

# EC1 ECHO

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Artist Georgie Fay in Bunhill Fields



## Grave review

Bunhill's first artist in residence, Georgie Faye, is looking anew at the ancient Fields

● BY OLIVER BENNETT ●

**T**he role of the artist in residence has grown hugely in recent years – among the more curious places that have hosted official artists include a tower block in Wembley, the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and West Ham FC.

Now it's the turn of ancient EC1 burial ground Bunhill Fields where Georgie Fay, a participatory artist and printmaker, is a few months into a year-long artist's residency. From her studio in St Luke's Community Centre, Georgie's objective

is to get local people developing their artistic skills, involve them with the area's heritage – and ultimately, to create new public art in Bunhill. She's "honoured and excited" by the residency created by Islington Council and is already very busy running art workshops with various groups, from local youth ambassadors to a multilingual women's group, Islington Heritage and several schools, including St Luke's Primary. There will follow a collective exhibition in Islington Museum on St John's Street to commemorate the year.

But the pinnacle of Georgie's year is to

make a public artwork that she and the community will produce over the year, to be set in the open ground of Bunhill Fields and to remain in situ for a year from January 2023–24, Georgie's studio is full of sketches and ideas that will go into this collective endeavour, and she's brimming with ideas about Bunhill.

To develop this particular project, Georgie has inevitably been spending a lot of time in Bunhill Fields. As a printmaker, she's interested in the traces of old names, engravings and the immense printing heritage in the area – not to mention the human sediment of so many old bones.

The print names that have clustered in the area over the centuries have been the De La Rue mint, printing banknotes, to *The Independent* newspaper's original home, as well as a welter of religious pamphlets. In a sense, the Grade-I listed burial ground can itself be read.

"The passage that goes from City Road to Bunhill Row is one of my favourite walks," she says. "I'm interested in the graves themselves, where you can see the traces of people, the engraved names and sometimes pictures that commemorate them, some worn away by time and exposure."

● Continued on Page-3



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# News from The Peel



St George' Day Party in full swing

**The Peel is your local community centre, based in the heart of Clerkenwell since 1898. We offer classes and activities for all ages and assist local people to set-up projects which benefit the whole community including the EC1 Echo**

**Letter From Olu**



CEO Olu Alake

Clerkenwell is blessed with an incredible diversity of people and businesses – people from all walks of life call the area

their home. At The Peel we work hard to facilitate connections between people who would not otherwise meet. This simple act of bringing people together is at the core of what we do. We know we can collaborate even more with others who share our values and interests. Do you share our vision to make Clerkenwell an even more fantastic place to live, work and play? If yes, then I invite you to join our quest!

**Celebrations!**



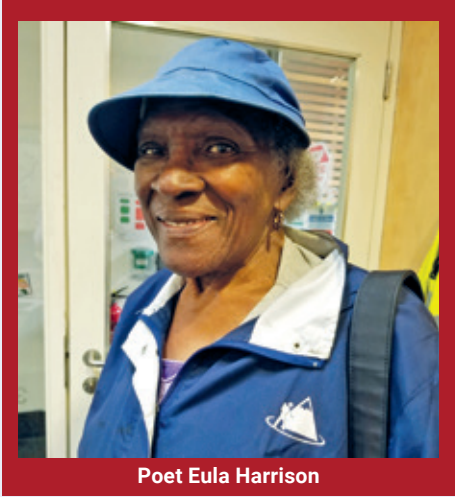
St George's Day celebrations

In April our Over 55s Social Club celebrated St George's Day with a proper knees up. A packed house enjoyed a traditional pie and mash lunch, live music & lots of dancing. Our next big celebration is for the Platinum Jubilee, where we will celebrate the Queen's 75 years on the throne in style! This will be closely followed by a Windrush Day party, where we will celebrate the huge contribution our Afro-Caribbean friends, neighbours, staff and members have made to The Peel, to Clerkenwell and beyond. In particular, we are looking forward to celebrating the contributions of nonagenarian Eula Harrison, whose poetry and general love of life continue to inspire Peel members and staff. More about Eula below...

Hosting events and parties to mark big events is a speciality of our social club. Drop us a line to find out about forthcoming parties and celebrations.

**Pride Of Peel**

We are so proud that Eula Harrison, The Peel's favourite poet, is featured in the latest edition of *Islington Life*, Islington Council's digital magazine.



