

London Mum's



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Star!

The unsung star
of Italian Song:
Pierdavide Carone
shines in London

FREE-Issue 45 – Summer/Autumn 2025

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Hello London Mums,

**both seasoned and new,
Summer's arrived, with an
autumnal hue.
Our city still dances with
laughter and light,
music in corners, hearts taking
flight.**



This issue I'm beaming – it's music I bring,
Two heroes of mine made my editor's heart sing.
Pierdaveide Carone, soulful and true,
Strummed in Scala – raw, heartfelt, askew.
No filters, no frills, just verses and grace,
A poet of feeling in a fast-forward race.

Then came a legend, bold and divine,
Kid Creole, dressed in rhythm and rhyme.
He told me of Bronx days, cheeky and grand,
Of coconut trails and his farewell band.
The zoot suits retire, the sequins will rest,
but August Darnell remains one of the best.

We travel too, to Turkish delights,
Antalya gleams with family nights.
From beachside bliss to baklava sweet,
ten reasons await you – sun-soaked, complete.

In shadows of synths, love softly plays,
As Shad Shadows pulse through Ravenna's maze.
And for your little ones, tales from the deep,
where Ella and Giggly Furbottom leap.
Under the sea, with creatures so kind,
They teach us of oceans and care for mankind.

So turn these pages, sip something chilled,
Let your heart wander, your senses be thrilled.
From cover to stories, each moment is yours,
A love letter to mums – with wide open doors.

With sparkle, with soul, with ink freshly spun,
Here's to you, London mums – and all you've done.
Keep dancing, keep dreaming, keep writing your song...
With music and motherhood, you've always belonged.

Love,

Monica
Editor in chief, Founder of London Mums & mum of
19-year-old Diego

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Pierdaveide Carone

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Music Chat!

The unsung star of Italian Song: Pierdavide Carone shines in London

Why one of Italy's most soulful songwriters deserves global recognition

By Monica Costa

In a world obsessed with flashy fame and fast tracks, some artists quietly earn their stripes with poetry, passion, and perseverance. *Pierdavide Carone* is one of them. A singer-songwriter with heart, humour and serious melodic chops, Carone first rose to fame on Italy's *Amici di Maria De Filippi* in 2009, grabbing third place and the Critics' Award. His debut album, *Una Canzone Pop*, shot to No. 1 and earned double platinum status. Since then, he's collaborated with musical legends like Lucio Dalla, graced the stage of *Sanremo*, and, most recently, won Italy's 2025 *Ora o mai più*. The **Sanremo Music Festival** is Italy's most famous and longest-running song competition, held every year in the coastal city of **Sanremo** since 1951.

But it was in a tucked-away corner of London – at Scala, King's Cross, during the *Spaghetti Disco* event – that Carone reminded everyone of his raw talent. Just a man, a guitar, and an audience of Italians (and curious Brits), united in warmth and music.

I sat down with Pierdavide to talk fame, failure, Lucio Dalla, and why true music doesn't need translation.



.....

“Talent’s not enough. Stay grounded.”

Monica: You’re incredibly gifted—and, frankly, under-recognised. That unplugged set at Spaghetti Disco was special. What made it stand out for you?

Pierdavid: Thank you, Monica—that means a lot. That 40-minute set was pure emotion. Just my voice, my guitar, and songs that trace my journey—from *Amici*, through ballads like *La ballata dell’ospedale di notte*, to more recent chapters after winning *Ora o mai più*. I even threw in some favourites from my five albums. It felt like catching up with old friends.

Monica: What would you tell your younger self from those *Amici* days?

Pierdavid: That talent’s not enough. Stay grounded. Success is delicate—you

build it over years and can lose it in minutes. I learned that the hard way, especially when my career hit bumps.

Monica: Your Sanremo duet with Lucio Dalla was iconic. Any special memories?

Pierdavid: So many. Lucio was like painting with Michelangelo. On *Amore eterno*, we recorded seven versions, changing tiny details—then ended up using the very first one. That was Lucio: a perfectionist with intuition.

Monica: You often mention him as a major influence. Who else shaped you musically?

Pierdavid: My musical world started with The Beatles, thanks to my dad’s



vinyls. Lennon and McCartney's genius lies in their simplicity. But George Harrison—often overlooked—gave us *Here Comes the Sun* and *Something*. His *All Things Must Pass* album is the best-selling Beatles solo record. That says it all.

Monica: You've collaborated with many legends. Who's still on your dream list?

Pierdaveide: Writing for Mina would be incredible. I've already worked with Baglioni, Venditti, Biagio Antonacci, even shared stages with Battiato, Cocciantè ... but I'd love to work with Francesco De Gregori. He shared a deep bond with Lucio Dalla, so that would feel full circle.

Monica: Do you see songwriting as therapy?

Pierdaveide: Definitely. It's a way to get things out of my system. When something bothers me, I write. This year I've also embraced mindfulness—not therapy, exactly, but it clears the mind. Music and movement are healing.

Monica: How did it feel performing at Spaghetti Disco in London?

Pierdaveide: Magical. The Italian community here is vibrant. Their stories, laughter, even the silence—it all fed into the performance. The applause felt genuine. I'll never forget it.

Monica: And finally, what do you take away from that night?

Pierdaveide: A moment that reminded me why I do this. I spoke a little English on stage, but I realised—music doesn't need translating. Melody connects us all. That night felt universal.

Don't miss Pierdaveide Carone's next chapters. He may not be on every front page, but he's writing songs that will live long in the hearts of those who listen.

Photography by Virginia Bettoja



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ADVICE FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF HEAD INJURIES

By Emma Hammett,
First Aid for Life Expert

There has been growing concern over the long-term effects of repeated head injuries, particularly for children involved in contact sports or anyone else experiencing a head injury. Former professional footballers are thought to be 3.5 times more likely to die with dementia and other serious neurological diseases. Consequently, everyone must ensure head injuries are taken seriously.

