

MARTIN FREEMAN • ADAM HILLS • MIKE MCCARTNEY
STEPHEN K. AMOS • SAMIRA AHMED • MEERA SYAL
RICK WAKEMAN • NIGEL PLANER
BEN ELTON • HARRY ENFIELD

SLAPSTICK



12-16 FEB 2025

BRINGING CLASSIC COMEDY TO LIFE!

"TWO DECADES OF PURE JOY" - MICHAEL PALIN

SLAPSTICK 2025

WELCOME

Dear Slapstick supporters,

I can hardly believe it's been 21 years since we first set out to share the magic of silent and visual comedy with audiences in Bristol and beyond.

As we celebrate this incredible milestone we have an extraordinary series of events planned, featuring classic screen comedy, music, and beloved figures from the world of comedy and culture. Our focus in on satire and references to satirical comedy can be found throughout the programme.

This year, we're thrilled to welcome a line up that reads like a comedy who's who, including: Harry Enfield, Martin Freeman, Sanjeev Bhaskar, Myra Syal, Ben Elton, Stephen K Amos, Adam Hills and Nigel Planer.

Alongside historians and experts Polly Rose, Pamela Hutchinson, and Samira Ahmed, all these great talents and supporters bring fresh insights and passion to our lineup. Regular attendees will know that music has always been at the heart of Slapstick, and we are again joined by a remarkable array of talented musicians including keyboard legend Rick Wakeman, all led by our musical director, maestro Günter A. Buchwald.

Our flagship event, the Silent Comedy Gala, features a big screen outing of Buster Keaton's finest: Steamboat Bill, Jr. (1928) with a live improvised 'score' by the European Silent Screen Virtuosi and an array of surprises, including vocal harmonies from The Matinee Idles.

Thank you for being with us on this journey, and we look forward to celebrating with you in February. Do visit slapstick.org.uk for tickets and more details.

Come and join us!

Chris Daniels

Festival Director

WWW.SLAPSTICK.ORG.UK

20TH ANNIVERSARY



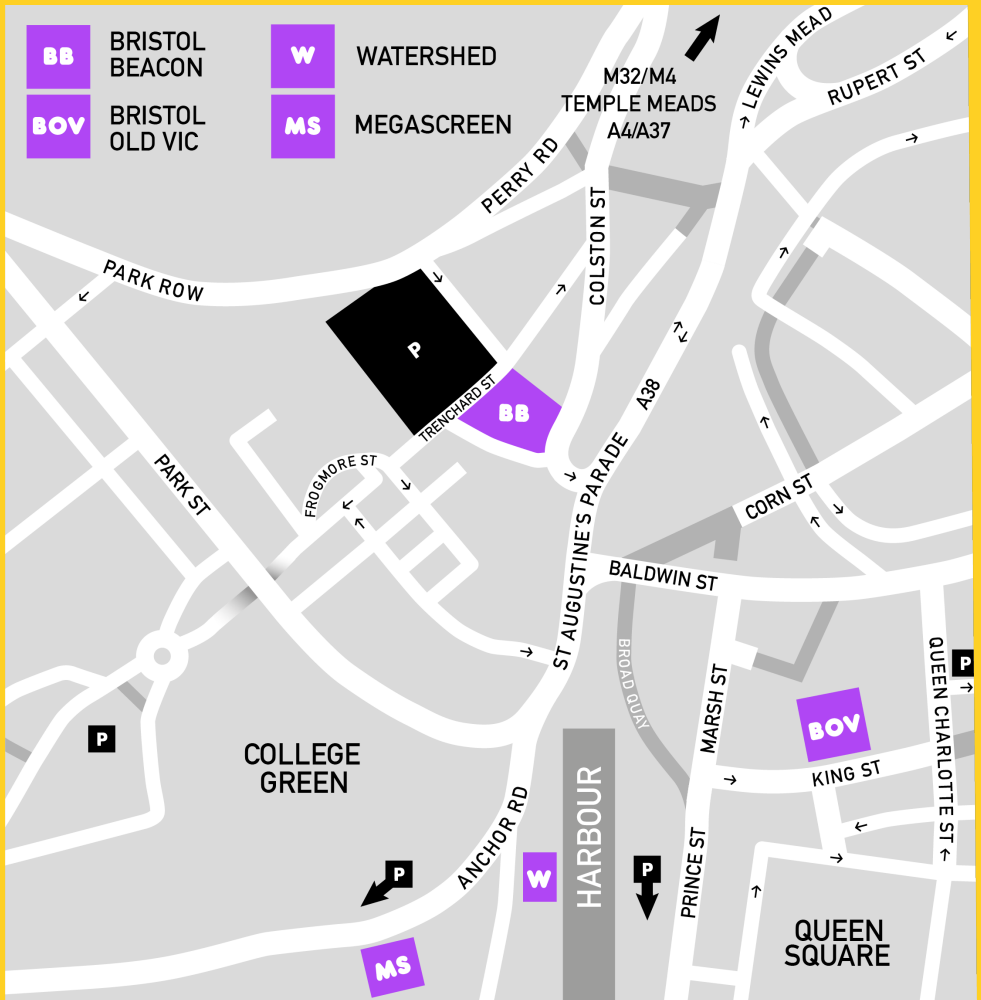
SATIRE!



SILENT COMEDY



CLASSIC COMEDY



VENUES: TICKET INFORMATION

Bristol Beacon, Trenchard St, Bristol BS1 5AR
0117 203 4040 | bristolbeacon.org

Bristol Old Vic, King St, Bristol BS1 4ED
0117 987 7877 | bristololdvic.org.uk

Watershed, 1 Canons Road, Bristol BS1 5TX
0117 927 5100 | watershed.co.uk

Bristol Megascreen, Anchor Rd, Bristol BS1 5TT
0117 929 8929 | www.bristolaquarium.co.uk/megascreen



@SLAPSTICKFEST

SLAPSTICK.ORG.UK

**“A HEARTWARMING
AND HILARIOUS
FESTIVAL”**

JO BRAND



BOOKING & PASSES

From £140

If you're planning to attend more than a handful of events at Slapstick, consider one of our pass options and make huge savings!

