

Poplar Consortium Exhibition

Celebrating 10 Years



Lansbury Lawrence Primary School

Artist Amy Leung worked with EYFS and KS1 SEND satellite classes, Yinka Class and Robbins Room, on a project exploring drawing, painting and sculpture in a broad and sensory way.

Through a series of short sessions, Amy worked with the groups to introduce and investigate a range of new materials and creative processes. The sessions took inspiration from Yinka Shonibare's wide reaching practice alongside other contemporary artists, including neurodivergent artists and creatives from diverse backgrounds and heritages.

Following the sessions, Amy compiled three resource kits with a range of materials and prompt sheets, for class teachers to use as stimulus in further activities, allowing the pupils to continue their learning through sensory exploration.



Exploring Art
Robbins Room and Yinka Class (EYFS and KS1)
with artist Amy Leung
Autumn 2024 - Spring 2025



"Teachers were introduced to new artists, new techniques, new ways to communicate and express ourselves."
Kerri Sellens, Assistant Head



Malmesbury Primary School

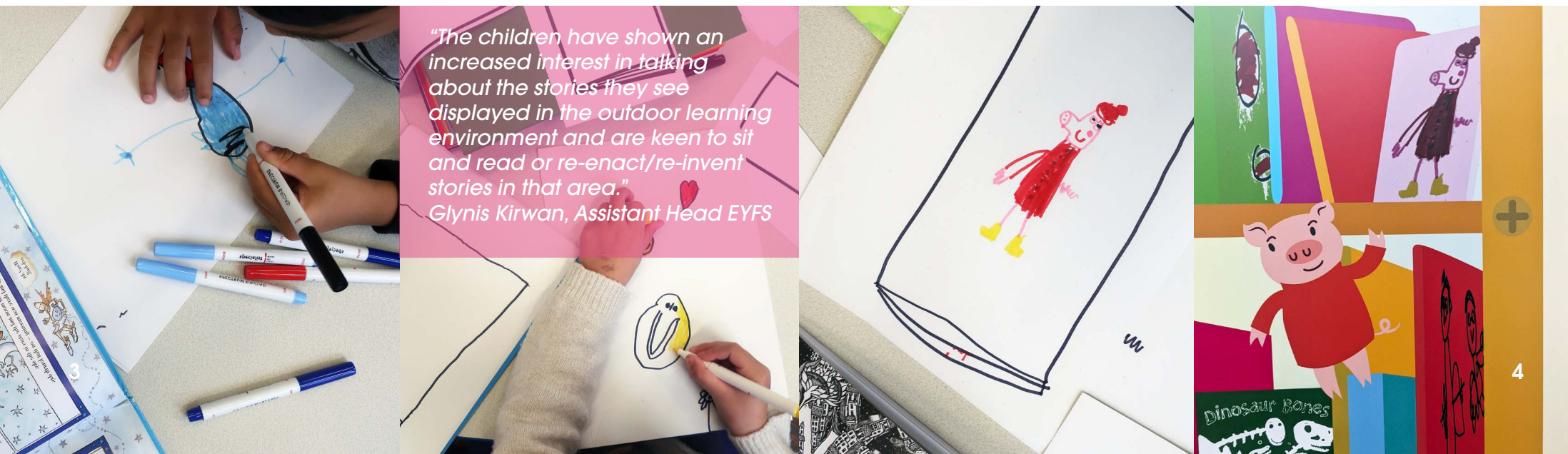
Artist Tom Berry worked with both reception classes at Malmesbury Primary School to help create a new permanent artwork for the reading area in the Early Years playground.

Tom worked with the two reception classes over one day in small groups of four at a time. With a series of prompts, children created drawings of books and imagery from within them, using the stories read in Nursery and Reception as inspiration. Tom collated the children's artwork to produce a large bookcase design, incorporating some of the covers and characters from familiar stories alongside the children's drawings.

The design was printed onto Dibond panels and installed on the wall behind and beams above a large chair, creating a cosy reading area for children to enjoy.



