

## Elijah returns to Epsom before the end of times

22 September 2023



On Wednesday 20th September, **Epsom Choral Society** held an open rehearsal at **St Martin's Church, Epsom**, their usual concert venue. An 'open rehearsal' served a double purpose. It was part of the preparation for their concert, performing **Felix Mendelssohn's *Elijah* on 18th November**. It was also a bid to attract some new singing members by offering a chance to come and try it out.

I went along. I enjoy Mendelssohn's music and it is easier to appreciate after an attempt at performing it. As Wednesday's weather approached biblical proportions, it was a good night for singing about whirlwinds droughts and floods.

After a welcome from choir chairman **Isobel Squire**, conductor **Julian Collings** began the rehearsal. The whole work has about 40 songs. The choir sings in about half of them. Usually, a rehearsal would entail concentrating on a few items, looking to correct some mistakes, find the music among the notes and then sing each piece all the way through. Wednesday was more of a taster. We sang fairly quickly through almost all the choral numbers, saving the detailed work for Julian's favourite movement, 'He, watching over Israel'. The conductor's role is to know the music inside-out (he does!), warning which notes are likely to go wrong and suggesting ways to make them sound better. Once the notes are correct, the next stage is suggesting how to shape them to bring out the musical effects.

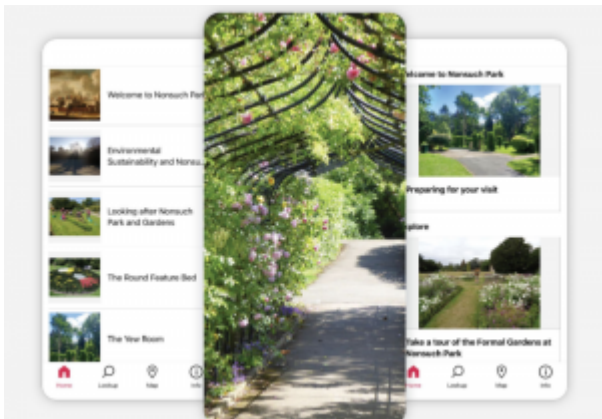
No-one has to sing alone. Epsom Choral Society has room for some new members but they do have all parts covered. There are confident singers among sopranos, altos, tenors and basses. Any newcomer will be adding to the overall sound, not sticking out while searching for the notes. They also have an expert pianist, **Marion Lea**, who can highlight the choir parts while learning or pretend to be an orchestra when everyone is singing something through.

Although the open rehearsal has passed, there are still plenty of Wednesdays before the concert. If you fancy a chance to discover *Elijah* from within an able and welcoming choir, I'm sure Epsom Choral Society's membership secretary (membership@epsomchoralsociety.org.uk) will be very happy to hear from you.

**Nigel Williams.**

## Digital guide to Nonsuch gardens unveiled

22 September 2023



**Nonsuch Park** has joined more than 250 cultural institutions around the globe in providing a new digital guide to the formal gardens on Bloomberg Connects, the free arts and culture app created by Bloomberg Philanthropies.

This is the first digital tour of its kind for **Epsom & Ewell Borough Council**, and is packed full of information, interesting facts, photos, history and more. It is the perfect accompaniment to enhance the experience of those visiting the park, and also makes Nonsuch Park accessible to people anytime, anywhere. Content will be updated throughout the year, adapting to the changing seasons at Nonsuch Park.

The tour is an important part of the council's Cultural Strategy, which is currently in development. One of the key aims of the Strategy is to increase access to culture and heritage in Epsom & Ewell and to allow people to engage with its colourful and varied cultural past in new and engaging ways.

The Bloomberg Connects app, which also features sites such as Central Park Conservancy, London's National Portrait Gallery and Anne Frank House, is available to download free of charge from Google Play or the App Store.

