



Fair Art in Epsom second to none

25 September 2024



Your creative senses will be tingled from the moment you arrive at the second **Art Surrey** contemporary art fair coming to The Duchess Stand, Epsom Downs Racecourse, 4 - 7 October 2024.

Art Surrey opens on Friday 4th October with a Preview Evening with a complimentary glass of fizz from 5.30pm to 8.30pm and opens over the weekend on Saturday 5 October 11am-5pm and Sunday 6 October 11am-5pm.

This exciting 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, once again, excited to be bringing this art fair back to Epsom. "We had a very successful art fair at Epsom Downs last year so had no reservations about coming back for a second event. We had great feed back from visitors and one of our favourite comments was, 'It's like a London Art Fair, but right on our doorstep'. Being one of the largest art fairs within the south east of England, this contemporary art fair will 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.

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

Have a sneak peek at the limited edition art fair brochure here:

[Brochure - Epsom 2024](#)

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

For further information about the art fair or art advisory contact carol@artsurrey.co.uk or call 07828513885

UCA bring Austen character into 21st century

25 September 2024



Fans of **Jane Austen's** Pride and Prejudice will finally get the chance to have a conversation with their literary hero when speaking with the world-first Elizabeth Bennet avatar - Lizzy.

Created by StarPal in collaboration with **University for the Creative Arts** (UCA), the avatar has been developed to mirror the human qualities of Austen's character as detailed in the novel, such as empathy and humour. Her conversations, which fans will have with her face-to-avatar, will evolve, giving each person who talks to Lizzy a unique experience.

How does Lizzy feel about being a world-first? She said: "It is quite an interesting notion indeed - I must say being Elizabeth Bennet in a world far removed from my own time is an unexpected but intriguing experience. It allows me to share the intricacies of our society and my life with new audiences."

Following consultation and guidance from Jane Austen's House in Hampshire, Lizzy's knowledge bank has been curated from a selection of novels, manuscripts and period-accurate information.

Lizzy is set within a Regency-style background. Her dress and hair have been designed and created by students from the Games Arts and Digital Fashion courses at UCA, drawing on fashion templates from the period.

Sophy Smith, Director of Games and Creative Technology at UCA and the originator of the project, added: "It is so exciting to finally be able to lift Elizabeth Bennet off the page and to be able to have real-time conversations with her. To be able to cross time in this way is joyful - you get a real sense of speaking directly to someone from the 18th century. And she has such a strong personality! Imagine - you can now have Elizabeth Bennet as your friend, to chat with throughout the day and offer you advice."

"This technology has the potential to transform experiences within both the museum and heritage, as well the education sector. Visitors to Jane Austen's House, will have the opportunity to not only experience the renowned author's home but also engage directly with one of her most famous characters. And think about how it could transform learning - instead of only having text-based revision guides, students can now learn about literature by speaking directly to the characters."

Director of Jane Austen's House, **Lizzie Dunford**, said: "It has been fascinating to watch this project develop, and to witness the innovative staff and students at UCA developing these new technologies, and new ways of accessing literary and cultural heritage."

Tanguy Dewavrin, the COO of StarPal, the company which built the avatar, commented Lizzy is continually surprising them: "It's amazing how real she is - she's just so impressive."

Anya Haber, an MA Digital Fashion student who created the dress in 3D, added: "This project brought the ideation into the digital, but historical garments can be tricky to create accurately, so there was a mix of history and modernity. It was exciting bringing to life the cut of dress, accessories, and embroideries - all inspired by historical drawings and descriptions. It showed how useful technology can be in a historical setting, letting fans engage with fictional characters...and that's just the beginning."

Fans will have the chance to interact with Lizzy if they visit the Learning Centre at Jane Austen's House between September and mid-December - included with House entry.



The lime light a foot in Epsom

25 September 2024



Aydin Mustafa, a lifelong performer and dedicated advocate for the arts, has taken on a new role as the Owner and Director of **Footlights Epsom**, the first Footlights franchise in London. Aydin's passion for the performing arts began at a young age, starting in the industry at the tender age of 4. Reflecting on his early beginnings, Aydin shares, "My mum introduced me to the world of performing arts not with the aim of fame, but to instil confidence, nurture development, and foster social connections. It was a love that ignited in me instantly and continued to burn bright throughout my teenage years."