Poet Eula Harrison

Eula, now in her mid-90s, is truly inspirational in so many ways, as anyone who spots her boogieing at Peel parties will testify! A regular at The Peel for over 20 years, she began writing poetry in her 60s. Her poetry is wonderful - eloquent, moving, observant and funny. Reading her poems has been known to have Peel members in tears. Writing helped Eula manage the long lockdowns of the past two years, along with tending her garden. We are supporting Eula to find a

publisher, as her poems deserve to be read by everyone! Drop us a line if you think you can help.

**Wellbeing Words**



Weaving & wellbeing

Our Direct Action Project is one mental health awareness project which we deliver on behalf of Islington Council. It is different to our other services and activities, but just as important. Our DAP team organises informal workshops and creative programmes for groups of parents and young people in venues across Islington. They work directly with other organisations such as colleges, youth projects and community centres. We recently led a wellbeing workshop with parents at Finsbury Library where the team chatted to parents and guardians whilst their little ones made a fantastic, collective 'happiness collage'. Another recent highlight was in partnership with our friends at St Luke's Centre. Under the expert guidance of the wonderful poet Steve Tasane and our DAP team, a group of parents enthusiastically joined in discussions about common mental health issues as well as writing poetry.

The aim of this project is to help all young people and parents/guardians across Islington to understand mental health better. We are always interested in hearing from groups and organisations who work with young people and parents. If that is you, then get in touch.

**Creative Writing**

We are very excited about our new 'Writing for Wellbeing' creative writing workshops, which are open to adults of all ages. These fortnightly workshops are free and beginners are most definitely welcome. We are keeping the group small, so everyone can receive lots of support from Grace, the experienced workshop leader. Drop us a line if you'd like to join these workshops, or any of our other creative activities.

**Express Yourself!**



Summer flower arranging

Arts and crafts are an important part of our regular programmes. Over the past couple of months older people, young people and parent groups have enjoyed painting, cooking, knitting, flower arranging, singing, weaving, mixed media and other creative outlets. Experience is never required because our bunch of talented workshop leaders work with everyone to lead enjoyable, stress-reducing and fun activities.

**Men Only**



Men's Group

From our photos you might be forgiven for thinking that only women come to our Over 55s Social Club. But that's not the case! A regular group of men meet every week to discuss current affairs and life in general, as well as to play darts, card games, table tennis, air hockey and more. From the start of July this will become an official group. If you, or a man you know, would like to join a weekly Men's Gathering then drop us a line. Men are, of course, always very welcome to join our other activities too.

**Our Youth Club Gets Bigger**

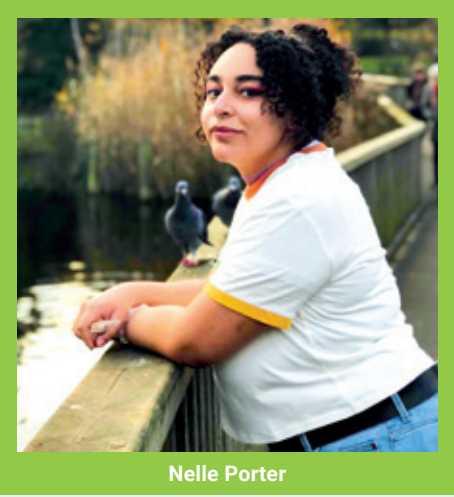
Our youth club meets weekly for group cooking, discussions, crafts and games. Particularly popular at the moment is our new table tennis table! Many of the young people have also joined a mentoring



Youth Club peer mentor training

programme, where they take part in a series of thought provoking discussions and activities. This will prepare them to become peer-mentors to other young people. Additionally, our Code Club meets weekly and continues to impress us all with fast developing tech skills. Young people will soon be able to join us for games and activities, to chill out and to socialise, to get arty and crafty and enjoy outings three times a week, including on Saturdays. We are also setting up a regular support circle for parents and guardians. If you are aged 10–18 years, or if you are the parent or guardian of a child in that age range, then we would love you to join us.

**Meet Nelle**



Nelle Porter

Nelle is our Executive Assistant, who joined us in the spring. She brings fresh energy and skills to the team, having recently graduated from university. So we were interested to discover what Nelle thinks about her first community sector job and in particular what she thinks about The Peel...

**Q: What actually is an Executive Assistant?**

**A:** I primarily work with our CEO, Olu, assisting him to schedule and manage his many appointments. I also help with Peel's communications and I support the rest of the Peel team where I can.