Councillor **Clive Woodbridge**, Chair of Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's Community and Wellbeing Committee, said "I am delighted to support this new venture which will allow our residents and visitors to access so much more in our wonderful Nonsuch Park. It is exciting that it puts us on the global map of stunning and historic cultural locations and allows people to see a much-loved part of our borough in a new way."

Councillor **Julian Freeman**, Chair of the Joint Management Committee of Nonsuch Park, added,

"It's a pleasure to not only be able to showcase some of the most beautiful areas of the formal gardens to people both in and outside the borough, but also to be able to do this in a format which allows people to journey around the area at their own pace."

Bloomberg Connects offers free digital guides to cultural organizations around the world. The app platform is part of Bloomberg Philanthropies' longstanding commitment to supporting digital innovation in the arts. Bloomberg Connects makes it easy to access and engage with arts and culture from mobile devices when visiting in person, or anytime from anywhere. With dynamic content exclusive to each partner organization, the app provides a range of features including video, audio, text, images with alt text to assist the visually impaired; expert commentary; and way-finding maps.

The digital tour has been developed with support from the council's Arts, Heritage and Culture team, Friends of Nonsuch, Nonsuch Voles, the council's Operational Services team and Bourne Hall Museum.

### About Bloomberg Philanthropies

Bloomberg Philanthropies invests in 700 cities and 150 countries around the world to ensure better, longer lives for the greatest number of people. The organization focuses on five key areas for creating lasting change: the Arts, Education, Environment, Government Innovation, and Public Health.

## New art fair comes to Epsom

22 September 2023



A new contemporary art fair is coming to The Duchess Stand, Epsom Downs Racecourse, 6 – 8 October 2023.

**Art Surrey** opens on Friday 6th October with a Preview Evening and a complimentary glass of fizz from 6pm to 9pm and opens over the weekend on Saturday 7 October 10am-6pm and Sunday 8 October 10am-5pm.

This inaugural art fair, curated by Art Surrey and **Ewell** based Art Adviser and Gallery, **Caiger Art**, offers art lovers and collectors the chance to browse and purchase artworks from over 80 of the most exciting contemporary and traditional artists selling today, many of whom are Surrey based artists.

As final preparations get under way, Carol Caiger, Director of Art Surrey, is understandably very excited about this new Epsom venture, “Being one of the largest art fairs within the south east of England, this new contemporary art fair will be the perfect place to find artwork to start your art collection, or add to your collection if you are already an art enthusiast!”

There will be over 3000 works of art to see, paintings, drawings, prints, digital art, mixed media art, photography, sculpture, glassworks and ceramics. With all artwork ranging from £50 to over £3000, there will be something for everyone.

This year the invited showcase is Surrey Sculpture Society, who will be showing a selection of their artists sculptures for sale.

Carol Caiger adds, “The bonus is, as well as awesome artwork, the Caiger Art and Art Surrey Team are on hand to give expert advice on the best artwork to buy for your home, too.”

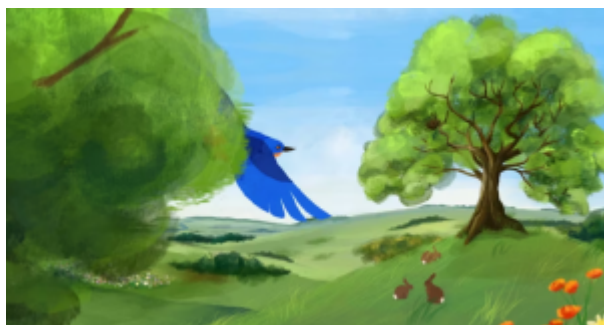
Weekend facilities include a bar and café serving teas, coffee and food throughout Saturday and Sunday, so you can easily spend a whole day there! The venue has ample onsite parking and is wheelchair accessible.

You can have see the limited edition art fair brochure here: <https://artsurrey.co.uk/brochure-2023/>.

