

Press Release: 16 April 2018

**Install shots now available** for the show that reveals the stories and inventions of east London's forgotten textile trade along the River Lea. **Opens 18 April**



Raw Materials: Textiles installation images, clockwise from top left: the invention of colour; Freya Gabie 90,000 miles across the sun 2018; R. E. Littler printing blocks; Sarah Desmarais Lea River Valley Dress 1 & 2 2018. Photographer Rob Harris

**Raw Materials: Textiles**

**Private view** Tuesday 17 April, 6-9pm **Exhibition** 18 April – 24 June 2018

[Click here for images](#)

[Exhibition Leaflet](#)

[Raw Materials: Textiles heritage map](#)

Raw Materials traces the forgotten industrial history of east London along the River Lea, supported by The National Lottery with funds awarded through the Heritage Lottery Fund. This year followed the **textiles** trail, uncovering the stories of silk-weaving, calico printing, jute spinning and the invention of dye colours. Remembering the industries that once filled areas including Hackney Wick, Stratford, West Ham and Walthamstow is important in a city that is fast ironing out the remnants of its trade and manufacturing history.

The exhibition will include loans of historic fabric produced in the area, including a Georgian calico from Old Ford courtesy of the V&A and a River Lea-inspired design by William Morris. Newly commissioned work will also be unveiled from resident artists **Freya Gabie** – her sculpture weaves a single golden thread through the fibres of a rope – and **Sarah Desmarais**, whose textiles use traditional dye and printing methods,

Press Release: 16 April 2018

including the dye-fast use of the colour madder, a process that was first patented in Hackney Wick. Working with project partners that include local archives, London College of Fashion, Jewish Museum London and the V&A, much of the exhibition content has been driven by a community steering group, keen to unearth the stories of their local area's past.

The show is accompanied by a lively event programme with opportunities of further learning for all ages, including walking and boat tours along the River Lea, artist-led workshops and panel discussions. Visitors can also trace the buildings, businesses and objects found through the project on the Raw Materials interactive map, that now includes points from materials wood and textiles. Read more and follow the project on the Raw Materials website [rawmaterials.bowarts.org/](http://rawmaterials.bowarts.org/)

### Event Programme

**Saturday 28 April Photography w/Heather McDonough**, practical session exploring heritage sites along the Lea 1-4pm £10/5

**Sunday 29 April Gallery Tour & River Lea Boat Cruise**, imagine the industrial riverbank from the water, 12.30-3.30pm £10/5

**Thursday 3 May First Thursday Late Opening**, with talk from resident artist Sarah Desmarais, 6-9pm FREE

**Sunday 6 May Exploring the River Lea by Bike & Gallery Tour**, 11am-2pm (cycling along the towpath) £5/3

**Sunday 13 May Community Celebration Day**, 12-4pm FREE

**Sunday 20 May Gallery Tour & River Lea Boat Cruise**, imagine the industrial riverbank from the water, 12.30-3.30pm £10/5

**Saturday 26 May Fabric and Film with artist-duo Kaleidoworks**, family event exploring hands-on textile processes with experimental film, 12-4pm, FREE

**Sunday 27 May Colouring in the Place**, natural dye workshop, exploring plants from east London. In collaboration with Chelsea Fringe. 11am-3pm (drop-in) FREE

**Thursday 31 May Location and Innovation**, panel discussion exploring the importance of location for innovation in the textile industry. With Anna Fitzpatrick, Mary Schoeser, Katelyn Toth-Frejel and other guest speakers. 7pm £5/3

**Saturday 2 June Guided historical walk on Raw Materials: Textiles**, £5/3

**Thursday 7 June First Thursday Late Opening**, with talk from resident artist Freya Gabie, 6-9pm FREE

**Saturday 9 June** A woven dance, a dancing weave, join artist Freya Gabie to create a giant, architectural 'danced' weaving with raw material jute. Families welcome, 1-4pm (drop-in) FREE

**Sunday 10 June Gallery Tour & River Lea Boat Cruise**, imagine the industrial riverbank from the water, 12.30-3.30pm £10/5

**Sunday 24 June Indigo dyeing workshop**, join artist Sarah Desmarais for a paste resist and indigo workshop. Learn how to dye with this over 100-year-old technique £10/5

For full event details and to book tickets visit our website. Prices are listed £full price/concession

### #RawMaterialsTextiles

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For further information and images please contact:

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[www.bowarts.org](http://www.bowarts.org) | [www.twitter.com/BowArts](https://www.twitter.com/BowArts) | [www.facebook.com/bowarts](https://www.facebook.com/bowarts)

Press Release: 16 April 2018

### Notes to editors

**Exhibition open:** 18 April – 24 June 2018

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

**Telephone:** +44 (0)20 8980 7774

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

**Admission:** Free

**Travel:** Bow Road Tube Station, Bow Church DLR, Cycle Super-highway 2

### 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 across east and south east London. Bow Arts also runs the Nunnery Gallery from its headquarters in Bow, a free not-for-profit art space that presents a diverse range of exhibitions and events, often focusing on local heritage.

[www.bowarts.org](http://www.bowarts.org)

### About the Heritage Lottery Fund

Thanks to National Lottery players, we invest money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about - from the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife. [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk) Follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) and use #NationalLottery and #HLFsupported.

