thecourt

ARTS, CULTURE AND COMMUNITY NEWS FROM HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM AND EARL'S COURT

March/April 2023



LGBTQ+ COLLECTION
Archive & Library Launch

HISTORY OF INNOVATION
Local inventions from times past

LOCAL TALENT SEARCH
Theatre company reaches out

Keeping Life Local

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H&F Women's History Month

Hammersmith & Fulham marks Women's History Month with dozens of events taking place across the borough. They honour many historical figures such as Fanny Eaton, Esther Bruce and Edmonia Lewis as well as the women that make the borough an amazing place to live, work and visit today.

14 March
Bystander training with the Suzy Lamplugh Trust
Online, various times
Learn how to defuse situations, discourage harassers and support victims of street harassment.

25 March
Self Esteem live at the Apollo
Eventim Apollo, 7pm
British singer-songwriter Self Esteem comes to Hammersmith for three nights.

23 March
Women Who Lead Lunch
Megans Kings Road, SW6, 11am
Join the BEYOUROWN Women Who Lead Lunch for an inspirational workshop.

26 March
Oxford v Cambridge Boat Race
Furnivall Gardens and Bishops Park, 4pm
The annual Gemini Boat Race is back! Watch the 77th Women's race from 4pm.

28 March
Hidden Voices: A focus on the experiences of women & girls affected by modern slavery & exploitation
Sands End Arts and Community Centre SW6, 6.30pm
An evening of art and discussion.
To join an event, go to https://www.lbhf.gov.uk

FINBOROUGH THEATRE

The Finborough branches out

The Finborough Theatre's Spring 2023 Season is an exemplar of its ability to develop British talent while consistently uncovering international work.

The new season opens from 28th March to 22nd April with the return by popular demand of *Pussycat In Memory Of Darkness* by Neda Nezhdana, direct from its run in Kyiv where it became the first play to be performed in Ukraine by a foreign company since the Russian invasion.

Closer to home, there has been an exciting discovery of a new first-time British playwright with Saana Sze's ETPEP Award winning play *Belly of the Beast* which shows on 15th April. *Belly of the Beast* examines school politics, from the standpoint of both student and a teacher, as it asks: "What are schools for?"

It is followed by the long-overdue European premiere of *The Retreat* by Jason Sherman, one of Canada's most acclaimed contemporary dramatists. A fast-paced acerbic take on art, craft, money and power, it plays 25 April-13 June.



The season continues with the world premiere of *A Brief List Of Everyone Who Died*, playing 16 May-10 June, and reuniting the team behind the critically acclaimed 2019 production of *Chemistry* at the Finborough Theatre – playwright Jacob Marx Rice, and director Alex Howarth. Wickedly funny and deeply humane, *A Brief List of Everyone Who Died* tells the story of all the deaths that make up a life.

From 13 June-8 July, the season culminates with the world premiere of *The Return of Benjamin Lay*, a unique collaboration between playwright Naomi Wallace and historian Marcus Rediker, directed by RSC Honorary Associate Director Ron Daniels, and starring acclaimed American actor Mark Povinelli.

Sweeping across centuries, it is a hallucinatory exploration of the true story of Benjamin Lay: shepherd, sailor, prophet, abolitionist, and dwarf.

Don't forget *The An Earl's Court Walking Tour* will be available to download in May – alongside the return of our online film, *An Earl's Court Miscellany*.