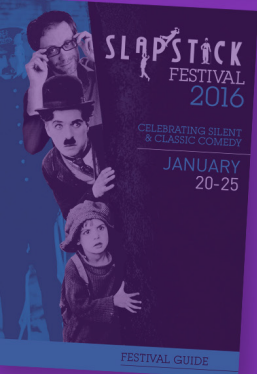
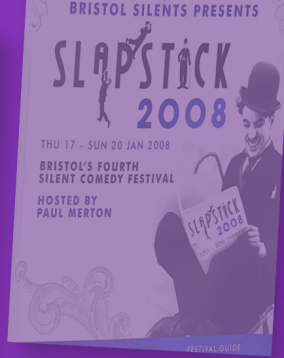
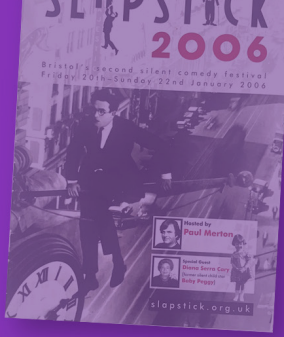
Enjoy a fuller festival experience while getting nearly 50% off regular ticket prices!

See www.slapstick.org.uk for details.

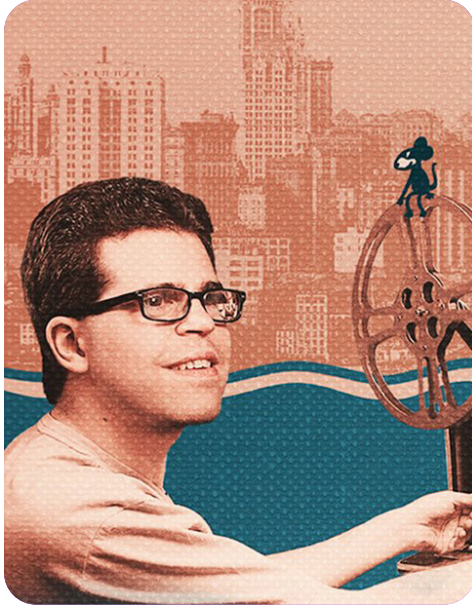


**“SLAPSTICK
FESTIVAL IS
VERY, VERY
IMPORTANT
TO THE WHOLE
INDUSTRY”**

JOSH WIDDICOMBE



FEB 12 WEDNESDAY



CARTOON CARNIVAL

With Peter Lord CBE & Andrew Smith
Wednesday 12th February

Watershed

11:00

Dir: Andrew T Smith, 2021, UK, 89 mins
£5.00 - £11.00

Opening Slapstick's 20th anniversary, Aardman's Peter Lord CBE chats with Andrew Smith, director of Cartoon Carnival; a lovingly-researched documentary telling the story of the early days of animated film and of one man's quest to rescue pre-sound cartoons from obscurity and share them with new audiences. We will be showing the film in full, which includes contributions from Kevin Brownlow, Walt Disney, Peter Lord himself and Tommy Jose Stathes, among many others.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 123 mins



NORRTULLSLIGAN (THE NUTHILL LEAGUE)

With Peter Walsh

Wednesday 12th February

Watershed

13:15

12A

Dir: Per Lindberg, 1923, Sweden
£5.00 - £11.00

Four single girls? Busy office jobs? Love lives? All while sharing a flat in a big city? Sounds like the plot of a modern comedy series, doesn't it? But not only does Norrtullsligan date from 1923, it was an adaptation of stories published 15 years earlier by journalist and feminist Elin Wägner. South West Silents' Peter Walsh introduces this gentle and graceful comedy about women trying to navigate a male dominated world. With live piano accompaniment from Daan van den Hurk. "Really charming" – Kevin Brownlow.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 96 mins.

FEB 12 WEDNESDAY



W.C.FIELDS: RUNNING WILD

With Dr Harriet Fields and Andrew Kelly
Wednesday 12th February
Watershed

15:30
PG

Dir: Gregory La Cave, 1927, USA,
68 mins £5.00 - £11.00

W.C. Fields is best known for his witty, cantankerous quotes and later talkies, but here in this early silent comedy, he shines as the henpecked Elmer. Regularly undermined by work colleagues and clients until he's hypnotised into believing he is a lion. Host Andrew Kelly will be talking live via Zoom to Dr. Harriet Fields, granddaughter of W.C. Fields. With live piano accompaniment from Daan van den Hurk.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 80 mins



HAROLD LLOYD IN THE FRESHMAN

With Paul McGann
Wednesday 12th February
BRISTOL MEGASCREEN (Aquarium)
18:00

Dir: Fred Newmeyer/Sam Taylor, 1925, USA,
77 mins £10.00 - 15.00

Actor and Lloyd superfan Paul McGann welcomes you to Bristol's largest screen for a screening of one of Harold Lloyd's best-loved comedies. Satirising college life, Lloyd is a student desperate to gain popularity, including on the football field, despite having no flair for the game. As his classmates fake friendship and aim to make him look like a fool, will the affection of his landlady's daughter be enough to turn his fortunes around? Accompanied by Carl Davis' critically acclaimed score, this is a heartwarming and hilarious event you won't want to miss.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 85 mins

FEB 12 WEDNESDAY



WITH RYLAND BRICKSON COLE TEWS



HOSTED BY ROBIN INCE



HUNDREDS OF BEAVERS

With Ryland Brickson Cole Tews in conversation

Wednesday 12th February

BRISTOL MEGASCREEN (Aquarium)

20:30

Dir: Mike Cheslik, 2022, USA,

130 mins £10.00 - £15.00

Made on a lowly \$100,000 budget, this surprise independent hit about a trapper (Ryland Brickson Cole Tews) battling beavers is already heading towards cult classic status, having picked up awards from festivals worldwide, earning glowing reviews from top critics & audiences and a 97% score on Rotten Tomatoes.

A masterful homage to slapstick classics, its makers are being awarded the Slapstick Legacy Medal. Includes a unique conversation, introduction and Q&A between host Robin Ince and co-writer / lead actor Ryland Brickson Cole Tews.