This advice follows the latest Government guidance and updated advice from the RFU.

The five R's

- **Remove** from play. If in doubt, leave them out!
- **Recognise** the signs of concussion. Only 10% of people with concussions lose consciousness.
- **Rest** – children and adolescents need at least 48 hours with no brain stimulation – no phones, TV, reading – just rest.
- **Recover** – ensures the casualty is completely symptom free before thinking about playing again.
- **Return** – use the Graduated Return to Activity and Sport (GRAS) method to start the gradual return to play.

Following concussion, children and adolescents may need 48 hours off school and a gradual return to academic study.

First steps in the event of a head injury

Following a head injury. Monitor your students carefully for any changes in behaviour.

They may experience:

- Loss of consciousness
- Intense crying
- Trouble walking
- Complaints of head and neck pain
- Increase emotion.



If the casualty hasn't lost consciousness after the impact:

- Observe them carefully for the next 48 hours.
- Apply a wrapped ice pack periodically for a maximum of ten minutes, to reduce superficial swelling.
- If they are drowsy, follow the advice below.

You should call an ambulance immediately if the student experiences:

- Unconsciousness
- Abnormal breathing
- Bleeding
- Dizziness
- Vomiting
- Paralysis

If the casualty is unconscious

- If they are breathing – carefully roll them into the recovery position – keep checking their breathing.
- If they are not breathing – start CPR.
- Call an ambulance immediately.

The brain needs considerable rest following a concussion. Although they may want to return sooner, it's imperative that the graduated return to play steps are followed methodically. Returning to sport too quickly could cause symptoms to return.

Please visit **firstaidforlife.org.uk** or call 0208 675 4036 for more information about our courses.

BEYOND THE LABEL: THE NOOK CLINIC'S FRESH TAKE ON AUTISM AND ADHD SUPPORT

The Nook Neurodevelopmental Clinic specialises in private autism and ADHD assessments for children, young people and adults from 5 years upwards. We operate from clinics in South Kensington in Central London, as well as Farnham Surrey and Summertown in Oxford.

The Nook Clinic was set up by Dr Selina Warlow (Clinical Psychologist) who has over 10 years' experience working in mental health services. Dr Warlow has worked in both the NHS and The Priory and wanted to set up a private neurodevelopmental service to provide both assessment and support for children, young people, and adults with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

The Nook Clinic understand that finding the right support is so important and want to celebrate the strengths and brilliance of the adults and children that they meet. Working with individuals and supporting families, children, and adults with understanding their diagnosis and building on their strengths with an overall aim to improve emotional wellbeing.

The Nook Clinic prides itself on its evidence-based practice and follow assessment protocols from the National Institution for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance. Using the DSM-5 criteria to diagnosis ADHD and ASD, clinical experience and observations to determine the appropriate diagnosis for you/your child.

At the Nook Neurodevelopmental Clinic, there is a multi-disciplinary team of experienced clinicians who have



specialised in working with children and adults with neurodevelopmental conditions both privately and in the NHS. The team are aware that this process can be daunting and are there to guide you through each step and answer any questions you have and put you at ease through the process. The team are passionate about ensuring individuals feel heard and supported through this journey.

Owner and founder, **Dr Selina Warlow** has worked in both the NHS and The Priory, and her previous role was working as a clinical psychologist in the NHS. Selina has also worked in CAMHS service, psychiatric inpatients ward, children's Crisis services and in OCD clinics in both the NHS and the Priory and worked at the Royal Marsden supporting families when a parent has cancer.



To find out more, visit The Nook Clinic website www.thenookclinic.co.uk

Kid Creole & The Coconuts: The Last Dance of a Legend – A Conversation with the Sultan of Suave

By Monica Costa

After five dazzling decades of sequins, satire and conga-fuelled chaos, Kid Creole & The Coconuts are saying goodbye. The iconic 80s party band is heading back to the UK for one last shimmy with the *Bye Bye Birdy* tour—a flamboyant farewell from one of music’s most theatrical trailblazers.

Led by the inimitable August Darnell (aka Kid Creole), the band brought a riot of funk, Latin, jazz, and wit to the charts with hits like *Annie*, *I’m Not Your Daddy*, *Stool Pigeon* and *I’m a Wonderful Thing, Baby*. Part carnival, part cabaret, their shows were pure spectacle.

As the zoot suits are packed away, I caught up with August—the High Priest of Hip himself—to talk Bronx beginnings, rebellious rhythms, and why it’s finally time to leave the stage.

Monica: Tell me about the *Bye Bye Birdy* Tour ...

August Darnell aka Kid Creole: This is supposed to be the final tour—though I’ve been saying that for about 15 years! But Monica, I really do think this might be the one... then again, you never know. The thing is, I have to do a farewell show in every country where Kid Creole found success. So we’ll start in the UK (where it all kicked off in 1981), then head to France, Italy, Germany, and Scandinavia. It’s shaping up to be quite the long goodbye! I love Italy and I’ve been there so many times – one of my favourite spots to vacation. My wife and I, we always go back to Ischia, because we just love Ischia and the island. I’m currently living in Hawaii, and it’s been absolutely wonderful.

Our daughter attends school here and she’s thriving—she loves swimming, surfing, and simply enjoying the warm, sunny climate.

Monica: You’ve been lighting up stages for over four decades now. What’s your secret to keeping that energy so alive and infectious?

August: People often say to me, “How are you still doing this? Aren’t you, like, 123 years old?” And I always laugh and say –it’s because I love the music. Music has been woven into the fabric of my life, thanks to my older brother. If it hadn’t been for him, I doubt I ever would have become a musician. He was the one who taught me guitar and bass, and ever since those early days—back when I was just a kid growing up in New York City—I’ve been in love with it. Music is such a fundamental part of who I am that when I step on stage, everything else just melts away.