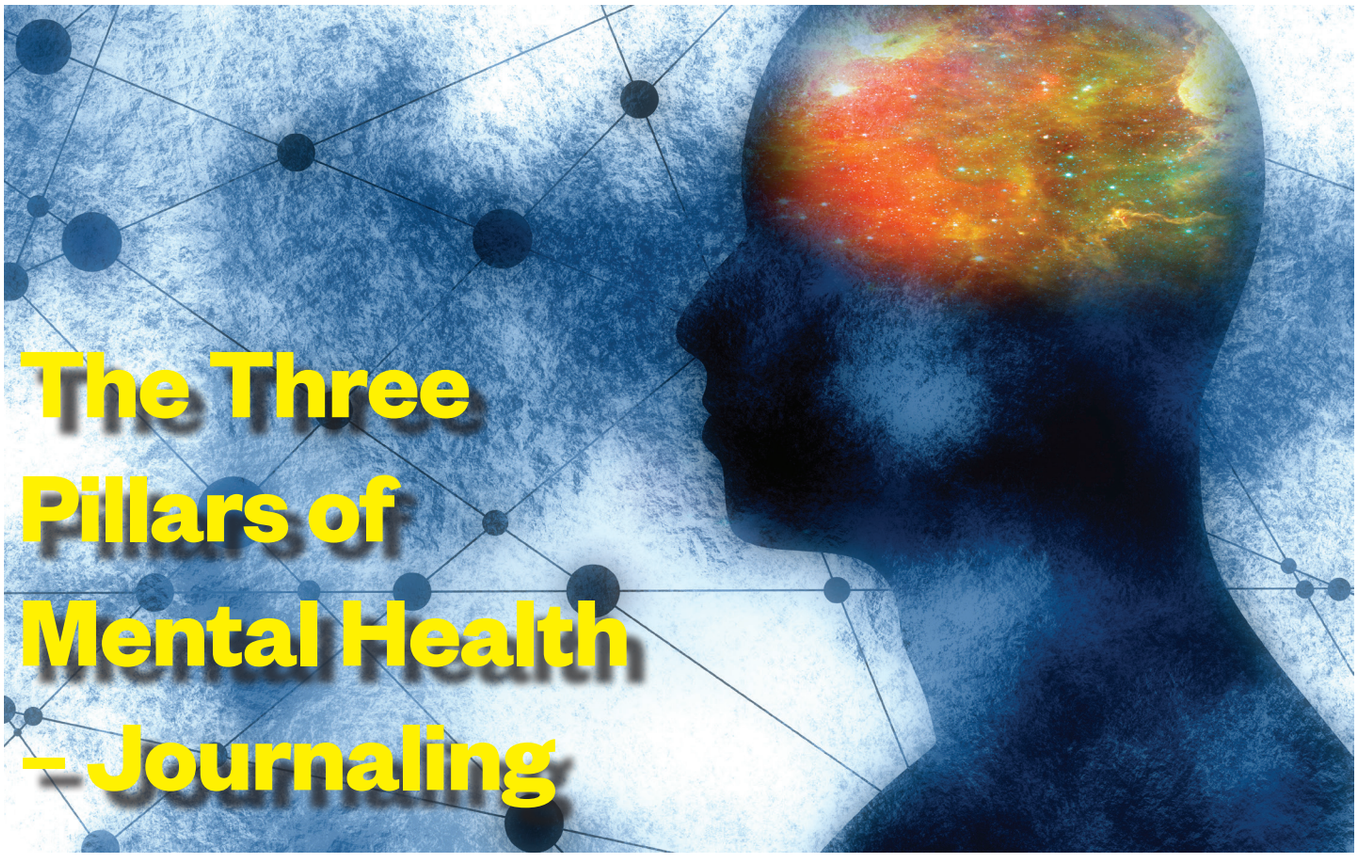
For more information visit www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk and follow on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube.

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Please send any contributions to:
brian@voxcorporation.com

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The Three Pillars of Mental Health – Journaling

In this, the third and final of our series Three Pillars of Mental Health, Chris Allan guides you through another aspect of self-care that can be important for securing your mental health - Pillar Three, Journaling.

It's important to remember that you don't have to define yourself by the things that have happened - or haven't happened - to you.

You do not have to cling to your old preconceptions because they are not the building blocks of yourself. Thoughts and feelings (and their associated behaviours) have no power except what we give to them by coercion or argument.

Here is what I mean: Have you ever noticed how you mentally argue with an unwanted situation, like being stuck in traffic? Drop the argument and you drop the feeling. Try it.

Throughout this series, I've invited you to reframe and reconsider specific topics at specific times. Now, I want to emphasize the importance of journaling to objectively watch your problems rather than being lost in them. To surgically remove them, examine them and choose to discard or retain them.

One way to do this is to write about your thoughts and feelings. Journaling helps you get them out and objectively examine the cognitive processes that lead to them.

Journaling can be a powerful tool for inner freedom and self-discovery when combined with the other elements of this series. I invite you to take some time to reflect on your thoughts and feelings and see what insights you can gain through this process.

