



A GRAND DAY OUT

Ali Gudgeon sat down with Andrew Howard, Head of Audience, Marketing & Sales at Blackpool's Grand Theatre, to discuss the upcoming Pantomime, Cinderella and the enduring allure of live theatre

Blackpool Grand is one of the few remaining theatres of great architectural character, designed by Frank Matcham and built in 1894. It has a magnificent four-level auditorium with 1,100 seats and a year-round programme covering everything from dance, drama, hip-hop, plays, opera, musicals and of course the much-loved annual Pantomime.

thrilled to have such a talented cast, including West End star and Dancing on Ice champion Hayley Tamaddon and local Pantomime legend and Britain's Got Talent finalist Steve Royle. It feels like our very own Fairy Godmother making our Christmas dreams come true! "Pantomime is a real family affair, with often three generations coming together to enjoy the show. It's heartwarming to see friends returning year after year, often to the same seats. It really is like an extended family at this time of year.



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When you step into the Victorian splendour of the Blackpool Grand Theatre you will understand what people mean by 'the glorious Grand'. There's the incredibly ornate, gilded plasterwork, baroque ceiling, cavorting cherubs, cantilevered balconies allowing every elegant seat a clear view of the stage. Walking into the theatre literally takes your breath away!

This year The Grand will showcase Cinderella, which runs 6th December – 5th January 2025. The production promises to be a dazzling spectacle, with a packed schedule of 51 shows across four weeks. With tickets starting at just £15, the idea is that theatre is accessible to all.

Andrew Howard, Head of Audience, Marketing & Sales at Blackpool Grand said: "Pantomime is a magical time. And we're

"Pantomime isn't easy. It's a massive undertaking but the passion and dedication of the entire team make it all worthwhile," Andrew explains. "From the cast and crew to the front-of-house staff, everyone plays a vital role in bringing the magic to life. It takes a lot of effort putting it on as it's a long production involving an army of dedicated people but it's also very fulfilling. Every single person gives blood, sweat and tears as you want to make it as special as you can for everyone visiting."

Cinderella's production is a packed schedule. The theatre will welcome many thousands >>