

# Philip's tale is all set to light up the Rep stage

TOP author Philip Pullman is looking forward to seeing one of his books brought to life at the Old Rep.

Philip wrote *The Firework-Maker's Daughter* when he was a teacher, wanting a tale that his pupils could perform.

The story was later published and now it's come full-circle, adapted for the theatre by Birmingham Stage Company.

Over the years, Philip's stories have been adapted into plays, TV dramas and feature films, but does he have any creative input?

"No! I haven't got time," he tells the *Solihull News*. "I've got new stories to write."

"Besides, I don't think the playwright likes having the author looking over their shoulder all the time, making objections."

But he does read the script and sometimes comes to rehearsals - he recently dropped in to meet the cast of the new show.

"If someone makes an adaptation that changes the feel or the style of the original story, then I say no to it at once."

"In this case, Stephen Russell

By David Irwin

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[the playwright] has done a brilliant job of keeping faithfully to the story while allowing the theatricality to bloom.

"It's not just a matter of getting the events in the right order - there has to be a faithfulness to the atmosphere of the story too, and that's harder to do, perhaps."

The Norwich-born writer describes *The Firework-Maker's Daughter*, about a young girl called Lila, as a "fairytale without the fairies".

And it must be nice to see a school-play, turned children's book, go back to the stage?

"Yes, and there's a great satisfaction in that. I love the way stories get handed on from one form to another."

"This is one of the best - adaptations, I mean. And certainly this is one of the best productions of my work I've ever seen."

■ *The Firework-Maker's Daughter* is on from November 9-January 22. Tickets are available on 0121 303 2323.



#### Philip Pullman adaptations:

\* *The Golden Compass*, first part of the writer's award-winning *His Dark Materials* trilogy, received the Hollywood treatment - starring Daniel Craig, Nicole Kidman and Eva Green.

\* Actress Billie Piper played Pullman's heroine Sally Lockhart, in two period dramas, filmed by the BBC.

\* Last year, the Birmingham Rep brought *His Dark Materials* to the stage in an ambitious, two-part production.



■ *The Firework-Maker's Daughter* is coming to the Old Rep



■ Claire Hickey, who studied textile design, will be among the artists exhibiting at the fair

## Arts fair for all

ALLSORTS Art Fair will be taking place at Solihull Arts Complex tomorrow (Saturday).

There will be a chance to take part in a workshop, working with everything from microscopes to retro cameras.

And the fair will also be a showcase for a number of local artists - with many pieces on sale.

It's on from 10.30am-4pm the free art activities start at 12.30pm.

## Meeting again

TWO concerts coming to the Dovehouse Theatre will feature some of the songs which lifted people's spirits during wartime.

*How We Sung The War* features music that evokes The Second World War, French Revolution and recent Afghanistan War, performed by Crossed Keys Musical Theatre Company with proceeds going to Help for Heroes.

They're on November 4-5, both starting at 7.30pm.

Tickets are available on 0121 603 5970 or 0777 5708874.

## Space Oddity

THE Red Lion in Shirley is taking people back to the club nights of 30 years ago.

Only After Dark is hoping to recapture the atmosphere of the late seventies/early eighties with music by the likes of David Bowie, The Human League, Soft Cell and Depeche Mode on the playlist.

It's on November 6, starting at 8.30pm.

To find out more go to [www.myspace.com/onlyafterdarkevent](http://www.myspace.com/onlyafterdarkevent).

# Tasty dishes for when you simply cannot agree

#### Duet Cuisine, Fort Dunlop, Erdington

★ WHEN eating out if you fancy an Indian, or perhaps you have the dilemma that your dining companions would rather try something a little less spicy such as an Italian - then Duet Cuisine restaurant is an ideal compromise.

Situated at Fort Dunlop in Erdington, just on the outskirts of Birmingham city centre, this modern fine dining establishment provides the sophistication of southern Europe; and the creativity of the East by offering the choice of both Italian and Indian cuisines collectively served within the same venue.

Their restaurant menu is extensive, and

includes Italian specialities like lasagne, risotto, tagliatelle and pizzas as well as Indian creamy kormas, rich biryanis and baltis, not forgetting vegetarian options and a variety of seafood delicacies.

For starters I chose the Seekh Kebab (£3.95), while my husband opted for the Lamb Chops (£4.95) and our daughter, the Bruschetta with finely chopped tomatoes and mozzarella cheese.

The dishes were all beautifully presented to the table, and we were pleasantly surprised at the portion size. Off the Indian menu I had chosen the Chicken Balti (£7.50), while my two family members opted for the Italian

Tagliatelle Pollo served with a creamy tomato sauce (£9.95) and the Penne al Arrabbiata, tubes of pasta with green and red peppers (£7.95). We were not disappointed with our choices, and for afters found just enough room for Crespelle pancake with ice cream (£3.95), apple rustica tart (£3.95) and my all time favourite dessert, crème caramel (£2.95). Duet Cuisine restaurant provides a unique and stylish facility in which to enjoy the versatility of eating both authentic Italian and Indian food in a relaxing dining environment. For table reservations call 0121 748 1234.

Rebekah Borg



■ Dine out whatever your taste