

GIGGUIDE

TONIGHT

The Badgers
Drummonds, New Street,
Worcester

Fred Zeppelin
Marr's Bar, Pierpoint Street,
Worcester

Mindless Self Indulgence
Carling Academy 2, Birmingham

Old Ions
Carling Academy, Birmingham

Bjork
Civic Hall, Wolverhampton

The Whiskey Syndicate
Little Civic, Wolverhampton

TOMORROW

Full Company
Marr's Bar, Pierpoint Street,
Worcester

The Barflys Blues Cruise
The Conway Castle, Upton-upon-Severn

Shazan
Barbourne Ex-services Club, The
Moors, Worcester

**Catapult Club presents This Love
Affair**
Carling Academy, Birmingham

**Gehanna, All Hail The Ruin and
Silence at Sundown**
Little Civic, Wolverhampton



Marr's Bar: Fred Zeppelin.

SUNDAY

Claire Hamill
Marr's Bar, Pierpoint Street,
Worcester

Karl Stafford
Barbourne Ex-services Club,
The Moors, Worcester

The Kooks
Carling Academy, Birmingham

The Envy Corps
Bar Academy, Birmingham

MONDAY

The Script
Bar Academy, Birmingham

TUESDAY

Black Cat Bone
The Plough, Deansway, Worcester

Ill Nino
Carling Academy, Birmingham

David Essex
Civic Hall, Wolverhampton

Alabama 3
Wulfrun Hall, Wolverhampton

Rosalita
Little Civic, Wolverhampton

WEDNESDAY

Jamming Night
Marr's Bar, Pierpoint Street,
Worcester

Yelps
Bar Academy Birmingham

THURSDAY

Big Cats
O'Neills, Worcester

Comedy zone
Marr's Bar, Pierpoint Street,
Worcester

Tanglefoot
Huntingdon Hall, Worcester

LightSpeed Champion
Carling Academy 2 Birmingham

FRIDAY

Pizza Static DJs
The FireFly, Lowesmoor, Worcester

Funky Skunk
Drummonds, New Street,
Worcester

The Notorious Brothers
Stourport Boat Club, Stourport on
Severn

Vampire Weekend
Carling Academy 2, Birmingham

Lee Rogers (The Jeeps)
Bar Academy Birmingham

Lexie's the next big thing, says blues night boss

City student has her sights set on big things – after her A-levels. **Lauren Rogers reports**



LEXIE Stobie is causing ripples in the Worcester music scene.

The 17-year-old student has a gutsy, soulful voice that belies her age and leaves you craving to hear more. Earlier this month, when she performed at the Cellar Bar blues night in Worcester, she stunned the audience.

Bob Jones, blues night organiser, knew he had stumbled upon something spectacular.

"There is a teenage girl on the circuit who has the best, most staggeringly powerful voice in the UK," he said.

"I'm not exaggerating: she's the next big thing."

While the ripples are fast becoming waves, Lexie keeps her feet firmly on the ground.

"When I finish my A-levels I am hoping to earn my living through my music," she said.

"I love playing the guitar and messing around on the keyboard."

At the age of 16, Lexie, a dedicated Christian, entered the BBC Radio 2 Young Chorister of the Year competition.

"This was considered unusual

as I was not the usual chorally-trained singer," she said.

"Instead, I sang modern worship music and hymns with a fresh twist."

It clearly worked. She made it to the top four and sang in Westminster Abbey, something she described as "a huge privilege".

"When it went out on Radio 2, I was picked up by Radio 4 as their Pick of the Week."

"This led to an appearance on Songs Of Praise in June 2007, where I sang the self-penned track We Need You."

There are plans to record more material for the BBC show at the end of the year.

Over the 18 months Lexie has been singing at open mic nights around Worcester, but she has been singing for her church – All Saints, in Deansway, Worcester – since she was 12.

"During my church concerts I have mixed Christian music with many others genres, particularly blues and soul," she said.

"I love Mowtown – Aretha Franklin is a firm favourite of mine."

Michael gig to vow fans

A GEORGE Michael tribute – complete with LA police uniform – performs in Droitwich this weekend.