Monica: It’s like when you’re performing, nothing else matters—problems disappear, and it’s just the music. It’s such a euphoric, almost transcendental feeling. I sing and write songs myself, and I really believe that’s what keeps me alive—keeps my life feeling joyful.

August: Music is therapy—it’s better than medicine.

Monica: Musicians really are some of the happiest people—well, most of the time! And your music, in particular, has always stood out for its sense of rebellion—not the usual angry or confrontational kind, but a more playful, stylish, danceable kind. Was that a



"From an early age, I learned to love all music. And that eclecticism is what shaped Kid Creole."



conscious choice? What message were you trying to send through that unique approach?

August: You've hit the nail on the head. It *is* rebellious, but in a very specific way. I've been a rebel all my life, but not the kind that yells at you or waves a fist. My revolution has always come wrapped in humour, wit, and flair. I grew up in a tough neighbourhood in New York City, and I truly believe that having a sense of humour was key to survival. If you could make people laugh, you'd live to see another day.

That perspective carried into my music. It's packed with humour, with rhythm, with joy—but there's always a deeper message underneath. I've always had something to say, politically and socially, but I don't deliver it with anger or bitterness. I deliver it with groove and style—so you can dance to it while you're absorbing the message. And the fans who *really* listen, they get it. They know there's more there than just a catchy beat.

Monica: Your music draws from such a rich palette—Latin, disco, funk, calypso. Which genre feels most like home to you?

August: You know, growing up in the Bronx, I was really lucky. My parents loved music—all kinds of music. Our house wasn't limited to one radio station. One moment we'd be listening to classical, the next to jazz or R&B. My dad adored Johnny Cash and Ella Fitzgerald. My brother and I were obsessed with The Beatles and the whole British Invasion. And I still remember Dean Martin singing *Non Dimenticar* in Italian—that really stuck with us.

From an early age, I learned to love *all* music. And that eclecticism is what shaped Kid Creole. I've never felt the need to commit to one genre. The real joy—and the secret sauce—has always been the *blend*. Mixing styles became my identity, my sound.

"Music is therapy—it's better than medicine"



Monica: Your songs really tell stories – from *Stool Pigeon* to *Annie*, *I'm Not Your Daddy*, to *I'm a Wonderful Thing, Baby*. Each one has its own mood, its own world.

August: They're little musical novellas, really. Of course, there's a lot of ego in them—*I'm a Wonderful Thing, Baby* is pure swagger. *Stool Pigeon* brings that gritty funk and groove, something you just can't sit still to. And *Annie* has that soca flavour—very Caribbean, very calypso. You've named three songs, and each one lives in its own genre. That's exactly what I set out to do—let every song be its own universe.

Monica: Your music has always been full of character and storytelling. Where do you get your lyrical ideas from?

August: That's easy—I studied English literature at university in New York, and I've always been a voracious reader. I love the craft of storytelling. As a songwriter, the real challenge is how to tell a compelling story in just three minutes. There's no room for fluff. You've got to hook your audience and deliver something meaningful—all in the time it takes to boil an egg. I've always found that challenge thrilling.

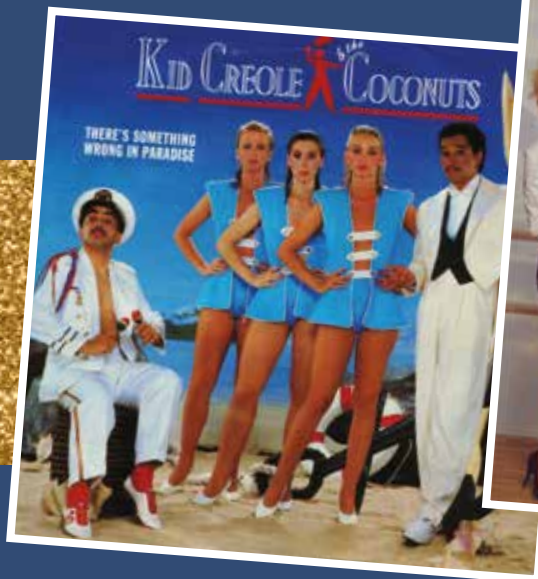
Monica: The Coconuts are such an iconic part of the Kid Creole identity. How did the concept for the trio come about?

August: That credit goes to Adriana Kaegi—my ex-wife and the original “Mama Coconut”. She moved to New York from a small town in Switzerland, hungry for creative adventure. She had incredible vision and took full charge of the choreography, styling, and the selection of the Coconuts. She created the look and feel of what became such an essential part of our show. Honestly, in the early days, people came to see *them*. I was just the guy standing to the side of those fabulous women!

“My advice: be original, stay authentic, and be prepared to hustle. Do it for the Love”

Monica: Your stage style is unmistakable – the zoot suits, the hats, the pizzazz. Where did your fashion inspiration come from?

August: The visual side of music has always been just as important to me as the sound. When I was 12, my dad took me to see a film called *Stormy Weather*, and Cab Calloway appeared in this stunning zoot suit—big shoulder pads, wide lapels, two-tone shoes. I remember



thinking, “*I want to look like that.*” So when I had my own band, I borrowed the look and gave it my own twist. I wanted the whole band to look sharp—like the 1940s met Studio 54. That visual identity became a huge part of our success. People still say, “Oh, you’re the group with the retro suits!”

Monica: Tell me a behind-the-scenes moment – something unexpected or hilarious that’s stayed with you.

August: Ah, I’ve got loads! But one that sticks out: we were performing a sold-out show in France, and I launched into *Off the Coast of Me*—a sweet ballad, one of my personal favourites. Midway through, the crowd started cheering wildly. I thought, *Wow, they must really love this song!* Turns out, the Coconuts had taken off their bras and were dancing topless behind me. That’s what got the applause—not my vocals! Typical Adriana—always full of surprises.

Monica: You’ve influenced so many with your vintage sound. What advice would you give to emerging artists inspired by your style?