"Genuinely bananas and genuinely funny" – Mark Kermode.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 130 mins

FEB 13 THURSDAY



SILENT MOVIE

With Chris Daniels & Robin Ince
Thursday 13th February - Watershed
09:30 - PG
Dir: Mel Brooks, 1976, USA,
87 mins £5.00 - £11.00

Laugh-out-loud gags, sharp satirical digs at the business side of Hollywood with cinema's best known stars sprinkled throughout this fine satire-charting the attempts by Mel Brooks and the lost-too-young Marty Feldman to make a silent film. The movie is completely silent- save for one unforgettable word delivered by the most surprising guest star. Including an introductory conversation between festival director Chris Daniels & comedian, writer Robin Ince.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 100 mins

SILENT MOVIE

RELAXED SCREENING

Thursday 13th February - Watershed
09:45 - PG
Dir: Mel Brooks, 1976, USA, 87 mins
£5.00 - £11.00



FEB 13 THURSDAY

**OH! WHAT A NURSE!
+SHORT**

With Lucy Porter

Thursday 13th February - Watershed

11:45 - 12A

Dir: Charles Reisner, 1926, USA, 70 mins /
Romeo Busetti, France, 1911

£5.00 - £11.00

Stand-up star Lucy Porter introduces two films linked by their takes on marriage. LE TORCHON BRULE, by far the oldest and shortest in this year's programme, stars Sarah Duhamel as one half of a couple engaged in all-out war.

The main feature, OH! WHAT A NURSE!, has Charlie Chaplin's brother Syd, seeking to prevent a young heiress from marrying her uncle's dubious choice of suitor, with madcap results. Includes a bit part for future double Oscar winner Janet Gaynor. With live piano accompaniment by Daan van den Hurk.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 90 mins



KEATON: THE SAPHEAD

With Polly Rose

Thursday 13th February - Watershed

13:45 - U

Dir: Herbert Blaché, Winchell Smith, 1920, USA

£5.00 - £11.00

In Buster Keaton's feature film debut, THE SAPHEAD, directed by the husband of groundbreaking filmmaker Alice Guy. Keaton plays Bertie, the son of a silver mine owner who's shady brother-in-law ruins Bertie's wedding plans with lies and jeopardises the family's wealth. Host Polly Rose says "this could be described as a dramedy; there are dark moments but also a grand slapstick action sequence at the height of the story". Watch out also for a rare smile from Buster; there isn't another by him on screen until 1934.

With live piano accompaniment by
Daan van den Hurk.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 75 mins



FEB 13 THURSDAY

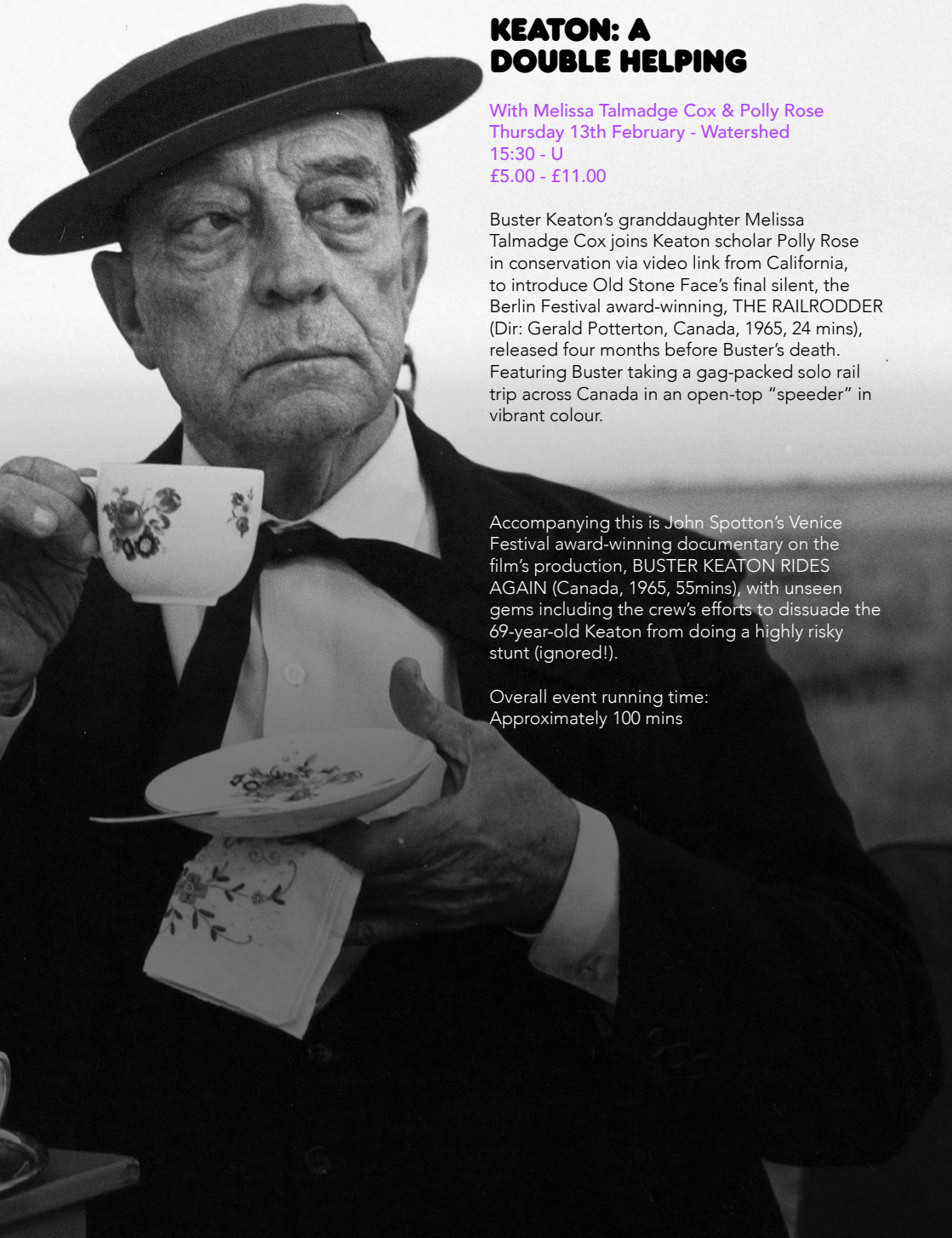
**KEATON: A
DOUBLE HELPING**

With Melissa Talmadge Cox & Polly Rose
Thursday 13th February - Watershed
15:30 - U
£5.00 - £11.00

Buster Keaton's granddaughter Melissa Talmadge Cox joins Keaton scholar Polly Rose in conservation via video link from California, to introduce Old Stone Face's final silent, the Berlin Festival award-winning, *THE RAILRODDER* (Dir: Gerald Potterton, Canada, 1965, 24 mins), released four months before Buster's death. Featuring Buster taking a gag-packed solo rail trip across Canada in an open-top "speeder" in vibrant colour.

