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New artwork takes centre stage at Epsom Playhouse

24 January 2025



During January two new murals were completed at Epsom Playhouse. The murals are part of a series of vibrant public art installations across the borough. Championing the 40-year history of Epsom Playhouse, the large-scale mural in the theatre's foyer showcases the variety and breadth of creative people who have contributed to the fabric of Epsom Playhouse's history over the last four decades. The second mural and new photographic exhibition in the downstairs bar celebrates famed British Jazz singer and a trailblazing performer, Evelyn Dove. Championing the roaring 1920s and the Art Deco period, the large-scale installation reflects the era that Dove was at the peak of her performing career.

The latest murals were created in collaboration with residents. Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, and specialists in community art Positive Arts, consulted with residents during the Christmas lights switch on in the Ashley Centre in Epsom, at Bourne Hall in Ewell and members of Girlguiding Division Epsom also kindly shared their thoughts on the design of the main foyer mural.

Both murals have been fully funded via the Arts, Culture and Heritage UKSPF 2024/25 allocation and contribute to the council's overall vision for curating art projects that build pride with local community stakeholders, nurture creative talent and raise the profile of our borough's rich heritage.

The murals are the last in a series that have been painted across the borough.

So far, working with Positive Arts and community groups, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council has created the following murals:

Upper High Street, Epsom – with GLF Schools

Alleyway behind Epsom Square – with Members of Girlguiding Epsom Division

Between Miles Road and Stones Road, Epsom – with GLF Schools

Near Clandon Close, Stoneleigh – with We Power On

Epsom Playhouse opened in 1984 as part of the development of The Ashley Centre and since opening has hosted a wide and varied programme of events featuring both professional and community productions.

The murals form part of improvement works taking place at Epsom Playhouse using an allocation of monies from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Improvements include a redesigned lower bar and a new bottle bar, clad in stainless steel. The upper bar has also been refurbished with new LED lighting and redesigned to create a larger space. There is also a new mezzanine floor, and a new platform lift has been installed to improve accessibility.

Commenting on the newly installed artworks, Councillor **Clive Woodbridge** (RA Ewell Village), Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Committee said,

"These new murals use a vibrant palette of colours, and I am sure will draw plenty for interest from residents, who'll be impressed to see how this much-loved community venue has been revived!

The foyer mural illustrates visually how important regional theatres are in bringing arts and creativity to local areas for the benefit of local communities"

The refurbishment of Epsom Playhouse also supports Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's new Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy which outlines its commitment to nurturing creative talent and to creating a thriving and inclusive creative and cultural outreach programme within the borough.

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Image: Epsom Playhouse bar mural

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