**Q: What do you enjoy the most about working here?**

**A:** I enjoy working with such a dedicated team and providing support for the local community.

**Q: If you had to describe The Peel to a friendly alien, what would you say?**

**A:** The Peel supports and represents the local residents of Clerkenwell. It provides important services and opportunities for learning, socialising and bringing people together.

**Q: Are there any activities that you secretly want to join in?**

**A:** The Youth Club cooking classes always look super fun! I try out a lot of the recipes from The Peel's Lockdown Cookbook at home.

**Peel Regular Classes and Special Events Include...**

- Windrush Day party
- Dance and fitness classes in Spa Fields & 3 Corners Centre
- Gardening
- Knitting & flower arranging classes
- Group cooking
- Creative writing workshops for all
- Code and Youth Clubs, for 10–18 year olds
- NEW! Spa Fields evening fitness classes starting soon



Enjoying Spa Fields sunshine

**Join The Peel Team**

Would you like to volunteer for us, or would you like to start class or activity for the local community? If yes, we'd love to hear from you. Drop us a line!

Keep up with our news with our digital newsletter. Sign up from our website home page.

**Visit** [peelinstitute.org.uk](http://peelinstitute.org.uk)  
**Email** [admin@peelinstitute.org.uk](mailto:admin@peelinstitute.org.uk)  
**Call** 020 7837 6082  
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FEATURE

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# The fare sax

*Meet Clerkenwell’s Jon Cox: cabbie, photographer – and big band leader*

Eagle-eyed readers of *EC1 Echo* might recognise the name Jon Cox – he took a gong in the photography competition last year. But Jon isn’t just a whizz with the lens. He’s also a London taxi driver and most importantly, an ace professional saxophonist who fronts an 18-piece big band, called the Starlight Big Band.

After several sell out shows at The Horseshoe in Clerkenwell Close, the Starlight Big Band are hitting the big time, and this month are playing the Charing Cross Theatre in the West End with a repertoire of classic songs from The Great American Songbook including the music of Frank Sinatra, Bobby Darin, Sammy Davis Jr and the like.

“Some people have never seen a big band, and to see one close up is great,” says Jon. “The big band sound was my first love of music, so I’m very happy.”

Jon went to Central Foundation Boys School where there was a deputy head of the school called Mr Blandford. “He was a big inspiration,” says Jon. “He was deputy head, a maths teacher and loved jazz and swing music.”

Jon then became a fan of funk and soul, listening to The Crusaders, Grover Washington, David Sanborn and British jazz-

funk outfit Morrissey–Mullen. He played in various soul and funk bands performing at clubs & venues in London, and after that, founded the very successful soul and disco covers band Groove Machine, jetting around the world and playing venues and hotels. “It was great fun and there was masses of work but that changed after the last recession,” he says.

*“The big band sound was my first love of music”*

As something to “fall back on, as I didn’t want to be a poor musician”, Jon then did “The Knowledge” – the three-year black cab training programme. He’s been a cab driver since 1994 but devotes a lot of time to music. Recently, with actor Lee McDonald on vocals – aka Zammo in the TV series Grange Hill and another alumnus of Central Foundation – they released a catchy single called *We Are London* and the video included a cameo appearance from Maureen Lipman guesting as a cabbie, and one of Jon’s

haunts, Scotti’s café in Clerkenwell Green, featuring heavily.

With singers like Michael Bublé and Robbie Williams doing big band-style music in recent years, the genre has been reinvented to a degree. “There has been a bit of a return to it,” says Jon. “But big band music is evergreen and hasn’t ever really gone away.” The Starlight Big Band is actually now playing a stirring version of the Robbie Williams arrangement of *Putting On The Ritz*.

Jon’s job and passion collided once when legendary funk and jazz artist Roy Ayers got in his cab. “I’ve had loads of famous people in the cab, but that was really special,” says Jon. “That said, I couldn’t get much conversation out of him and it was before mobile phones, so no selfie, unfortunately.”

With a studio at the Islington Arts Factory in Holloway Jon records and teaches there, as the sax “is not something you can really practise with neighbours around”. Jon can currently be found playing saxophone and keyboards with the Jukebox Party Band, performing classic retro pop hits from the 1960s, 70s and 80s.

The Starlight Big Band are playing two shows on Sunday 12 June at the Charing Cross Theatre and tickets are available from the Box Office, tel 08444 930 650 and online at [www.charingcrosstheatre.co.uk](http://www.charingcrosstheatre.co.uk)



Saxophonist Jon Cox in his black cab Credit Terry Gibbins

FEATURE



# Pop goes the shop

*A photography bookshop in Whitecross Street shows the changing nature of retail*

After a bruising two years under the Covid shroud, retail has yet to properly come back – and the long-term migration to internet shopping as well as the more recent cost of living crisis hasn’t helped.