Accompanying this is John Spotton's Venice Festival award-winning documentary on the film's production, *BUSTER KEATON RIDES AGAIN* (Canada, 1965, 55mins), with unseen gems including the crew's efforts to dissuade the 69-year-old Keaton from doing a highly risky stunt (ignored!).

Overall event running time:
Approximately 100 mins



FEB 13 THURSDAY

ALASDAIR BECKETT-KING'S LAUREL & HARDY MAYHEM

Thursday 13th February
BRISTOL MEGASCREEN (Aquarium)
18:00 - £10.00 - £15.00

Slapstick is thrilled to welcome award-winning comedian Alasdair Beckett-King to host our annual celebration of the greatest comedy duo of all time: Stan Laurel & Oliver Hardy. Join Alasdair as he dives into the timeless brilliance of Laurel & Hardy in conversation with stand-up comedian and writer Robin Ince. Alasdair will bring his unique blend of clever, absurdist humour and whimsical style alongside writer Robin Ince, to Stan & Ollie's comedic magic on the big screen, showcasing their finest comedy shorts and iconic moments. Plus, a post show Q&A with the audience.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 80 mins



THE GREAT DICTATOR (1940)

With Alasdair Beckett-King & Robin Ince
Thursday 13th February
BRISTOL MEGASCREEN (Aquarium)
Dir: Charles Chaplin, USA, 2 hrs 5 mins
20:00 - £10.00 - £15.00

In this special big screen outing of Chaplin's poignant satire, Alasdair and Robin will explore how Chaplin skillfully used comedy to take aim at authoritarianism, racism and war. The Great Dictator was Chaplin's first talking picture, and he didn't hold back. His brilliant lampooning of Adolf Hitler made the film both an act of defiance and a masterclass in weaponising humour. Despite being banned in Nazi-occupied territories and doubts about its success elsewhere the film became Chaplin's highest grossing film. The film's closing speech remains one of cinema's most daring and timeless works.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 135 mins



FEB 14 FRIDAY



THE GIRL WITH A HAT BOX

With Lucy Porter

Friday 14th February

Watershed

09:30 - 12A

Dir: Boris Barnet, 1927, USSR, 60 mins

£5.00 - £11.00

Starting today's line-up of Soviet Union satires, Slapstick favourite Lucy Porter introduces a screwball romcom directed by Boris Barnet, the master of Soviet silent cinema.

It stars the Ukrainian/ Swedish beauty, Anna Sten later whisked to Hollywood by Sam Goldwyn who dubbed her 'the new Greta Garbo'. Sten plays a hat maker caught in a love triangle and the challenges involving a room rental scam plus the winning of a lottery ticket. With live piano accompaniment by Günter A. Buchwald.

Overall event running time:

Approximately 110 mins



SOVIET COMEDIES OF THE 1920s + CHESS FEVER

With Pamela Hutchinson

Friday 14th February Watershed

11:40 - 12A

Dir: Vsevolod Pudovkin, Mykola Shpykovskiy, 1925, USSR, 28 mins - £5.00 - £11.00

Film historian and Silent London blogger Pamela Hutchinson offers context for our Soviet comedies day with a presentation highlighting the influence of 1920s Soviet silent comedies + Chess Fever (1925). Shot in Moscow with real footage from the World Chess Championships, the film follows a young woman (Anna Zemtsova) frustrated by her fiancé's chess obsession. Trying to escape, she meets World Chess Champion José Raúl Capablanca. This blending of fiction and reality formed a lasting impact on cinema, influencing future sports comedies and the use of real-world figures in films.

With live music by John Sweeney.

Overall event running time:

Approximately 60 mins

FEB 14 FRIDAY

THE OPPORTUNIST

With Paul McGann Friday 14th February
Watershed

13:30 - 12A

Dir: Mykola Shpykovskiy, 1929, Soviet Ukraine,
77 mins - £5.00 - £11.00

Recently rediscovered and restored in Ukraine, this rare find from the co-director of Chess Fever (1925) is a satire about a small-time racketeer trying to turn Bolshevism to his advantage. Ending up with the Red Army, in charge of a camel, this film was banned by Soviet apparatchiks for its political commentary. Introduced by actor Paul McGann, with live piano accompaniment by John Sweeney. All profits from this event will be donated to Ukrainian Charity 'From Bristol With Love'.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 90 mins



THE HOUSE AT TRUBNAYA SQUARE

With Pamela Hutchinson Friday 14th February
Watershed

15:30 - 12A

Dir: Boris Barnet, 1928, USSR, 84 mins
£5.00 - £11.00

A widely regarded masterpiece of Soviet silent cinema, this delightful comedy of manners satirises life in Moscow during a time of ever-shifting, often contradictory, policies. Starring Vera Maretskaya, a five times winner of the Stalin Prize for acting, as a country girl seeking her uncle in the big city and finding herself in a highly eccentric household. Noted for comic timing, clever use of editing, innovative camera angles and the involvement of five scriptwriters, all of them literary or political notables. Introduced by Pamela Hutchinson with live piano accompaniment by John Sweeney.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 92 mins



FEB 14 FRIDAY



**SMASHING MELONS!
ROBIN INCE &
MARK MIODOWNIK**

Friday 14th February
Watershed
17:30
£5.00 - £11.00

When it comes to punching melons until they explode, no one in the UK can rival Robin Ince's expertise. From his ill-fated 2004 Edinburgh Show to his critically acclaimed 2023 performance, melons were punched. What changed? In this event The Infinite Monkey Cage co-host teams up with one of the UK's top materials scientists, Mark Miodownik, alongside melons of various shapes and sizes, to explore why some come apart in funnier ways than others.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 60 mins