Early Years Reading Den
Reception pupils
with artist Tom Berry
Autumn 2024 - Spring 2025



Mayflower Primary School

Artist Esther Neslen worked with pupils from Mayflower Primary in a series of sessions inspired by the work of different artists.

Responses were created through drawing, collage, cyanotype and printing activities as well as exploring how light moves through colour and space by playing with different materials. Esther then collated the pupils' work to produce designs which were printed onto three flags for the school playground. While the flags reflect influences from all the workshops and focus artists, the work of Corita Kent has been chosen as the unifying theme. As the flags will be viewable from both sides, some of the text is flipped or upside down in a similar way to many of Corita Kent's prints, meaning the work can be seen as text and as image simultaneously. The project was part of a wider mission to help implement new additions to the curriculum on the back of a targeted teacher CPD project.



Flags
Reception, Year 3 and
Year 4 pupils
with artist Esther Neslen
Autumn 2024



St Paul with St Luke and St Saviour's Primary School

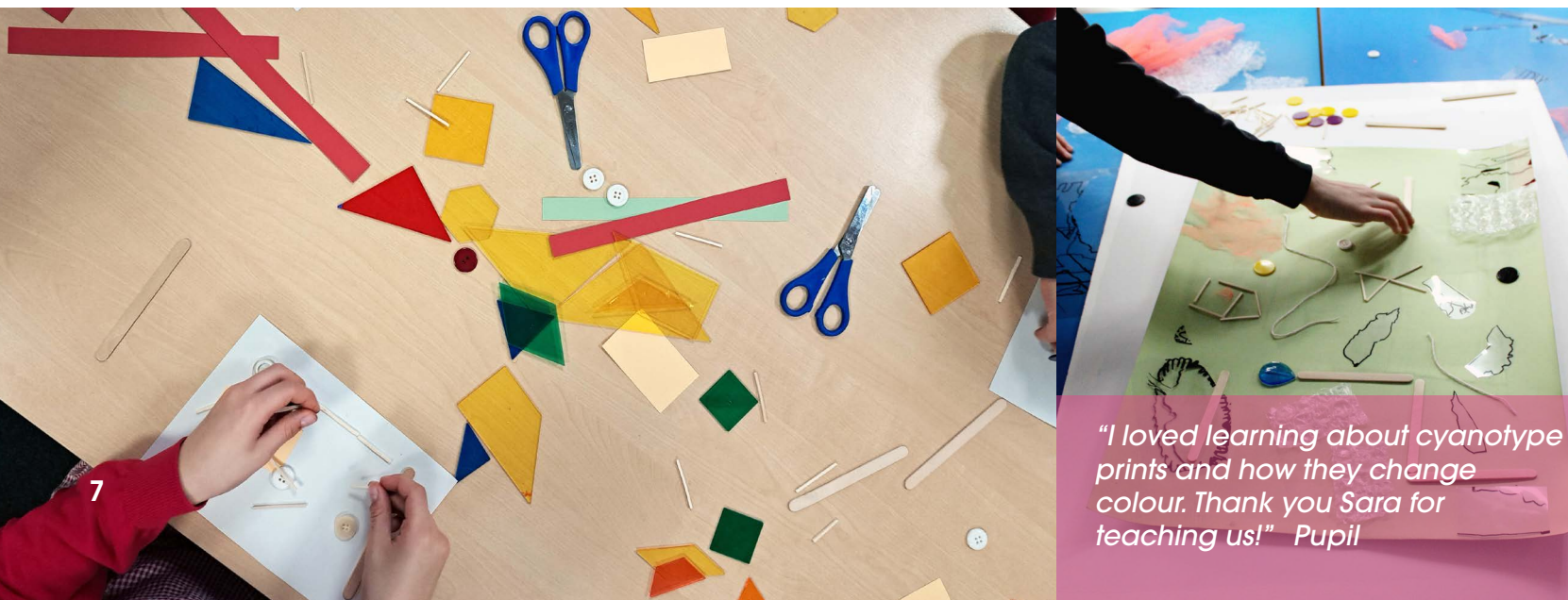
Artist Sara Heywood worked with all children from Years 1 - 6 across both schools on a cross-curricular project exploring the photographic process of cyanotypes.