After studying performing arts at GCSE and A-level at Woodcote High School in Coulsdon, Surrey, Aydin pursued a career in the corporate world but found himself yearning for something more fulfilling. Inspired by his deep-rooted passion for the arts and his desire to make a positive impact on the community, Aydin sought guidance from Jo Fisher, the visionary founder of Footlights, founded in 2005.

Aydin recalls, "Jo Fisher's journey from leaving school at the age of 14 to crafting Footlights into the illustrious, multi-award-winning performing arts franchise it is today has been a constant source of inspiration for me. Her commitment to empowering young talent and creating avenues for personal growth resonates profoundly with my own beliefs and values."

With a vision to establish a sanctuary of excellence, diversity, and inclusivity for children and teenagers aged 3-18, Aydin envisions Footlights Epsom as a nurturing environment where individuals can freely express themselves and cultivate lifelong skills "In a world that can often feel overwhelming and chaotic".

Aydin poignantly expresses, "Our mission is to nurture the generation of tomorrow today, equipping them with the tools, confidence, and resilience needed to navigate the complexities of the modern world."

Aydin's unwavering dedication to fostering young talent and nurturing personal growth is deeply rooted in his love for his 2-year-old daughter, Ayla, who serves as his greatest inspiration. "Every step I take with Footlights Epsom is guided by the hope of creating a world where my daughter can flourish, learn, and boldly express her true self. A performing arts school isn't just about creating the next star; it's about empowering young individuals, fostering their creativity, and equipping them with essential skills for life," said Aydin Mustafa, Owner and Director of Footlights Epsom.

The grand opening of Footlights Epsom is set to take place on Saturday 14th September, at Epsom and Ewell High School from 9:30am to 1pm. Individuals aged 3-18 years old, regardless of background or experience, are invited to join in the celebration. The Mayor of Epsom and Ewell, Steve Bridger, will be in attendance to mark this exciting new chapter in the performing arts scene in Surrey.

Aydin lastly adds "Join us at Epsom and Ewell High School on Saturday 14th September for a day filled with fun, creativity, and the magic of Performing Arts. We look forward to welcoming the Epsom and Ewell community and neighbouring towns to our grand opening event."

For more information about Footlights Epsom, including updates on workshops and events, follow them on Instagram and Facebook @footlightsepsom. To learn more about the school and register for the open day, visit www.footlightstheatre.co.uk/location/footlights-epsom/ or contact Aydin Mustafa via email at epsom@footlightstheatre.co.uk

Text provided by Footlights.

Crime story of an Epsom workhouse baby

25 September 2024



Born 1946 in the Epsom Union Workhouse **Ronnie Field** lived a life of crime. Together with local Epsom author **Martin Knight** he tells his story in **Nefarious - A Life in Crime**. Released in May this year it was Daily Mail Book of the Week and number one in the Amazon True Crime chart.

Ronnie Field was a prolific armed robber, close ally of crime boss Joey Pyle for forty years, friend and fellow prisoner of the Kray twins - he was the last man to stand trial with a Kray brother. Ronnie was also the inaugural prisoner in the notorious Belmarsh Unit - the "super" prison within a prison.

This is the first time Ronnie has told his incredible story. Nefarious is a raw, honest and sometimes humorous account of an abusive childhood, almost inevitable journey into criminality and life sharing the fast lane of armed robbery with the real-life Sweeney and on to the even more dangerous and murky waters of south London's gangland.

Offering fresh Kray material, unseen photographs and untold stories regarding some of the world's most infamous gangsters, Nefarious is an incredible first-hand



account from one of the last voices of a generation.



Martin Knight was born in the borough of Epsom & Ewell. Martin has had a long career in newspapers, firstly with the Financial Times, and then with various media monitoring agencies he has launched. Martin is also an author of local histories and has co-written autobiographies. He is a shareholder in Early Morning Media Ltd and publisher London Books Ltd. He was a co-founder of and serves the editorial board of the Epsom and Ewell Times.