Here are some prompts to get you started:

- What are you grateful for today and why?
- What challenges are you facing right now, and how can you overcome them?
- What things can you do to take care of yourself physically, emotionally, and mentally?
- What positive changes have you made in your life recently, and how have they impacted you?
- Describe a situation in which you've felt proud of yourself. What did you learn from it?
- Think of things you want to achieve. What steps can you take to make progress towards them?
- Describe a moment when you felt happy and content. What made that so special?
- Reflect on a mistake you made, and what you learned from it.
- Name some of the things that bring you joy, and how can you incorporate them more into your life?
- Name some of the qualities you admire in yourself. How can you continue to cultivate them?

Final Thoughts

Your life is your own masterpiece in the making. It will not be perfected overnight.

With any practice, you reap what you sow. The more time, energy, and dedication that you invest in developing and maintaining the practices that form the Three Pillars, the greater your results will be.

One thing to keep in mind is the role that fear plays in our lives. Fear is often linked to our central nervous system, which is designed to keep us safe.

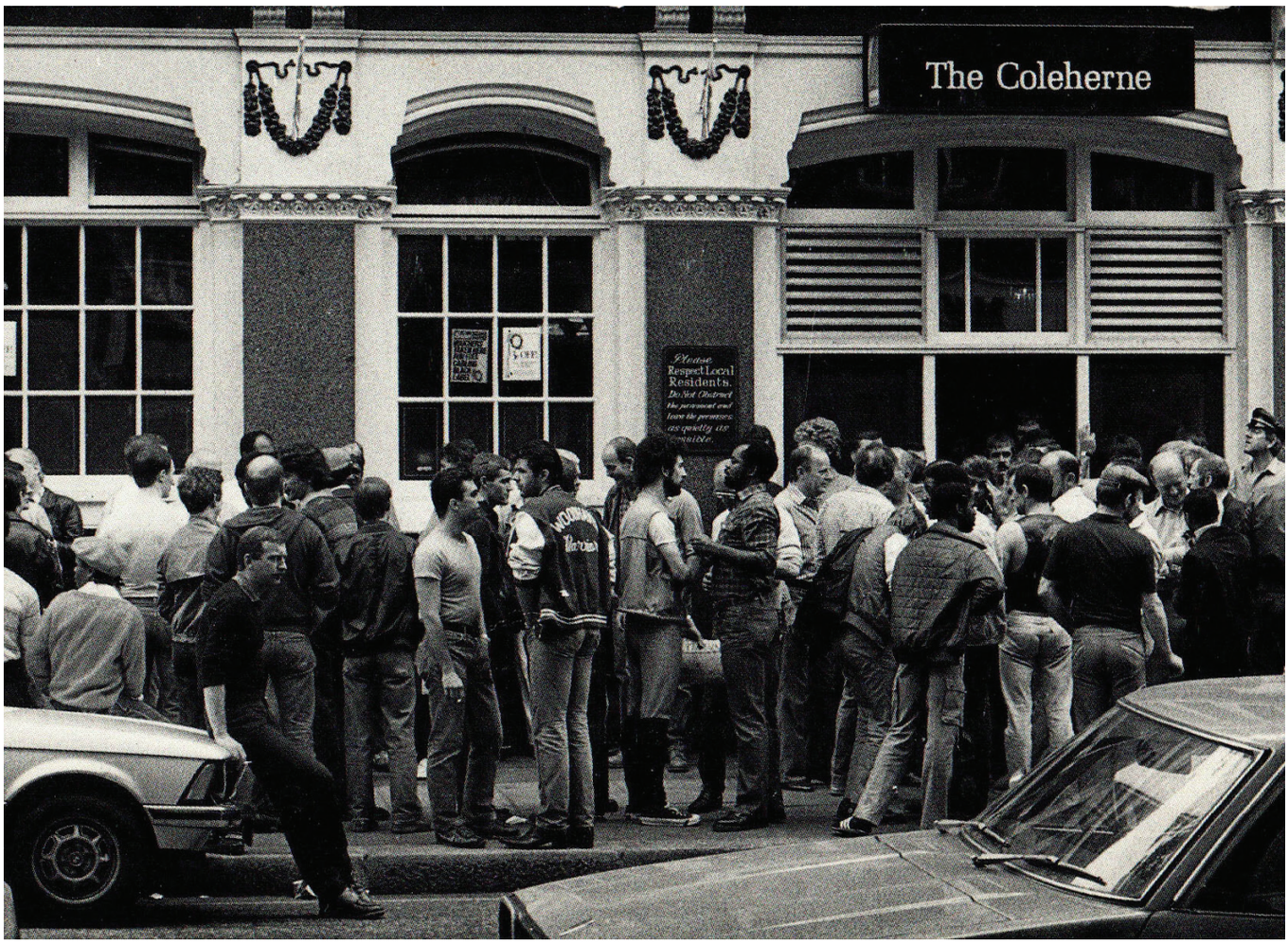
However, it's not always effective at keeping us happy. By being mindful of where we direct our thoughts, we can change the blueprint of our attention and focus on what we want rather than what we don't want.

