

7 things in 7 days

tonight

FAMILY: Le Snob

Millennium Plain, 5.30pm/10.15pm, free admission
Begin your festival with Fanfare Le Snob, an incredible gliding street band from France. Quite a spectacle, dressed in cone-shaped gowns and hats spouting flames, the fanfare member playing assorted brass, percussion and plucked instruments, they move swiftly and silently, morphing as if by magic from one transfixing routine to another.

saturday

CLASSICAL: Festival Chorus and Hewett School Choir with Birmingham Symphony Orchestra

St Andrews Hall, 7.30pm, £7.50-£40, 01603 766400
Jonathan Dove gained widespread acclaim for his operas Flight and Pinocchio. There Was a Child, a specially commissioned work here gets its world premiere. A joyful celebration of the wonder of life it features the combined forces of one of the world's finest orchestras, the Festival chorus and the choir of Norwich's Hewett School.

sunday

JAZZ: Tomasz Stanko Quartet

St Peter Mancroft, 8.30pm, £9-£17, 01603 766400
Tomasz Stanko enjoys legendary status on the European jazz scene as a trumpeter, composer and free-jazz pioneer. His haunting, lyrical music and complex, delicate compositions have earned him the reputation as one of the world's most original and inventive jazz trumpeters. A rare treat.

monday

MUSIC/FAMILY: London Mozart Players with Roger McGough

St Andrew's Hall, 5pm, £10-£20, children under-16 £5-£10, 01603 766400
A musical treat for all the family. Two sparkling works by Mozart and Haydn set the scene for Saint Saëns' ever-popular journey through the animal kingdom. The London Mozart Players create a musical backdrop for popular poet Roger McGough's animal-themed verses.

tuesday

DRAMA: Kitchen (You've Never Had It So Good)

Norwich Playhouse, 8pm (also Wednesday), £12, 01603 766400
British-German collaboration Gob Squad present a multi-media journey back in time It's 1965 and they are setting out to reconstruct Andy Warhol's Kitchen, despite the fact that none of them have ever seen it. How do they know if they're going wrong? How did people dance? What did they talk about? Had feminism happened?

wednesday

FAMILY: Architects of Air

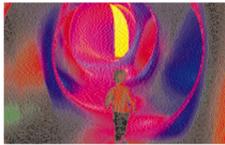
Chapelfield Gardens, May 1-16, Mon-Fri 3pm-8pm; Sat/Sun/Bank Holiday Monday 11am-8pm, free admission
Relinquish your shoes and your senses as you immerse yourself in the surreal, sensual world of Levity III, a kaleidoscope of liquid light, gentle surround sound and psychedelic colour. The 10,000-sq ft inflatable, walk-through sculpture is inspired by Islamic architecture. It's also a fantastic chill-out zone.

thursday

WORLD MUSIC: Femi Temowo & Mike Swai Band

Norwich Arts Centre, 8pm, £5, 01603 660352
Femi Temowo is a long-time collaborator with Soweto Kinch and Amy Winehouse. He has recently been developing his own compositions fusing modern jazz with early Yoruba folk music. Collaborating with Nigerian musicians this will be its first airing. Mike Swai will be premiering his recent work with Senegalese djembe master Makhou N'Diaye.

at The Festival



Pine standing tall as one of UK's jazz greats



Courtney Pine is widely seen as the most significant jazz musician to come from the UK for decades, and will be bringing his Jazz Warriors to the city as one of the highlights of this year's festival. **ROB GARRATT** spoke to the legend.

To Courtney Pine, being a musician doesn't end with playing music.

His current project the Jazz Warriors is not just a band – it is a community project formed in 2007 to mark the 200th anniversary of the abolition of slavery.

Designed to be a platform for young and rising Afro-Caribbean stars, the 14-piece big band has an evolving door of young talent – to the extent that Pine is unsure of exactly who will be playing the gig at the Theatre Royal next week.

Ironically, the Jazz Warriors were first put together by Pine in the mid-80s because he "couldn't get any work."

Now though, they are a celebration of race, freedom, and a forceful celebration of Black culture and expression. "The bicentenary Abolition of the Slave Trade Act was such a significant event to people from the same background as me," says Pine.

The early Warriors fell apart as Pine's own solo career was taking off. His debut album, 1987's Journey to the Urge Within, became the first serious UK jazz album to chart in the Top 40 and the best selling jazz album to ever come out of the UK. It threw the dusty old genre into the limelight and made it cool and relevant again by opening up the groove and mixing in elements of funk and soul.

"It was just unheard of," admits Pine. "It opened up a lot of people who wanted to play jazz to a wider audience. A lot of people who had to wait for Americans to come over to play

anywhere that wasn't a wine bar or a pub.

"When I came into jazz I couldn't work out why all these great jazz musicians would want to play to a

limited audience. I wanted to play on the main stage of the Festival Hall – that was my ambition.

"The media couldn't understand what I was doing at the time, but I'm still standing and I'm still playing jazz."

His silver-selling debut also established Pine as the leading force in British jazz, a status he has used to bring youngsters to the forefront – using the Jazz Warriors to catapult UK jazz stars like Tony Kofi and Bryan Wilson into the spotlight.

His record label Destin-E also put out the debut album by rising stars Empirical – one of the most exciting news albums of the

decade, it went onto to pick up a string of awards.