Nefarious - a Life in Crime can be purchased via Amazon [HERE](#).

Satisfy your eye at Epsom film festival

25 September 2024



Epsom based **Satisfied Eye International Film Festival** (SEIFF) is set to dazzle film enthusiasts with its "Best of Fest 2024," running from July 26-28 at the brand new **Picture House** in Epsom Square. This special event will showcase the top-rated films from SEIFF's history, highlighting exceptional storytelling from over 20 countries since its inception in 2018.

The festival kicks off on July 26 with the "People's Choice" segment, featuring films like the Spanish short "Ainhoa" and the heartwarming "A Kiss" from the Netherlands. This selection promises a journey through a variety of emotions, setting the tone for the weekend.

On July 27, the morning begins with "Kids Animation," where young audiences can enjoy charming shorts such as "The Kite" and "Ian, A Moving Story." The afternoon continues with "Best of British," spotlighting homegrown talent with films like "The Legend of Bob Leonard" and the poignant "An Irish Goodbye."

Saturday's programming also includes the thought-provoking "Underage Engineers," an inspiring Polish documentary, and the "Rising Stars" segment, which showcases emerging filmmakers. The day wraps up with "The Human Condition," exploring deep human emotions through shorts like "Bonobo" and "Hot Chocolate."

Sunday, July 28, starts with "Adult Animation," including the award-winning "Lost & Found" and the haunting "The Driver Is Red." The festival then honors female filmmakers with the "Wonder Women" segment, featuring powerful films like "A Travers" and "The Letter Room."

The weekend concludes with "All Blood Runs Red," a collection of shorts addressing diversity and prejudice, and "A Night at the Oscars," celebrating SEIFF's past Oscar nominees and winners, such as "The Neighbor's Window" and "Brotherhood." Finally, "The Lighter Side" closes the festival on a humorous note with a series of comedies including "Career Day" and "Archibald's Syndrome."

This year's SEIFF promises a cinematic feast, offering something for everyone and celebrating the best in independent filmmaking. Don't miss the chance to experience these compelling stories on the big screen.

For full programme and tickets [click HERE](#)

Epsom Choral Society goes to Town on English music

25 September 2024



Epsom Choral Society joined the musical forces of The Barnes Choir, The English Sinfonietta and the Arcubus Ensemble on Saturday 13th July in The Cadogan Hall, London for a stirring celebration of English music, including William Walton's stupendous Belshazzar's Feast. **Peter Lutton** reviews the concert.

England in the 18th and 19th centuries is often said to have been a 'land without music'; this concert proved emphatically that from early in the 20th century every effort was being made to disprove that notion. From Parry in 1902 to Walton in 1931 we heard music of great confidence, assuredness of technique and not least, great beauty. The large forces needed were cleverly squeezed into the venue, including the optional extra brass. Such a splendid all-English offering encourages those of us who feel that much concert programming pays too little heed to the sheer quantity of excellent composition in these isles over the last one hundred and twenty years.

Parry's 'I was Glad' and 'Blest Pair of Sirens' are staples of the repertoire but were given more than the usual respect; indeed, there was some very careful treatment of the various parts of the text. Even if the brass opening in the former left little room for the choirs' entry to crescendo, mostly the dynamics were carefully observed, the Vivats were sensibly omitted (against current trends) and the contrasting middle sections in both were sensitively presented. The tempo of 'I was Glad' could perhaps have been a notch or two faster, given that this building has no noticeable reverberation period. In the louder parts, choral forces this size were able to balance the sheer power that modern orchestral instruments can produce and yet the climaxes were not overwhelming in a venue which might have been thought not quite large enough for such massed forces.



