEMY AWARD

BRITISH SUMMER TIME FESTIVAL

More than 65,000 people a day attend the Barclaycard Presents British Summer Time festival, a series of one-day concerts which takes over much of Hyde Park's 350 acres.

Since 2013, everyone from The Rolling Stones to Kylie and Taylor Swift have graced its stage, while 2016's headliners included big-name artists such as Carole King and Stevie Wonder wowing audiences.

Penelope Boyd is head of events at The Royal Parks, which cares for the park. She says: 'The Great Oak stage has hosted the best global artists and 2017 is shaping up to be an exciting year. This is the fifth year for the event which has created memorable moments for hundreds of thousands of fans and in turn raised vital funds which go back into enhancing this iconic park.'

British superstar Phil Collins (30 Jun) kicks things off with his biggest-ever solo show. Don't miss it, as British Summer Time will be the only European festival he's performing at this year.

Later in the summer, Green Day will perform (1 Jul) alongside Justin Bieber (2 Jul), Kings of Leon (6 Jul), The Killers and the Mancunian band Elbow (8 Jul). Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers (9 Jul) will also rock the stage for the only 2017 European performance of their 40th anniversary tour.

Missed out on tickets? Then make the most of the festival's free events, including open-air films, comedy, daily Wimbledon tennis screenings, badminton, ping pong and a pay-per-ride funfair.

30 Jun-9 Jul. www.bst-hydepark.com ►



This image: Adele
Inset: Elton John



HOW TO BUY TICKETS

- Ask your hotel concierge
- Go online at www.ticketmaster.co.uk
- Visit each festival's website



Clockwise from this image: Live at Chelsea; Hampton Court Palace Festival; Green Day; Greenwich+Docklands International Festival; Meltdown Below left: Justin Bieber Below right: Royal Albert Hall



DAVID BOWIE AND YOKO ONO HAVE CURATED THE MELTDOWN FESTIVAL

HAMPTON COURT PALACE FESTIVAL

Hyde Park isn't the only place to catch household musical names live on stage. Listen to homegrown talent such as James Morrison (8 Jun), Will Young (14 Jun) and Van Morrison (15 Jun) in the palace courtyard at Hampton Court Palace.

The line-up includes Bryan Ferry (7 & 21 Jun), pianist Jools Holland (16 Jun) and ABBA tribute band Björn Again (17 Jun), plus soul singer Corinne Bailey Rae (20 Jun) and 1980s star Rick Astley (22 Jun). The classical duo Michael Ball and Alfie Boe also perform (23 Jun), while the Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra play at the firework finale (24 Jun). Take a picnic or browse the food court, which comes complete with a Pimm's tent. 8-24 Jun. www.hamptoncourtplacefestival.com

MELTDOWN

Back in town, the Southbank Centre's Meltdown festival fuses gigs by well-known and upcoming musicians with free films, a carnival and a party on the pavement

outside Riverside Terrace. Since 1993, Meltdown has presented a line-up of new and influential artists cherry-picked by a distinguished musician. Past curators have included David Bowie and Morrissey.

Each star invites their favourite artists to perform in a series of one-off gigs. Previous highlights saw Jeff Buckley play his final UK show for Elvis Costello, and Pete Doherty sing Disney songs with Jarvis Cocker.

This year's curator is M.I.A., a British-Sri Lankan rapper and visual artist who has been nominated for two Grammys, a Mercury Prize and an Academy Award. She has worked with Madonna, Nicki Minaj, Kanye West and Jay Z, so expect everything from nu rave and dancehall to electro and hip hop.

M.I.A. says: 'I'm honoured to be part of Meltdown, among important artists who have contributed to keeping it real in the past. I hope you rate my curating. I'm bringing together new outlaw musicians who have contributed to keeping things weird, exciting, opinionated, loud, emotional, brave or off the grid.'

The line-up kicks off with Mercury Prize-winners the Young

Fathers, who open the festival with a choir, followed by a party at the Royal Festival Hall (9 Jun). The following night, Afrikan Boy performs afrobeats and grime (10 Jun), while rapper MHD performs alongside Nigerian afrobeat star Mr Eazi (11 Jun).

