

Press Release: 2 February 2018

## Bow Arts' heritage exhibition series *Raw Materials* wins National Lottery support for textiles, with loans confirmed from the V&A



Image: printed cotton, Robert Jones & Co, Old Ford, English 1769 © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Bow Arts is delighted to announce receiving a £34,100 National Lottery grant to continue their community driven project *Raw Materials*, which explores the industrial history of the River Lea Valley, east London. *Raw Materials: Textiles* will examine a rich and little-known history that includes silk weaving, calico printing, jute spinning and the invention of dye colours – all along the banks of the River Lea, moments away from Bow Arts' Nunnery Gallery. The exhibition will present loans – including a fascinating piece of Georgian fabric made in Bow's Old Ford district (see image) – alongside contemporary interpretation from resident artists Freya Gabie and Sarah Desmarais.

*Raw Materials: Wood*, which was previously awarded National Lottery funding by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), ran across 2016/17, and, thanks to National Lottery players, Bow Arts looks forward to continuing its local heritage research through *textiles*. On Bow Arts' doorstep, the River Lea runs through the heart of east London – including the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, Hackney Wick and Walthamstow – and, although now enjoyed recreationally, once drove the industrial development of the area. Project partners include The Drapers' Company, London College of Fashion (LCF), Jewish Museum London, Victoria & Albert Museum, William Morris Gallery, and local archives from Barking and Dagenham, Hackney, Haringey, Newham and Tower Hamlets. *Raw Materials: Textiles* will highlight a fast disappearing history with research, heritage maps, walking and boat tours and an exhibition of unearthed objects at Bow Arts' Nunnery Gallery in spring 2018.

The project is careful to incorporate modern interpretation alongside the historical. Two residencies will accompany the project, with Gabie and Desmarais making new work and running workshops

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encompassing heritage textiles techniques. LCF BA Fashion students will also be using *Raw Materials* research as inspiration for their heritage-making module and a selection of students will show as part of the final exhibition. A community steering group, who will drive much of the project's content by attending archival visits and collating research, will work alongside in a project that puts the interest of those that live and work in the area at the heart of its outcomes.

For more information and to follow the project see [rawmaterials.bowarts.org](http://rawmaterials.bowarts.org)

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### Notes to editors

#### 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.

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The National Lottery**

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