The baritone soloist, Philip Tebb, was a very good communicator in both Vaughan Williams' 'Five Mystical Songs' and Walton's 'Belshazzar's Feast', only very occasionally losing out to the scale of the orchestral sound behind him. A few hints of intonation fractionally under the note did not detract from his impassioned performance. When the choir was assigned to very gentle but tutti accompaniment, they were well balanced and the effect was surely exactly what the composer intended. Also particularly effective was the orchestral wind playing in 'The Call'. Finally, the tightness and drive of 'Let all the World' with its excellent dynamic contrast ensured an inspiring finish to these heartfelt settings of George Herbert's powerful poetry.

The English Sinfonietta's strings provided a very appropriate breather in Elgar's 'Serenade', before Parry's 'Blest Pair of Sirens' rounded off the first half. This was precise, immaculate ensemble playing of a very high order. The music was allowed to breathe and a great many nuances of rhythm and dynamic were brought out in all three movements. Particularly notable was the restraint in the final part of the second movement. The stylish yet slightly skittish playing evident in the third movement reflects Elgar's confident orchestration; string players eulogise Elgar's writing for their instruments, saying that his understanding of their needs is shown in the way the individual lines often lie under their fingers.

The climax of the evening was of course Walton's ground-breaking cantata, 'Belshazzar's Feast'. This must have been a revelation to all its hearers back in 1931 - it has this power now, as we heard clearly in this performance. The orchestra made the most of the dramatic brass and varied percussion writing, carefully designed so as not to drown out the choral writing, itself written deliberately in homophonic style so that the text would be clear to the listener. The rhythmic demands in this music are considerable, yet this performance came across as confident and accurate, even if some furious counting must have been going on amongst the differing voice parts.

The emotional outpouring in the first few pages reached a peak of luminosity in the repeated setting of the words 'How shall I sing the Lord's song in a strange land?' Walton's bold choral writing broke new ground and the choirs did it full justice. The long and demanding unaccompanied baritone solo was delivered with both accuracy and passion before we launched into the vivid description of the feast and its musical elements.

Walton's music strikes a balance between modernity and tonal tradition which makes him more approachable than many other composers; this performance was admirable for its clarity and direction. The sinister percussion introduction to the writing on the wall and the choral shout of 'Slain!' were as effective as any visual image, showing the power of modern oratorio when brilliantly crafted and expertly handled.

The final romp of celebration was given due impetus and we were left breathless at the end by the grandeur of the conception and the quality of the performance.

Congratulations are due once more to Epsom Choral Society, The Barnes Choir, the Arcubus Ensemble and the English Sinfonietta, all under Julian Collings, for their stirring performance of a great classic.

Peter Lutton

Formerly Assistant Director of Music, St John's School, Leatherhead and Organist Emeritus, St Nicolas, Great Bookham.

Feast your eyes and ears on this

25 September 2024



Epsom Choral Society and The Barnes Choir, two amateur choral groups renowned for their passion and dedication to musical excellence, are set to entertain audiences with a grand performance of Sir William Walton's epic masterpiece, **Belshazzar's Feast**, on Saturday 13th July 2024, at **Cadogan Hall** in London. Under the baton of their Musical Director, Julian Collings, and featuring acclaimed baritone soloist, Philip Tebb, this event promises to be an unforgettable evening.

The work will be performed by an 80-piece professional orchestra, including two additional brass bands as called for in Walton's score, complemented by a combined choir of over 160 singers. Such a collaborative effort shows the commitment of both choirs to showcasing the exceptional standard of amateur choral singing prevalent in this country.

The programme will also feature a selection of other notable works, including Vaughan Williams' evocative Five Mystical Songs, Parry's majestic I Was Glad and stirring Blest Pair of Sirens, as well as Elgar's enchanting Serenade for Strings.

"We are thrilled to bring together the talents of Epsom Choral Society and Barnes Choir for this ambitious performance," said Julian Collings, Musical Director of both choirs. "Through our dedication and passion for choral music, we aim to inspire and uplift audiences, showcasing the extraordinary level of artistry that exists within the realm of amateur choral singing."

Tickets for this event are now available from Cadogan Hall box office, offering audiences the opportunity to experience the power and beauty of choral music at its finest. Don't miss this exciting collaboration.

