

Station to station: A sprinkling of stardust at two stations to remember musical legend

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The Community Brain have teamed up with local rail operator South West Railway and Community Rail for an afternoon of special events to highlight the 50th anniversary of pop legend David Bowie introducing the world to his iconic and pioneering Ziggy Stardust persona.

The Community Brain, a not-for-profit based in Tolworth Southwest London organisation is holding a silent disco at Waterloo Station and a small music festival at their local station to celebrate an often-overlooked piece of musical heritage.

Celebrate '72 on Thursday 10th February marks 50 years to the day since pop legend David Bowie first introduced the world to his iconic and pioneering Ziggy Stardust persona at the former Toby Jug pub, in Tolworth back in 1972.

The Community Brain have teamed up with local rail operator South West Railway and Community Rail for an afternoon of special events to highlight this momentous anniversary.

The Toby Jug pub stood next to the A3 Tolworth Junction from 1934 to the early 2000s, when it was

demolished and the site cleared. During the late 60s and early 70s it made its name as a music venue for upcoming artists many of whom, like Bowie, went on to enjoy global stardom. They included *Led Zeppelin*, *Genesis*, *Rod Stewart* and the *Stranglers*, and many others.

The community-led celebration is being delivered in partnership with South Western Railway, who have kindly given The Community Brain a rare opportunity to “takeover” one of its trains and parts of two of its stations. Up to 250 people are expected to boogie to Bowie and other hits from '72 when they take part in a silent disco on the concourse of London Waterloo – a first in the station’s 175-year history!

Then later in the afternoon, the focus of the celebrations will shift to the forecourt of Tolworth Station – just a stone’s throw from the site of the Toby Jug – for an open-air, family-friendly, Bowie-inspired music festival – another first for Tolworth!

Festivalgoers travelling from the Waterloo silent disco to the Tolworth festival on the afternoon of the February 10th will have an extra-special journey, with the option of enjoying onboard live music or joining a talk to discover more about the '72 Ziggy gig and the pub venue.

To buy tickets or for more information visit www.bit.ly/ziggyreturns. Celebrate '72 is just one element of The Community Brain’s year-long #ZiggyReturns programme of activities, inspired by Bowie’s story and creative legacy.

Ziggy Stardust was Bowie’s pioneering extra-terrestrial persona characterised whose music, outrageous and flamboyant costumes and sexual ambiguity, catapulted Bowie to superstardom. Over the next 12 months, the programme will explore four themes: fashion, design, sexuality and, of course, music. While reflecting on the past, it will also focus on the vital role grassroots venues play in cultivating bands of the future.

Robin Hutchinson MBE, The Community Brain founder, said: “We’re celebrating Tolworth as a place of firsts and discovery. It was at the Toby Jug pub that David Bowie unveiled Ziggy Stardust on the first night of his world-wide Spiders from Mars tour, which catapulted him to fame. That’s an important moment for the history of pop music and it happened in Tolworth.

“There’s an obscene amount of creativity and musical talent in suburban towns like Tolworth. Yet, fifty years on from the Ziggy gig, you’ll be hard-pressed to find a venue in the town for live music. It’s something the local community have been after for a while – Where would an artist like Bowie play today?

He adds: “It’s been a tough winter for so many people and Celebrate '72 and our #ZiggyReturns programme gives us a fantastic excuse for a brief escape. It’s a chance to bring communities and Bowie fans together, in a safe environment, and inject a little 1970s Glam and glitter, to what would otherwise be a typical Thursday in February and we really want to thank South Western Railway for their help and support.”

Claire Mann, South Western Railway’s Managing Director said: “SWR is extremely proud of the work that station groups such as The Community Brain do to make their station an integral part of the local community. We’re delighted to help them celebrate such an important anniversary in music history.”

Photo credit: South Western Railway