

# STOP PRESS

## Summer concert booked!

Date: **Sunday 10 July**...Time: **7pm**... Venue: **The Electric Cinema**, 47-49 Station Street, Birmingham... Theme: **Film**...

Join us to enjoy memorable music

from movies, songs from the silver screen and the great composers of cinema!

Call the ticket hotline 0121 706 6346 to request delivery of your reserved ticket - Friends of Notorious will be seated in the lavish VIP area! Additional tickets are also available at £8 (£6 concessions). Join us on the day

at 6.30pm for an exclusive free drinks reception for Friends of Notorious.

The Electric Cinema is the oldest working cinema in the UK (first opened in 1909) and was re-opened earlier this year after being renovated and re-fitted in charming original art deco style. It now presents the best in

independent cinema and intelligent mainstream films in a luxurious environment and is equipped with a full bar. We're very excited to be performing at this fantastic venue, which will fit perfectly with the programme. You can get a flavour of the cinema yourself by visiting [www.theelectric.co.uk](http://www.theelectric.co.uk).

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Newsletter 11

# notorious friends

## Arrival at Waterloo imminent



It's a kind of music

**Mamma Mia Mamma Mia**, Notorious' forthcoming concert in tribute to the music of Queen and Abba is now only days away! Make sure you've got it in your diary: Sunday 24 April at the James Brindley pub on

Bridge Street, off Broad Street in the centre of Birmingham. The venue opens at 12 noon. Be sure to arrive in good time to enjoy that music between 1 and 3pm.

### Editor's Note

Welcome once again to the Notorious Friends' newsletter. I hope it whets your appetite for the musical treats we have in store for the months ahead.

I'm sure you'd all like to join me in extending congratulations and best wishes to Clare and Richard on the recent birth of their daughter Mia and to Helena and Pete with their new baby Oscar – both surely named in reference to forthcoming concerts!

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## Musical Director's Letter

Our Spring concert programme was put together based on popular demand - so we hope you will like it! **Mamma Mia Mamma Mia** brings together our favourite Queen and Abba songs and a number of new arrangements by choir members. We also see the return of the Notorious Band featuring Ian Sutton (piano), Jon Hawkesworth (guitar), Richard Salt (clarinet/sax), Ian Chapman (bass guitar) and Ian's brother Adrian Chapman on drums.

In December we are planning to put on a very special Christmas concert with some

elements dedicated to looking at Christmas songs from Word War II. So if any of you remember that era, or you know anyone who does, we will be asking for your help to put together some authentic repertoire. This element of the concert will be to mark the 60th Anniversary of VE Day that falls this year.

We are also currently in discussion with the Queen's Park Sinfonia who are keen to work with us again... So watch this space!

Clare Edwards



**"We will be asking for your help to put together some authentic repertoire."**

## Would you like to help spread the word about Notorious?

Would you like to give us your reaction from the audience? Anonymously if you want!

newsletter, as quotes on publicity or even for article and reviews in the press.

We're always able to use interesting reviews of our performances – on our website, here in the Friends'

So why not put pen to paper and send something in?

## ♪ Notorious Guide to Performance Techniques ♪

Singing can bring so much pleasure, it enables the spirit to soar and can express emotions that are sometimes hard to put into words. It is also a technical event requiring muscle and breath control, rhythm, observation and listening skills. This is no different for notorious, of course, so here are a few of the techniques we use to help keep our performances energetic, enthusiastic and, we hope, enjoyable for everyone.

### The “Pretend These Notes Aren’t High By Bending Your Knees” Technique

Tenors and sopranos are particularly fond of this technique as it provides a more comfortable alternative to:

- Trying to force your eyebrows over the top of your head
- Doing Pilates-style buttock clenches
- Getting someone next to you to poke you in the ribs with a pencil.

N.B. there is a risk of looking like comedy policemen, so caution must be employed.

### The “Cold And Wintry Time Of Our Lives” Technique

Notorious members aren't shy about getting into the party spirit and never is this more true than when our carol concerts take us outside. Whether being accosted by hilarious unicyclists outside WH Smith or interrupting the Spud-U-Like queue in Martineau Place, we will deliver a range of

Christmas songs with vim and vigour. We'll even applaud ourselves if the public seems uncertain.

Sometimes a festive performance can be rather magical, singing carols at a Christmas street party in Rubery (we offered ourselves as a raffle prize in autumn 2003) was rather special as lights twinkled and children were allowed to stay up late for the occasion.

### The “Off By Heart, Slightly Surprised By The Clapping” Technique

Notorious members are always willing to work hard; and when we need to learn something off by heart it certainly isn't always easy! There can be rehearsals with fudged lines and repeated middle eights (despite our esteemed conductor's careful counting). But by the time we're performing for our very special audiences (that's you), everyone is proud to say they really do know the words.

However... such immense feats of memory are rarely accompanied by equal confidence in any associated hand movements. The mind is willing but for a small cluster of us there is a startling instant at the beginning of verse two when everyone else starts clapping.

## Notorious Notions

### Anecdotes and in-jokes from inside Notorious

#### No. 3- Action Man Eyes

When she is conducting the choir in rehearsal, Clare Edwards has imaginative ways of getting across the sound or effect she is looking for. For example, when she is conducting a piece that is meant to sound scary or

mysterious, she starts talking about an Action Man doll.

The salient feature of the Action Man (as opposed to other 12 inch fully poseable action figures) is the lever at the back of the head which allows you to move the eyes from side to side (Clare

sometimes demonstrates this action for those deprived of such a doll in their childhood). To Clare, this eye movement makes the doll appear worried or scared, which is exactly what she wants the audience to feel as they listen to the music.

So, the next time you're at a Notorious concert and the music makes you feel a little uneasy or scared, and your eyes start to move from side to side, then Clare's direction has worked. If you see any of us moving our eyes from side to side then we haven't understood properly!