Tickets are available to buy for the Friday Preview Evening, Saturday and Sunday from <https://artsurrey.co.uk/tickets/>

## Surrey Uni film award in the Cannes

22 September 2023



A thought-provoking animated film made at the **University of Surrey**, which encourages its viewers to ***Remember the Future***, has achieved the accolade of ‘Best Environmental Film’ at the **Cannes World Film Festival**.

Co-created by the University’s Institute for Sustainability to support its vision of a world where everyone can live fulfilling and healthy lives within the limits of the planet, the film seeks to draw in viewers emotionally and win hearts and minds to the need to collaborate and act.

*Remember the Future* was produced and directed by Jon Weinbren, who is the Programme Director for Surrey’s MA in Film, Animation and Digital Arts within the University’s Department of Music and Media. The film shows a tree that is ailing because of environmental damage. The tree is saved from destruction by cooperation between an optimistic, visionary child and a songbird, delivering an upbeat, hopeful way forward.

Professor Lorenzo Fioramonti, Founding Director of the University of Surrey’s Institute for Sustainability, said:

“A tree is a symbolic and almost permanent thing. We see it through the seasons and ages, with a child dreaming of a future which rubs out the climate emergency. We see the solutions which are within our reach. We hope this film plants the seed and encourages people to work with each other and be connected.”

Co-written by Tom Hill and brought to life by a team of artists led by animation director Izzy Barszcz, the film was crafted using digital natural media techniques to create an evocative water-colour feel. It also features an original song composed and performed by Surrey alumna Alice Mills.

Jon Weinbren said:

“We experimented with using some of the latest AI-based image generation and style transfer techniques, but the quality we were achieving wasn’t high enough. Instead, our team of animators resorted to ‘traditional’ digital painting techniques to create the hand-crafted look and feel which, along with a beautifully arresting, specially composed song, helps the film engage on a powerful emotional level.”

Nathalie Hinds, Head of Operations and Partnerships at the Institute for Sustainability, said:

“Achieving a sustainable world takes cooperation and inspiration, as well as technology and regulation. At Surrey, we’re working on all of these, with the Institute for Sustainability taking an active, leading role. Strategic partners of the Institute, who were lucky to have an exclusive preview of the film, gave feedback how the film not only creates a sense of urgency, but is a true beacon of hope. They hope to use it within their organisations to inspire staff and suppliers.”

Remember the Future has been entered for other film festivals and will also screen at the Electric Theatre as part of Guildford’s Car Free Day on Sunday 24 September. Find out more about Car Free Day, watch a trailer or see how the film was made on YouTube.

For information about the MA in Film, Animation and Digital Arts, visit the website.

## World class live-jazz returns to Epsom

22 September 2023



Epsom Jazz Club returns this Tuesday 12th September for another three highly anticipated world class jazz concerts, beginning with their first intimate duo show.

The wondrous pair of Cuban Jazz violinist **Omar Puente** and Italian pianist and composer **Ilario Ferrari** have performed their “**Mediterranean meets Cuba**” show numerous times in London to sellout crowds and now Epsom Jazz Club has encouraged them to bring it to our Borough to launch the new Season. Omar can often be seen leading his own sextet in venues such as Ronnie Scott’s and upon many a Jazz Festival stage. Ilario is equally busy, having just released his third album as band leader, a work for piano and string quartet that combines Classical music, contemporary Jazz and Indian rhythms. They promise to take the audience on a journey from Cuba, the shores of south Italy and back, exploring the common ground and new possibilities that come from the encounter of the Afro-Cuban Jazz tradition and the Mediterranean Culture.

Next month, on Tuesday 10th October Epsom Jazz Club plays host to an all-star Saxophone Quartet led by swing and the straight-ahead focussed **Fraser Smith**. In-demand pianist **Rob Barron** makes his return to Epsom after his visit in August (with vibes player Nat Steele), alongside revered bassist **Simon Read** and stalwart jazz drummer **Steve Brown**. Swinging sax quartets are often so popular with audiences and these four musicians are amongst the best. Following Fraser’s album release in April this year, the band has been gigging all over the UK showcasing much of the music from “TipTop!” as well as hard bop / bebop arrangements of popular standards.