August: First off, get a thick skin. The industry today is wild. With streaming, it’s a whole new world—and not always in a good way. Back in my day, you had to be signed, record in a studio, press physical records. Now anyone can

drop a track from their bathroom. The upside is accessibility. The downside? Oversaturation and almost zero income unless you’re hitting tens of millions of streams.

So, my advice: be original, stay authentic, and be prepared to hustle. If you’re doing it just for fame, don’t bother. Do it for the love—because that’s what sustains you.

Monica: After all these years, what still lights you up about performing?

August: Oh, that’s easy—the immediate gratification. The instant energy. The feedback. The applause. When you’re in a studio, it’s just you and your ideas. But on stage? You feel the crowd’s electricity. When people are singing your lyrics back at you, dancing, letting go—that’s the ultimate high. That’s why we do it.

Don’t miss Kid Creole & The Coconuts’ final UK hurrah with the electrifying Bye Bye Birdy Tour. Expect feathers, funk, and one last fabulous fiesta.

Tickets:
www.seetickets.com/tour/kid-creole-the-coconuts



Read the full article
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10 REASONS TO LOVE ANTALYA

By Monica Costa, Donatella Barbini, Laura Castelli

Sunshine, history, turquoise seas – Antalya, Turkey’s crown jewel on the southwest coast, is the ultimate family escape. After a dreamy trip flying directly with Corendon Airlines and staying at the fabulous Corendon Playa Kemer, here’s why you’ll want to pack your bags – and maybe an extra suitcase for souvenirs!

1

Blue Flag Beaches

Antalya boasts more than 200 stunning beaches with Blue Flag awards. The calm, clear waters are perfect for paddling, snorkelling or just lounging like a lizard.

2

Family-Friendly Turkish Hospitality

In Turkey, children are treated like VIPs. Expect baby chairs in restaurants and kids’ menus at every turn. Stress-free meals? Yes, please!

3

Sun, Glorious Sun

With over 300 sunny days a year, Antalya guarantees a tan and is perfect for family holidays.

4

History That Makes Indiana Jones Jealous

From the grand Hadrian’s Gate to the ancient cities of Perge and Aspendos, Antalya is a living museum.

5

Kaleiçi – Old Town Magic

Step into a living postcard as you wander Kaleiçi’s maze of cobbled lanes, where crumbling Ottoman mansions lean into each other, bougainvillea spills from balconies, and every corner feels like a secret waiting to be found. Antalya’s historic streets are filled with friendly, sunbathing cats – unofficial city mascots who’ll happily pose for your family album.



3



1



2



4



5



6

Flavours to Please the Fussiest Eaters

Turkish cuisine is secretly genius at sneaking in healthy stuff. Think juicy kebabs, grilled fish straight from the sea, vibrant salads, warm, pillowy gözleme, fluffy pilav rice, and homemade breads fresh out of the oven – all washed down with a glass of ayran. If you crave a sweet reward there's endless baklava, sticky Turkish delight, and künefe oozing with melted cheese and syrup.

8

Easy Breezy Travel

Corendon Airlines flies direct from London to Antalya in under five hours. www.corendonairlines.com

9

Live Tunes, Sweet Treats, and Serious Pampering

At Corendon Playa Kemer, your senses are in for a treat. Sip Turkish tea or coffee at the gorgeous patisserie while listening to brilliant live music and taste a sinfully good cheesecake – honestly, some of the best we've ever tasted. Then spoil yourself with traditional Turkish baths (hammams), complete with skin-peeling facials, foam massages, and more heavenly pampering.



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All-Inclusive Value

Corendon Playa Kemer is a five-star, ultra all-inclusive resort just 40 minutes' drive west of Antalya. Perfect for families, it offers pools, a beachside location, endless buffets and plenty of kid-friendly activities, all at a great price. The hotel features modern rooms and attentive service. Facilities include a private beach, cabanas, a private jetty, indoor and outdoor pools, water sports, tennis club, a spa, fitness centre, and a kids' club. Dining options range from buffet restaurants with sea views to à la carte options plus a 24-hour patisserie and bars. www.corendonhotels.com/corendon-playa-kemer/

10

10. Shop Till You Drop in Kemer

If you love a good bargain, Kemer's buzzing markets are your paradise. From gorgeous leather bags to perfumes, you can bag yourself a little luxury without the luxury price tag. Haggling is half the fun!



NEW STUDY REVEALS 77% OF CHILDREN USE AI WHEN DOING HOMEWORK LEADING TO CONCERNS AROUND TAKING SHORT-CUTS

A new study surveying over 1,000 pupils aged 15-18 years in state and private schools across the UK, has revealed some startling figures around the culture and impact of AI (Artificial Intelligence) on day-to-day learning as well as how children are accessing content and what their attitudes are towards it. The study, which was commissioned by independent day and boarding school for girls, Downe House, found that 77% of children across UK schools admitted they have used AI tools to help them complete their homework, leading to concerns from teachers that some may be taking the easy way out.

These findings come alongside recent thought-provoking dramas like Netflix's *Adolescence*, which has taken parents and schools by storm in relation to how the evolving world of social media and AI is impacting children's lives and whether there should be more onus on schools to educate young people on how to use these tools effectively. The study also found that a resounding 94% of pupils have used AI tools, apps and chat bots, demonstrating widespread use amongst young people between 15-18 years. A further 49% of pupils said they used AI tools occasionally, while 20% admitted to regular use.

Jane Basnett, Director of Digital Learning at Downe House commented, "We have to step up as educators and invest more in training teachers adequately on ethical use of AI, if there is one thing the recent Netflix series *Adolescence* did, is to raise public awareness of the very real issues facing teenagers today. While its storyline may not reflect every teenager's experience, the drama



was rooted in actual cases from the UK, lending it both authenticity and emotional weight."

