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BATH COMEDY FESTIVAL 2018

PRESS RELEASE: FEB 2018

Bath Comedy Festival 2018 celebrates 10 year anniversary with top gags from best stand ups on comedy circuit.. Jon Richardson, Viv Groskop, Rachel Parris, Zoe Lyons, Simon Evans, Helen Lederer....and famous grumpy old man Arthur Smith....

Festival runs for a mammoth 20 days with exciting events across a range of iconic venues in the city

March 27th-April 15th

Highlights include:

- **Opening Event at Bath's largest event venue- The Forum with British Comedy Award nominee and 8 Out of 10 Cats star Jon Richardson**
- **Vivalicious- A brand new show from Viv Groskop, star of BBC1's 'This Week' and BBC Radio 4's 'It's Just a Joke, Comrade'**
- **Mother's Ruin- A Cabaret about Gin- flagship 5* cabaret show on for 6 nights**
- **Immersive experiences with Faulty Towers: The Dining Experience and The Wine Arts Trail- TWAT- hosted by Absolutely Fabulous actress Helen Lederer**
- **Acclaimed 2017 Edinburgh Fringe solo stand-up show Sarah Bennetto presents 'All My Life's Mistakes, Catalogued (Volume 1)'**
- **Affordable Festival centred on Bath Brew House and St James Wine Vaults with many "pay what you feel" events.**
- **Ring O Bells and Widcombe Social Club host plethora of professional shows from the likes of Simon Evans, Rachel Parris, Arthur Smith, Colin Hoult and Diane Spencer**
- **Rondo Theatre to boast a full programme featuring luminaries such as Elf Lyons, David Mills, Tom Stade and John Otway**
- **Closing Comedy Gala hosted by Bath's brand new Apex Hotel with 'grumpy old man' Arthur Smith, 'The Fast Show's' Simon Day and Zoe Lyons**
- **10th Bath Comedy Festival is supported by Principal Sponsor Lovehoney supporting new talent with the Lovehoney Newcomer Award**

The City of Bath will be roaring with laughter this year as the **Bath Comedy Festival (BCF)** opens on **March 27th** running for an impressive **20 days** across a range of venues in the beautiful historic city. Commencing proceedings will be top stand up **Jon Richardson** opening the Festival at **The Forum** with show **The Old Man** followed by dates with **Viv Groskop, Sarah Bennetto, Helen Lederer** and **Arthur Smith**. Audiences will find 'mirth and laughter' across the length and breadth of the city from **BCF's** spiritual home the **Widcombe Social Club** (with its newly refurbished waterfront bar) and **Ring O Bells**, to **The Bell, The Assembly Inn, The Mission Theatre, St James Wine Vaults, Komedia** and **The Rondo Theatre**.

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Festival Director Nick Steel says "This year sees **Bath Comedy Festival** enter its tenth year, and we have an amazing line-up to celebrate. For our opening night we are back at Bath's fabulous art deco **Forum** venue, this time with **Jon Richardson** giving us his first Bath gig in many years - I booked his last Bath outing a long time ago at the old **Widcombe Social Club** and I am over the moon to welcome him back for our 10th year!"

Vivalicious (28th March) is a brand new show from **Viv Groskop**, star of BBC1's 'This Week' and BBC Radio 4's 'It's Just a Joke, Comrade'. In an age of therapy and reinvention, Viv's latest work-in-progress is about being the very best version of yourself and ultimately accept you are just never going to be 'that' person!

Mother's Ruin (April 1st-6th) will run for 6 nights and is a raucous journey through 18th Century London, a few New York speakeasies, the Australian bush and the jungles of Peru. With music originally performed by Amy Winehouse, Nina Simone, Martha Wainwright, Tom Waits, The Pretenders, Jessie J and more, **Mother's Ruin** moves from misery to vaudeville in a moment, intertwining excess and prohibition, history and (re)invention.

The fantastic **Faulty Towers: The Dining Experience** (3rd- 4th April) returns for its second visit to the **BCF** which will see guests dine at possibly the worst hotel in the world. Basil, Sybil and Manuel serve a 3-course meal along with audience participation in this 5-star immersive show which is 70% improvised! A true blend of ingenious comedy where chaos reigns right from the start!

Absolutely Fabulous actress and comedian **Helen Lederer** will host the flagship hit immersive show **The Wine Arts Trail (TWAT)** which will make its bonkers boozy way around Bath's secret corners in a big red Routemaster bus (8th April). German Comedy Ambassador sell out **Henning Wehn** brings 2 shows of his work-in-progress show, or masterpiece-under-construction to the **Widcombe Social Club** (9/10th April) .

