

The Diary

Boys make Opera fun

Four leading men from London's West End, Broadway and even Eurovision combine at Lowther Pavilion, tomorrow night.

Rob Cherry, Michael Storrs, Colin Bryce, Richard Colvin, known collectively as The Opera Boys, will perform a set of opera, pop, and everything in between.

All four are classically trained and between them, as well as appearing on West End on Broadway, they have performed as backing vocalists to some of the world's biggest superstars including Russell Watson, Robbie Williams, Tom Jones and Elton John.

In 2015, Michael Storrs even appeared as part of the Belgian entry for The Eurovi-

sion Song Contest, placing a very respectable fourth in the competition.

The four have been performing as 'The Opera Boys' for the past five years after Rob Cherry and Richard Colvin originally met on a show.

However Rob admits it wasn't always plan sailing between the two.

He laughed: "We kind of hated each other!"

Despite this, the pair eventually became very close and they decided to recruit another pair of singers to make it into the four-piece it is today.

Rob has been in the business for more than 15 years and has been singing since a very young age.

He told The Gazette: "I had

private tuition, which was nice, it's a slightly different experience.

"I grew up in a house that was full of music. My dad was a very good pianist and singer so from a very young age I was learning to play and sing.

"I started working at 17/18 and fortunately I've been lucky enough to work ever since."

One of the big selling points of the show is that it makes classical music accessible, with Rob admitting that a lot of people have unfair preconceptions of the genre.

He said: "Some people think that opera and classical is a bit stuffy and boring. We don't see it like that, we make it quite fun and funny.

"There's something in there for everyone."



Originally growing up in nearby Lancaster, Rob is relishing the chance to bring the show to the Fylde coast.

He added: "It's great. Obviously family and friends get

to see the show. We've played in Lytham before, it's a lovely venue and we're looking forward to going back."

Tickets are £19. To book, visit lowtherpavilion.co.uk.

Mike's a Grand comic

Mop-haired Mancunian Mike Newall will headline the tomorrow night's 'Laugh Out Loud Comedy Club' at Blackpool Grand Theatre.

Mike's sharp, breezy style has made him a popular figure on the comedy circuit. He will be joined by Bethany Black, who describes herself as Britain's only goth, lesbian and transsexual comic.

Bethany has gained a cult following for her sarcastic and dark views of the world's taboo subjects.

Completing the bill is Tom Houghton, who has performed alongside the likes of Michael McIntyre, Al Murray and Harry Hill.

The evening will be compered by local comic Damion Larkin. Tickets: lolcomedyclubs.co.uk.

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Puppets bring touching show to life

This weekend marks the last chance to see the spectacular Running Wild, with its state-of-the-art puppetry.

Adapted from the Michael Morpurgo book of the same name, the show is described as "an emotional and moving story of love, loss and loyalty and of living for the moment".

The story is inspired by the real life tale of Amber Owen, who was on holiday in Phuket with her mother and stepfather in 2004, when she went on an elephant ride. While riding 'Ning Nong' along the beach, the eight-year-old noticed the elephant was attempting to pull away from the receding sea water.

The lead role of Lilly will be shared by three young actresses, Jemima Bennett, India Brown and Annika

Whiston.

However it's the spectacular life-size puppets that steal the show, controlled by Darcy Collins, Romina Hytten, Fred Davis, Elisa de Grey, James Charlton, Michael Peters, and Wela Mbusi.

Originally produced by Regent's Park Theatre and Chichester Festival Theatre, the award-winning production has been described by critics as 'inspiring', 'evocative, 'imaginative' and 'life-affirming'..

It opened at Blackpool Grand Theatre on Tuesday and it will run until Saturday evening.

Ruth Eastwood, chief executive at the Grand Theatre, said: "If you only get one chance to come to The Grand this year make it Running Wild by Michael Morpurgo.



"My team had the privilege of seeing the show before I booked it to come here and they were, quite simply, blown away by the performances and magic of this exquisite and touching show.

"Don't miss it." Tickets are priced from £20 and are available from www.blackpoolgrand.co.uk or 01253 290190.



Clubland command

The 68th annual Clubland Command Show will take place at the Horseshoe, Pleasure Beach, tomorrow.

Over the years, the shows have helped launch the careers of stars such as Duggie Chapman, The Nolans, Tony Christie and Bernie Clifton.

Performing at this year's events will be 'clubland' favourites such as comedians Terry Cotta and "Yorkshire's finest" Johnny Casson, musical duos Re-Mix and the Midnight Duo, soloists in the form of Ben Bellushi, Si-Sonata, Sasha T and Lauren Faye Moss, vocal harmony group The Jukes.

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