



PRESS RELEASE

Nunnery Gallery and Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives present
living in fear of quicksand

Maria Amidu

3 March – 21 May 2023



living in fear of quicksand, installation, Nunnery Gallery
Photo: Jonathan Bassett

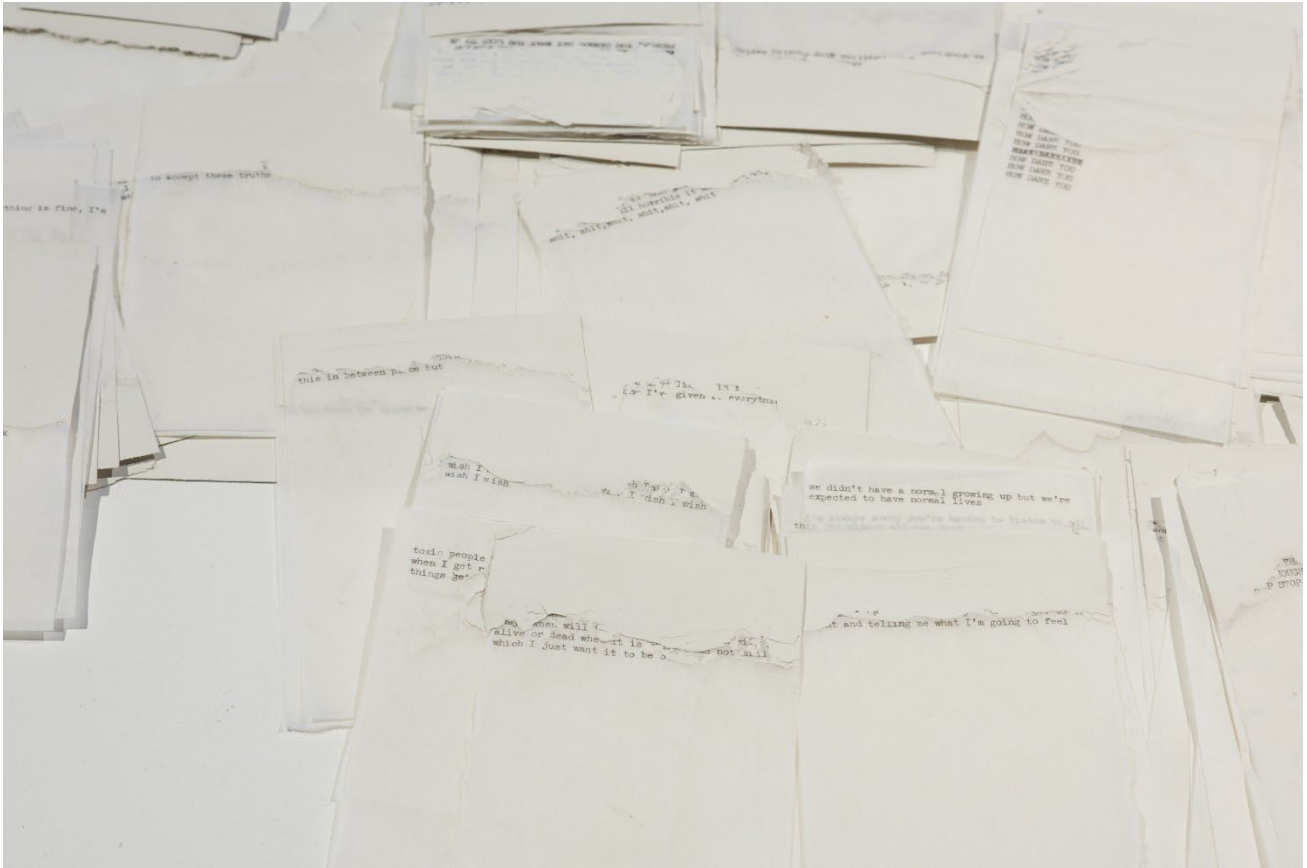
living in fear of quicksand is a solo exhibition by Maria Amidu comprising new artworks and archival material that unfolds across two locations in Bow – the Nunnery Gallery and Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives. The title of the exhibition, alluding to an ever-present sense of danger and subtly contextualising the artworks within the 1970s, examines the fragmentary nature of memory in relation to a fragile experience of home.

A limited-edition print work – 25 years in the making and the genesis of *living in fear of quicksand*, a film piece, a sound work, a text-based installation and a bespoke paint colour are being exhibited for the first time. The print work – a memoir of sorts – traces the artist's early childhood living in Sleaford House on the Lincoln Estate (within walking distance of the gallery); growing up in state care in Bexhill-on-Sea; and consequential experiences in her adult life.



air, 2022, installation, Nunnery Gallery

Photo: Jonathan Bassett



things I want known and also do not want to share, 2022, detail

Photo: Jonathan Bassett

The exhibition continues a short bus ride away at the Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives. Here the focus is placed on the architectural and social history of the Lincoln Estate and the artist's brief place within it.