Remember, consistent practice is key to achieving your goals. Don't be discouraged by setbacks, but rather see them as opportunities to learn and grow. You can create the life you want.

That's all for now, my friends. Thank you very much for stopping by.

I'm Chris and I hope that you have good mental health.

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GAY CRUCIBLE

We interview Sophia Hall, Archivist and Local Studies specialist at Kensington Central Library, about a new collection looking at our area's gay history – and how she is seeking those that can contribute to it.

The Court ***What is the Earl's Court LGBTQ+ Collection?***
Sophia We are partnering with Councillor Linda Wade to develop the Living Histories Archive – a core LGBTQ+ collection. We've also partnered with the Council's Proud network to develop long term aims for the collection that ensure we celebrate the queer history of the borough and the importance of Earl's Court in London's LGBTQ+ history.

The Court ***How much material do you have so far?***
Sophia It's like being a detective. We have few records relating to the 1960s but we're basically trying to build up the bare bones. We know the geographic history and some well-known individuals from that time, but we are trying to capture everyday lived-experiences – building a full picture of what life was like living in Earl's Court throughout the 20th century – but particularly from the seventies to the nineties.

Some of the stories that were shared with us at the local Pride event in February last year were incredible. People were so generous with their memories. The oldest person at the event was possibly in their nineties. He shared memories with me of what it was like to live as a gay man in the area and that is the beauty of it: we're open to whatever form of story people want to share with us. Submissions have focussed on personal experiences, meeting partners, the best places to go for a dance. We're creating a space where people can share their stories, their memories, their photographs to make sure that Earl's Court's LGBTQ+ history isn't forgotten.

The Court ***Do you come across a hesitancy where people want to know where their stories are going to end up?***
Sophia Earl's Court is a microcosm of incredible memories that aren't really reflected anywhere else. Sometimes people don't realise that their story is worth hearing without being encouraged to tell it.

From an archival perspective, whenever anybody chooses to donate or deposit anything with the archive, but specifically to the LGBTQ+ collection, what we will do, depending on the type of

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Local Film Festival presents its first Comedy Awards

The best of comedy short films from the Earl's Court International Film Festival were screened at the Chelsea Theatre to a sell out crowd. Accompanied by hilarious live performances from the very talented Ali Woods, Leigh Douglas, Maddie Black and Anoushka Rava.

"We screened the best of the comedy shorts that have been submitted to our festival," explains Caroline Tod-Richardson, Festival Director. "It is so great to highlight new film talent, of every genre. An evening of laughs was had by all!"

The winning short of ECIFF Comedy Awards 2023 was Kirsty Mann and Dipak Patel's 'Lady Brently's End'. A huge congratulations to the entire team that worked on this comic masterpiece!

For more details on the Earls Court International Film Festival 2023, go to www.filmearlscourt.com.



media, is formally add it into the archive. We have two, secure, temperature-controlled rooms at Kensington Central Library. Ideally we make all our material available to the public and researchers but there is a possibility where people can apply 'closure' and 'retention' periods to their submissions. There is a deposit or donation agreement. Within that, people have the freedom to say, I would like this record to be closed for a certain number of years, or 'it can only be shown with prior permission or under supervision', or 'It can't be copied', or 'It can be viewed within the search room but not used anywhere else'. There are many different ways that people can tailor the agreement to fit with what they feel comfortable.

The Court ***What's the most striking story you've had so far?***
Sophia One of the loveliest stories we've had is from a gentleman who is now in New Zealand - we're starting to recognise that people lived or travelled to the borough but the community has gone all over the world. But those connections are still there. The submission is a really wonderful account of finishing work, going home, getting ready, going out for a night, and then how he met his partner. He's been with his partner for 25 years and he holds a really special place in his heart for Earl's Court and the memories he created there.