Event Details:

- Date: 13th July 2024
- Time: 7:30 PM
- Venue: Cadogan Hall, 5 Sloane Terrace, London SW1X 9DQ

For ticketing information and enquiries:

Please visit www.cadoganhall.com or contact the box office on 020 7730 4500 or online <https://cadoganhall.com/whats-on/belshazzars-feast/book/912634/>

Northern Lights up Epsom

25 September 2024



At their "Mass in Blue" concert Saturday 29th June, St Martins Church, Epsom, the **Epsom Chamber Choir** succeeded once again in enhancing their reputation for exciting performances of adventurous programmes.

The evening kicked off with "Northern Lights" by the contemporary Latvian composer, **Ēriks Ešenvalds**, and saw the choir placed unusually in the chancel, rather than in their customary position nearer the audience in the transept. This meant that their entrance was not greeted by the usual applause, as the audience hadn't realised that they had arrived! After a vigorous opening, the reason for this placing became apparent as the piece employs tuned wine glasses and chimes which need to be supported - the choir stalls being ideal.

Ešenvalds uses this unusual instrumentation to produce a sustained shimmering sound which underscores the choir particularly effectively in the quieter passages. A timely work for us in the UK, having recently been treated to magical displays of the Northern Lights!

The choir returned to their normal positions for "Stargazer" by the contemporary British composer, **Alec Roth**. His style recalls Holst's and Britten's - especially the Flower Songs - and the choir showed some wonderful legato singing in the shifting harmonic colours.

Vocalist **Maddie Martin** and the **LJ Jazz Trio** then provided us with a jazzy interlude, and the first half of the concert concluded with another contemporary British composer, **Jonathan Dove** and his "The Passing of the Year". These seven, contrasting part-songs - stunningly accompanied by choir member, virtuoso pianist **Stephen Ridge** - gave the choir the chance to display their convincing mastery of complex and quirky rhythms, and cool and hot tone clusters.

The second half of the concert was given over to "Mass in Blue" by a third contemporary British composer, Will Todd. While not a personal favourite, this exciting setting of the mass has gained huge popularity across the choral world. The blues scale permeates the whole work but the choir immediately seemed fully "in the groove", secure and quite at ease with the challenging blues harmonies and rhythms.

At times, some were unable to resist the urge for spontaneous swaying! Singing almost as a complex backing group to the jazz trio and vocalist, the choir was able to show off its skill with sensitive phrasing and highly effective dynamic contrasts. A convincing performance of a welcome addition to the repertoire.