But on Whitecross Street a couple are changing the script with a pop-up photography bookshop called Record 28 or, as it states on the window, simply ‘Book Shop’. With a six-month tenancy lasting until the end of July, it offers a model of the kind of short-term store that could help to revive our high streets.

Nick Mennell and Louisa Tratalos took over the space after Nick was made redundant overnight from an Islington men’s fashion shop. Already selling a mix of books, magazines and videos via social media, they took over the empty shop for the short lease.

“Buyers around the world have already got to know us as having a selection of books, ephemera, cultural materials, old magazines and cool films,” says Nick. “We weren’t necessarily looking for a physical space but when the opportunity came around, we had to take it.”

The space had been a shoe shop and possibly even a secondhand music shop;

but as Nick says, “It’s a cool story but I’ve never found any evidence of it.” Nonetheless, Record 28 has made its presence felt in the market street, furnished with a big light box and a bench where customers can browse the wares, which included old copies of *Melody Maker*, *The Face* and Kate Bush ephemera, now collectable. Rather than nostalgic baby boomers Nick says that much of the market is from younger people who are also buying vinyl.

*“If you’ve never done retail, the six-month model is a good opportunity to try”*

Nick knows Whitecross Street well. “I used to work on the market sometimes and still do work a couple of hours on the market tomorrow at a friend’s stall,” he says. While the shop exists, he has plans for poetry events and launches with London-based artists, as well as being involved in the Whitecross Street Party, due to take place on 9–10 July this summer.

With secretary of state Michael Gove saying that he will now fine business owners who have shops closed for longer than six months, could shops like Record 28 be setting the agenda?

“If the pandemic taught us anything, nothing can stay the same for any amount of time,” says Nick. “We don’t know what’s around the corner, and it’s hard for people to invest in long leases post-pandemic. That said, I think that while the landlord is enjoying us being here they have intentions for the building.”

The six-month lease is a great way of testing out the market. “You can’t expect new shops to open on five-year leases when they’ve got no analytical information about whether it will work or not,” says Nick. “But if you’ve never done retail before, this six-month model is a good opportunity to give it a go and build up a customer base.” With high rents in EC1 it isn’t necessarily going to pave the way for an independent revolution, but it could help breathe life into unused shop space.

Record 28 is at 141–143, Whitecross St, London EC1 Visit [record28.com](http://record28.com)

The Whitecross Street Party is on 9-10 July, 12.00–18.00 hours Visit [wxstreetparty.co.uk](http://wxstreetparty.co.uk)

FEATURE

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# Join the IT crowd

*Interested in tech but can’t make headway? Nathalie Renaud of Elizabeth House explains how you can get with the program*

The UK’s tech sector is booming, but there is a significant skills shortage and young people from BAME backgrounds are regrettably underrepresented in this sector.

Peoples Place Community Partnerships (PPCP) and Elizabeth House Community Centre in N5 have worked together over the past four years to develop the 21CS programme: a unique IT training and employment programme led by a dedicated team of IT professionals who mentor young people with low qualifications and no network to gain IT qualifications and secure jobs in the tech sector.

The training is free for all. There is no prerequisites or qualifications required to join and very flexible to enable young people to work or continue their formal education at the same time. As well as classroom and/or online training sessions, 21CS offers work placements and practical work experience at Elizabeth House in Highbury or with local employers. All trainees can also put their newly learned skills into practice through the PPCP’s call centre and provide remote IT support.

