

BRIEFLY

Dancing concludes

'MAN and Woman' – a stunning new piece of dance performed by the internationally renowned Ricochet Dance Company, will be performed at Taunton's Tacchi-Morris Arts Centre on Wednesday, November 23, at 7.30pm.

The last in the centre's highly successful Season of Dance, tickets cost £7.50 (£5 concs) from the box office on 01823-414141 or from the Taunton Tourist Information Centre.

Diamond is forever

THE music of world renowned American singer/songwriter/guitarist Neil Diamond takes centre stage at Weston's Playhouse on Saturday, November 26, at 7.30pm, when top vocalist John Hylton brings his Real Diamond show to the resort.

Tickets cost £12 (£10 concs) from the Playhouse box office on 01934-645544.

Christmas classics

YOUNGSTERS from Tina Counsell's Junior Showtime will be spreading some yuletide spirit on Saturday, December 3, when they present their festive show, Christmas Magic, at Weston-super-Mare's Playhouse Theatre.

Tickets cost £8, (children £7), from the box office on 01934-645544.

One more chance

FOR those who missed Spike Theatre's production 'Backwater' at the Brewhouse last week, there is another chance to catch the performance at The David Hall Arts Centre, South Petherton as part of Take Art Live on Saturday, December 3, at 8pm. Call 01460-240340 for details.

What a farce! Camerata's guests

Review: Taking Steps at the Brewhouse

WITH the Taunton Thespians' opening night at the Brewhouse happily falling on a Tuesday, famous *Gazette* opinion girl Jean Tilley and my humble self decided to make a team effort and give our verdict on TT's take on Alan Ayckbourn's farce 'Taking Steps'.

In such a script-heavy play, it's important everyone keeps the pace up, and there were no fluffs here. In fact, I was impressed with the overall slickness of the show.

Stand-out performances, for me, came from Dusty Miller as Mark (the dancer's brother) and Adrian Lynch as Tristram, the junior solicitor. Adrian's performance was perhaps the most well-rounded of the evening, but Dusty's comic timing was spot-on.

Jean said Alison Jenkinson as Elizabeth (the dancer) was just like Penelope Keith (Margo) from the Good Life – very true! Her range of pitch was wonderfully OTT, although I thought her dancey flourishes could have been even more extravagant.

The script was a good choice – complex enough for the misunderstandings to work plausibly, yet easy to follow.



MR Bainbridge in a spot of bother – Arthur Cummins, Ray Court and Alison Jenkinson in a scene from Taking Steps.

And many moments were laugh-out-loud funny.

Arthur Cummins did well to appear arrogant and self-assured (before his character's problems started, of course), and Ron Roberts' direction was inventive. I liked the way the cast duly tackled the 'stairs', even though they were just lines of tape on a flat stage.

Occasionally, I felt the pace dropped a little, especially when the jokes thinned out,

but overall, it was a fine farce – and one the decent-sized audience appeared to enjoy.

Jean said she found the ending a little abrupt, and had to piece together why it ended where it did... and I'd have to agree. After such a good show, it was perhaps the weakest part.

The production runs until Saturday – so there's still time to see if you agree.

JUSTIN TOWELL

TAUNTON Camerata are pleased to announce the Musicians of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London will be returning for another Christmas concert at North Curry Church on Sunday, December 4 at 7pm.

This year the programme will focus on English seasonal music from the Renaissance and later – particularly West Gallery Carols – which will give the

versatile band an opportunity to show off their many and varied period instruments.

Seats are limited and cost £9-£12 with the usual concessions for young people.

For information on this and forthcoming events, contact Taunton Camerata on 01884-849172 or visit www.tauntoncamerata.com

Another SCAT coup

ON MONDAY, November 28, Eliza Carthy will perform at Somerset College on Wellington Road.

At the age of 30 Eliza is one of the top traditional female folk singers in this country. Nominated twice for the Mercury Music Prize, she will be performing with her band The Ratcatchers.

Tickets cost £15 from main reception at the College, or by phone from Andy Lock on 01278-723389/07723-331436.

Torn for Children in Need

STEVE Parsons and Tim Beadle will be holding a fundraising night at The Westgate in Taunton tonight (Thursday) to raise money for Children in Need.

Steve's band, Torn, (described as 'three guys only doing what the universe demands of them') will be playing – visit www.torn.biz for details.

Early tomorrow (Friday) Steve and Time will be

setting off on a walk from French Weir Park in Taunton to Starcross, along the Two Counties Way.

The pair aim to complete the 56 mile hike sometime on Sunday morning, not only raise money for Children in Need, but also help to promote The Two Counties Way – see www.somersetramblers.co.uk/2CW/thewalk.htm for route details.

e-mail us on leisure@countygazette.co.uk



ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

Supporting Pudsey this Friday

FOLLOW the lead of local businesses by digging deep to donate to BBC Children in Need.

Schools, work sites and homes across the country have been raising money for the cause for some weeks and people will be gathered round the TV on Friday to follow the fundraising efforts.

And with your help, the annual seven-hour TV and radio extravaganza will raise millions of smiles and pounds for disadvantaged children.

Many people think poverty and suffering only exists in far away African countries – but this couldn't be further from the truth, because millions of youngsters suffer on a daily basis in streets near you.

Every penny raised by the public is used to make a difference to the lives of disadvantaged children across the UK.

Last year, your efforts helped raise £17.1 million on appeal and the money is still rolling in.

Over the 26 years since Children In Need began, more than

£385 million has been generated, helping improve the lives of thousands of kids across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

During the last couple of years alone, over 1,750 grants have been made to children's charities and voluntary groups throughout the UK.

These include children suffering through illness, abuse, distress or neglect, those experiencing poverty, deprivation or homelessness, and children with behavioural and psychological disorders.

And the money has been sent to give many youngsters a brighter future by helping with their learning, sensory or physical disabilities.

So, follow the example of businesses and make a donation to reduce suffering in neighbourhoods near you.

The *Gazette* donated ten per cent of the revenue from this charity feature (registered charity number 802052).

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