Since then Pine has continued to dabble with other genres. After starting his career as a reggae player, most notably working with Clint Eastwood and General Saint.

His first take on his upbringing came in his 1990 reggae-infused album Closer To Home, recorded in Jamaica with a cast of top Caribbean musicians.

"My parents are from Jamaica and its the kind of music I grew up with," says Courtney. "Ever since I can remember they would be playing records by people like Jimmy Cliff – but I preferred the b-sides on the records where there were solos. I didn't realise they were jazz musicians – these are the guys that created blue-beat and ska and rock-steady."

Since then Pine's sound has been a constant evolution, utilising musicians and styles from across the globe, and combining everything from hip-hop samples to sitars on records still filed under the 'jazz' section.

"For me it's development," he says. "I don't see it as changing. I have things I'd like to fulfil. I have a lot of projects I'd like to do and sometimes the opportunity or the budget is there – for me it's still a case of ticking all the boxes. I'd love to do a ballads album. I'd love to do Brazilian music. As a musician I have travelled and experienced the world and I want to bring those experiences into my records and life and just be true to myself. I'm not just being different to be different – as my life changes so does my music."

One of his most renowned – and critically mauled – crossovers is his drum and bass-infused work, first employed on 1995's groundbreaking New Jazz Stories – which was shortlisted for the Mercury Music Prize – and used more extensively on follow up Underground. A remix album of material from the two albums by big names like Roni Size, Another Story, followed – virtually unheard of for a jazz artist.

"I like the music and I'm really proud it came from this country and our experiences," he explains. "At first I was playing acoustic jazz standards and it got to the point where I was bored, and the audience were bored too – it was saxophone solo, piano solo, bass solo – and I would go back to the hotel and listen to 4 Hero and Roni Size and I just wanted to play it. I'd play a gig and be bored and go back to the hotel and listen to jungle records and get excited. And there was no Coltrane or Charlie Parker to refer to – it was new territory. The jazzers didn't like me anyway."

But despite a receiving a critical mauling at semi-regular intervals from the snobbish jazz press, the American jazz aristocracy have welcomed Pine with open arms, with legend Art Blakey inviting Pine to join the Jazz Messengers early in his career – widely seen as the ultimate apprenticeship. Previous horn greats to pass through the ranks include Wayne Shorter, Freddie Hubbard, Lee Morgan, Wynton Marsalis and Hank Mobley.

Pine's love of the saxophone is something



Late Minute Tickets

Tickets have already sold-out for a number of Norfolk & Norwich Festival events, while other shows close to capacity.

Shows by jazz star Andy Sheppard, violinist Nicola Benedetti, the Philharmonia orchestra and festival favourites the Tallis Scholars are among those already sold out, while only a handful of tickets remain for big name shows such as Philip Glass, the world premieres by composer Jonathan Dove with the Festival Chorus and jazz sensation Gwilym Simcock and the debut of Retropect Ensemble.

"Naturally we're thrilled that so many events are selling fast," said artistic director Jonathan Holloway. "But we want to reassure festival-goers that if they haven't got their tickets yet, it's not too late. If you've missed the Benedetti Trio, then come along to hear some sublime sounds from Ilya Gingolts at Norwich Playhouse; if you were hoping catch Andy Sheppard, then come to St Peter Mancroft setting and hear hauntingly beautiful music by jazz legend, Tomasz Stanko.

"What I find each year is that our audiences trust us enough to take a chance and try something completely new. And the great thing is that there is a really strong free festival programme again this year, so even if you haven't got a ticket you can come along and enjoy the experience!"

■ **Ticket hotline: 01603 766400, www.nnfestival.org.uk.**

Festival-Going On A Shoestring

If you're strapped for cash but still fancy getting into the festival spirit, here is a handy guide to making the most of Norfolk & Norwich Festival without spending a fortune.

■ **The MG Free Events** — May Gurney have sponsored three massive events this year. They're big, their explosive and they are completely and utterly free. Ullik & Le SNOB — the incredible gliding, flaming street band from France, perform outside the Forum tonight at 5.30pm and 10.15pm. Commandos Percu, Bombs Per Minute, a pyrotechnic extravaganza, is staged at Earlham Park at 10.15pm tomorrow. And The Garden Party — two days of circus, theatre, music, dance and aerialists from all over the world, takes place in Chapelfield Gardens on May 10-11, 11am–5pm.

■ **Be under-26** — There are £5 tickets allocated for every show. And they're not the rubbish seats either: they're some of the best seats in the house. And all you have to do to get your hands on them is to make sure you book your tickets in advance... oh, and make sure you're under the age of 26.

■ **Private View for Children** — Mary Newcomb's exhibition, Fire, Earth, Water, Air will have a special private view that's just for children with Spin Off Theatre Company on May 9, between 11am and 2pm at Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery (booking essential on 01603 495897)

■ **SpiegelLates Early Birds** — For five nights the Spiegel Lates programme in the Salon Perdu SpiegelLates in Chapelfield Gardens will cost you not a penny to get in. That's right. Groove on down to a host of music and cabaret by the celebrated Bo Nananafana crew for absolutely nothing. But make sure you get there early as space is limited. Spiegel Lates will be on May 10-14 and 16.

■ **Check www.nnfestival.org.uk for last minute special offers.**

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