

The Working Artist: The East London Group
 curated by Michael Rosen and Emma-Louise Williams

New series of commemorative public artworks unveiled to celebrate historic group of East End artists



Image: courtesy Nunnery Gallery, © Marcus Orlandi 2017

Private View Thursday 28 September, 6-9pm

Frieze First Thursday: Ode to a Window Cleaner Thursday 5 October 6-9pm

Exhibition 29 Sept – 17 Dec 2017

Three new public artworks will be unveiled on Bow Road to celebrate the return of the East London Group's historic paintings to Bow at the Nunnery Gallery. Selected and curated by writer broadcaster **Michael Rosen** – whose parents were contemporaries of the Group's artists – and radio producer film-maker **Emma-Louise Williams**, over 50 works will be on show in the Gallery, documenting the changing face of east London's streets since the 1920s.

The accompanying public artworks will commemorate this little-known group of artists, who, made up of ordinary working men and women, painted alongside their day jobs. Today's 'working artists', **Lindsey Mendick**, **Marcus Orlandi** and **Maxima Smith**, have each taken a different aspect of the Group's rich history to make new work that outlines their significance to a contemporary audience.

Mendick, who recently performed at the Zabłudowicz Collection, will commemorate a new park bench in the Group's memory, installed at the iconic Bow Church and embedded with miniature ceramics that symbolise the quiet moments of now and then – including a *Daily Worker* newspaper, paint brushes and a crisp packet. **Orlandi** – known for his politically engaged work, as featured in the Art Licks Weekenders and the acclaimed Shuffle Festival – will explore the all too clear parallels between member Albert Turpin's fight against anti-fascism in Cable Street and our own contemporary struggle against extreme views with the banner *Control; Alt Right: Delete*, to be installed outside the Bow Bells pub.

Smith's new film series *Ode to a Window Cleaner* subtly remembers Turpin's day job, filming the mesmerising lines and gestures of contemporary East End window washers at work. Installed at the People's Palace at Queen Mary University of London – where remnants of a mural by member Phyllis Bray still stand – Smith will also present an accompanying performance as part of the Nunnery Gallery's **Frieze First Thursday** event.

Sophie Hill, Nunnery Gallery Co-Director, said:

“Our three commissions demonstrate the inspiring talent of young artists working in London, showing incredible skill and sensitivity in drawing our attention to the rich historical depths of the East London Group: the stories of our streets, art’s narrative power, politics, and the challenge of being an artist and having to keep a job down – something many artists juggle today.

Installed in the public domain, we hope that visitors from across London will enjoy their presence, together with our local community, as we share the history of this little-known group of artists”



Image: courtesy the Nunnery Gallery, © Maxima Smith

ENDS

For interviews, with curators Michael Rosen and Emma-Louise Williams or the artists, and images contact:

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Notes to editors

Exhibition: East London Group

Dates: 29 Sept – 17 Dec 2017

Admission: Free

Opening Hours: Tues to Sun, 10am – 5pm

Address: Nunnery Gallery, Bow Arts, 181 Bow Road, London E3 2SJ

Travel: Bow Road Tube Station, Bow Church DLR

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About Bow Arts

Bow Arts Trust was established as an educational arts charity in 1995 and supports a community of over 500 artists with affordable, secure and creative workspaces. Bow Arts also runs the Nunnery Gallery, a contemporary art gallery which supports a diverse range of local, national and international exhibitions and events.

www.bowarts.org