More than half (54%) of pupils surveyed said they felt knowledgeable around AI capabilities, even though a further 54% said they rely solely on the internet and social media for insight. Only 19% of children said they get this information from their school – prompting questions around accountability from social media platforms, as well as investment in training teachers on responsible and ethical use of technology. On the contrary, when asked whether or not ethical education around the use of AI should be included in the school curriculum, pupils were divided, with 46% (almost half) saying they weren't concerned about this, while 42% felt this was important. These split opinions may also signal an over-reliance from some young people on the day-to-day use of such tools in school.

"There is no denying that AI is appealing to young people and despite some obvious concerns associated with the findings of this study, there is a certain level of intrigue and optimism around its potential too, with 60% believing AI improves their learning experience and a further 66% of pupils saying they want to learn more about AI in school. Yet there is clearly a gap in terms of what we are teaching children in school, if they are getting most of their insight from social media and websites, it is up to schools to help balance that", added Mrs Basnett.

www.downehouse.net



CAPTAIN FANTASTIC TO BRING MAGIC TO CHILDREN'S PARTIES IN DARTFORD

Captain Fantastic, the UK's premier children's party franchise company is to bring magic to children's parties in Dartford with the help of new franchisee and experienced children's entertainer Nathaniel McCloskey.



Nathaniel McCloskey, a professionally trained actor who has worked as chief entertainer at Captain Fantastic in Kent since 2017, explains: "We are on a mission to spread happiness and make memories and I have been delighted to take on the Dartford area as a new franchisee business owner. It means we can now offer children's parties to community residents in Dartford. "From interactive magic shows to disco dance parties, our events are designed to be engaging and fun for all ages and can include puppetry, science experiments, bubbles, dancing and games."

Nathaniel, who recently put on special events for several refugee charities in Kent last year, continues: "Captain Fantastic was set up to create journeys of fun and safe adventure for children across the country, and we now organise more than 2000 parties and events for 60,000 children every year in the UK. From pirates to princesses, science to disco, each party theme has been created by professional actors and are all full of fun,



excitement and laughter. I'm now looking forward to bringing the magic of Captain Fantastic to children and their families in Dartford."

Captain Fantastic was originally set up in London in 2010 and was franchised in 2017. Each regional branch franchise is run by entertainers such as Nathaniel who is professionally trained as an actor and has a history of performing on stages across the country, using his skills to engage audiences on a daily basis. Captain Fantastic has been voted the UK's Number One children's entertainment company by the trusted reviewing site FreeIndex.



For further information about Captain Fantastic's parties and events please see: <https://captain-fantastic.co.uk/>

For Kids to carry on the adventure see: www.youtube.com/captainfantastickids

For actors and professional entertainers interested in exploring Captain Fantastic's flexible franchise opportunities please see: <https://captain-fantastic.co.uk/jointheteam/childrens-party-franchise/>

Music chat!

Shad Shadows: Synths, Shadows and a love story in sound

By Monica Costa

By night, beneath the cloak of quiet streets and neon reflections, the Italian duo Shad Shadows craft something spellbinding. A romantic and musical partnership, their latest single *Divination* pulses with synthetic beats and mystical yearning—a dreamlike journey that speaks to love, darkness, and freedom. Based in the evocative city of Ravenna, artists Alessandra and Luca have built a unique universe where music becomes both resistance and enchantment.

We caught up with them to discover how this creative couple turn nocturnal musings into soundscapes that captivate listeners far beyond the Italian borders.

Divination feels like an electro-ritual. How did the song come about and what does it mean for you now?

“*Divination* represents the most intimate and emotional part of our sound right now. It was born from the need to transform our creative impulses into melodic evocations—almost like a love spell, a ritual in sound.”

Your videos are visually rich and atmospheric. How important is the visual element in your work?

“We shot our last two videos at night because that’s when we feel most ourselves. We love searching for locations—Ravenna has plenty of eerie, industrial, deserted places that are perfect. At night, our city becomes silent and brooding, yet always romantic in a beautifully decaying way.”

Your music blends retro tones with a modern edge. Who inspires you musically today?

“Our background from the ’80s and ’90s always influences us. But if we had to pick one enduring influence, it would be filmmaker and composer John Carpenter. His cinematic vision and sound have always had a special place in our hearts.”

What are the strengths of the Italian electronic scene? And what’s still missing?

“Italian electronic music, especially the ‘Italo disco’ wave of the ’70s and ’80s, had global reach thanks to pioneers like Giorgio Moroder. Today, there’s an overwhelming amount of everything—and that makes it hard for individual voices to stand out internationally. Popularity is more accessible, but not universal.”

You’re partners in life and music. How does that affect your creative process?

“Our synergy flows naturally. Each album evolves differently, and recently Luca has taken the creative lead—composing, writing lyrics, and producing. But we always consult each other, and he listens closely to my ideas.”

Would you consider performing outside of clubs and festivals—say, in art galleries or theatres?

“We haven’t yet received those kinds of proposals, but we’d love to! I was a classical dancer in my youth, and the idea of combining our music with performative arts really excites me.”

How would you describe your new album to a music-loving London mum who’s never heard of you?

“It’s danceable and fun—just give it a listen and see where it takes you!”

What would you want your hypothetical children to remember you by, musically?

“We’d want them to hear this latest album. It’s truly our soundtrack—a bit decayed and twilight-hued, but deeply romantic and full of love.”

You have a DIY, minimalist style. Do you see that as a rebellious stance?

“Not rebellious, really. It’s more about passion and the freedom to express ourselves outside commercial structures. Our DIY approach is just our way of staying true and independent.”

.....
Music has
always been
joy and play
for us, not
rebellion.



What does ‘rebellion’ mean to you today—in music or in life?

“Perhaps we were rebellious in our teens! Now, we’re calm and content. Rebellion comes from discomfort—a way out. Music has always been joy and play for us, not rebellion.”

