

LONDON

VITAL STATISTICS

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forced its way into the premier league, and **Strongroom** (120 Curtain Road, EC2A) which was first to prove that a relatively new facility could still cut a reputation for itself among London's established studio community, even in a climate of economic hardship. —D.P.



BBC TV is headquartered in London. Daily regional news is provided on BBC 1 by Newsroom Southeast. National BBC 1 airs "Top Of The Pops" (Friday, 7.30 p.m.) from its Elstree

Studios in northwest London. BBC 2's key flagship music program is the adult-oriented "Later With Jools Holland," Fridays at 11 p.m., featuring live acts. On the commercial ITV network, London has two broadcasters: **Carlton** broadcasts during the week and **London Weekend Television** takes over on Fridays and Saturdays. Both are involved in supplying programming to the national ITV network; Carlton produces both the Brit Awards and the Music Of Black Origin (MOBO) Awards. Commercial TV stations **Channel 4** and **Channel 5** are also London-based. Music is a key component of Channel 4's "TFI Friday," produced by east-London-based Ginger Productions, controlled by DJ and

television presenter Chris Evans. Due to return to TV schedules this fall is "The White Room," hosted by Jo Whiley, which features acts discussing music. Channel 5 runs "The Pepsi Chart" in a half-hour program Thursday at 7 p.m., which is hosted by a different act each week. —D.P.



WEST LONDON

Wembley Stadium is a world-renowned venue featuring top international stars and was the site of 1985's Live Aid benefit as well as recent Spice Girls and Aerosmith shows. The stadium closes for rebuilding in September 2000, with plans for a 475 million pound (\$300 million) super-stadium to be constructed on the site. The new **Wembley National Stadium** will be open for business in 2003. Next door, the 12,000-capacity **Wembley Arena** is one of the busiest in the U.K. Recent bookings include Whitney Houston, Bryan Adams, Cher, Status Quo, Blondie and

Eurythmics. It's also the venue for basketball, the Horse Of The Year show and London International Tattoo. **Hammersmith Palais** is the legendary venue patronized by the Clash and reggae acts in the past. After a hiatus as a disco, the 2,350-standing-capacity venue, now leased to Leopard Lounge, is open for rock, pop and indie acts. The 2,300-capacity **Shepherd's Bush Empire**, part of the McKenzie Group (which also owns the Brixton Academy), is one of the busiest venues in London for midrange and name acts, including a recent Rolling Stones secret show and Patti Smith. Recent bookings include the Pretenders, Travis, Gomez and Beth Orton. **Subterania**, hidden away below the underpass in Notting Hill, is an excellent, local, dance-orientated venue of 650 capacity with funk, hip-hop, soul, R&B and left-field dance acts. It's part of the Mean Fiddler group of venues. **The Orange** in West Kensington is a 300-capacity venue with a varied music program: pop, rock and indie, with occasional soul and funk gigs.

EAST LONDON

The **London Arena** has recently undergone a massive, 10 million pound (\$6.25 million) refurbishment. Probably the most modern of the arenas, it is located in the rapidly developing Dockland's district in the shadow of the Canary Wharf tower, with new London Underground links due to open in late autumn. The 12,500-capacity arena hosts exhibitions, sports events and music shows. Recent bookings include Eurythmics, Blondie, Culture Club and Disney On Ice. **The Barbican Centre** is an arts venue in the depths of the City, London's financial district. The 1,989-capacity **Barbican Hall** is the home of the London Symphony Orchestra and hosts classical, jazz and world music—even shows by the likes of KLF and Pulp. The Barbican's 1,156-capacity theater venue hosts acoustic, folk and world-music artists.