Nick Landauer

Photo: ©Edward Webb

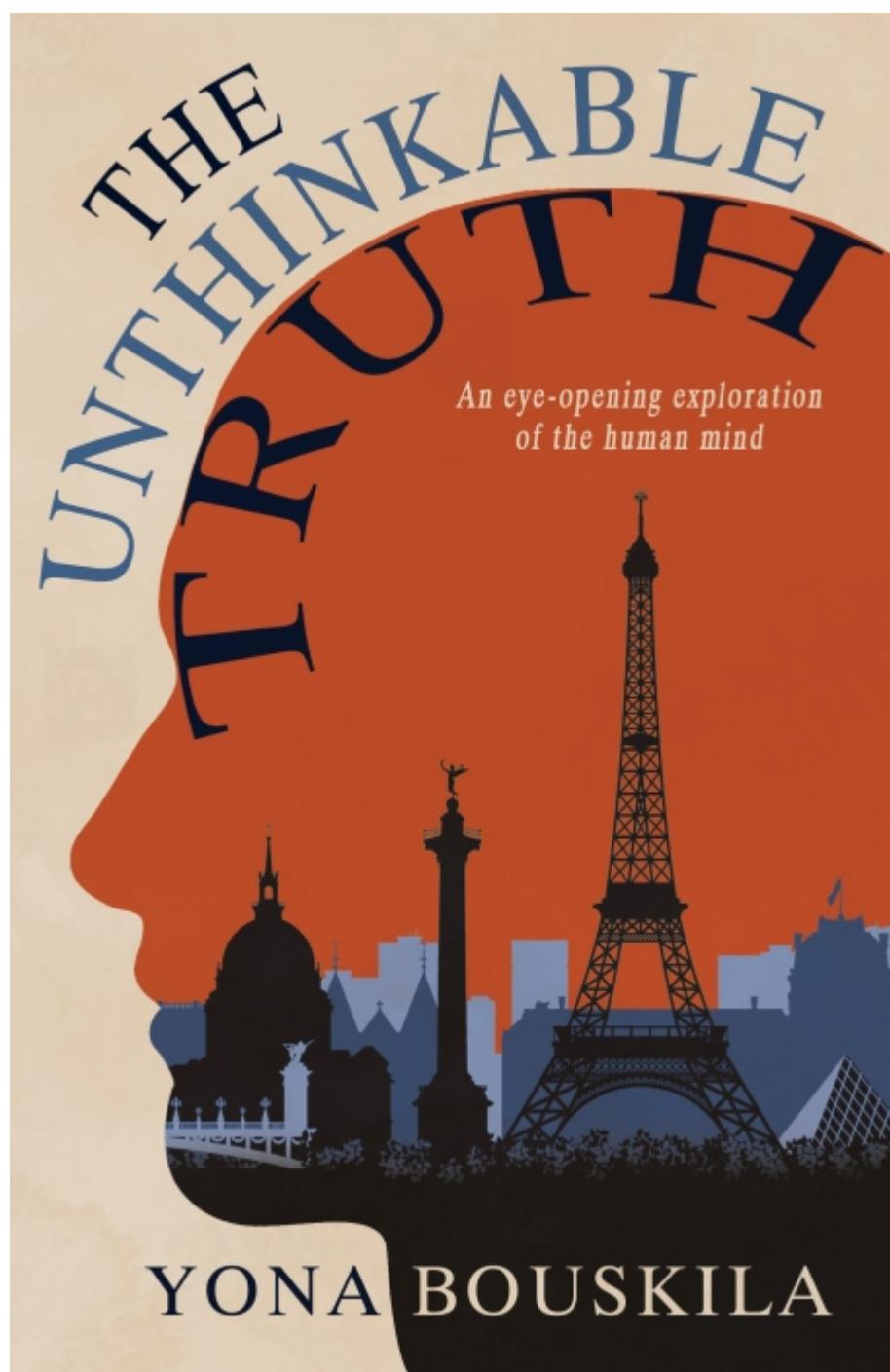
Epsom author thinks the unthinkable

25 September 2024



Published on 28th May 2024, **The Unthinkable Truth** by **Epsom** based author **Yona Bouskila** is a gripping thriller that delves into the depths of the human mind and explores how real and seemingly innocent scientific discoveries can spiral into global dystopia.

With the authorities set to rob people of their freedom of choice, in order to create a perfectly obedient and mindless society, **The Unthinkable Truth** questions whether free will is simply an illusion, and whether our own human nature could be the catalyst to our downfall.



Making use of his extensive background in neuroscience, the author expertly transports us into a world where a team of scientists, other experts and a characterful AI are tasked with solving the most baffling question about the human mind, creating a gripping narrative that will appeal to all.

Yona Bouskila ticks all the boxes for fans of both thrillers and intellectually stimulating reads, but most importantly, readers aren't required to know the first thing about science to enjoy his compelling and thought-provoking novel.

In the hope of distracting himself from his heartache, George Bennet, a mild-mannered professor of theoretical physics, accepts an invitation by UNESCO to join an eclectic multidisciplinary team of experts, tasked with unravelling the enigma of the human mind.

As this seemingly innocent academic investigation twists and turns, George suspects that they are being duped into aiding a sinister plan, which threatens to shatter the very foundations of society. When the unthinkable truth emerges as their final conclusion, and the plan is exposed, George and the team must be silenced. No matter the cost.

What is the unthinkable truth? Will George survive to reveal it? Only one thing is certain: humanity will never be the same.

Drawing on solid scientific research, *The Unthinkable Truth* is a compelling and intricate thriller that will make readers question their own human nature.