Sophia Hall is the Archivist and Local Studies specialist at Kensington Central Library, Phillimore Walk, London, W8 7RX. 020 7361 3038. centrallocalenquiries@rbkc.gov.uk. Facebook: rbkc libraries. Instagram: @rbkclibraries. Twitter: @rbkclibraries

Learn more at the Local studies and archives | Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (rbkc.gov.uk)



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Bringing the wonder back to Earls Court

The Earls Court Development Company reveals plans for transformation of 40-acre largely derelict site.



CGI aerial view of the new Earls Court masterplan.

The Earls Court Development Company (ECDC) unveiled a draft masterplan to deliver on their vision 'to bring the wonder back to Earls Court' in February. The ambitious redevelopment will see this long neglected, largely derelict 40-acre site in Zone 1 London reinstated as a destination for entertainment, innovation and excitement.

Revealing plans to deliver up to 4,500 homes (targeting 35% affordable across all tenures), all set within a landscape-led development which aims to go beyond net zero and become a climate-positive neighbourhood, Rob Heasman, CEO of ECDC commented: *"Like a London jigsaw missing its final piece, this 40-acre site is perhaps Central London's most significant redevelopment opportunity. The site has an illustrious past which is a continual source of inspiration for us as we look towards the future.*

"We want to create a place which reinstates 'wonder' in this incredible part of London. We will help to create a more inclusive and equitable piece of city with homes for all incomes and stages of life, and thousands of jobs from training to start up to scale up. The development will integrate culture and public realm throughout, responding to the number one stated desire from local people; to have green and open spaces across the site. We have an ambition to be a global exemplar of responsible, sustainable development, putting people's health and well-being first."

The aspiration is for the development to incorporate the first large scale Zero Carbon energy sharing network in the UK, enabling local people to benefit

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from cost effective heat networks. Up to 15,000 jobs will be created with the development becoming a research and development hub for green tech, attracting businesses which have a role in transforming our future by responding to the climate crisis.

The masterplan has been drafted following two years of discussion and engagement with local communities and stakeholders to understand the aspirations and priorities of those who already live and work in the area. Heasman continued: “Being based locally has given us the ability to get to know the communities in which we are based, to understand the experiences of people who live, work and go to school here. We have used that to inform and shape the draft masterplan concepts which we are now presenting.”

Our new plan is on public display at the Conversation Corner space opposite Hotel Lily. It is open now until 1 April: Wednesdays 12pm–4pm, Thursdays and Fridays, 3pm–7pm and Saturdays 11am–3pm.

All the exhibition materials are available to view on the ECDC website (https://theearlscourtdevco.com). You will be able to give your feedback directly to the team by dropping into the exhibition space or email.

If you can’t make it to the exhibition, join the team online at our webinar on Monday 20th March at 1.30pm, or at Conversation Corner for a public meeting taking place at 6.30pm on Tuesday 21st March.

Email info@earlscourtdevco.com or call on 0330 333 1510.

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Helen McCallum



What's your name?

Helen McCallum, I'm the first Artist in Residence for The Earls Court Development Company. There will be eleven more artists to follow me over the next three years.

Where are you based?

At the community Hub in Aisgill Avenue, on the Gibbs Green Estate, West Kensington.

How did you come to be there?

The Earls Court Development Company advertised for an Artist In Residence. They wanted a portrait artist, and I really liked the idea of mapping what is going on by looking at the people that support the local community but often aren't really visible to the other people whose lives they make possible. The premise is to photograph and then draw from the photographs. These will eventually be displayed around the site and hopefully the future development. So it's a remit to seek out those particular kinds of people and those particular kinds of roles.

During the pandemic, I took photographs of people having their sandwiches in the bucket of a digger; somebody lying in a wheelbarrow on their mobile phone; buskers. People who can't be replaced by machines. If I can can make as beautiful a drawing as possible of that person, then that's a really worthwhile thing for an artist to do.

Do you regard yourself as a portrait artist or are you bringing other skills to the mix?

It's always to do with pinpointing something and focusing in on that person and what they're doing. They could be digging a hole, or painting, or cleaning, or playing an instrument. I want to show how much pride people take in what they do. There is real dignity there.

What have the reactions been like?

