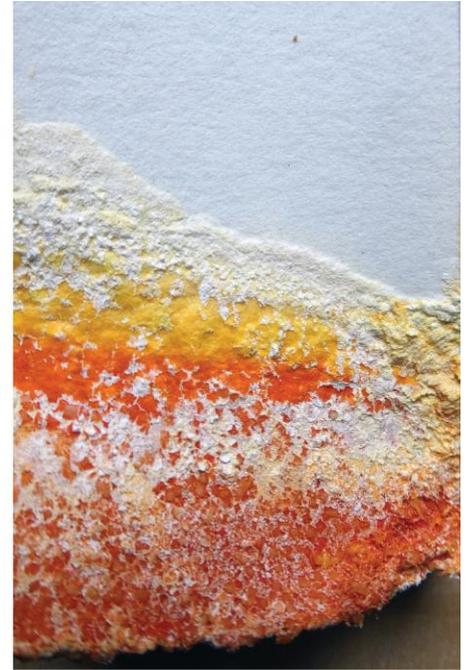


Press Release: 21 March 2018

## New exhibition reveals the stories and inventions of east London's forgotten textile trade along the River Lea



Images, from left: printed cotton, Robert Jones & Co, Old Ford, English 1769 © Victoria and Albert Museum, London; family photograph, courtesy Sam Stockman; © Freya Gabie

### Raw Materials: Textiles

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

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** – whose conceptual sculpture explores trinitrotoluene, the yellow dye that was later used as an explosive – and **Sarah Desmarias**, whose textiles use traditional dye and printing methods, including the dye-fast use of the colour madder 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/)

**#RawMaterialsTextiles**

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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)

### 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.

