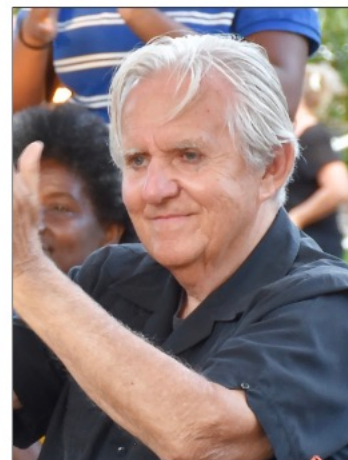




Cllr Alwin Puthenpurakal and student performers

Image: Heritage of London Trust



George Underwood



One of the students performing

Celebrating David Bowie's school days

By ROBYN BENNETT

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A SPECIAL event took place at David Bowie's former school to mark the star's childhood home being transformed into a public heritage site.

The Bromley house at 4 Plaistow Grove is where the iconic musician lived from age eight to 20 and began writing the songs that would later define his career. It is now being restored by the Heritage of London Trust with plans to open it to visitors by late 2027.

To mark the occasion, the Trust hosted a special event at Ravens Wood School in Bromley, which Bowie attended during his youth, featuring artist and musician George Underwood, Bowie's childhood best friend.

Ravens Woodstock is the school's annual music festival, organised and hosted by the school each year. This year's event celebrated the life and music of former Ravens Wood student David Bowie, supporting the Heritage of London Trust's Bowie's House project. Over several months, students worked alongside the school's music, drama and dance



The performers Image: Heritage of London Trust

departments to create an evening of live music, theatre and dance inspired by Bowie's extraordinary legacy.

On the day, Mr Underwood shared personal stories from their school days and early creative experiences, painting a vivid picture of Bowie's formative years.

He said: "We spent hours in the toilets at school. We were doing our hair; different hairstyles and things. We were quite vain, you know, thought we were God's gift."

He recalled Bowie's early experimentation with style, describing an incident where Bowie arrived at school with a very short hair-



George Underwood speaking on stage

cut, calling it his "Gerry Mulligan period", in reference to the jazz musician.

Mr Underwood continued: "Later on, David said to me: 'Actually, George, I tried cutting my own hair last night and it all went wrong.'"

"So he had to get the local hair-

dresser down the road to come and trim it, tidy it up for him."

He also spoke about Bowie's early theatrical flair and love of pretending to be other people, often adopting different accents, including American, while chatting up girls.

Mr Underwood added: "He wanted to move on. He strived to get better and better at what he was doing and of course, it was song-writing that he eventually found."

"He wasn't even singing in the early days, he was playing saxophone and stuff."

The Heritage of London Trust has delivered a series of workshops, assemblies, and creative sessions in schools across Bromley.

Dr Nicola Stacey, director of the Heritage of London Trust, said: "The school has incredible young talent already and it's been fabulous to have them all involved in the project from the beginning."

Melanie Lester, headteacher at Ravens Wood School, added: "What made it so special was seeing our students bring David Bowie's music to life with such confidence, passion and professionalism."