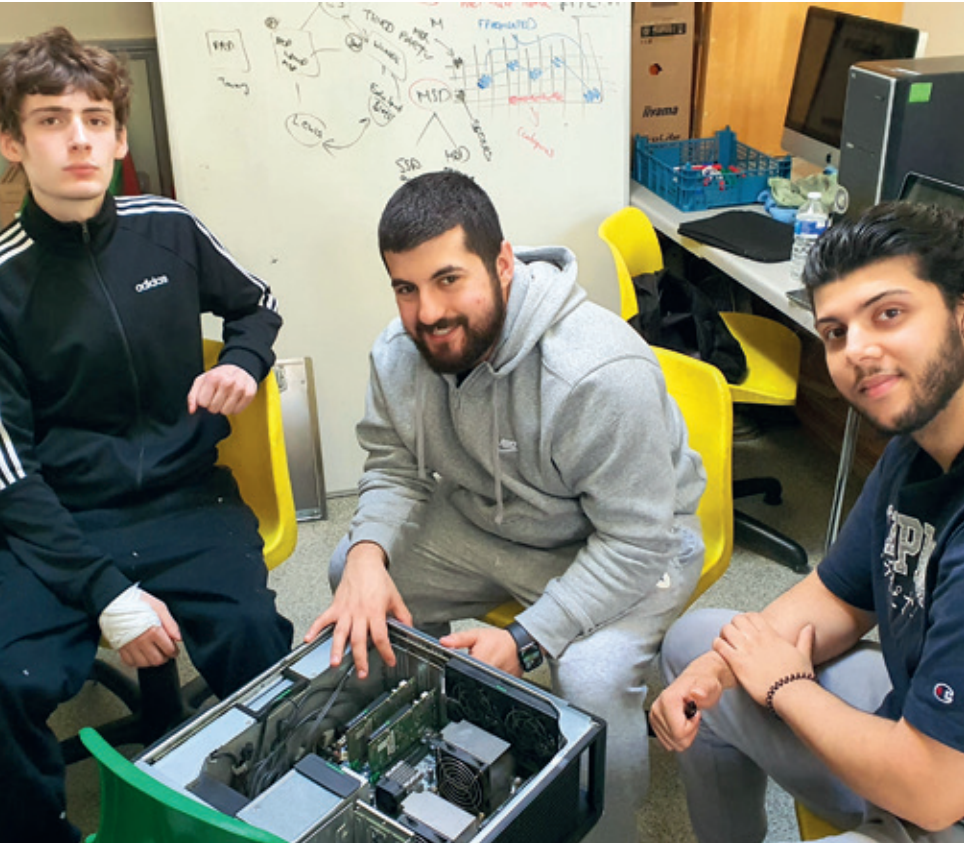
The training curriculum is employer-led. Participants receive industry-recognised

technical training, formal qualifications certificates, such as Microsoft Technical Associate (MTA), Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS), and Adobe Certified Expert (ACA). They also learn essential soft skills and customer service skills to become junior professionals for the IT or digital creative industries. 21CS is ideal for anyone who is interested in IT or who is looking for a promising career path where there are many opportunities. In the last three months, five young people secured jobs as junior IT technician.

As one graduate of the course put it, “I enrolled on the IT training at Elizabeth House so I can develop the necessary skills to work in the IT sector and my experience with PPCP has been profound to say the least. It has honestly changed my life for the better. With warm welcoming staff and young people, they have helped me build confidence and develop the necessary skills for me to flourish in my future career endeavours.”

*“There is a significant skills shortage”*

To register for more information, visit [www.21cs.org.uk](http://www.21cs.org.uk). The programme is currently funded by Trust for London, London Youth and CAF Resilience Fund. Elizabeth House Community Centre is at 2 Hurlock St, London N5 and O2O 7690 1300. See also [elizabeth-house.org.uk](http://elizabeth-house.org.uk)