Your sound is nocturnal and cinematic. Do you consider yourselves storytellers?

“Not in a traditional sense. Our lyrics are like fragments—feelings, visions, dreams—expressed through hypnotic, repetitive sounds. We explore love stories, yes, but from the shadows.”

What’s your daily act of rebellion, if any?

“I’m a serial procrastinator! Perhaps that’s my own quiet revolt against the frantic pace of modern life.”

How can your music empower those who feel different or out of place?

“‘Dark disco’ is just one of many non-traditional musical expressions. We’ve never felt ‘different’ for using synths or self-producing—it’s just another stylistic choice. Like loving horror films doesn’t make you odd; it’s just your taste.”

Can electronic music still be a form of liberation in today’s conformist world?

“Absolutely. Music of any kind is freedom.”

You’ve taken risks by splitting your identity between Shad Shadows and Schonwald. Why the bold move?

“Thank you for asking what many don’t dare! Not everyone notices the nuances between our projects — but those who do, truly get us. We’re lucky to have a loyal following that’s been with us for over two decades. That support makes the risk worthwhile.”

You’ve performed around the world. What have you learnt from your audiences?

“Our audience gives us incredible emotional energy during live shows. That connection is magical and humbling. We’ve learnt to respect and engage with them—even if I have to leave my stage fright backstage!”

Musical idols? Special memories?

“As a lifelong rock fan, I’d choose The Beatles, especially John Lennon—though sadly, I never saw them live. Luca’s passion is the late ‘70s



New York No-Wave scene, especially Suicide. We saw them once before Alan Vega passed away, but it was sadly a letdown. Still, their influence is immense.”

In an era of noise and haste, Shad Shadows invite us into a slower, darker, more poetic world—one where love, night, and freedom merge through synths, shadows, and shared vision. Their music is more than sound: it’s a feeling, a flicker, a spell.

Whether you’re dancing alone in your kitchen or daydreaming on the school run, their beats just might become part of your soundtrack, too.





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Books We Love: Kids & Family Reads

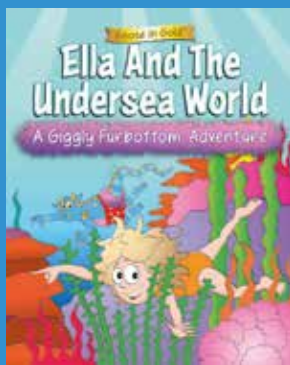
ELLA AND THE UNDERSEA WORLD

If your little ones adore adventure, giggles and the ocean's mysteries, *Ella and the Undersea World* will quickly become a bedtime favourite. The latest in the Giggly Furbottom picture book series, this splashtastic tale is a joyful plunge into ocean exploration with a heartwarming message of environmental awareness.

Our heroine, Ella, and her fuzzy best friend, Giggly Furbottom – a cuddly, wise, and ever-cheerful creature – dive beneath the waves and straight into an unforgettable underwater escapade. Along the way, they meet dolphins who dance, a trumpetfish who blows bubbles, and a glowing squid who lights their path. Each encounter is both magical and educational, cleverly weaving ocean facts with storytelling sparkle.

Central to the tale is Professor Pinchy, a brainy crab who reveals secrets of the reef and encourages Ella to befriend unlikely allies – including Chomp the misunderstood shark and the prickly yet endearing Mr Puff the pufferfish. Together, these characters highlight themes of friendship, kindness, courage and inclusion, even in the face of the unknown.

As Ella learns more about the delicate ecosystem beneath the waves, she's inspired to protect it – promising to become an Ocean Protector when she grows up. This gentle call to action is both empowering and accessible for young readers, planting seeds



of responsibility and care for the natural world.

What makes *Ella and the Undersea World* stand out is its warm dedication to Sir David Attenborough – a lovely nod to the man who

has inspired generations to look beneath the surface of our blue planet. Just like Attenborough, this book encourages awe, curiosity and respect for marine life, making it more than just a bedtime story – it's a conversation starter.

The Giggly Furbottom series has already won hearts with titles like *Bedtime for Ella*, *Ella's Forest of Letters*, and *Ella and the Magic of Seven*. This newest instalment continues the tradition of enchanting storytelling that's both entertaining and educational.

Giggly Furbottom himself is a star – more than just a sidekick, he's a mentor, moral compass, and giggle-inducing friend rolled into one furry bundle. Through his guidance, children explore big ideas like bravery, empathy, and the joy of learning – all wrapped in vibrant illustrations and playful prose.

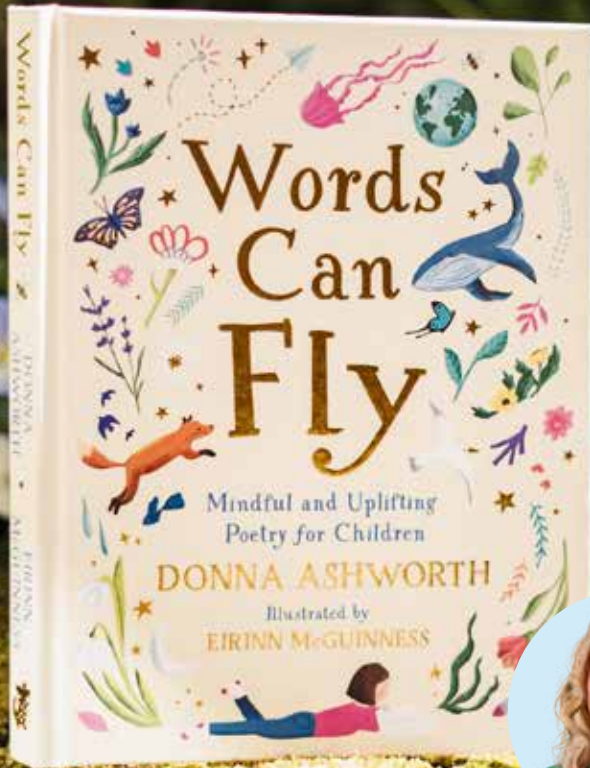
Perfect for children aged 3-7, *Ella and the Undersea World* is a treasure trove of wonder, laughter, and learning. Don't be surprised if your child wants to dive right back in again and again.

