

ART WITH HEART

Top-notch theatres, art galleries and cinemas are bringing audiences to London developments, finds Cheryl Markosky



Once a small gym was enough to entice buyers to new housing schemes in the capital. But as owner-occupiers replace investors and tastes evolve, purchasers desire on-site artistic experiences.

Honor Fishburn, senior placemaking manager at Battersea Power Station, is behind the creation of a new cultural district along the south bank of the Thames.

Inspired by the iconic building featured in films and on Pink Floyd's album cover, Honor's commissioned work from sculptors, organised outdoor cinema screenings and held comedy nights in a new village hill.

"This is an entirely new neighbourhood, but when you put culture at the heart of what you are, people really want to be here."

She adds that you can't just apply "a layer of culture" – it needs to run through everything, from a Power Club app where residents can form their own clubs to collaborating with Art Night and the London Design Festival.

Honor believes that as well as providing homes for new residents, developers can also be part of supplying the arts. "Artists working in partnership with corporations is a good way to sustain funding."

Equally, Stanhope's Television Centre in White City is a champion of the arts. Electric Cinema projects films on outdoor screens regularly and Elephant West is opening a new installation space for emerging artists.

Just as eateries and shops complement artistic endeavours at Battersea Power Station, the same is true at Television Centre.

"Stanhope's found good commercial tenants to generate a buzz from day one," remarks Strutt & Parker's Sarah Curtis. Newcomers include the Bluebird restaurant, Soho House-branded Alice Bar and pizzeria Homeslice.

Three TV studios broadcasting *This Morning*, *The Graham Norton Show* and other productions offer food for thought. Sarah notes that people like observing crews filming on the forecourt – "they feel part of the media scene".

Fyfe McDade's Tom Page, who's selling apartments in The Gransden in London Fields, says house-builders are going in a different direction. As there's a cinema and numerous places to eat, the commercial unit's been sold to a modern art gallery.

ROYAL ARSENAL RIVERSIDE, WOOLWICH SE18

FROM £485,000

One- and two-bed apartments in this new creative quarter with a 450-seat theatre and performance courtyard.

www.royalarsenalriverside.co.uk



ANTHOLOGY DEPTFORD FOUNDRY SE8

FROM £385,000

Former metal foundry with one- to three-bed apartments and 80 artists' studios run by Second Floor Studios & Arts.

www.knightfrank.co.uk

"There are enough cafes in the district and a gallery will be low impact. People's perceptions are changing when it comes to deciding what a development needs," he explains.

Berkeley Homes' Royal Arsenal in Woolwich has gone all out when it comes to keeping culture vultures happy. Head of sales Lyndon Nunn says the arts help form a dynamic destination.

Elements for a 16,000-square-metre area, about the same size of the South Bank, include a 450-seat theatre, music venue, museum and rehearsal studios expected to attract 45,000 visitors a week.

"Homeowners can be at Bond Street within 18 minutes when Crossrail opens in December. And the reverse applies to art-lovers travelling to Royal Arsenal," points out Lyndon.

A good example of a scheme benefiting hugely from its own theatre is One Tower Bridge, declares Laura Laws from Savills Wapping. She frequently attends performances at The Bridge Theatre, which opened last year.



ONE PARK DRIVE, CANARY WHARF E14

FROM £825,000

Art on the Estate, lights festival, film screenings and outdoor theatre make life in this Herzog & de Meuron building go with a zing.

www.canarywharf.com



THE RESIDENCE, BATTERSEA SW8

FROM £615,000

Matt's Gallery is at the core of this scheme opposite the new American Embassy and next to Battersea Power Station.

www.bellwayhomes.co.uk



TELEVISION CENTRE, WHITE CITY W12

FROM £725,000

Soho House-branded bar, Elephant West art, Electric Cinema film screenings and three TV studios in this former BBC building.

www.televisioncentre.com



THE GRANSDEN, LONDON FIELDS E8

FROM £575,000

Forty-three one- to three-bed apartments, with 23,000 square feet of creative commercial space on the ground floor.

www.fyfemcdade.com



QUEEN'S WHARF, HAMMERSMITH W6

FROM £599,950

Owners of Thames-side apartments benefit from the on-site Riverside Studios' theatre, cinema, cafe and restaurant.

www.mountainvil.com

"Every seat is comfortable, unlike some Victorian theatres, and St John serves great food and drink." Laura says a developer can't just throw up homes anymore – "it's about making a community" – and what better than a successful new playhouse?