**"SLAPSTICK
TAKES
COMEDY
SERIOUSLY"**

STEPHEN FRY



FESTIVAL DIARY

● ANIMATION ● SILENT COMEDY ● SATIRE!
● CLASSIC ● RELAXED ● KIDS

FEB 12 WEDNESDAY

11:00	CARTOON CARNIVAL		WATERSHED
13:15	NORRTULLSLIGAN (THE NUTHILL LEAGUE)		WATERSHED
15:30	W.C.FIELDS: RUNNING WILD		WATERSHED
18:00	HAROLD LLOYD IN THE FRESHMAN		MEGASCREEN
20:30	HUNDREDS OF BEAVERS		MEGASCREEN

FEB 13 THURSDAY

9:30	SILENT MOVIE		WATERSHED
9:45	SILENT MOVIE	RELAXED SCREENING	WATERSHED
11:45	OH! WHAT A NURSE + SHORT		WATERSHED
13:45	KEATON: THE SAPHEAD		WATERSHED
15:30	KEATON: A DOUBLE HELPING		WATERSHED
18:00	ALASDAIR BECKETT-KING'S LAUREL & HARDY MAYHEM		MEGASCREEN
20:00	THE GREAT DICTATOR (1940)		MEGASCREEN

FEB 14 FRIDAY

9:30	THE GIRL WITH A HAT BOX		WATERSHED
11:40	SOVIET COMEDIES OF THE 1920S + CHESS FEVER	BSL	WATERSHED
13:30	THE OPPORTUNIST	BSL	WATERSHED
15:30	THE HOUSE AT TRUBNAYA SQUARE		WATERSHED
17:30	SMASHING MELONS! ROBIN INCE & MARK MIODOWNIK		WATERSHED
19:30	SILENT COMEDY GALA	BSL	BRISTOL BEACON

FEB 15 SATURDAY

9:30	I WAS BORN, BUT		WATERSHED
10:00	SLAPSTICK KIDS: WALLACE & GROMIT DOUBLE BILL		WATERSHED
11:30	RICK WAKEMAN: DON'T TELL HIM, PIKE!	BSL	BRISTOL BEACON
12:00	TOOTSIE		WATERSHED
14:15	GOODNESS GRACIOUS ME		BRISTOL BEACON
16:30	HARRY ENFIELD: NORBERT SMITH: A LIFE		BRISTOL BEACON
19:00	STEPHEN K.AMOS: MY COMEDY HEROES		BRISTOL BEACON
21:15	STEPHEN K. AMOS: MY FAVOURITE COMEDY – BLAZING SADDLES		BRISTOL BEACON

FEB 16 SUNDAY

9:30	KEATON: GO WEST		WATERSHED
10:00	SLAPSTICK KIDS: THE HAUNTED MANSION		WATERSHED
10:15	SLAPSTICK KIDS: THE HAUNTED MANSION	RELAXED SCREENING	WATERSHED
11:30	IS SATIRE DEAD? DR. STRANGELOVE		BRISTOL OLD VIC THEATRE
12:00	'THAT'S REALLY HEAVY MAN'		WESTON STUDIO, BRISTOL OLD VIC
14:15	BEST SELLER – PETER SELLERS... A LIFE IN COMEDY		WESTON STUDIO, BRISTOL OLD VIC
15:30	RIK! THE ANARCHIC GENIUS OF RIK MAYALL	BSL	BRISTOL OLD VIC THEATRE
16:45	PICTURE THIS – MIKE MAC'S STORIES		WESTON STUDIO, BRISTOL OLD VIC
18:00	HARRY ENFIELD'S TOP COMEDY MOMENTS		BRISTOL OLD VIC THEATRE
19:20	THE THINKING WOMAN'S GUIDE TO THE GOODIES PART 2		WESTON STUDIO, BRISTOL OLD VIC
20:30	BEN ELTON: COMEDY LEGEND	BSL	BRISTOL OLD VIC THEATRE

FEB 14 FRIDAY



SILENT COMEDY GALA

With special guest host Martin Freeman and legendary musician Rick Wakeman
Friday 14th February
Beacon Hall, Bristol Beacon
19.30
£15.00 - £55.00
BSL interpreted event

Known and loved worldwide for his iconic roles in *Sherlock*, *The Hobbit*, *The Office*, and *Black Panther*, Martin's razor-sharp wit, charm, and deep passion for classic comedy (especially *Laurel & Hardy*) make him the perfect host for this gala evening.

Celebrate Valentine's Day in a unique and unforgettable way by joining Bristol's Slapstick Festival for its 20th-anniversary Silent Comedy Gala, hosted by none other than the brilliant, award-winning actor **Martin Freeman**.

Enjoy the magic of watching three classic silent comedies on the big screen—exactly how they were meant to be seen—with live accompaniment from world-class musicians, including legendary keyboardist and 'Grumpy Old Man' star **Rick Wakeman**.



FEB 14 FRIDAY

The highlight of the evening is Buster Keaton's iconic **Steamboat Bill Jr. (1928)**, filled with breathtaking stunts and timeless sight gags that cement Buster's place amongst the all time comedy greats. The film is accompanied by the renowned five-piece European Silent Screen Virtuosi, led by maestro **Günter A. Buchwald**.

Rick Wakeman provides live, improvised accompaniment to Laurel & Hardy's final silent short, the hilarious **Angora Love (1929)**, where the comedy duo's antics with a runaway goat cause chaos for their landlord. Charlie Chaplin's classic and still so relevant masterpiece **The Immigrant (1917)** completes the lineup of classic screenings.

In addition, A cappella group **The Matinee Idles**, featuring members from 70s chart-toppers DARTS, along with actor **Paul McGann**, will perform as a reminder of their debut at the very first Silent Comedy Gala in 2005.

With Martin Freeman at the helm, this is more than a show—it's a once-in-a-lifetime celebration of comedy, music, and classic comedy!

Ahead of the main hall events, **Trip for Biscuits** will be playing their ragtime takes on contemporary hits in the Beacon's foyer from 18:00.

Please note: Guest appearances are subject to work commitments and may be subject to change.