Sometimes it's been really positive and people have been really excited about it. And sometimes people have just said 'No' quite emphatically. The world is full of different personalities, and I have to respect that as an artist. I have to constantly recalibrate how I feel about what I'm doing. One day I was walking around the streets and photographing the stallholders down North End Road. I photographed a guy who had a fruit stall who had a great energy. He was really looking after the fruit – posing it to best effect. And I noticed somebody quite restless behind me. It was his friend. I asked, 'Do you want me to take your photograph as well?' He said, 'Oh, yes'. He absolutely loved having his photo taken. That was one of the first drawings that I did. He was just so delighted at the idea of being drawn.

But then another day I walked down to Earl's Court Tube Station. There were two women chatting to each other and I asked if I could take that photo because they had this lovely interaction. They were extremely clear that they didn't want their photo taken. I was disappointed. But then I had to understand that it was a private conversation. I was intruding.

Then the heavens opened. And as I walked back to the studio they were still standing there talking to each other. I thought 'That is such a fantastic example of friendship. That they were so absorbed that they hadn't even noticed that they're getting soaked.' So I photographed the railings where they were talking. I think I might just do a photo portrait of the area. Because to me, that was such a meaningful thing to see.

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What general impression do you have of the area so far?

I love the way that people get on with each other. I sit in cafes and they're full of people speaking lots of different languages, lots of different ages. And it's still winter. But it's an area where people seem to really support each other and really like living here. There's such a great atmosphere and that's really to be celebrated.

Tell us about your art workshops at the Hub...

I do a Tuesday evening workshop at 6pm at the Hub. It's an hour and is basically led by what people want to do. I go in with an idea every week but it's interesting to see how much they enjoy drawing with crayons like I do, because it is very therapeutic. When we're all sitting there, I can just hear the sound of crayons on paper and a little bit of chat. It's really nice. I've been really, really impressed by how people understand what I'm showing them and take it somewhere that's really, really personal to them. The theme of the workshops is identity. So that's exactly what's supposed to happen.

What would you say to the next artist that comes along?

It's hard to give advice to another artist, but I can say that so far I've had a really, really positive experience. The staff at the Hub are incredibly helpful. I love the studio looking out on a building site. It's got the most incredible light. It's very quiet. And when I want to get embedded in the area, it's really easy to just go out for a walk for a couple of hours.

It's a fantastic opportunity. It's made the last two months an absolute joy. I'm not going to want to stop because I've started to feel very close to the routines and the activities of the area. It's the beginning of a year and I can see that it's also the beginning of the development company's activities. Whoever follows next is going to feel a huge momentum of change and being really positive.

To find out more go to https://earlscourtdevco.com and see Early Delivery and Artists in Residence.

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INVENTIONS AND INNOVATIONS

Neil McPherson, Artistic Director of the Finborough Theatre, imparts the next in our regular series on the rich history of the local area and community. See www.earlscourtlocalhistory.co.uk for more.

Joseph Aloysius Hansom (1803-1882) was granted a patent in 1834 for what became known as the Hansom Cab, the single-horse fast cab that was a ubiquitous sight in 19th Century cities.

Hansom himself was best known as an architect, designing over 200 buildings. His work can be seen nearby – The Church of Our Lady of Seven Dolours and St Mary's Priory of the Servite Friars at 264 Fulham Road were designed by Hansom and his son.

He founded the magazine 'The Builder', edited for many years by George Godwin, the architect responsible for much of Earl's Court as we know it today. Hansom was also a teacher, and one of his pupils was another local resident – Herbert Gribble (1847-1894), the architect of Brompton Oratory, who lived at 64 Redcliffe Road from 1883 until his death.

Hansom died in 1882 at 399 Fulham Road.

NEXT LEVEL

It wasn't invented in Earl's Court, it wasn't even the first in the UK (Harrods had one as early as 1898), but Earl's Court was the home to the very first escalator used in the London Underground.

Opening on 4 October 1911 and linking the Piccadilly Line with the District and Circle lines, the new-fangled invention terrified people so much that rumour has it that a one-legged engineer – William 'Bumper' Harris – was hired to ride up and down the escalators for the entire opening day to put people at their ease. Whilst it is quite possible that the story of 'Bumper' Harris is an urban myth, he is commemorated with a tiny figurine at the London Transport Museum.