Wayne Dilks, seen on ITV's Stars In Their Eyes, is considered one of the top Michael tributes and, performing at the Norbury Theatre tomorrow, promises to satisfy the most avid fan.

Audiences should expect Wham tracks, from Club Tropicana to Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go, to solo hits such as Faith, Freedom 90, Fast Love and Outside. Not forgetting Careless Whisper and Don't Let The Sun Go Down On Me.

For tickets, priced £10, call the 24-hour box office on 08700 600100 or book online at www.ticketweb.co.uk.

Top guitarist is back with his award-winning music

MARTIN Simpson – winner of best album at the 2008 BBC folk awards – is back at Huntingdon Hall.

The Scunthorpe-born guitarist, who dropped out of college to become a full-time musician, picked up the award for his record Prodigal Son.

He also won best original song with Never Any Good and was nominated for Musician of the Year.

Simpson could play guitar at 12 and at 14 gave his first paid performance. In 1975, a meeting with Bill Leader resulted in his debut solo album, Golden Vanity, and within the year he was supporting Steeleye Span.

By 1977 he was working with June Tabor. Their



Guitarist: Martin Simpson.

decade-long partnership produced a number of highly influential albums. Continually adding colours to his palette, Simpson is inspired by a vast array of musicians; from Blind Willie Johnson to Bob Dylan. He performs in Worcester on Friday, May 9.

For tickets, priced £14, call the Worcester Live box office on 01905 611427.

You'll dance in the dome

SOLAR-powered geodesic domes will soon be home to live music in Castlemorton, near Malvern.

On Sunday, May 4, the dome-shaped mobile marquee will be set up in the village near Worcester to host Tragic Roundabout. Performing live, the five-some offer an eclectic melange of hardcore ska/klezmer blended with an "unsubtle hint of the mystic eastern bloc".

Organisers Floating Lotus – who provide domes for many summer festivals – secured a temporary event notice for the entertainment to run from 8pm to midnight.

There will be a licensed bar and parking on the common. For more visit www.myspace.com/missiontomottingham.

CDGUIDE

What's hot and what's not? **JANINE HARRISON** gives the lowdown on the latest releases



The Last Shadow Puppets.

The Last Shadow Puppets – Age of the Understatement
THE Last Shadow Puppets are Alex Turner of the Arctic Monkeys and Miles Kane of the Rascals, who decided to make an album inspired by 1960s songwriters, tales of doomed love and femme fatales. This is the end result – with a little help from the London Metropolitan Orchestra.

The first single, Age of the Understatement, begins with a Spanish guitar and sounds as though it's straight out Scott Walker's back catalogue. When their joint voices kick in, with their Northern accents, it's an odd combination that somehow works very well. This nod to nostalgia continues with the amazing Standing Next To Me, the lush strings perfectly complementing Turner's warm vocals.

The music is superb throughout. It never sounds retro, though it is clearly a tribute to the music of the classic songwriters such as Burt Bacharach and the aforementioned Walker.

The lyrics are poetic, full of witticisms, and help keep the album in a modern setting.

This is definitely going to be winning a few album of the year awards come the end of 2008.

Sarah Brightman – Symphony

SARAH Brightman has always been a difficult one to put into a category. She began her career on the stage, and flirted with pop songs, but her solo albums have always been a mixed bag of opera, easy listening, world and even dance music. Symphony continues in this vein.

Opening track Gothica starts with a thunderstorm, then goes straight into Fleurs Du Mal. It is so similar to the music of band Evanescence that it could easily slot into the metal section at a music store, with the ethereal vocals and pounding music.

Canta Della Terra reunites Brightman with Andrea Bocelli and is a beautiful Italian love song. On rock ballad I Will Be With You she performs with Paul Stanley (of KISS fame), and their voices work well, in a beauty and the beast way.

Running begins like the classical world in union track, but transforms into crazed Euro pop. In other words, Symphony is typical Sarah Brightman, in that it sounds like nothing else you've heard before.

If you like your classical/female divas with a bit of character, then you will love this album.

For more CD reviews, visit www.worcesternews.co.uk/whatson