Available on Amazon



“Brilliantly reflective, awakening and full of comfort. This is an offering of beauty.”

Giovanna Fletcher



The debut children's poetry collection
by #1 Sunday Times bestselling author
Donna Ashworth.

Books We Love: Kids & Family Reads

NAGA'S WINGS: THE UPLIFTING TALE THAT PROVES BEING DIFFERENT IS YOUR SUPERPOWER

How do you teach a child that their quirks, emotions and differences aren't just okay—but something to be proud of?

That's exactly what author G.P. Fripp sets out to do in her heartfelt new children's book, *Naga's Wings – A World Where Everyone Belongs*. Inspired by her own daughter, Fripp introduces young readers to Naga—a spirited, sensitive girl who discovers that standing tall in your own skin is the greatest strength of all.

Published on 15 April 2025 and available now for pre-order, *Naga's Wings* is an uplifting read-aloud story that champions kindness, inclusion and individuality. Bursting with colour and emotion, it follows Naga as she navigates a world where she sometimes feels misunderstood—until she finds her wings, both metaphorically and magically. (Yes, she has an enchanting secret!)

Written for children who've ever felt "different", this beautifully illustrated tale reassures them that they belong just as they are. Parents, educators, and therapists alike have praised it as a valuable tool for opening conversations about acceptance, self-confidence and empathy.

Fripp, a proud mother and immigrant, says she's often drawn on her personal experience as someone who's felt like an outsider. Through storytelling, she hopes to create a more compassionate, inclusive world—one child at a time.

"There's real power in emotions, in kindness, and in being yourself," Fripp explains. "That's what I want kids to take away from Naga's journey."

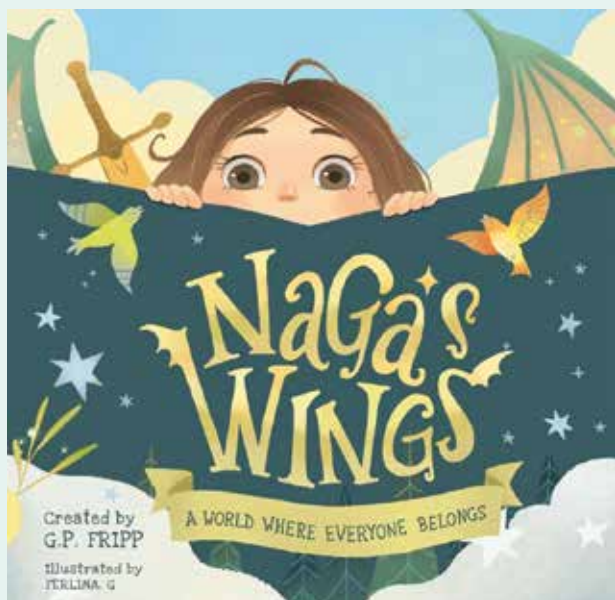
The book has already received glowing endorsements from teachers, therapists, and families.

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**"This beautifully
illustrated tale reassures
children that they belong
just as they are."**

Speech therapist Blakesley Orr calls it "a refreshing account of how a young girl with a difference thrives and inspires," while special education teacher Samantha Brady praises it for helping children "embrace individuality and foster a sense of belonging."

Naga's Wings – A World Where Everyone Belongs is available to pre-order for £6.41 on Amazon Kindle (ASIN: BODV79CZX80), on Amazon and is also listed on Barnes & Noble.

Perfect for classrooms, bedtime stories or therapy sessions, this gem belongs on every child's bookshelf. With a dragon's name, a heart full of hope, and wings ready to soar—Naga is the hero every child deserves.



ASCENT OF A WOMAN BY MHAIRI BLYTH

A powerful, heartfelt memoir tackling trauma, resilience and hope



Ascent of a Woman by Mhairi Blyth is a compelling new memoir that shines a much-needed light on subjects too often left in the shadows—infertility, miscarriage, early menopause, medical negligence, domestic abuse and family trauma.

With honesty and raw emotion, Blyth takes readers on a journey through some of life's most painful experiences. Her story is one of heartbreak and adversity but also of extraordinary strength and hope. As she navigates multiple miscarriages, endometriosis, infertility struggles, a failed marriage and the long-term care of her father following a life-changing brain haemorrhage, Blyth refuses to shy away from the realities that so many women face but are rarely discussed openly.

Fuelled by a deep desire to offer solidarity to others who have experienced similar losses and challenges, *Ascent of a Woman* is much more than a personal account; it is a message of resilience and survival. Blyth shares her truth without filter, breaking the silence

around stigmatised women's health issues and challenging the societal expectation for women to push their bodies beyond breaking point in pursuit of motherhood.

The memoir also highlights a broader battle: confronting a healthcare system that sometimes fails to listen to women's voices, leaving many feeling isolated and unheard. Through it all, Blyth's unwavering determination to move forward offers a profound sense of hope to her readers — a reminder that even in the face of devastation, life can blossom anew.

Written in a way that allows readers to truly feel the emotions behind every event, *Ascent of a Woman* is both cathartic and inspiring. It stands as an authentic and moving testament to the strength found in vulnerability, and the transformative power of sharing our most difficult stories.

If you have ever felt overwhelmed by grief, trauma or societal pressures, this memoir offers comfort, courage and connection. It is a beacon for anyone seeking reassurance that healing — and joy — are possible.

The Author:



Mhairi Blyth was born in Kirkcaldy, Fife, and spent much of her childhood between Scotland and Saudi Arabia. She began writing poetry at the age of ten during a period of separation from her parents, using writing as a form of escape and solace.