DRILLING IT IN

Finally, the humble rawlplug – the insert used to enable items to be screwed to walls that would not otherwise support the weight of the object attached with the screw. Rawling Brothers started out in London in about 1887 as a small firm of plumbers in Richmond Road (now Old Brompton Road). In 1910, and based in a garage in Ashburn Mews, John Joseph Rawlings (1860-1942) won a contract from the British Museum which required him to unobtrusively fix electrical fittings to the museum walls without damaging the masonry.

Rawlings named his creation a "rawlplug" using the first syllable of his last name. In 1921, the recently renamed Rawlplug Company Limited moved to 87A and 89 Cromwell Road, and quickly became a worldwide brand.



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The Earl's Courtiers are looking for theatre talent

The sun is out and there are signs that Spring is around the corner. That can only mean one thing... The Earl's Courtiers are back for another summer of singing, dancing and performing in the gardens of Kensington and Chelsea. This year we plan to transport you to gritty New York City, as two young idealistic lovers find themselves caught between warring street gangs.

From the first notes to the final breath, West Side Story, the Earl's Courtiers summer show, is one of the most memorable musicals and greatest love stories of all time. The score by Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim is widely regarded as one of the best ever written. America, I feel pretty, Tonight and Somewhere are just a few memorable songs you won't want to miss.

Caspian Marks, aged 10, who played Winthrop in the Earl's Courtiers Musical of 2022 Music Man, explains it best. He said it's the highlight of his year and he is willing to give up any after school activities to be part of this year's show.

"I make new friends from all the schools around," he says. "I get a chance to sing and dance and perform in front of lots of people. The show has live music and you get to wear amazing costumes. But the best is having Toby [Brown] and Kristen [Gaetz Riva] as our directors. They are amazing and I've learnt so much about acting and singing from them."

Why not join him for the auditions, taking place on Wednesday 15th and Thursday 16th March?

The show is more than just an after school club. It's an amazing community project for young and old. A unique opportunity to get involved in the entire process of a show; everything from auditions, rehearsals and the performance - accompanied with a live band in front of a large local audience.

Parents whose children have been in shows over the years had this to say after last year's show: "Arijit and I are forever grateful for the exposure the boys are getting and the relationships they are building outside of school. It is priceless and we couldn't be more proud of being part of this amazing and talented community."

Said another: "This experience is simply amazing for our kids. My girls keep talking about it and the people they met. We feel so grateful and lucky to be part of this community. No words can express my thanks to Toby, Inge, Mariela, Kristen and all the ones that helped for their countless effort which makes this show possible every year, and better year after year. The band, lunch, souvenirs... Wow!"







This year we are looking in particular for teens as there are some great roles. You could be our Maria, a lovely young and obedient girl, excited and enthusiastic about her new life in America, but with stubborn inner strength that allows her to evolve into a strong woman.

Or Tony, a romantic young man and former leader of the Jets, who finds himself violently torn between his friendships and love. Or perhaps you would like to play feisty and assertive Annita or bitter angry Bernado. There are so many great roles this year.

If playing the lead role is not what you are looking for perhaps you would like to be in one of the singing and dancing rival gangs: There are quite a few ensemble songs in West Side Story.

Inge Marks, Earl's Courtiers Producer, explains: "You really don't have to have any formal training but we are looking for strong singers, performers who can act and are willing to learn dance routines. What we are looking for in a cast is enthusiasm, focus, willingness to create a truly wonderful show."

Mariela Manso, Earl's Courtiers Producer added, "It's a great show, wonderful characters, great songs and we know that we have some very talented teens out there so we hope you will get in touch because this is truly an amazing opportunity, which you don't want to miss!"

For those who have been waiting, the wait is over! We look forward to seeing you at the auditions, to find out more about how to apply please email: earlscourtiersproduction@gmail.com

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The
Earls Court
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Bring the wonder back to Earls Court

The Earls Court Development Company invite you to come and see their draft masterplan, at their new consultation space **Conversation Corner**.

The ambitious plans will see this largely derelict 40 acre site reinstated as a **destination for entertainment, innovation and excitement**.



Find us on What Three Words
///logo.tribune.feed



Exhibition opening times
23 February - 1 April

Wednesdays - 12pm - 4pm
Thursdays - Fridays 3pm - 7pm
Saturdays - 11am - 3pm

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