And finally, on Tuesday 7th November arguably one of the world’s best jazz clarinetists, **Giacomo Smith**, will be performing on the Oaks Room stage. Born in Italy and raised in upstate New York, Giacomo leads many great projects (including Kansas Smitty’s, Hot Five, Trav’lin Light) as well as being in demand all over the world as a soloist and collaborator. He’s produced recordings for Jamie Cullum, rising star Jas Kayser and the debut album from actor Damian Lewis alongside performing regularly as a featured soloist with Gregory Porter the Southbank Sinfonia and other international orchestras. His writing, production and collaborations have garnered 10m + streams and counting. Alongside New Zealand born jazz guitarist and banjo player **Alexander ‘Honey’ Boulton**, and US born (and Manhattan School of Music and Royal Academy of Music graduate) double bassist **Will Sach**, Epsom Jazz Club has booked a phenomenal trio for their Autumn Season finale!

Tickets for all these concerts are on sale now and available to buy in advance either via their website **EpsomJazzClub.com** or by going directly to the **ticket site**.

<http://twitter.com/EpsomJazzClub>

<http://facebook.com/EpsomJazzClub>

<http://instagram.com/EpsomJazzClub>

## One way to learn collective nouns

22 September 2023



Last Monday, 7th August, **Epsom Library** invited **Frances Cohen** to come and read some of the poems from her recently published book: “**A Prickle of Porcupines - Really!!**”

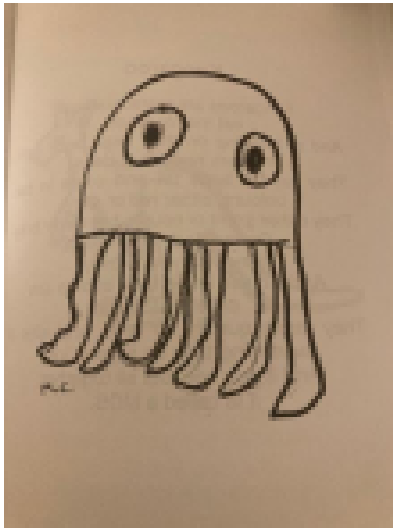
The added attraction was that the poems had been illustrated by five of her 7 grandchildren, three of whom go to local schools in Epsom. Wallace Field Juniors, and Rosebery.

Frances is a 74 year old widow, and during the many COVID lockdowns she decided to use her talent for writing poems and using the different, and sometimes very amusing “collective nouns” she had discovered for animals and birds, which she had taught to her grandchildren over the years.

The poems are educational, including some interesting facts about each animal or bird, and really can be enjoyed by children of all ages, and adults alike.

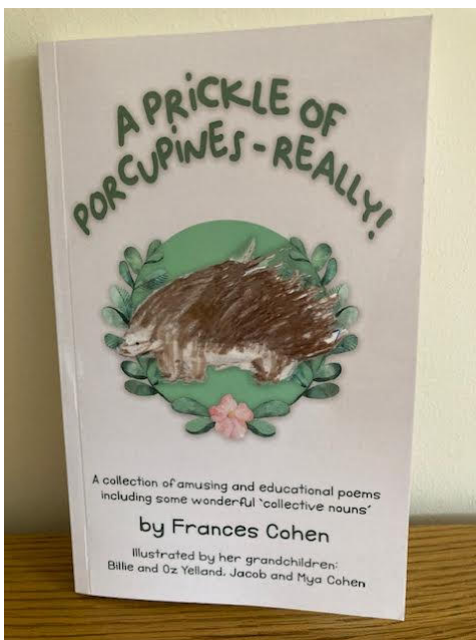
**Jellyfish** have been around for millions of years,  
 They are 95% water, and have no brains, bones, or ears,  
 Even though they have long tentacles, they are not very smart,  
 They also have no eyes, and not even a heart.  
 150 million people get stung by them every year,  
 So they are not very popular when, near your beach, they appear.  
 So if you see them coming, you better draw back,  
 And if there are lots of them together, it is called a SMACK





The book is available on Amazon, and some Waterstones Shops

Image: Frances with and left to right: Oz, Billie, Mya and Jacob.