Award-winning musical comic **Rachel Parris** whose songs have been played on BBC Radio 4, BBC 6 Music and who was listed in the BBC's Hot Talent List 2017 and has appeared most recently in the satirical BBC show **The Mash Report** presents **Keynote** (6th April) . The show sees her invited to be a guest speaker at her old school, but what kind of a role model is she really? Through stand-up, character and musical comedy, she explores what messed up message she can possibly offer to impressionable young minds.

Brimming with new talent the city has seen the **BCF New Act Competition** become so popular that the heats have been extended to a total of twelve, to be held in the beautiful creative space of the **Igloo** (underneath the Abbey Hotel); The Westgate Pub and The Bath Brew House. Previous winners have gone on to great things and the final will see another line-up of brand new stars in the making. The Winner will make off with the first ever **Lovehoney Newcomer Award**, akin to Edinburgh's famous "Perrier".

Residents of Bradford on Avon and those up for a ten minute train ride out of Bath won't miss out as Radio 4 favourite **Mark Steel** is appearing at **St Margaret's Hall** (13th April). The people of Frome can look forward to a walking tour with a difference where **Rare Species** will be presenting **Frome – The Fecund Coming**.

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The Affordable **Pay What You Feel Festival** returns to **Bath Brew House** with a plethora of free entry shows playing host to Friday and Saturday evening events organised by **Mirth Control**, featuring headliners **Jonny & The Baptists**, **Jarred Christmas** and **Arthur Smith**. **Widcombe** remains the spiritual home of the Festival, with the programme at **Widcombe Social Club** boasting some special shows such as celebrated impressionist **Julian Dutton** with his show about the **Life & Times of John Le Mesurier**, **Simon Evans** and **Arthur Smith**. The **Ring O Bells** programme showcases Edinburgh style professional solo shows from the likes of **Ashley Storrie**, **Janey Godley**, **Colin Hault**, **Diane Spencer**, **Matt Green** and **Joey Page** as well as **Sam Fraser** – the first BBC Weather presenter to turn to stand-up.

The festival is also the first 'F' (female) rated United Kingdom comedy festival - continuing to fight against the traditional perception that comedy is male-dominated by championing female acts every day.

Arthur Smith will also perform at the Festival's glittering **Closing Gala Show** at the brand new **Apex Hotel Conference Suite** – one of the best new venue's Bath has seen in many years. Audiences will be able to enjoy characters by **The Fast Show's Simon Day**, a visit from Donald Trump aka ace TV and Radio impressionist **Lewis MacLeod** and headliner **Zoe Lyons**. The inaugural **Lovehoney Award** will be presented on the night to reward the most innuendo-laden joke writer of the Festival. Rumour has it that the Queen will also be in attendance...

BCF Director Nick Steel says: "For our 10th year we have a fantastic programme and series of expanded events with famous names coming to perform as well as discovering up and coming comedians and new spaces for them to perform in. The Festival has grown in status and reputation over the years and Bath is now being recognised as a centre for comedy and more than just Jane Austen and cups of tea!"

For more information please see: www.bathcomedy.com or check out the [What's on pages](#) which are correct at time of going to press. Follow BCF on facebook <https://www.facebook.com/BathComedyFest/> and Twitter @bathcomedyfest

Arthur Smith 'best comedy festival in England'

Lorraine Chase 'Thank you for a very interesting weekend indeed! What lovely people they are in Bath without exception...wondrous. A great success, you deserve it... I think the Bus Tour is a hoot and a blooming good idea!'

ENDS

IMAGE LINK

<http://goo.gl/5G5kGH>

MEDIA CONTACT

Mary Rahman at MRPR on 07958 399740 or email maryrahmanMRPR@gmail.com

NOTES TO EDITOR

Principal Sponsor: Lovehoney

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Richard Longhurst, Co-Founder of Lovehoney, said:

“Lovehoney is delighted to work with Bath Comedy Festival and VisitBath on this fantastic event. It’s probably the first time that comedy fans have been able to enjoy rib ticklers and feather ticklers on the same night out.”

Other Festival Sponsors include: Specsavers, Curo, Abbey Hotel, Apex Hotel

Notes for Editors

Bath Comedy Festival runs Tuesday 27 March – Sunday 15 April 2018 throughout various venues in Bath

Bath Comedy Festival

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Nick Steel - Director, Bath Comedy Festival

Tel: 07974 301219 // nick@bathcomedy.com

VisitBath

www.visitbath.co.uk

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/VisitBath>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/VisitBath>

Leslie Redwood - Head of Business Development

Leslie_Redwood@bathtourism.co.uk

Lovehoney

www.lovehoney.co.uk

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LovehoneyOfficial/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/lovehoney>

Jacqueline Cameron - PR & Communications Manager

jacqueline.cameron@lovehoney.co.uk

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