**SPECIAL
GUEST HOST**
**MARTIN
FREEMAN**



FEAT. RICK WAKEMAN



FEB 15 SATURDAY



I WAS BORN, BUT

With Pamela Hutchinson
Saturday 15th February Watershed
09:30 - PG
Dir: Yasujiro Ozu, 1932, Japan, 90 mins
£5.00 - £11.00

It is rare to score 100% on Rotten Tomatoes but this silent comedy-drama – by a Japanese director enamoured with Hollywood and Harold Lloyd, – does so. It looks at family life through the eyes of two young rascally brothers, new to Tokyo, bullied at school and outraged when they discover their authoritarian father is less important than they believed.

With an introduction by film journalist and Silent London blogger, Pamela Hutchinson, and live musical accompaniment from John Sweeney.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 92 min



SLAPSTICK KIDS: WALLACE & GROMIT DOUBLE BILL

With Peter Lord CBE
Saturday 15th February
Watershed
10:00 - U
£5.00 -£11.00

Join us this half-term for a rare outing of Aardman Animations' new feature film Vengeance Most Fowl (2024) starring everyone's favourite duo, Wallace & Gromit! This special big screening is preceded by the award-winning prequel The Wrong Trousers (1993), a true masterpiece of animation.

Introduced by none other than Aardman's co-founder, Peter Lord CBE, he offers a unique insight into the world of Wallace & Gromit and the creative magic behind their latest adventure. Perfect for kids and grown-ups alike! Stan the Slapstick bear will also be making an appearance.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 110 mins

FEB 15 SATURDAY



DON'T TELL HIM,
PIKE!

With Rick Wakeman & Matthew Sweet
Saturday 15th February
Lantern Hall, Bristol Beacon
11:30 - £15 - £20.00

Another side to globally famous musician Rick Wakeman CBE is his love of classic screen comedy. Accompanied by clips and home movie footage, he delves into why he considers Dad's Army one of the finest comedies ever made, reflecting on his cherished friendship with Ian Lavender, one of the show's stars and a beloved Slapstick Festival patron and contributor until his passing in February 2024. Wakeman celebrates Lavender's immense talent and their memorable moments together.

Overall event running time: Approximately 80 mins



TOOTSIE



With Harriet Taylor
Saturday 15th February
Watershed
12:00 - 15
Dir: Sydney Pollack, 1982, USA, 1 hr 54 mins
£5.00 - £11.00

Dustin Hoffman is nominated for an Oscar as an unsuccessful actor who poses as a woman to try for a part in a hit TV series. He gets the role and relishes living as a woman but the situation becomes farcical and tangled with those around him not aware of his reality.

A stellar cast includes Jessica Lange, Geena Davis, Bill Murray and the film's director Sydney Pollack. Introduced by Harriet Taylor in partnership with Queer Vision and Switch.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 120 mins

FEB 15 SATURDAY

Goodness Gracious Me

BREAKING BARRIERS

Saturday 15th February
Lantern Hall, Bristol Beacon
14:15 - £12.00 - £16.00

Celebrate the 30th anniversary of Goodness Gracious Me, the pioneering radio and television comedy series that redefined British comedy by challenging stereotypes and spotlighting British-Asian experiences. Join the series' creators and stars, Sanjeev Bhaskar, Meera Syal, and Anil Gupta, in conversation with host Matthew Sweet (BBC Radio 4's Free Thinking) as they reflect on the show's impact and legacy. Through conversation and extracts from the show, this event promises fresh insights into how this satire has shaped perspectives on identity, culture, and comedy in the UK.

Note: Guest appearances are subject to work commitments.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 70 mins



FEB 15 SATURDAY

Harry Enfield:
Norbert Smith: A Life

Saturday 15th February
Lantern Hall, Bristol Beacon
Dir: Geoff Posner, 1989, UK, 47mins
16:30 - PG
£15.00 - £20.00

Don't miss this rare opportunity to experience Harry Enfield's groundbreaking Mockumentary *Norbert Smith: A Life* on the big screen! Widely regarded as a seminal work of British television comedy, *Norbert Smith: A Life* has been celebrated for its clever satire, and masterful performances. Lauded as an important cultural touchstone, the film brilliantly parodies the history of British cinema while showcasing Harry Enfield's unmatched comic talents. Join us for a special screening followed by a Q&A session with Harry Enfield and director Geoff Posner, hosted by former director of Bristol's Festival of Ideas Andrew Kelly.

Overall event running time: Approximately 75 mins



FEB 15 SATURDAY

STEPHEN K. AMOS: MY COMEDY HEROES

Hosted by Matthew Sweet
Saturday 15th February
Lantern Hall, Bristol Beacon 19:00 - 14
£15.00 - £20.00

Making a welcome debut at Slapstick is an exceptional talent. Comedian, actor and gay rights champion Stephen K. Amos, has a 20+ year record of making audiences laugh worldwide with sharp wit, charm and energy. His many accolades include a BAFTA nomination, an RTS Award, a Royal Variety Show appearance, getting life advice from the Pope and a role in the latest Beetlejuice film.

In this exclusive event, hosted by Matthew Sweet, Stephen will share the comic influences and heroes who have inspired his life and career to date.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 75 mins



STEPHEN K. AMOS: MY FAVOURITE COMEDY – BLAZING SADDLES

Saturday 15th February
Lantern Hall, Bristol Beacon
21:15 - 12A - Dir: Mel Brooks, 1974, USA, 93
mins - £10.00 - £12.00

Stephen K. Amos shares his admiration for Mel Brooks, introducing the film he considers his all-time favourite comedy: Blazing Saddles (1974). This classic stars Cleavon Little as a Sheriff, appointed by a villain intent on destroying a town, only to prove himself a worthy adversary. Bursting with both physical and verbal comedy and accompanied by a stellar cast including Gene Wilder, Slim Pickens, and Madeline Kahn. With Stephen's knack for audience engagement, attendees may find themselves invited to challenge or defend his top comedy pick in a brief post screening Q+ A. NB £2 discount for all those buying tickets for both Stephen K Amos events. Overall event running time: Approximately 105 mins

FEB 16 SUNDAY

KEATON: GO WEST

Sunday 16th February Watershed
9:30 - U
Dir: Buster Keaton, 1925, USA
£6.00 - £12.00