## Epsom's outdoor theatre going great guns

22 September 2023



On Monday 31st July we went to see **Annie Get Your Gun** at the **Lavender Theatre** - a recently erected outdoor space amongst lavender fields in Reigate Road, Epsom. A new venture for Mayfield Lavender.. the owners of the family-run lavender farm in Banstead. Fortunately, it was a lovely evening and the setting perfect. We were welcomed into the theatre after passing through the stunning shop with beautiful gifts including 'lavender chocolate bars' - outside one could buy drinks and enjoy delicious eats before the performance.

The show included celebrated stars from the music world - SuRie (represented the United Kingdom in the Eurovision Song concert in 2018) as Anna, Charlie Mccullagh (Frank) and many other wonderful performers including three children.

We were enthralled by the magic of this open-air show, tapping our feet to the famous tunes including "no business like show business" and 'Doin' what comes natur'lly'.

I can honestly say it was one of our best evenings out! Huge congratulations to Director **Simon Hardwick** and his team.

Tickets are still available until the show ends on Saturday 5th August!

On sale today at [lavendertheatre.com](http://lavendertheatre.com).

As locals we hope that this innovative exciting venture will continue - another jewel for our area.

Related reports:

New Epsom theatre very open for business

## Urning a big profit on rare Epsom find

22 September 2023



A young Epsom couple will be making a large donation to charity after the miniature vase they purchased in an **Epsom** charity shop for £2.50 sold this weekend at auction for £6300.

The beautiful black Japanese cloisonne 4-inch-high vase by Namikawa Yasuyuki, featuring a cockerel, hen and chicks was created during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The same technique was used to create the taller red vase shown, which I purchased from the Debra charity shop in Ewell Village a few years ago.

Whilst charity shops, like Debra in Ewell and the one in Epsom the young couple visited, are always on the lookout for Asian treasures, due to the profitable Chinese and Japanese antique markets, work of the quality of Yasuyuki rarely finds its way onto the bric-a-brac shelves of charity shops; so it is not difficult to understand how the fine detailed cloisonne work was overlooked and perhaps mistaken for a transfer print. Note how different the red Debra charity shop Japanese cloisonne vase looks to the young Epsom couple's find.



Cloisonne is the technique of creating designs on metal vessels with coloured glass paste which is placed within enclosures made of copper or bronze wires attached to the vessel. Then the vessel is fired in a kiln at a temperature of about 800C.

Although there were markings on the base of the black cloisonne vase, it would have taken an expert to understand the significance of these, which is why the young Epsom couple contacted Canterbury Auction Galleries who succeeded in selling the much sought after vase today. The auction house had sold a larger vase by Yasuyuki for £29,000 in April 2019.

The Epsom couple that found the Yasuyuki cloisonne vase have generously pledged to make a large donation to the Epsom charity shop they purchased the vase from.

The finders intend to treat themselves to a well-deserved holiday with the remaining sale proceeds.



DEBRA was established in 1978 by Phyllis Hilton, whose daughter Debra had epidermolysis bullosa (EB), as the world’s first patient support group for people living with EB. Epidermolysis bullosa is the name for a group of painful genetic skin conditions that cause the skin to become very fragile and tear or blister at the slightest touch.

The local branch can be found at 78 High St, Ewell, Epsom KT17 1RE



Top photo background image: cc. Remi Mathis (auction illustration, not the real one).