From among the extensive collections held at the Archives the artist has unearthed council correspondence, plans, drawings and newspaper cuttings about the Estate – material that has played an integral role in the development of the resulting artworks. A selection of these historic records are on show alongside some items from the artist's personal archive, accompanied by a timeline documenting the development of the Estate.

living in fear of quicksand first began to emerge in 2005 after Maria Amidu devised a project for looked after children with the Foundling Museum.

living in fear of quicksand has been conceived by the artist in collaboration with independent curator Gemma Lloyd. Accompanying the exhibition is an exhibition booklet of Maria Amidu and Gemma Lloyd in conversation. Maria Amidu also worked closely with Dubmorphology (Trevor Mathison and Gary Stewart) on *1973*, and the new paint colour was mixed in partnership with Dulux.

The development of the artist's new work and the exhibition is supported by Arts Council England and supporters who wish to remain anonymous.



living in fear of quicksand, installation, Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives.

Photo: Jonathan Bassett

EVENTS

The exhibition is accompanied by an exciting and varied event programme exploring the exhibition's themes, including talks, screenings, free family workshops, arts and crafts activities, walks, and a sharing circle exploring communal healing through sound and the objects and oral traditions that ground us.

Workshop: Porcelain paper clay workshop with Victoria Burgher
Saturday 25 March, 11am–12.30pm, Bow Arts Outdoor Courtyard, £10/£7

Bow Families: sensory ikebana – self portraits through objects with Lou-Atessa Marcellin
Sunday 26 March, 11am–1pm, Bow Arts Outdoor Courtyard, FREE, drop-in

Sharing Circle: archiving memories and sonic healing with Aditi Ahalya Jaganathan
Thursday 30 March, 6–8.30pm, Bow Arts Courtyard Room, £5/£3

Workshop: East End History Club – social housing
Saturday 1 April 2–4pm, Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives, FREE, drop-in

Conversation: Farzana Khan in conversation with Dhelia Snoussi for *Rehearsing Freedoms*

Sunday 2 April, 2-4pm, Bow Arts Courtyard Room, FREE

Talk and screening: Artists on the Lincoln Estate

Thursday 13 April, 6-7pm, Online (Zoom), FREE

Walk: herbalism and natural remedy walk with Rasheeqa Ahmad

Saturday 22 April, 11am-1pm, Canal Towpath – meeting point sent out after booking, £7/£5

Bow Families: natural dyes and painting with Lou-Atessa Marcellin

Sunday 30 April, 11am-1pm, Bow Arts Courtyard Room, FREE, drop-in

Walking tour: Histories of Bow Common with Heritage Officers Sanjida Alam and Genova Messiah, Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives

Saturday 6 May, 1-3pm, Meeting point sent out after booking, FREE

Workshop: Indigo, the deepest of blues – an introduction to indigo dyeing with Lucille Junkere

Sunday 14 May, 1-4pm, Bow Arts Outdoor Courtyard, £15/£12

Workshop: an introduction to creative papermaking and manipulation with Lucy Baxandall

Saturday 20 May, 11am-1pm, Bow Arts Outdoor Courtyard, £10/£7

To book onto events held at Bow Arts, go to bowarts.org/whats-on

To book onto events held at Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives, go to ideastore.co.uk/local-history

For the public programme Maria Amidu has chosen a playlist of films to 'speak on her behalf'. They examine the following themes: loss, an unprotected childhood and the 'adultification' of children in crisis situations.

Rocks (2019); dir. Sarah Gavron

Rabbit Proof Fence (2002); dir. Phillip Noyce

The Colour Purple; (1985) dir. Steven Spielberg

Precious (2009); dir. Lee Daniels

Beasts of the Southern Wild (2012); dir. Benh Zeitlin

Queen of Katwe (2016); dir. Mira Nair

Zion (2018); dir. Floyd Russ

Moonlight (2016); dir. Barry Jenkins

Central Station (1998); dir. Walter Salles

Farming (2018); dir. Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje

The Last Tree (2019); dir. Shola Amoo

Hunt for the Wilderpeople (2016); dir. Taika Waititi
Wasp (2003); dir. Andrea Arnold
Aftersun (2022); dir. Charlotte Wells
Ray & Liz (2018); dir. Richard Billingham
Oranges and Sunshine (2010); dir. Jim Loach
Tracks (2013); dir. John Curran
I Tonya (2017); dir. Craig Gillespie
Room (2015); dir. Lenny Abrahamson
What Maisie Knew (2012); dir. Scott McGehee
The Most Beautiful Boy in the World (2021); dir. Kristina Lindström and Kristian Petri
My Life as a Courgette (2016); dir. Claude Barras
Nowhere Special (2020); dir. Uberto Pasolini
Ratcatcher (1999); dir. Lynn Ramsay
A Monster Calls (2016); dir. J. A. Bayona
Captain Fantastic (2016); dir. Matt Ross