Keaton is touching and funny in this film as Friendless, a hapless soul cattle ranching after failing to find a big city job. Spurned by the ranch owner's daughter (Kathleen Myers), Friendless forms a bond with a young cow, Brown Eyes, finds himself stowing away on a cattle train, battling an ambush and wrangling hundreds of stampeding cattle through Los Angeles in a hilarious crescendo. Cameos include Buster's dad Joe, Fatty Arbuckle, and silent comedy stalwart Babe London, and importantly Brown Eyes, Buster's bovine leading lady who he hand-picked and trained for the film. With live accompaniment from members of the European Silent Screen Virtuosi led by Günter A. Buchwald.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 80 mins



SLAPSTICK KIDS: THE HAUNTED MANSION

With Adam Murray
Sunday 16th February - Watershed
10:00 - PG - Dir: Rob Minkoff, 2003, USA,
84 mins - £5.00 - £11.00

Eddie Murphy stars in this comedy where a family thinks they've found their dream home only for ghosts and ghouls to get in the way. Though a Disney production with a PG rating suitable for youngsters, anyone especially nervy needs to beware – it picked up multiple awards for its special effects and make-up. Cast includes Marsha Thomason (DS Townsend in ITV's THE BAY) and Terence Stamp, with an introduction from Adam Murray, founder of the Bristol Black Horror Club.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 94 mins



RELAXED SCREENING

Sunday 16th February, Watershed
10:15am - PG - £5.00 - 11.00

FEB 16 SUNDAY



IS SATIRE DEAD?

NAVIGATING THE MADNESS OF MODERN POLITICS

Sunday 16th February Bristol Old Vic Theatre
11:30 - 12A
Dir: Stanley Kubrick, 1964, UK / USA, 95 mins
£15.00 - £22.00

Hosted by **Samira Ahmed** with **Harry Enfield**,
Anil Gupta and **Mike McCartney**.

At the heart of this event is a rare big screen outing for Kubrick's iconic satirical masterwork, Dr. Strangelove. Released 60 years ago, the film remains as sharp and relevant as ever. It follows the pandemonium that ensues when a delusional US general orders a nuclear strike on the Soviet Union, with world leaders scrambling to avert disaster.

Followed by: Is Satire Dead? Navigating the Madness of Modern Politics. Join us for a thought-provoking onstage discussion hosted by writer and broadcaster Samira Ahmed.

+ SCREENING OF STANLEY KUBRICK'S DR. STRANGELOVE

This star-studded panel will explore whether satirical comedy still holds relevance in our chaotic modern world or if it has lost its edge in the face of 21st-century politics.

The panel features **Harry Enfield**, the iconic comedian known for his satirical screenwork and unforgettable characters; **Anil Gupta**, the writer and producer behind groundbreaking shows (Goodness Gracious Me and The Office etc) and **Mike (McGear) McCartney**, founding member of The Scaffold, blending Satirical wit and music.

The discussion promises a spirited debate on satire's power to illuminate, provoke, and entertain in an era where reality often outpaces parody.

Event will include a 10-minute break.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 150 mins

FEB 16 SUNDAY

That's Really HEAVY MAN

**THE COMIC
INCARNATIONS
OF NIGEL PLANER**

In conversation with Robin Ince
Sunday 16th February
Weston Studio, Bristol Old Vic 12:00
£14.00

Nigel Planer, actor, poet, comedian, author, playwright, voiceover artist, musician— and possesses a showbiz CV including starring roles in award-winning musicals, TV whodunits, fondly-remembered comedies and stage dramas. In this event, he's focusing on two of his beloved comedy parody characters— Neil, AKA Neil Wheedon Watkins Pye, the pacifist, vegetarian hippy from The Young Ones who earned a surprise chart hit and BRIT Award for his version of A Hole In My Shoe, and the spoof luvvie even luvvies love, Nicholas Craig, classical actor and self-styled "sage of the stage".

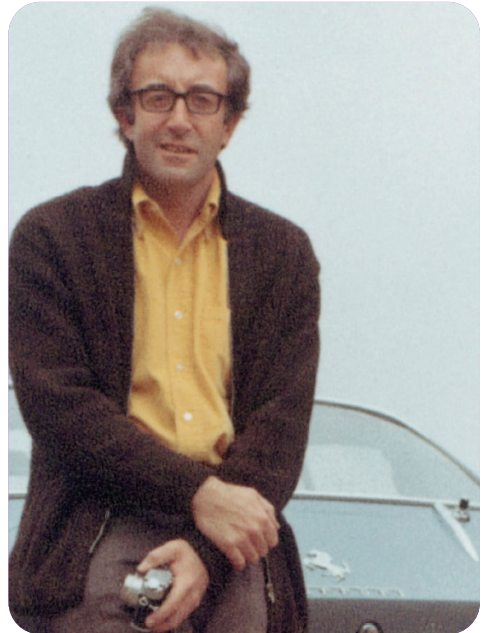
Overall event running time:
Approximately 60 mins

BEST SELLERS – PETER SELLERS... A LIFE IN COMEDY

With Robert Ross
Sunday 16th February
Weston Studio, Bristol Old Vic
14:15 - £12.00

Whether the flamboyant pratfalls of The Pink Panther films or the aural anarchic of The Goon Show, the essence of Slapstick comedy was vital to the comedy career of Peter Sellers. Robert Ross, Britain's Comedy Historian and the author of the new book, Best Sellers: Peter Sellers A Life in Comedy, presents an affectionate and hilarious celebration of the comic genius in his centenary year.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 60 mins



RIK!

