

## Media Information

### Kingston Glamour: art, innovation and the suburbs exhibition

**Date:** Friday 16 May 2025 to Friday 10 January 2026 (Thursday to Saturday)

**Time:** 10am to 5pm

**Address:** Kingston Museum, Wheatfield Way KT1 2PS

**Contact the Kingston Council press office at [press.enquiries@kingston.gov.uk](mailto:press.enquiries@kingston.gov.uk)**

Come and rediscover Kingston's glamorous reputation for late night cabaret, race cars and fashion and how it led the way in architecture and modern interior design. Focusing on the 1920s to 1970s, and encompassing Art Deco, the Ace of Spades nightclub on the Kingston Bypass, Suburban Modernism, and Mary Quant and the Swinging Sixties, this exhibition will celebrate Kingston's starring role in the enterprising history of the Suburbs.

Curator, [Ruth Brimacombe](#) says:

This exhibition shines a light on the paradox that while the term "Surburban" is often used to indicate a provincial state of mind and a boring location characterised by an unremarkable environment, in reality, throughout the twentieth century, the suburbs of West London have been the source of cutting-edge developments that bring with them the allure of glamour. It rediscovers these glamorous aspects of Kingston's past and celebrates the ground-breaking innovations of the inventors, architects, fashion and design pioneers who achieved great things from within the borough.

Exhibition highlights include

- Footage and Images from the **Ace of Spades Roadhouse**, in its heyday the glitziest and most famous nightclub outside the West End, located on the Kingston Bypass in Hook, which developed in response to the growing motoring culture of the inter-war period.
- A display of exceptional furniture and works of art by **Betty Joel**, one of the most high profile Art Deco designers of the thirties and forties, who had a prestigious client list drawn from high society and who commissioned the leading architect, Harry Stuart Goodhart-Rendel to build her a purpose-built factory at Hook Rise on the Kingston Bypass.
- An array of the cosmetics and eye-catching promotional material relating to the partnership in the Sixties between the **Gala Cosmetics Company** and the fashion designer, **Mary Quant**, the successors to Betty Joel's factory in Hook Rise, who between them orchestrated the 'young make up shake up' of that era and permanently introduced fashion into the cosmetics industry.
- A recently rediscovered set of press photos relating to a rare public appearance by **Mary Quant at Bantalls Department Store** on 27th April 1977 to promote her collaboration with Viyella's 'London Pride' label - a reminder of the pioneering role the department store, the first in the country to introduce a 'Miss Junior Fashion'

department, played in the young fashion revolution that radically altered the popular culture of Britain in the latter half of the Twentieth Century.

- A showing of '**A Modernist in Suburbia**' - A short documentary film collaboration between the film maker Gilly Booth and academic Dr Fiona Fisher on the life and work of the British architect Kenneth Wood, (who was based in East Moseley and built Picker One for Stanley Picker, the CEO of Gala Cosmetics, as well as the Park Avenue HQ for Mary Quant).

The exhibition will be open to the public during museum hours (Thursday-Saturday 10am-5pm) between 16 May and 10 January, plus a programme of talks. Kingston Glamour is part of Kingston 2025, a major six-month celebration to mark the 1100th anniversary of the crowning of King Athelstan, the first king of a united England, in Kingston. The programme is an exciting blend of large and small scale public events, exhibitions, talks, tours and outdoor performances.