

# Duke's Diary



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Listen in and vote

## Singer going to finals

A hypnotic water show by dancers

AUDIO from all 18 of the successful bands who have got through to the three heats of The Original Rock Quest 2009 is now available online at [www.blackpoolgazette.co.uk](http://www.blackpoolgazette.co.uk) - just follow the Rock Quest link.



Listen to what they have got to offer then see them live on stage at The Tower Lounge from Friday, November 20.

Remember, you can now vote by emailing rockquest@blackpoolgazette.co.uk

Along with the competition's highest scoring runner up and the three heat winners, the band with the highest email score which has not already gained a place in the final will be given a second chance to play for the big money first prize.

Your vote could be the one that puts your favourite band into the final of The Original Rock Quest 2009 at Blackpool Tower Lounge.

**A**nsdell-based singer Charlese Allen has made it through to the national final of the major Open Mic UK 2009 search for new vocal talent.

Charlese (*right*) gained her place after making it through in the Liverpool regional final of the event and will now be competing against performers from throughout the country on Sunday December 6 at The Willows in Salford where she could win an impressive management and recording contract and be crowned the UK's Best On the Mic 2009.

"The night was great," says Charlese.

"There were 17 acts altogether, performing a mix of original and covered songs."

She sang Crazy, the Gnarls Barclay chart topper, but in an acoustic slowed down version accompanied by Liverpoolian musician and friend Matthew Shaw.

"It went really well and I came second which means that I'm through to the national finals," she says.

"Once again people can come along to support me - and I hope they do."

Tickets are £12 each and information on how to obtain them can be found on her Facebook entry and YouTube - where you can also view her performance.

"So I'm really excited, not to mention a little nervous about performing in front of the judges, and of course potentially winning the £20,000 investment towards recording an album. Fingers crossed!"

Charlese has been singing since she was eight, concentrating on classical and choral music until 16 when she discovered soul, blues and jazz.

At 17 she started singing in bars and restaurants and after finishing at school took a year out before starting a Diploma in



Popular Music and Sound Technology at Paul McCartney's Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts (LIPA).

Whilst there she started singing in a couple of function bands, performing at events across the country and in Germany.

Now back on the Fylde she has started playing with local guitarist Tom Vernon and is getting another band together.

As previously reported, Blackpool vocalist Robert Lea and Paul Speak-Heaton, Oldham-based runner-up from the Stanley Bar & Cabaret talent contest, have made it through to the grand finals.

Also still in with a chance of reaching the final is Blackpool teenager Ryan Cregan who has been given another opportunity to make it in the form of a 'Wildcard' entry which has been introduced with two places up for grabs in each age category for the North and South.

Each act has been allocated a specific code and the public can vote until noon today via a text for Ryan who could go on to grab one of the last grand final spots.

You can vote for Ryan by text (wildcard294 to 84222). Details at [www.myspace.com/ryan-johncregan](http://www.myspace.com/ryan-johncregan) or alternatively hit [www.openmicuk.co.uk](http://www.openmicuk.co.uk)

## Star heats

THE annual Rumours WKD Factor search for a karaoke style star starts at the Talbot Square venue tomorrow.

Heats will be held each Thursday with winners receiving a £50 cash prize and a place in the December 10 grand final.

Contestants in that event will be competing for a prize of a £500 drinks voucher which they can spend throughout Christmas and the New Year in Rumours and Hush.

Entry to the WKD Factor heats can be made on the night.

## Eric's coming home to Dukes

AFTER a successful premiere at this year's Edinburgh Fringe and its transfer for Christmas to the Duchess Theatre in London's West End, the one man show Morecambe will be heading to The Dukes in Lancaster next year.

Inspired by TV star Eric Morecambe's life, the play will be running from Wednesday to Friday, February 10 to 12 at the Moor Lane theatre.

David Owen, head of cultural services at Lancaster City Council, said: "As well as being a coup for the district, I am delighted that this production will see Eric 'coming home'."

is a particularly demanding and challenging technical production.

"The Dukes is one of only a few theatres in the region that can accommodate such a complex technical specification in terms of lighting, sound and staging - the time it takes just to set up the stage is estimated at six hours."

Julie Brown, producer at The Dukes, added: "It's great to be welcoming the show to The Dukes on behalf of the region."

"It was the hot ticket at the Edinburgh Fringe and there's a real buzz about it coming here. "It's an opportunity for the

whole region to come together and celebrate the life of 'the tall one with glasses'. This production is a real highlight of our spring and summer season of work, which sees shows coming in from as far afield as South Africa."

In what has been described as "the performance of a lifetime" actor Bob Golding hurtles through the triumphs and tribulations in the life of 1971's Pipe Smoker Of The Year - from his humble beginnings days as a lad from Lancashire singing from pies and peas, through the giddy heyday of variety and summer season to his rightful status as a

national treasure in the hearts of almost 30 million TV viewers.

The play also examines Eric's relationship with his ambitious mother, his struggles with ill-health and how his partnership with Ernie Wise survived the road to fame and fortune.

The work, written by Tim Whitnall and directed by Guy Masterson, had its debut at the 2009 Edinburgh Festival Fringe enjoying full houses, standing ovations and dazzling reviews, culminating in a prestigious Scotsman Fringe First Award for innovation and outstanding new writing.

## Review

### Scattered

Blackpool Grand Theatre

IT'S still usual with even the most adventurous of modern dance companies to expect its members to stay reasonably rooted to the stage.

Not so the critically acclaimed Motionhouse, whose latest production centres around a set designed as a cross between a surfer's breaking wave and a skateboard ramp.

Fitting indeed for a work inspired by water - abundant or scarce, benign or sinister, soothing or treacherous.

When the first of the seven impressive dancers slides effortlessly down the centrepiece, it looks almost accidental and slightly dangerous.

But when it couples with the production's other star - the running backdrop film of the Basque-based Logela Multimedia film-makers' collective, it becomes both hypnotic and illusionary.

To an electronic and world music fusion score by Sophie Smith and Tom Dickinson, the film takes us on a journey from North to South - from ice to equator and back again. Icebergs melt, detritus floats by

and dancers "sit" on the images of seats before "entering" a giant refrigerator or clambering up "stairs" and "escalators" before bodysurfing down waterfalls and flowing tap water.

The company is the brainchild of artistic director Kevin Finnan and executive director Louise Richards and has been going from strength to strength since its inception in 1988.

The reassuringly large number of youngsters in the audience knew when to gasp and when to laugh - Scattered is not without its humour. A dance with polluting plastic bottles combines commentary with tongue in cheek and even the best of dancers wouldn't want to make on-stage gargling a serious affair.

Motionhouse are back again tonight with this most innovative dance. **Robin Duke**

The Gazette Event

## AN OUT OF THIS WORLD EXPERIENCE

AN EVENING OF  
*Clairvoyance*

With Stephen Holbrook - one of Britain's top clairvoyants

### Friday, December 11, 2009

**Thornton Little Theatre, Fleetwood Road North, Thornton Cleveleys. FY5 3SZ.**

Come along and experience for yourself an exciting and stimulating two and a half hours of clairvoyance and paranormal discussion. His accuracy has stunned audiences all over the country. You WILL be amazed.

Doors open at 7pm. The show starts at 7.30pm.

**HOW TO BOOK:**

- Send a cheque, with details of the number of tickets you require, plus your full name, address and a daytime telephone number to Clairvoyance Night, The Gazette, PO Box 55, South Shore, Blackpool FY4 2GF
- Make cheques payable to The Gazette.
- Or call the ticket hotline with your credit card details, office hours only - Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm on 01253 361862
- All tickets subject to availability.

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