THE ANARCHIC GENIUS OF RIK MAYALL

FEB 16 SUNDAY



With Nigel Planer and Robin Ince
Sunday 16th February
Bristol Old Vic Theatre
15:30 - £15.00 - £24.00

Rik Mayall, a pioneer of alternative comedy, writing and performing in a style which revolutionised TV sitcoms and led to such memorable series as *Filthy Rich & Catflap*, *The Comic Strips Presents*, *Bottom*, *The New Statesman* and *The Young Ones*. Here, his *Young Ones* and *The Comic Strip Presents* co-star, Nigel Planer, discusses Rik's legacy with superfan Robin Ince, using clips from Rik's output to salute his creative brilliance, including rare and previously unseen footage.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 70 mins

MIKE MAC'S STORIES WITH ADAM HILLS


With Mike McCartney & Adam Hills
Sunday 16th February
Weston Studio, Bristol Old Vic - 16.45
£14.00

As his brother's band The Beatles enjoyed their first chart success, the younger of the McCartney brothers was adopting the name Mike McGear and forming satirical comic trio The Scaffold, with poet Roger McGough and comedian John Gorman. They went on to score UK hits with *Lily The Pink*, *Thank U Very Much* and *Liverpool Lou* but Mike always held a parallel interest in music and performance photography. Through showbiz connections, tours and travelling, Mike has albums filled with fascinating images and a fund of remarkable anecdotes to go with them. Here he opens up his collection of images to share stories and moments that inspired him with his friend, comedian and host of Channel 4's *The Last Leg*, Adam Hills.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 60 mins



Harry Enfield's TOP COMEDY MOMENTS

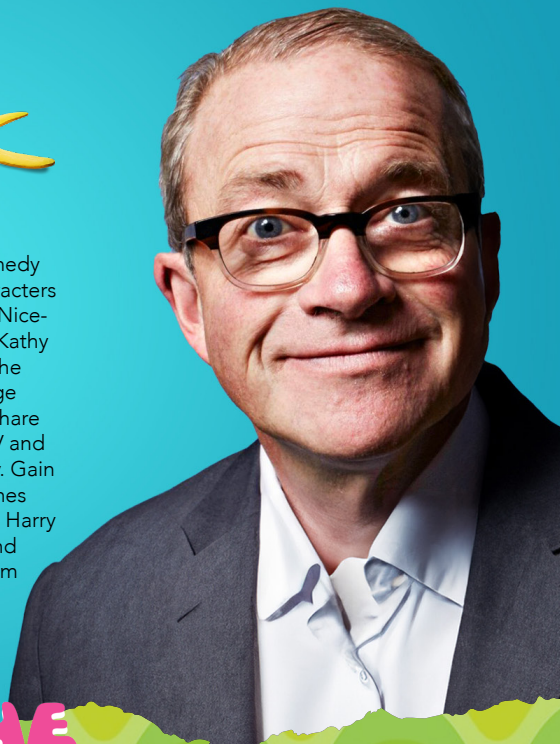


FEB 16 SUNDAY

Sunday 16th February
Bristol Old Vic
18:00 - £15.00 - £32.00

Join us for an unmissable evening with national comedy treasure Harry Enfield, creator of unforgettable characters such as the 'Loadsamoney' boasting plasterer; Tim Nice-But-Dim, kebab king Stavros; Kevin and Perry (with Kathy Burke) and with The Fast Show's Paul Whitehouse, the iconic radio DJs Smashie and Nicey. In a rare onstage appearance, Harry will sit down with Robin Ince to share and discuss his favourite comedy moments from TV and film and why these have influenced his own comedy. Gain unique insight into the inspiration behind the sketches and characters he's created for his much applauded Harry Enfield's Television Programme and Harry & Paul, and more recently playing Dad to David Mitchell's William Shakespeare in the BBC's Upstart Crow.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 75 mins



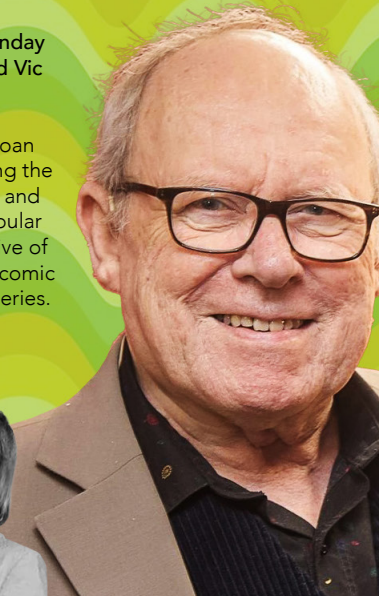
THE GOODIES

THINKING WOMEN

With Graeme Garden & Samira Ahmed Sunday
16th February - Weston Studio, Bristol Old Vic
19:20 - £14.00

From Punky Business with Jane Asher to Joan Sims and June Whitfield as gangsters running the world of ballroom dancing, Samira Ahmed and Graeme Garden follow-up their hugely popular Slapstick 2024 show, drawing on a rich archive of clips to discuss the importance of the many comic actresses who featured in The Goodies TV series.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 60 mins



FEB 16 SUNDAY

BEN ELTON

Comedy Legend

With special guest host Adam Hills
Sunday 16th February
Bristol Old Vic Theatre
20:30
£16.50 - £38.50

This year's winner of the Aardman Slapstick Comedy Legend Award is comedian, actor, author, playwright, lyricist and director Ben Elton. He first achieved widespread fame for his satirical rants as the host of Channel 4's Saturday Live. However, his career as a scriptwriter began in 1980 leading to writing credits and cameo roles in a wide array of TV comedy classics, among them *The Young Ones*, the showbiz spoof *Filthy Rich & Catflap*, some of the *Blackadder* series and *Upstart Crow*, and to collaborations with stars such as French & Saunders, Rik Mayall, Ade Edmondson, Emma Thompson, Stephen Fry and Rowan Atkinson.

Along the way, he has written over a dozen novels and worked on musicals, including Andrew Lloyd Webber's *The Beautiful Game*, and the hit jukebox musical built around Queen songs, *We Will Rock You*. With onscreen extracts, Ben will be talking with Last Leg presenter and comedian, Adam Hills, about highlights of his career prior to receiving a personalised Morph, conferring on him Aardman Slapstick Comedy Legend status. "What an amazing honour to be joining such an incredible pantheon of Aardman/Slapstick Legends! I would have liked to have pulled off a perfect pratt fall to celebrate but at 65 I'm worried I'd do my back in. I may slap a custard pie in my face though because I am truly thrilled and grateful." - Ben Elton.

Overall event running time:
Approximately 80 mins



Aardman
THE SLAPSTICK AWARDS

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Steven Coombe, Chris Daniels, Jo Daniels, Graeme Garden, Chris Kidd, Robin Ince, Sue Lion, Lucy Porter, David Robinson, David Sproxton

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Social Media/Digital Content: Nathan Hardie **Technical Manager:** Ewan Dunford
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Stage Manager: Gemma Brooks **Musical Director:** Günter A. Buchwald
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