Pupils worked together to consider composition, taking inspiration from their class topics of Plants, Shapes & Grids, Rocks and Fossils, Anglo Saxons & Vikings, Properties & Changes of Materials and Electricity & Light. KS2 children worked in small groups to create collaborative large-scale cyanotypes, drawing onto acetate and exposing their images alongside a range of different objects. KS1 classes worked on smaller individual pieces, using objects and paper cut outs to make their compositions.

All of the cyanotypes created are now on display throughout both schools.



Cyanotypes
All pupils from Years 1 - 6
with artist Sara Heywood
Autumn 2024



"I loved learning about cyanotype prints and how they change colour. Thank you Sara for teaching us!" Pupil



Wellington Primary School

Artist Tom Berry continues his work with Wellington Primary from the last two years, developing their school core value characters: Schola, Benesse and Respectus.

This year, Tom is returning to Wellington to create designs for a series of windows at the front of the school, showcasing the characters to a wider audience.

Tom worked with the school's Arts Ambassadors for a day to create drawings, prints, paintings and paper cut outs, using the characters and each of their behaviours as reference. The children's outcomes provided inspiration for Tom's first draft designs which show the content of each window. After reworking and adding the school's brand colours, the final window designs will continue the design aesthetic of the banners and books Tom created previously for Wellington.



Wellington Windows
Arts Ambassadors (pupils from Year 1 - 6)
With artist Tom Berry
Spring 2025



Woolmore Primary School

Artist Katka Krajči visited Woolmore Primary this year to lead workshops which saw pupils and teachers alike benefitting from the input, guidance and technical expertise of a professional artist.

Katka joined Year 1 to introduce them to formally working with clay as a sculptural material for the first time, responding to their topic - Dinosaur Planet.

Year 2 used the work of artist Stephen Wiltshire to inspire their drawings of London and local landmarks, improving their mark-making skills and beginning to experiment with tone to depict light, shadow and texture in more depth. The project follows on from previous Bow Arts workshops with Woolmore, where an artist visits to deliver a Cornerstones curriculum unit and its associated skills.



Curriculum workshops
Pupils from Year 1 - 5
with artists Katka Krajči & Emily Hopkins
Summer 2024 & Spring 2025



In the summer term, Emily Hopkins also worked with Year 5 pupils on their topic Groundbreaking Greeks, in which they learnt how to sculpt and decorate their own clay pots inspired by Ancient Greece.



Teacher CPD

The teacher CPD programme aims to develop teachers' skills in creative practice, art forms, and materials to apply to their classroom practice.

Amy Leung led a session exploring creativity with children in EYFS and KS1 SEND groups. Teachers took part in a collaborative building exercise to generate ideas and encourage conversation. Inspired by Amy's project with Lansbury Lawrence, there were three areas set up for teachers to move between – drawing, painting and sculpture. At each table teachers were encouraged to explore a range of materials and their possibilities, using prompts to inspire self-guided activities.

There was an opportunity to share ideas with the group, equipping participants with new approaches to take back to the classroom.

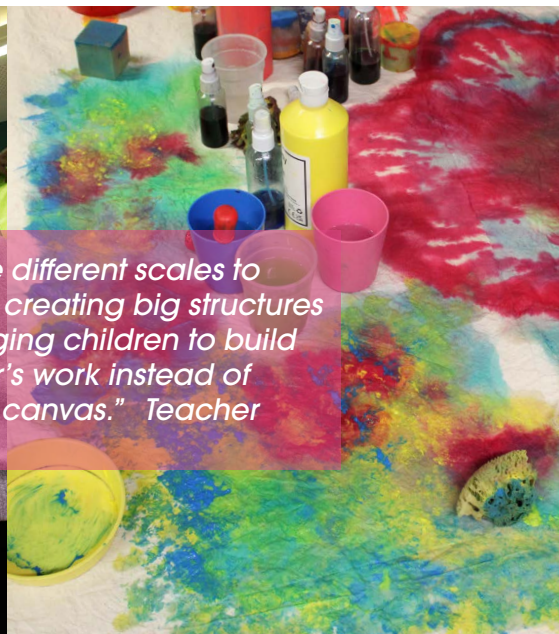
Natalie Ryde worked with the Poplar teachers exploring ways to use art processes and artists' work to deliver learning outcomes across the curriculum.

