

## **Raw Materials: Textiles Resident Makers' Brief**

Bow Arts is looking for makers / designers / artists for two residencies that will form an integral part of the Heritage Lottery Funded project *Raw Materials: Textiles*. The residencies are research-based – with no working / studio space provided – to the aim of making new work for exhibition.

*Raw Materials: Textiles* will explore the industrial heritage of textiles in the River Lea Valley, east London. It will be the second phase of *Raw Materials* project, the first of which focussed on wood, culminating in an exhibition in the Nunnery Gallery from April-June 2017. Following on from [Raw Materials: Wood](#)'s success, the project will record the relatively unexplored heritage of textiles in the specific geographical area of the Lower Lea Valley, local to the Nunnery Gallery and Bow Arts' studio sites.

Research will be conducted through archive and museum collections, on-site visits and exploration, led by an active volunteer steering group and supported by local project partners. The residencies will provide a contemporary response to the heritage of textiles along the River Lea, to the aim of engaging new audiences and highlighting the relevance of the area's textile heritage to contemporary textile design and making.

This is an exciting opportunity for a maker to further engage with heritage in their practice and explore the influence a material (textiles) can have on a geographical area's development. The residency will be focused on providing a development and exhibition opportunity for a maker – to the aim of producing a physical response to heritage that will be exhibited alongside archival objects in the *Raw Materials: Textiles* exhibition – as well engaging new audiences with heritage through contemporary work, drawing out the relevance of heritage in contemporary textiles, fashion or design.

Part of the residencies' role in community engagement will be running a series of workshops that engage groups in textiles skills – inspired by heritage – at the Nunnery Gallery and at London College of Fashion's Fashion Hub in nearby Poplar.

The *Raw Materials: Textiles* project will be highly publicised and a great opportunity for a maker to increase the recognition of their work, in heritage, arts and fashion communities. The residency will also provide opportunities to work directly with project partners, including local archives at Barking and Dagenham, Hackney, Haringey, Newham and Tower Hamlets, as well as the Drapers' Company, London College of Fashion, The Jewish Museum London, William Morris Gallery, Valence House and the V&A, all whom are supporting the project through access to their collections and specialist advice.

The residency research can be carried out in the following ways:

- By attending the project archive and institution collection visits.
- By attending the River Lea heritage site visits.
- By researching independently any element of the industrial heritage of textiles in the River Lea area, including area of impact such as the environmental effects of industry on water.
- By investigating heritage textile techniques that were used in the River Lea area.
- By working with students from the London College of Fashion, who will be incorporating the project's heritage research into their BA Fashion course.

- By talking to members of the community who remember textile industries' influence on the area, such as through sweatshops / tailors.

The idea for the final response for exhibition and the focus of the skills workshops will be developed with the Gallery Co-Director of the Nunnery Gallery and the *Raw Materials* Project Manager, both of whom will provide support and guidance throughout the residencies.

### **Applicant Specification**

Applicants should have:

- A proven track record of producing work independently and to deadlines.
- A proven track record of working with the material of textiles or be able to demonstrate a developed interest in working with textiles.
- Experience of leading workshops / working with a community, or a proven desire to develop this experience with some evidence of steps taken to do so.
- A flexible approach to working that bears in mind the focus / direction of the fellow residency.
- Ambition to develop their practice through engagement with heritage / an interest in the industrial heritage of the Lower Lea Valley.

### **Budget**

There is a budget of £5,000 per residency to respond to this brief. The budget should cover all research time, tools, materials and related making costs to create the final piece(s) ready for exhibition. Fees to run textile skills workshops will be additional, at Bow Arts' half-day artist rate of £200 per workshop. The spending of the budget will be in consultation with and monitored by the *Raw Materials* Project Manager, with guidance from the Gallery Co-Director.

### **Timescale**

The residency will begin with the project research starting in October 2017. The made response must be ready for exhibition by early **April 2018**, to show in the *Raw Materials: Textiles* end of project exhibition at the Nunnery Gallery, running from April-June 2018.

### **Application**

Please email a response to this brief in no more than 1000 words, answering the following questions:

1. Why are you interested in the industrial heritage of textiles, specifically in the River Lea Valley area?
2. Why do you think your practice / approach would benefit from this residency and the access it provides to archival collections?
3. Which area of research relating to the industrial heritage of textiles interests you most and why?
4. What work might you hope to produce in response to this brief?
5. How do you think your practice / approach would positively engage community / vulnerable groups through skills workshops?

Applications should be sent to Sophie Hill, Gallery Co-Director on [shill@bowarts.com](mailto:shill@bowarts.com)

### **Deadline**

5pm, Friday 15 September 2017