CENTRAL LONDON

Earls Court Hall One is part of a five-hall complex at Earls Court Olympia in West central London, currently up for sale by its owners, P&O. Hall One is one of the biggest indoor arenas in Europe at 22,000 capacity. This year, Pavarotti, Bruce Springsteen, Backstreet Boys and REM have played, with four nights of the Spice Girls coming up in December. **The Royal Albert Hall**, a world-class venue and the plushiest in London, is undergoing a major refurbishment. The 5,500-capacity venue is home to classical, opera, theatrical shows and spectacles and is a place for bands who want somewhere special to play. **The Astoria**, just off Tottenham Court Road, is one of the capital's most popular venues for alternative, rock and indie bands. Recent bookings include Burning Spear and Travis. The old 2,000-capacity theater has lots of atmosphere. Underneath is the smaller and more intimate **LA2**, which is host to reggae and alternative acts. Both feature regular gay club nights. **The Hanover Grand** is a mix of modern and old-fashioned ornate. At 875-capacity, it is popular with record companies for showcases. It also offers frequent R&B and house club nights with live-music shows about once a month. David

Bowie, the Osmonds, Blur and Black Grape have all graced its stage. **Cafe De Paris**, a plush, 700-plus-capacity club venue is used for showcases, special events and occasional upcoming bands. It launched the singing careers of Marlene Dietrich, Eartha Kitt and Noel Coward. **The Embassy Rooms**, opened earlier this year and formerly an old cabaret venue, still has a 1950s boudoir feel, with flocked wallpaper, heavy drapes and gilt. P.J. Harvey, Echo & The Bunnymen, ABC and Culture Club have all played the 700-capacity venue. **Ronnie Scott's** is London's premier, long-running jazz venue in the heart of Soho. Jazz legends have all played there, and it's often used for record-company showcases. Its namesake died in 1996, but the legend lives on. Recent and upcoming shows include Georgie Fame, the Count Basie Orchestra and Elvin Jones. The Oxford Street-located, 300-capacity **100 Club**, historically the favored venue in punk's heyday, has a stable diet of jazz, R&B, swing, jitterbug and jive, with occasional pop and rock shows. **Africa Centre**, in the West End's Covent Garden, hosts mainly ethnic/African-inspired music. Bands tend to play late; there are also club nights. **Rock Garden** is part of a restaurant and club complex. The 300-capacity live venue recently had a new sound system installed and hosts many new acts, though tends to be more popular with tourists than with locals. **The Borderline**, tucked round the back of Charing Cross Road, is a 275-capacity live venue, with quality music most nights of the week, including country, roots and alternative acts. Recent gigs have included Martin Stephenson and Rico.

NORTH LONDON

The Forum, part of the Mean Fiddler's group of venues, is well laid out, with good sound. Recent bookings at the 2,100-capacity venue include Supergrass, Public Enemy, Megadeth and Everything But The Girl. It also features popular club nights, including Junkyard with punk acts. **The Scala**, opened in March this year, is a split-level club and live venue in a radically redesigned and refurbished old cinema. The 700-capacity venue in the heart of Kings Cross has three or four live shows per week in a cutting-edge program that includes such acts as Pavement, the Creatures and Moby. **The Garage and Upstairs** at the Garage are in the very trendy Islington area (and also part of the Mean Fiddler group of venues). The main, 500-capacity Garage is a top spot for indie and known bands, including Suicide, the Creatures and Buckcherry. Upstairs, the 100-capacity venue hosts more obscure and lo-fi acts, including a Bernard Butler residency, Mogwai and Add N (To X). **Underworld**, at 500 capacity, is one of the bigger of the Camden clubs. It hosts an eclectic range of acts, from alternative U.S. country to hardcore, indie and extreme forms of music. **The Jazz Cafe**, in the heart of Camden, brings in top international jazz legends and funk/R&B acts. Pricy and glamorous, the 450-plus-capacity venue tends to book acts for multiple dates. Recent shows have included McCoy Tyner and Archie Shepp. **The Monarch**, a large pub in the central Camden area, offers indie/alternative live bands seven days a week in the venue upstairs. With recent

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