Natalie introduced the group to simple foam printmaking techniques to create visual representations of different fractions as fruit segments. Teachers looked at the process of paper marbling as a way to learn about the properties of different liquids, and discovered how marbled paper could then be used in connection with other topics. Natalie also provided examples of diverse artist references suitable for approaching a range of subjects within schools.

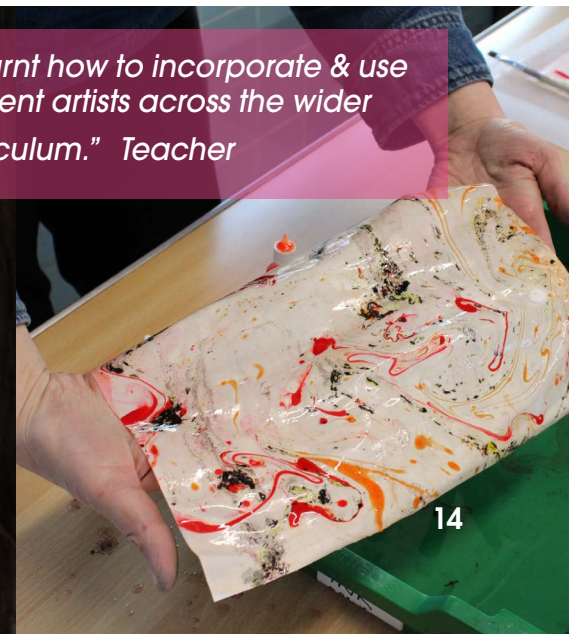


"I learnt to use different scales to work from like creating big structures and encouraging children to build on each other's work instead of using a blank canvas." Teacher

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"I learnt how to incorporate & use different artists across the wider curriculum." Teacher



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Arts Award Explore

Artists Paige Denham and Leanne Ingram led a three-day arts club during the October half term for children from six of the Poplar Consortium schools.

The groups also had the chance to visit Bow Arts' Rum Factory Studios in Wapping, and were introduced to the work of artists Kirsty Chan, Fatima Ali and Leanne Ingram.

Over the three days, children took part in a range of activities and completed an Arts Award Explore booklet to present evidence of their findings.

To complete the award, children must take part in arts activities, explore the work of artists and arts organisations, create a final artwork and share what they have enjoyed and achieved with others. On the final day, children helped to curate an exhibition of their artwork, for parents and carers to visit and engage with.



Pupils from Year 3 - 6
with artists Paige Denham & Leanne Ingram
Autumn 2024



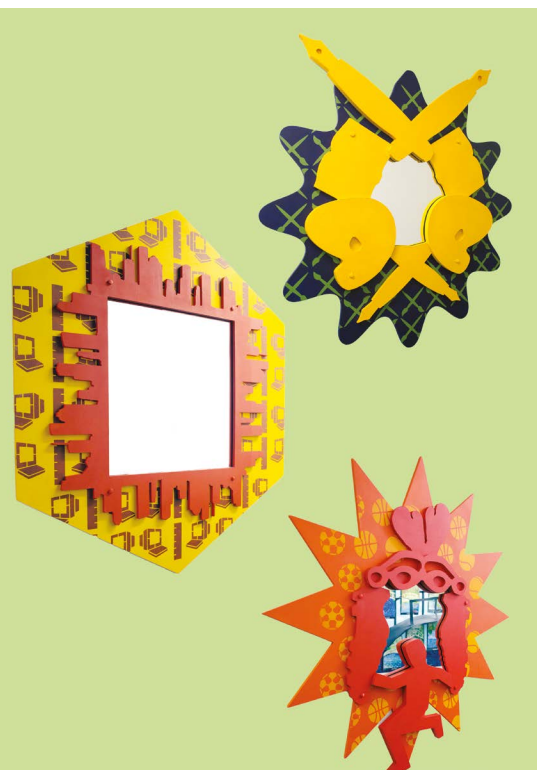
"(The children) were able to talk about the way they made the mosaic and the artist it was inspired by." Lead artist