A scientist by training, a thinker by nature, and an author by passion, Yona Bouskila has a particular fascination with the human mind in all its aspects. This enduring passion, together with his penchant for thrillers, served as the driving force behind his novel, *The Unthinkable Truth*, which he describes as a thought-provoking thriller that culminates in an eye-opening revelation on the mind and humanity. He studied biology (with philosophy) and received a PhD in neuroscience from UCLA.

He is involved in medical research and development. Before that, he conducted brain research at several institutions in the US and Europe. He writes short stories, often with a humorous slant, and his debut novel will be published in May 2024. He lives in Epsom with his wife and pets, where he enjoys the Surrey countryside and contemplating life.

A book promotion will end on 10th June (<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Unthinkable-Truth-Yona-Bouskila-ebook/dp/B0CW1N2JTJ>)

Picture this house in the centre of Epsom!

25 September 2024



After much anticipation, **Epsom Picturehouse** — a six-screen cinema, café, and bar at the heart of Epsom Square — will be opening its doors on Saturday 01 June.

The latest addition to the Picturehouse Cinemas family, Epsom Picturehouse is set to encompass all the best that the world of film has to offer. Tickets are on sale now for *Furiosa*, George Miller's epic *Mad Max* prequel starring Chris Hemsworth and Anya Taylor-Joy, and film lovers will be able to book soon for new releases including the horror thriller *A Quiet Place: Day One* and Marvel Studios' *Deadpool & Wolverine*.

There'll also be chances to catch this year's wonderful family titles, *Inside Out 2* and *Despicable Me 4* — and don't forget to ask for the discounted Family Ticket!



Film fans can also catch up with a wide range of classic movies from directors such as the Coen Brothers and Stanley Kubrick – perfect to revisit on the big screen.

The fun doesn't stop there: we're pleased to announce our Summer Outdoor Cinema season. Enjoy alfresco cinema under the stars as our pop-up screen comes to Bourne Hall in Ewell from Friday 05 July. Bring a blanket for the perfect way to spend a summer evening, with crowd-pleasers like Mamma Mia, Twilight, and Back to the Future!

Find out more at: picturehouses.com/epsom

Clare Binns, Managing Director of Picturehouse Cinemas, says: "We're thrilled to be opening the doors and welcoming the people of Epsom into Picturehouse's 28th cinema - at long last! Our cinemas are shaped by their communities, and with six screens, a bar and a restaurant, this beautiful new venue will be a perfect space for bringing people together to relax, enjoy delicious food and drink, and soak up all the magic of the big screen."

Book a private screening to give your clients, colleagues, or employees a big-screen experience that blows them away, or enjoy a night of gaming in our specially-created event screen.

As part of our nod to local history, we've even dedicated one of our screens to Epsom's first-ever cinema, The Electric Theatre, which opened its doors to the neighbourhood's cinema lovers in 1910. We're proud to continue its legacy by honouring this jewel in the community, where people queued up for hours for silent films, newsreels, and live piano accompaniment.

Epsom Picturehouse Founder Membership is on sale now. The first 1000 customers who purchase an annual Membership for the new cinema will get their names installed in the building, on a specially commissioned Founder Members' Wall. The Memberships will also include an additional 2 free tickets to use when the cinema opens its doors. Learn more and sign up at picturehouses.com/epsom-membership.

About Picturehouse Cinemas:

Picturehouse is an award-winning UK film company incorporating cinema, distribution and home entertainment, formed in 1989 to challenge the multiplex model. Its flagship cinema Picturehouse Central is situated in the heart of London's West End, with the rest of its 28 venues located across England and Scotland.

Picturehouse's architecturally unique cinemas sit in the heart of local neighbourhoods and cater to a diverse and wide-ranging audience. They provide bespoke food and drink offerings across their cafés, bars, restaurants and members' bars. The programme is curated to champion films made for all ages and backgrounds, from quality mainstream film through to foreign-language and documentary features, as well as live event cinema and in-person events and Q&As when available.

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Picture House press release.