## UCA expands at its roots

22 September 2023



**Local councillors from the borough of Epsom and Ewell have granted the University for the Creative Arts (UCA) Epsom planning approval to change the use of two centrally located buildings for educational purposes.**

The Wells Building on Church Street and Parkside House on Ashley Road signify an expansion of UCA’s estate, providing more than 40,000 square feet of additional space and delivering high-quality teaching, learning and social spaces.

The building on Church Street marks a return to UCA’s roots, as it is adjacent to no. 1 Church Street, which was previously home to Epsom Technical College and School of Art, its predecessor institution.

Investment in the buildings’ construction and reconfiguration is likely to reach around £13 million.

By utilising existing office buildings close to its Epsom campus, UCA will be able to deliver these retrofitted spaces rapidly, in an environmentally friendly way and with minimal disruption to the community, student and staff experience.

The projects will also enhance collaboration with Epsom and Ewell Borough Council, the local community, and residents as the new buildings will provide opportunities and spaces for creativity and innovation and blaze a trail for greater engagement in the town’s activities.

**UCA’s Chief Operating Officer, Mark Ellul, said:** *“This is a massive step forward in growing our Epsom campus and building on our global reputation as a centre for Fashion & Textiles and Business School for the Creative Industries.*

*“We must have facilities and functions in place for us to deliver the very best creative education and adding two new buildings to our estate will create a creative learning environment that is fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.”*

Works will commence later this year and the plan is to occupy the buildings in 2024/25.

**Emma Cook UCA**

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## Change at the top at Epsom’s University

22 September 2023



**Professor Nick Foscett has been named as the interim President & Vice-Chancellor of the University for the Creative Arts.** This includes the campus in Ashley Road, Epsom.

Prof. Foscett, currently an independent member of UCA’s Board of Governors, will take over from outgoing President & Vice-Chancellor, Professor **Bashir Makhoul**, upon his retirement from UK higher education in September.

*“Having served on the Board of Governors, it was an honour to be asked to cover this interim period,” said Prof. Foscett. “UCA is a wonderful university with endless potential and under Prof. Makhoul’s leadership is in a fantastic position. I will ensure his legacy continues and is built on so that UCA can continue its impressive trajectory.”*

Prof. Foscett is a graduate of Oxford and Southampton universities and has had a long and diverse relationship with higher education, working at some of the UK’s leading universities. He was Vice-Chancellor of Keele University from 2010 to 2015, and Interim Vice-Chancellor of Bath Spa University from 2017 to 2018. For around 20 years he held several positions at the University of Southampton, latterly as Professor of Education and Dean of the Faculty of Law, Arts and Social Sciences. Prior to that his first foray into higher education was at Aston University, working in school engagement and external relations.

An expert in education policy and management, Prof. Foscett has sat on and continues to sit on several boards in the UK and globally and has also made a huge contribution to the development of governance frameworks within the higher education sector.

Prof. Makhoul announced his retirement from UCA and from UK higher education in March of this year, after more than six years as President & Vice-Chancellor. Since joining, Prof. Makhoul has steered the University towards its aim of becoming a global authority on the creative industries, forging significant partnerships at home and abroad. He has overseen a five-fold increase in international students studying at the University’s UK campuses and spearheading the opening of the Institute of Creativity and Innovation in Xiamen, China, along with the establishment of the UK’s first Business School for the Creative Industries.

External recognition of these achievements includes being named Modern University of the Year by The Times and The Sunday Times Good University Guide in 2019 and being granted Research Degree Awarding Powers by the Office for Students.

Prof. Makhoul said: *“I am delighted Prof. Foscett will be overseeing operations while my permanent replacement is found. He has a fantastic track record and understands UCA’s unique position as a champion of the creative industries. I wish him all the best for his interim tenure.”*

**Jeremy Sandelson**, Chair of the Board of Governors, said: *“We are delighted Prof. Foscett has agreed to be our interim President & Vice-Chancellor at UCA. We couldn’t think of a safer pair of hands to take the helm, and we offer him every support as he leads the University during this time.”*

Emma Cook UCA