10 Year Project Highlights

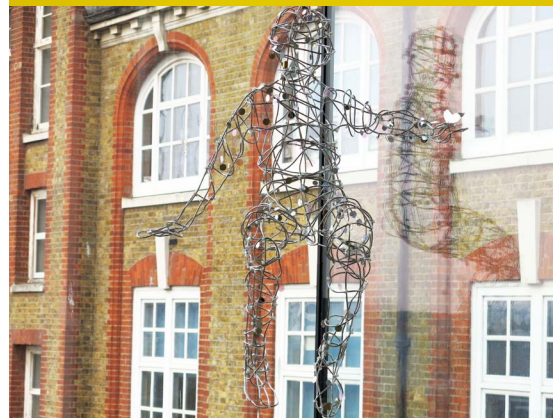
To celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Poplar Consortium, we are looking back at some project highlights from the last decade.

As our longest running consortia and one of the first, the Poplar Consortium has helped to shape the way in which we currently work in partnership with schools.



Bygrove Primary School *Aspirations Corridor*, 2015

Artist Carl Stevenson worked with Year 6 pupils to create a series of framed mirrors for the Year 6 corridor. Carl worked with pupils on drawing and collage workshops, featuring images based on aspirations, dreams and goals. They then worked together to refine their individual designs and incorporate them within the larger design for the final artworks. The finished mirrors were then installed along the school corridor.



Marner Primary School *Minibeasts*, 2014

Artist Debs Hoy worked with Reception and Nursery children to create artworks for their playground and wild garden spaces. Debs delivered a series of hands-on workshops with the early years classes to create insect and minibeast artworks, working with a variety of materials including clay. These objects inspired a series of final artworks that have been installed on the wooden fence posts in the outside space, to be used as an inspiring learning tool for the early years pupils.

Langdon Park School *Wire figures*, 2014

Artist Reza Ben Gajra worked with Year 9 students to create life-sized artworks of figures using wire and metal sheeting. Students were introduced to a range of new tools and techniques for working with and manipulating metal. They created large scale design drawings to develop their ideas and then worked in groups to make three artworks for the stairwell in the Music and Drama block.



Manorfield Primary School *Mastering an Art: Glass, 2015*

Year 5 pupils worked with artist Damien Robinson to ask, 'What does it take to master an art?' with a focus on glass. To better understand everything they could do about glass they made camera obscuras, water microscopes, a stained 'glass' window from sugar, sandblasted patterns onto drinking glasses, bent glass rods using a candle, and fused real glass pieces in a microwave to make a large artwork for the school. The group also worked with a glass specialist Shelley James at her studio and visited a glassblower's workshop.



Lansbury Lawrence Primary School, *Guide to Lansbury Lawrence, 2017*

Illustrator Joe Lyward and artist Eleanor Lines worked with Year 6 pupils to produce a guide for visitors to Lansbury Lawrence School. Pupils produced visual and verbal responses about their favourite places in school and developed theatrical tours to make up the content of the guide. They made a series of drawings and collages and learnt how to make their own screen prints inspired by artist Peggy Angus.

They researched the history of the school and its architecture and interviewed designer Haidée Drew about her artwork in the school. The finished guide combines a selection of all the work produced, including school archive images and text written by the children. The guides are available to all visitors that come to visit the unique Lansbury Lawrence School.

Stebon Primary School *Learning Journeys in Maths, 2016*

Artist Mark Oliver worked with children and staff at Stebon Primary to develop an immersive maths learning space for the school building. Mark began by observing each class in their maths lessons, responding to the children's investigations with a series of illustrations. He then led cut paper illustration workshops, working with the children to create their own visual representations of their maths learning. Each class had a designated number as a focus for activities and were encouraged to generate artwork to communicate the information and concepts behind their number.