For younger audiences:

James and the Giant Peach (1996); dir. Henry Selick

ENDS

**For interview requests, images and further information, please contact Gemma Lloyd,
Curator and Project Manager: gemma.lloyd57@gmail.com**

NOTES TO EDITORS

living in fear of quicksand

Maria Amidu

3 March – 21 May 2023, Nunnery Gallery

3 March – 20 May, Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives.

VENUE DETAILS

Nunnery Gallery, 181 Bow Rd, Bow, London E3 2SJ. Open: Tuesday to Sunday 10:00am – 4:00pm. Free admission. T: 020 8980 7774. E: nunnery@bowarts.com W: <https://bowarts.org/nunnery>

Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives, 277 Bancroft Road, London, E1 4DQ. Open: Monday to Friday 10.00am – 5.00pm, Thursday until 7.00pm, and 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month, 10.00am – 5.00pm. Free admission. T: 020 7364 1290. E: localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk. W: <https://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history>

ABOUT MARIA AMIDU

Maria Amidu studied glass and ceramics West Surrey College of Art & Design and the Royal College of Art, and she is currently pursuing doctoral research in the School of Arts & Humanities at the Royal College of Art. The title of her project is *Making that remembers: a correspondence between emotion and material*.

Maria's artistic concerns are influenced by the complexities of the relational – between people, and between people and place. Through writing, printmaking, artist's books, audio visual works and sometimes glassmaking she tries to substantiate what might be going on in collective situations, paying specific attention to what is hidden, obscured or unspoken. She has developed projects with museums, galleries and other cultural organisations including: *Watermarks* (2021), Metal Culture; *"Where are we?"* (2020) Mid-Sussex, District Council; *edge/threshold/brink* (2018), Nuit Blanche Toronto; *Act, Campaign, Petition, Reform, Lobby, Argue and Soit droit fait come est desire (Let it be done as it is desired)* (2015); Houses of Parliament; *Workforce (a work in progress)* (2014), National Maritime Museum; *a moment of your time* (2013), People United in association with Turner Contemporary; *Betty, Pat, Diane, Ivy, Lynette, Bonney* (2011), Parramatta Artists' Studios; *Dolphin Loves Disco (and other favourite words)* (2012), PEER; *21st Century Reporter* (2005), Foundling Museum; *Tribute* (2002), Arnolfini and Bristol Royal Children's Hospital; *Finders, Keepers* (2001), Horniman Museum & Gardens; and *...a moment caught in three dimension(s)* (1999), 198 Contemporary Arts & Learning. Her work is in several public and private collections including the Parliamentary Archives (UK), V&A, Arnolfini Collection Trust, and Limerick National Drawing Collection. www.mariaamidu.co.uk

ABOUT THE NUNNERY GALLERY, BOW ARTS

Housed in a former 19th-century convent building, surrounded by artist studios, the Nunnery Gallery is Bow Arts' not-for-profit art space. The programme pushes boundaries with an original and creative approach that explores the stories of east London and celebrates today's artistic talent. Bow Arts creates inspirational, supportive environments where artists and communities interact, learn and flourish. Since 1994, Bow Arts has nurtured London's diverse creativity and talent, providing artists and creative practitioners with affordable workspace, connecting them with local communities and supporting their professional development. The charity gives communities throughout London greater access to and interaction with the arts, through a schools programme, workshops, exhibitions and events. <https://bowarts.org/nunnery>

ABOUT TOWER HAMLETS LOCAL HISTORY LIBRARY & ARCHIVES

Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives is part of Tower Hamlets Council and is the home of outstanding and unique resources documenting the history of London's world famous East End. Through an extraordinary range of original archives, images, maps, audio-visual material, pamphlets and paintings, the changing local landscapes and lived experiences of individuals and communities in Tower Hamlets are preserved.

The Grade II listed library building dates from 1860 and is located in Mile End. The extensive local history library covers a vast range of popular subjects such as migration and communities, local industries and political movements; and includes thousands of photographs and press cuttings as well as rare publications. The exhibition hall hosts themed displays of materials from the collections as well as creative interventions by artists inspired by them. <https://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history>

