

No.50. June 2017

THE

# E LIST

ISSN 2058-2196

Your cultural life in and around Walthamstow,  
Leytonstone, Leyton and Wanstead

Your **FREE**  
Magazine  
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things to do  
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Opposite:  
Far left top: Robert  
Ince, photo © Timothy  
Ginn; Bottom: Lucy  
Porter. Middle: Mark  
Thomas, photo ©  
Steve Ullathorne. Right:  
Richard Herring.  
This page:  
Top: Shappi Khorsandi.  
Bottom: Mike Gunn.

# It's a funny old summer

Susan Murray practically is the comedy scene in E17. With an enviable CV and a comedians' who's who contact list she brings the cream of the UK and international comedy to East London for her July season of Previews. Sean Urquhart caught up with her at Red Imp HQ at The Rose and Crown.

Susan Murray embodies all that is healthy in the UK comedy circuit. Rude health you might say. Her engaging, effervescent and infectious persona made her an entertaining interviewee. Coming from a Glaswegian background, you might say comedy is in her DNA as she reflected 'my parents went to see Stanley Baxter on their wedding night, they were too poor for a reception'. Currently setting up a series of pre-Edinburgh Fringe gigs at The Rose and Crown, she has curated an impressive line-up, ranging from Greg Davies and Robin Ince to Shappi Khorsandi and Sara Pascoe. 'We have to have a strong line-up as we are starting to get competition in the area, but I think we bat it out of the park. I've worked really hard at this year's line up and I'm proud of the fact that it's very nearly a 50/50 % split gender-wise. There aren't many clubs that can say that. It's the audience that make this gig so amazing. Every comic that comes here just adores it and they ask to come back. I even had to open it last August, when we're usually closed, to accommodate Omid Djalili

last year, he's played it nearly as many times as I have. Mark Thomas is doing two nights this July because he enjoyed it so much last year – he got a standing ovation.' Stewart Lee has said about the club "By feeding them only choicest comedy cuts available, Walthamstow's up close and personal Red Imp Comedy club has hand-reared a discerning and imaginative audience as sassy and switched-on as the early alternative comedy crowds". All the seasoned comics love it as it's 'old school'.

Susan's career trajectory itself is impressive, from her early days working on the cult classic Channel 4 show *Crapston Villas* as a camera assistant, to taking a stand-up course in Highgate. She finally took the plunge and set up Guffaw comedy club seven years ago at The Rose and Crown. She then split from her co-promoter ('musical differences') and launched Red Imp ('it comes from a teenage nickname I had'), it has become one of the essential gigs in comedy. Asking Susan about

the role of women in a traditionally male-dominated arena, she succinctly summed the situation up 'women paved the way for women in comedy'.

When it comes to unwinding away from the pressure cooker environment of live stand-up, Susan immerses herself in *Air Crash Investigations*. 'I've seen so many episodes, I could put a plane back together. It would be a death trap mind you. But let's face it, they all are.'

Talking about comedy in general, particularly the idea of comedy as the new rock n' roll (an ill-advised throwaway idea from the early 90s), Susan dismissed the idea; 'music and comedy don't mix at all. I remember seeing Mark Lamarr opening for Transglobal Underground and really struggling and he was a master at comedy. It was a lesson learnt'.

The abiding impression I have of Murray, is of a hyper-kinetic restless intelligence, throwing in one-liners throughout the course of our meeting, a renaissance



woman who has cornered the East London comedy market with no sign of slowing down. I for one am glad we have her here in Walthamstow, as one of our cultural cornerstones.

## July Preview Season

3 July	Andrew Maxwell & Mandy Knight	10 July	Robin Ince & Sally-Anne Hayward
4 July	Paul Sinha & Bethany Black	11 July	Lucy Porter & Simon Munnery
5 July	Mark Thomas & Mike Gunn	12 July	Tiffany Stevenson & Sam Gore
6 July	Mark Thomas & Angela Barnes	13 July	Greg Davies & Zoe Lyons
7 July	Richard Herring & Eleanor Tiernan	14 July	Stephen K Amos & Gordon Southern
8 July	Shappi Khorsandi & Dominic Holland	16 July	Matinée Sara Pascoe and Elliot Steel
9 July	Matinée Kidz Show & Howard Read's Yukfest		

Tickets and further info [www.redimpcomedy.com](http://www.redimpcomedy.com)

# A SPOTTER'S GUIDE TO LOCAL STREETLIFE

for Waltham Forest's people watchers.



From a series by Walthamstow resident, illustrator Tom Gaul.  
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## Local Street Life



By Tom Gaul  
As featured in the  
E List magazine

Saturday 3 June – Sunday 18 June

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