Mark collaborated with a select steering group of pupils to make final decisions for the installation. They refined and selected artwork from the observations and workshops, to represent the different learning styles and teaching strategies used at each key stage. The finished pieces, printed on dibond panels, sit on a painted number line that travels across the school. The installation incorporates the project ideas and discoveries, as well as providing a space for open-ended maths enquiry.





Woolmore Primary School *Shelter, 2018*

Artist Kirsti Davies worked with Early Years children at Woolmore to create a piece that would stimulate creative exploration and be used collaboratively by pupils to develop role play, gross motor, fine motor and sensory skills. Kirsti initially spent time in the school discovering how reception pupils liked to play and what might be missing from their outdoor space. She also led a CPD to encourage feedback from reception staff about what type of artwork would be most beneficial.

Through a series of workshops, Kirsti encouraged children to experiment and build dens with different materials such as canes, string, fabric and willow, which contrasted to the plastic toys often used in the playground. The workshops demonstrated the active role children play in facilitating their own creative learning, which showed the importance of producing an apparatus that stimulated imaginative play dictated by the children to be enjoyed in multiple ways. The reception pupils were involved in choosing the final design and the resulting artwork, called Shelter, was installed in the EYFS playground.



Wellington Primary School *Clay, Play, Replay, 2019*

Artist, designer and maker Haidée Drew worked with Year 5 pupils to guide them through the processes of clay, and ceramic design and making. The project started with a visit to Bow Arts to see Haidée's Bow Road Studio. The school's Arts Lead Siodhna O'Dowd also led a yoga class on site - to encourage the children to think practically about movement, shape and balance. Back at school, Haidée worked with the pupils to explore the possibilities of mould making and casting. The initial sessions were researched-based, with the group exploring form and function in design and making.

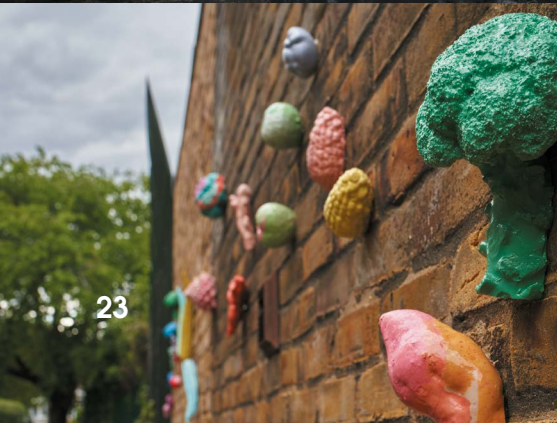
The initial sessions were researched-based, with the group exploring form and function in design and making. Haidée introduced artists David Clarke and Rachel Whiteread - and how they celebrate everyday objects through transformation and preservation. Each pupil has created unique vessels from slip-cast porcelain, which were sold at a local maker's market as part of the school's enterprise activity in the Summer Term.





St Saviour's Primary School *The Sea of Tranquility*, 2020

Artist Sara Heywood worked with all pupils at St Saviour's Primary exploring themes of mindfulness, innovation and creative play to produce a permanent artwork which celebrated the 50th anniversary of the school. Through workshops, pupils explored a range of materials and activities relating to Maths and DT construction, created temporary spaces to play and built maquettes to develop their ideas. Inspired by the work generated in the workshops,



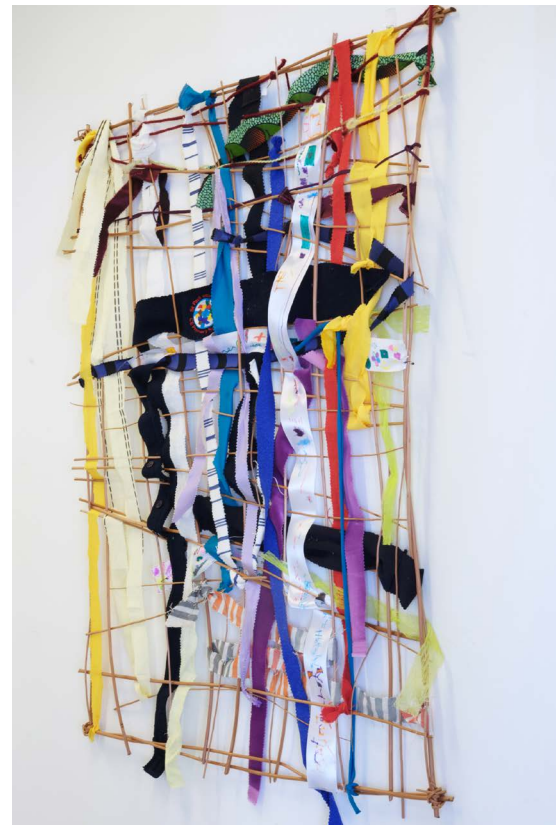
Sara designed and fabricated a permanent structure as a space for reflection, mindfulness and moments of calm.

