



THE
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ASK ALAN... WHAT'S ON STAGE

The best-selling and most anticipated new shows



"OLD FRIENDS" Gielgud Theatre

After Stephen Sondheim's death in 2021, Cameron Mackintosh produced a one-off gala performance last year to celebrate Sondheim's greatest works. Now, the concert is back for a full season at the Gielgud Theatre. A host of big musical stars, including Bernadette Peters and Lea Salonga sparkle their way through songs from his best shows, including *Sweeney Todd*, *Gypsy*, and *West Side Story*. If you enjoy Sondheim's work, you will be in seventh heaven from the moment the curtain goes up. It's very special!

"PRIVATE LIVES" Ambassadors Theatre

If you like Noel Coward's witty style of writing, this production is definitely worth seeing. Nigel Havers and Patricia Hodge star, and have such a wealth of experience between them that they are able to relish the richness of Coward's language to great effect. Their timing is impeccable, and the way these two characters hurl insults at each other is a joy to behold. It is a period piece certainly, but it's executed with such humour and panache that you come out of the theatre having had a good old giggle.

"VANYA" Duke of York's Theatre

Andrew Scott is back in the West End, this time playing every single role in Chekhov's 'Uncle Vanya'. This is a play with boiling passions beneath the surface, and one in which some of our greatest actors have given their all: Laurence Olivier, Peter O'Toole, Derek Jacobi.

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"HAMNET"

The Garrick Theatre

Based on Maggie O'Farrell's best-selling novel and adapted by award-winning playwright Lolita Chakrabarti (*Life of Pi*, *Red Velvet*, *Hymn*), *Hamnet* pulls back a curtain on the story of the greatest writer in the English language and the woman who was the constant presence and purpose of his life. Warwickshire, 1582, Agnes Hathaway, a natural healer, meets the Latin tutor, William Shakespeare. Drawn together by powerful but hidden impulses, they create a life together and make a family. When the Plague steals 11-year-old Hamnet from his loving parents, they must each confront their loss alone. And yet, out of the greatest suffering, something of extraordinary wonder is born.

"DEAR ENGLAND"

Prince Edward Theatre

This unusual play has as its subject Gareth Southgate, the England football team manager, with Joseph Fiennes taking on the lead role. We, (the audience) are left to make up our own mind about Southgate and his touchy-feely approach to managing the team. The writing means that the play is accessible to all, not just those with football knowledge. It covers weighty subjects including toxic masculinity and discrimination.

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