Covering the turbulent decades of her life from childhood into early

adulthood, *Ascent of a Woman* reflects the numerous personal battles she faced. Now in her forties, Mhairi lives in Fife with her parents (whom she helps care for), three dogs, two cats, and a full and bustling household.

Alongside writing poetry, fiction and non-fiction, Mhairi enjoys cross-stitching, gardening and finding time for a well-earned rest. She is currently working on her next non-fiction project, continuing her mission to support and empower other women through her writing.

***Ascent of a Woman* is published by Chiselbury Publishing and is available in hardcover (£16.50, ISBN: 978-1916556652) and Kindle format (£5.99) via Amazon and Chiselbury Publishing**

Books That Matter

NURSES, NEEDLES & NO MORE SILENCE: ANGELINE MOYO SPEAKS OUT

Angeline Moyo is a Zimbabwean-born nurse, mental health advocate, and author based in the UK. With over a decade of experience in the NHS, she brings both a deeply personal and professional lens to issues of healthcare injustice, racism, and psychiatric abuse.

Her ground-breaking first book, *White English Nurses Eat Black African Nurses*, takes its provocative title from the well-known adage, “Nurses eat their young”—a phrase coined by American nursing professor Judith Meissner in 1986 to describe the hostility often faced by new or junior nurses from their more experienced colleagues. Sometimes, this dynamic is reversed, with younger nurses bullying older ones. While many regard nurse-on-nurse bullying as an unfortunate rite of passage or a systemic issue within the profession, Angeline offers a more pointed critique based on her lived experience: “White English nurses eat Black African nurses.”

Though unsettling, this claim reflects a painful reality she has witnessed first-hand. Her book confronts systemic racism within the UK healthcare system and is intended to spark vital conversations about institutional bias and bullying in the nursing profession. Through her personal account, she reveals how these dynamics unfold and persist.

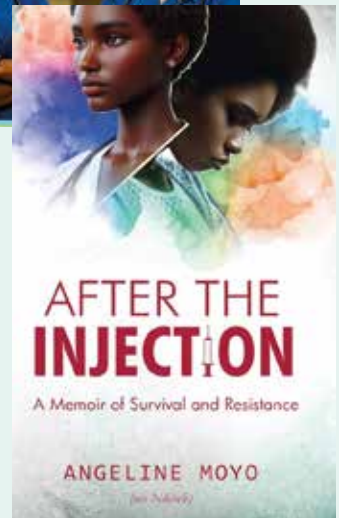
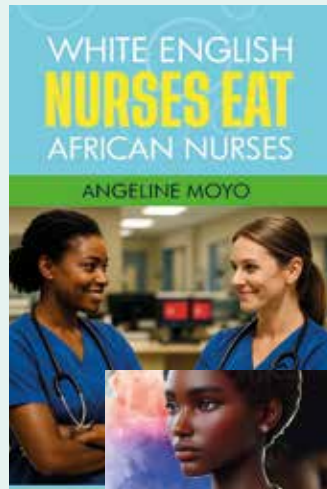
Angeline's second book, *After the Injection*, breaks the silence around a kind of suffering that many endure—but few dare to name. As a Black African nurse trained to provide compassionate and dignified care, she found herself stripped of those same rights when she became a patient within the psychiatric system. Instead of empathy, she was met with forced medication, institutional racism, and a justice system that treated her not as a human being in crisis, but as a problem to be managed.

This book is more than a memoir—it is her resistance letter to a system that nearly erased her. *After the Injection* chronicles her journey from the locked wards of psychiatric

detention to reclaiming her voice and agency after a devastating forced Clopixol injection. It explores how injustice – not just illness – can push a person to the brink. It also raises urgent questions about how society treats those labelled “mentally ill,” especially Black women who are doubly silenced—by race and by psychiatry.

She wrote this book for everyone who has been misdiagnosed, overmedicated, unheard, or unjustly detained. For survivors. For whistleblowers. For those still trapped inside systems that mistake coercion for care. Most of all, she wrote it to reclaim her story—and to show that even in the aftermath of trauma, it is possible to rise, to resist, and to begin again.

Available on Amazon



BETWEEN – A BRAVE, BEAUTIFUL MEMOIR BY A MUM AND HER TRANS SON BY GEMMA AND LEO TELFORD

In a world of noisy opinions and media-fuelled debates around gender identity, *Between* by Gemma and Leo Telford offers something increasingly rare: a heartfelt, human story rooted in love, growth and understanding.

Written by a mother and her transgender son, *Between* is a dual-perspective memoir exploring what it truly means to transition—not just for Leo, but for Gemma as a parent navigating the unknown with unwavering support. Their combined voices bring warmth, honesty and humour to a subject many still struggle to understand.

Leo's journey began in his teens, while Gemma, like so many parents, found herself unprepared but determined to support him unconditionally. Through chapters alternating between their voices, readers witness the confusion, pain, small wins and big milestones that make up their shared story. There are stumbles and misunderstandings, but also deep love and mutual respect.

What sets this memoir apart is its generosity—both authors invite us into their world with candour and vulnerability. From coming out to loved ones and facing social stigma, to moments of joy, connection and self-discovery, *Between* demystifies the process of transition in a way that feels personal and universally relatable.

Critics and readers alike have praised the book for its insight. Drag artist Tom Rasmussen calls it “a masterclass in getting it right again, forgiving each other, and

understanding how we grow.” Amazon reviewers describe it as “eloquent,” “candid,” and “an honour to read.”

Between is more than a memoir—it's an essential guide for parents, teachers, and anyone seeking to be a better ally. Whether you're walking a similar path or simply want to understand what it means to be trans in today's world, this book delivers with grace and heart.

The Authors:

Gemma Telford, 52, is a marketing consultant with over 20 years' experience in the tech industry.

Leo Telford, 21, is a sociology student at the University of East Anglia, passionate about education and advocacy.

Published by Trigger Publishing
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