

Press Release: 7 April 2017

Raw Materials: Wood now open at the Nunnery Gallery, the first in a series of exhibitions and events explores the industrial heritage of east London through the key materials of its past



[Installation shots available to download](#)

[Private View](#) Thursday 6 April, 6-9pm

[Exhibition](#) 7 April – 4 June 2017

[Installation shots available](#) Friday 7 April

Raw Materials: Wood will take viewers on a journey through the history of east London's waterways, factories and businesses, guided by one of the key materials that carved its progression.

Following the industrial heritage of wood through a vein of London's industry – the River Lea – the exhibition will be a rare chance to see a diverse collection of archive images and objects, many of which are not normally on public display, together with work from contemporary makers, casting an insight into both our past and present. Made possible with generous support from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Foundation for FutureLondon, a diverse event programme will accompany the show – including wood workshops, riverside walks and boat tours – all a stone's throw away from where the Lea's waters still shape east London's development, at Bow Arts' Nunnery Gallery.

Wood, a versatile and integral material to the development of industry, began its journey raw: imported through the Thames and up the River Lea to feed the many businesses that once lined the riverbanks. *Raw Materials: Wood* delves into this past, from timber yards and sawmills, such as James Latham in Hackney, to leading furniture makers, together with newly recorded stories from those that remember a fast-disappearing industrial east London. Exploring stories of industrial change, movement and immigration, including businesses' aptitude to adapt during times of war and changing communities, *Raw Materials* brings to light a history that is more relevant today than ever.

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A new commission from resident artist Silke Dettmers – a thrilling large-scale sculpture – will accompany the uncovered objects, offering a surreal reflection that subtly mimics the forms and materials of industry. Uniquely, the project's research has been carried out and the stories made visible through the hard work and research of a local community-led steering group, with whom Dettmers worked closely.

The Building Crafts College, founded by the Worshipful Company of Carpenters in 1893, has also been a partner of the project, incorporating its research on heritage techniques into its furniture making course, and students will be exhibiting their newly crafted cabinets as part of the exhibition.

Exhibition highlights include: the brilliant collection of photographs of Harris Lebus' Tottenham factory; an inscribed saw handed down over generations, part of a cabinet makers toolkit loaned from the Jewish Museum, London; ornate wooden printing blocks from Newham archives; and a rare, never before publicly shown, scrapbook following the 'Old Carpentarians', loaned from the City of London's Carpenters' Company.

Raw Materials' research and stories can be followed on its free online resource and accompanying map, enabling visitors to follow heritage routes on foot, cycle or boat rawmaterials.bowarts.org.

----Ends----

Exhibition events

Thursday 13 April **River Lea Boat Cruise & Gallery tour**, 10am-1pm £10/5

Wednesday 19 April **Cabinets of Curiosities Talk: In Conversation with Silke Dettmers and Neil Austin**, 7-9pm, £5/3

Saturday 22 April **Guided Historical Walk & Gallery Tour**, 11am-12pm, £5/3

Sunday 30 April **Origami Workshop and Community Celebration Day**, 12-4pm FREE

Thursday 4 May **First Thursday Late Opening**, 6-9pm FREE

Sunday 7 May **Guided Historical Walk & Gallery Tour**, 2-3pm, 35/3

Sunday 14 May **Guided Historical Walk & Gallery Tour**, 11am-12pm, £5/3

Sunday 21 May **River Lea Boat Cruise & Gallery Tour**, 1-4pm, £10/5

Saturday 27 May **Family Wood workshop (2 parts)**, 10.30am-4pm, £10/6, £25 family (full day); £6/4 (half day)

Part 1: **Den Making** 10:30am-12pm

Part 2: **Mobile sculptures for the home**, 2-4pm

Wednesday 31 May **Faking It; The Many Guises of Wood**, in partnership with the **V&A**, 7-9pm, £5/3

Thursday 1 June **First Thursday Late Opening** 6-9pm, FREE with optional evening river walk & gallery tour, 7:30pm £5/3

For full event details and to book tickets go online. Prices are listed £full price/Senior Citizen, student, child, Bow Arts artist

For further information and images please contact

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[Download images](#)

Web: www.bowarts.org | www.twitter.com/BowArts | www.facebook.com/bowarts

Notes to editors

Exhibition: Raw Materials: Wood; exploring the heritage of the River Lea Valley

Dates: 7 April – 4 June 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

Contact: +44 (0)20 8980 7774 / nunnery@bowarts.com

Website: bowarts.rawmaterials.org

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

About the Heritage Lottery Fund

Sharing Heritage is for any not-for-profit group wanting to explore their community's heritage. With a commitment from HLF of £3m each year, Sharing Heritage grants between £3,000 and £10,000 are now available to groups who want to discover their local heritage. Projects can cover a wide spectrum of subject matter from exploring local archaeology and a community's cultures and traditions to identifying and recording local wildlife and protecting the surrounding environment to managing and training volunteers, and holding festivals and events to commemorate the past.

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
[@heritagelottery](https://twitter.com/heritagelottery)

About the Foundation for FutureLondon

Foundation for FutureLondon was created to work with the Mayor of London to ensure that all Londoners can benefit from the opportunities created by the unique collaboration of world class institutions forming the cultural and education district on Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. FFL also coordinates the fundraising efforts for this emblematic project.

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Supported by
The National Lottery[®]
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