Another approach is to make creatives tenants. Knight Frank's Ed Robinson is excited by Anthology Deptford Foundry, where, as well as 276 apartments for sale, there's a gallery and 80 affordable studios for artists to rent.

"There's a sort of synergy between the two groups that lends identity and offers a sense of belonging," he notes. "Instead of worrying about capital appreciation, they're living the life they want."

According to Lucy Chitty from L&Q, building arts and culture into Greenwich Peninsula is undoubtedly a selling point. Opening in 2020, London's new Design District will cover a one-hectare area, providing flexible spaces for creatives.

"Access to the scheme's cinema, theatre and museum sits well with London's growing gig-economy – many of our buyers are freelancers working flexible hours, so access to an arts scene close to home is a real draw."

However, many renters applaud schemes with their own indigenous cultures, too, argues James Saunders, chief operating officer at Quintain.

Projects at Tipi, his scheme in Wembley Park, consist of Boxpark – a new Wembley Park Theatre operated by Troubadour – and the leasing of 29 artists' studios.

"We're also building a significant public art programme of sculptures and other works in external spaces, parkour gatherings and movie screenings, jugglers and buskers in the summer," James says.

Similarly, Anita Mehra at Benham and Reeves Residential Lettings tips Berkeley Homes' Goodman's Fields in the City – "amazing public art and private screening room" – and St James's White City Living, with its intimate cinemas.

Whether renting or buying a home, Londoners want to applaud enriching cultural happenings on their own turf. The good news is developers are writing new scripts to accommodate their wishes – to award-winning effect. 🏠



BATTERSEA POWER STATION SW8

FROM £550,000

An exciting new cultural zone adds extra lustre to these 253 apartments in the iconic building and third-phase buildings by Gehry Partners and Foster & Partners.

www.bpsdc.co.uk



GREENWICH PENINSULA SE10

FROM £117,500 FOR 25% SHARE

Shared ownership flats in a new design district with its own cinema, theatre and museum.

www.lqpricedin.co.uk

ONE TOWER BRIDGE SE1

£1,090,000

You'll never miss a performance at The Bridge Theatre as the owner of this one-bed apartment with a 49 sq ft balcony, and access to a pool, gym, sauna and steam rooms.

www.savills.com

SMART ART

Tim Dixon, deputy director of Matt's Gallery, is looking forward to moving to a new space at Bellway Homes' The Residence next year. Specialising in contemporary art, he's been working with the community on three projects prior to the transfer.

"For our first project, local people each designed a panel for a tapestry called *By Our Own Hand*, devised by artist and professional embroiderer Richard Grayson," he explains.

Having been selected by Wandsworth Council to occupy the flexible, core and shell space at Nine Elms, Matt's Gallery will be part of a new cultural zone running along the south bank of the Thames.

The Residence's sales manager Ed Brading says his project is the only one with a gallery on-site. "The public is looking for culture on a development. Residents will be able to see artists' works catering for different tastes." With the first completions taking place next month, art aficionados will be able to familiarise themselves with the gallery's changing displays of paintings, video, sculpture and other mediums.

Ed believes the gallery at The Residence will play a key part in the district's art scene. "Battersea Power Station's right next door and the new Royal College of Art is nearby. Parents are looking to buy flats here for their art student offspring."

Prices for one- to three-bed apartments at The Residence start from £615,000. www.bellway.co.uk