As well as a performance by Swedish rapper Yung Lean (14 Jun), the festival includes the UK premiere of Jamaican reggae artist I Wayne (15 Jun). M.I.A. is set to close the festival (18 Jun). 9-18 Jun. www.southbankcentre.co.uk

MIGHTY HOOPLA

This festival is headlined by 2016 Brit Award-winners Years & Years. Will Young, All Saints and S Club 3 perform too, as does Charlotte Church – who covers Bowie, Britney and Beyoncé with a 10-piece band.

You can boogie to Sophie Ellis-Bextor, too.

The festival also celebrates rising stars such as Raye and Porter. But it wouldn't be east London without a hipster band, so the 10-piece Old Dirty Brassstars round things off.

Stalls sell cocktails, craft ales and food. You can also dance to DJs, watch a surreal show by Figs in Wigs, join in a karaoke for the masses and play bingo.

4 Jun. www.mightyhoopla.com



GREENWICH+DOCKLANDS INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

Like Meltdown, Greenwich+Docklands International Festival is also well established: it's been going since 1996. More a celebration of street art and theatre than a music festival, the event has expanded to 16 days. This year, 100,000 people are expected to attend its free outdoor performances.

The festival's artistic director Bradley Hemmings says: 'There are advantages to performing outside. We can use amazing settings such as Canary Wharf, Old Royal Naval College or the atmospheric ruins of St George's Garrison Church in Woolwich. Then there's the informal experience of sharing a performance outdoors with friends. Even if you're watching alone, you'll get swept up in the marvellous sense of community that arises during an outdoor theatre show. The challenge is that, without a theatre, we must build everything from scratch.'

Hemmings co-directed the London 2012 Paralympic Games Opening Ceremony, and curates the Liberty Festival, which promotes arts by people who are deaf and disabled. He adds: 'We think hard about engaging deaf and disabled artists and audiences. Look for viewing areas for wheelchair users, captioned performances and British Sign Language interpreters. This year I'm particularly excited about Deaf Men

Dancing's *Corazón a Corazón*, which brings together tango, British Sign Language and aerial performance.'

So how does Hemmings choose the acts? 'We keep up to date with what's happening in street arts. This means supporting the development of new shows or travelling to see performances – recently I've met artists in Krakow, Antwerp, Brighton and Edinburgh, who will at some stage make their way to audiences in east London,' he explains. 'I seek out shows that capture people's imagination, tell stories in accessible ways and encourage us to look at the world differently. I love performances with an element of surprise.'

Last year acrobats, jugglers and robots roamed the streets – as well as creepy giant heads and a dancing octopus puppet the size of a van. Festival-goers also witnessed fire spectacles, illuminations and musicians playing inside a moving sculpture.

'Last year's opening night combined video projections, pyrotechnics, narration and choreography,' Hemmings says. 'This year we are running a one-day street arts celebration (25 Jun) called *Out in the Streets*, marking the 50th anniversary of the decriminalisation of homosexuality. We're cooking up something even more ambitious for next year.' Fireworks will bring the festival to a close.

From 23 Jun. www.festival.org

LIVE AT CHELSEA

Live at Chelsea sparks into life with The Chelsea Fireworks Prom (16 Jun) at the Royal Hospital Chelsea, which was designed by Sir Christopher Wren in 1682. The Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra plays *Rule, Britannia!* and *Jerusalem*. You can also watch Belle and Sebastian (15 Jun) perform.

15-18 Jun. www.liveatchelsea.com

- TOP TOURS -

• On the Royal Albert Hall's Grand Tour, you might catch a rehearsal taking place in the auditorium (below).

• During the Royal Opera House's Velvet, Gilt and Glamour tour, you will learn about opera singers who have graced its stage since 1858.

• On the Barbican's Private Backstage Tour, you can explore the Grade II-listed multi-arts venue.

