

Macrobert Arts Centre to get audiences dancing this Christmas with disco retelling of Aladdin



15th November 2023

Macrobert Arts Centre, Central Scotland's leading arts venue, has revealed a programme filled with festive fun for all the family to round off 2023, including a panto sure to get everyone dancing in their seats: Aladdin. With a stellar cast bringing the story to life, audiences are invited to don their boogie shoes for this disco-inspired panto, and enjoy all of the cultural excellence that Stirling's cultural hub has on offer this December.

Get ready for a disco inferno, as we join the McTwank family in the town that Stirling Stella almost forgot- Discotopia. Here lives widow Marge O'Reen McTwank, owner of the last laundrette in town. Her oldest daughter, Aladdin, is wildly in love with Prince Jasper but can love survive the grease stains and smell of fabric conditioner? And if love's trials and tribulations weren't enough, The Demon King has arrived in town claiming himself to be a long-lost relative of the McTwank family, and all he wants for Christmas is some rusty old lamp. Hmmm...

Written and directed by **Jonny McKnight**, who also stars as Widow McTwank, Aladdin will be lighting up Macrobert's Mainhouse Friday 1 – Sunday 31 December. Starring alongside Jonny will be **Robbie Jack**, known for appearing as Jacko in Garry Tank Commander, **Helen McAlpine**, whose screen appearances include Scot Squad, Outlander and Waterloo Road, **Amy Conachan**, who audiences might recognise from Hollyoaks, and Tillicoultry's own **Dylan Wood**, who stars as the new Prince on the Stirling Stella block. The incredible cast is completed by **Betty Valencia** in the title role, and **Ryan Towart** and **Kara Swinney**.

In addition to Aladdin, *Eric The Elf* is a fun-filled, interactive, inspiring musical adventure with lots of laughs and songs for wee ones to join in with this Christmas. First produced and presented by the Citizens Theatre, this very special show invites young audiences to join Eric on his adventure to save Christmas.

It's Eric's first day working in Santa's Grotto and he is about as excited as an Elf can be. But what starts out as a magical day filled with fun soon goes wrong, as Eric is left all on his own with the future of Christmas resting entirely on his rather small shoulders. Thankfully, a whole bunch of his little human pals have shown up, little children from all over Scotland and beyond. Surely if they work together, they can get the job done?

With BSL and relaxed performances on offer, and reduced ticket prices for nurseries and playgroups of more than 10 children, this is a show that's sure to wow those aged 5 and under.

Handmade 2023, Macrobert's annual exhibition of some of Scotland's best makers and artists, returns from 27 November to 7 January 2024. The perfect place to find something special to give to family and friends at Christmas, this pop-up market will have a fantastic array of gifts by Scotland's Artists and Makers.

Macrobert's cinema will also be filled with festive spirit this Christmas, as the Royal Opera House's production of **The Nutcracker** hits the big screen 12-17 December. Peter Wright's much-loved production for The Royal Ballet, with gorgeous period designs by Julia Trevelyan Oman, keeps true to the spirit of this festive ballet classic, combining the thrill of the fairy tale with spectacular dancing. Join Clara at a delightful Christmas Eve party that becomes a magical adventure once everyone else is tucked up in bed. Marvel at the brilliance of Tchaikovsky's score, as Clara and her enchanted Nutcracker fight the Mouse King and visit the Sugar Plum Fairy in the glittering Kingdom of Sweets.

New film **Wonka** will be also released in cinemas this December, just in time for visitors to Macrobert's cinema to indulge in their favourite Christmas candy as they watch Timothée Chalamet tell the story of how Willy became Wonka.

Julie Ellen, Artistic Director of Macrobert Arts Centre said: "Getting ready for Christmas at Macrobert is like organising the best party ever and it really is a treat to have dear friends, and some disco tunes, to be setting up the Festive fun with. I'm delighted Johnny McKnight, Robert Jack, Helen McAlpine, Kara Swinney and Amy Conachan are coming back. And look forward to you meeting our new pals, Ryan Towart and Tillicoultry's very own Dylan Wood. I am really looking forward to seeing them, our Handmade makers, Eric & Friends, and all of you, very, very soon."

Tickets are on sale now at <https://macrobertartscentre.org/>