The school's anniversary coincided with 50 years since the first moon landing, so the piece was made to celebrate and connect these milestones. The finished piece includes a series of panels in spiritual colours which symbolise the mental element of mind, body and spirit and echo stained glass windows within a church. The ceiling panel has drilled holes to represent stars in a constellation depicting the sky over Poplar on the night of the moon landing. The artwork's title was taken from the name of the lunar landing site.



Mayflower Primary School *Fabulous Food*, 2022

Artist Emma Jane Whitton worked with a select group of pupils from across the school to respond to the challenge of brightening up the alleyway shared with the public that is used by families coming and going from Mayflower's Early Years entrance. The group visited Crisp Street Market and selected a range of fruit and vegetables which were then cast in jesmonite, decorated in bright colours and varnished. These sculptural works were then installed along the walls and planters in the alleyway, making it a sunnier place for those that pass through it.



St Paul with St Luke Primary School, *Woven Together*, 2024

All children from Years 1-6 worked with artist Francesca Telling to produce large collaborative woven artworks for their school, inspired by themes of connection and community. Children were asked to bring in old clothes and textiles from home so they could use existing woven pieces which hold a memory and have a history. Pupils also created small woven pieces with yarn and fabric, which were attached to the main structure made from willow. The artworks were then installed in the windows of each classroom.



Thank you

The *Poplar Consortium Exhibition: Celebrating 10 Years* was curated by Liane Harris and took place at The Art Pavilion, Mile End between 18 - 20 March 2025. We would like to thank St George for their generous support towards the Poplar Consortium programme over the last year.

2024-25 Poplar Consortium

Lansbury Lawrence Primary School
Malmesbury Primary School
Mayflower Primary School
St Paul with St Luke Primary School
St Saviour's Primary School
Wellington Primary School
Woolmore Primary School

The 2024-25 Poplar Consortium has been managed by Laura Lloyd, Learning Project Manager, and Tom Sherriff, Learning Project Manager, with support from the Bow Arts Learning team.

About Bow Arts

We're an arts and education charity and a social enterprise; our services support the growth of sustainable local creative economies. Over 900 artists, designers and makers are affiliated with Bow Arts through our workspaces, Nunnery Gallery, affordable housing for creatives, and a schools and young people's learning programme.

We appreciate the on-going partnership and support from the Arts Coordinators and Headteachers of the Poplar Consortium.

Thanks to all artists, designers and makers who have contributed to the consortium, and to other Bow Arts projects within Tower Hamlets. Their ideas, passion and professional approach has driven the continuous ambition and high standard achieved.

2025 marks Bow Arts' 30th anniversary, celebrating three decades of providing long-lasting artist support.

www.bowarts.org



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Over the last year, Bow Arts have been working with the Poplar Consortium schools to deliver an inspiring programme of arts and cultural learning for children and their teachers.

The 2024-25 the Poplar Consortium was made up of seven primary schools across Tower Hamlets.

Each school has taken part in their own bespoke arts projects led by professional artists from Bow Arts, as well as year round professional development for teaching and support staff. A group of children from each school also took part in an Arts Award holiday club.

This year we celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Poplar Consortium, so we are also taking a look back at some project highlights from the last decade.

Bow Arts and the Poplar Consortium schools welcome you and hope you enjoy the exhibition.