Students Edén, Arian and Dustin learning tech at Elizabeth House



<h1>Move through the fair</h1>				<div>9</div> <div>EC1 ECHO</div> <div>Nº 16</div>	
<h2>With all the activity in Smithfield it's time to revive the ancient Bartholomew Fair</h2>				<div>June/July</div> <div>2022</div>	
<div>BY MATTHEW BELL &amp; DAVID WILCOX</div> <div> <p>There is a move to try to resurrect Bartholomew Fair, which used to take place around August 24 every year. With a group working to the same end, we are hoping that it will be up and running in time for the 900th celebrations next year of Rahere, the monk who founded St Bartholomew the Great and St Bartholomew's Hospital. The Fair ran from 1133 until 1855.</p> </div> <div> <p>It started in Cloth Fair and the churchyard of St Bart's the Great, east of Smithfield Market (when the market was on open field, long before it was housed in the building it is now). The fair grew over the years to take in a much larger space around St Bart's Hospital.</p> <p>In its heyday, Bartholomew Fair had become an important holiday event. The making and selling of cloth was of enormous importance for British exports in this period of growing empire and the Fair became the most</p> </div> <div> <p>important international place for all sorts of British cloth to be sold. Bartholomew Fair soon also became a thriving and fun-packed long weekend of all sorts of events and pleasures obtainable for a price, drawing people from far and wide – including some of the Rabelaisian figures to be seen in these contemporary illustrations, such as contortionist Joseph Clark the Posture Master, able to turn his feet to face each other, dancer Phillips the Merry Andrew, and Mrs Allen the Horned Woman. But by 1855, the fair</p> </div> <div> <p>had all become far too fun-packed for the more strait-laced Victorians and it was closed down.</p> <p>We now think there are ways that Bartholomew Fair can be brought in to the 21st century – and which would have blown Rahere's mind.</p> <p>A small group of us including St Bart's the Great, St Bart's Hospital and the City of London Corporation are contacting various Livery Companies who were historically connected with the fair to drum up some interest in its revival.</p> </div>				   <div> <p>View of the Fair by John Nixon, 1813</p> <p>View of Bartholomew Fair, West Smithfield in 1721. The print was made semicircular so it could act as a decorative fan</p> <p>Another entertainer at Barts Fair, Phillips the Merry Andrew (1792)</p> <p>Portrait of fair entertainer Joseph Clark, the Posture Master by M Lauron, 1792</p> <p>Picture of a fairgoer in a spiked barrel, smoking a pipe and carrying a 'persuader', Theodore Lane, c1825</p> </div>	
 				 <div> <p>As well as resurrecting the Fair, we have long felt that it would be tremendous to have augmented reality for smartphones in places like Cloth Fair and the Guildhall amphitheatre. Our neighbour and colleague (and <i>EC1 Echo</i> contributor, see page 13) David Wilcox suggested that it would be a great way of making the Bartholomew Fair a virtual event – which is an exciting possibility.</p> <p><i>Writes David Wilcox:</i></p> <p>Re-starting Bartholomew Fair in 2023, as Matthew suggests above, will be a great way to bring together residents, visitors and workers in one of London's most historic neighbourhoods, now part of the City's Culture Mile.</p> <p>Here's an ambitious vision of what a fair might be like in the digital age. In the spirit of the original Fair much can be achieved by harnessing local skills and resources. In this case that's the residents, Livery companies and businesses in the City and nearby Clerkenwell. That collaboration can also support plans for the City's new Culture Mile Business Improvement District, and Creative Communities programme.</p> <p>In 2023 the Fair doesn't have to be limited to a few days in August or available only to those who can visit the area. During the Fair events could be livestreamed. Culture Mile venues offer a lot of activities online, and we can build on that.</p> <p>We can develop augmented reality experiences, so that visitors to the area can use their smartphones to match images from today with historic images and information. We can draw on the resources of the London Metropolitan Archives and Museum of London – which pioneered the StreetMuseum app 2010. Local creative agency Shift has developed Historypin, which allows you to embed historic photos in today's settings and make audio and video walks that anyone with a smartphone can create, with a little practice.</p> <p>Developing the virtual Bartholomew Fair offers lots of opportunities for professionals to work with local residents, schools and students and we can build on the maps, data and media that I have assembled for the Exploring EC1 project while The Layers of London mapping website offers maps of the area from 1270 to the present day.</p> <p>As well as maps and media showing the Fairground today, we could create a virtual fairground of stalls and performance spaces – and the old phrase “meet me at Bartholomew Fair” could be bought up to date.</p> <p>If you are interested in helping me develop the virtual Bartholomew Fair, please get in touch at <a href="mailto:david@socialreporter.com">david@socialreporter.com</a>.</p> <p><small>These prints of Bartholomew Fair courtesy of London Metropolitan Archives (LMA), available to view at London Picture Archive website along with 250,000 images <a href="http://www.londonpicturearchive.org.uk">www.londonpicturearchive.org.uk</a>. Located in Clerkenwell, LMA is London's historical archive, providing free access to millions of documents, films and images from 1067 to now. Its exhibition Magnificent Maps of London, runs until 26 October. See <a href="http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/lma">www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/lma</a>.</small></p> </div>	
<p>“Bartholomew Fair became a fun-packed long weekend with all sorts of pleasures”</p>				<div>F</div> <div>E</div> <div>A</div> <div>T</div> <div>U</div> <div>R</div> <div>E</div>	



BY OLIVER BENNETT

It's claimed that professional female boxing began in Clerkenwell 300 years ago this month

In May, Ireland's Katie Taylor beat Puerto Rico's Amanda Serrano at female boxing's biggest-ever fight in New York. It shows the maturity of a sport that made a slow start. The first official female boxing match in Britain was in 1998 and it took until the London 2012 games to become an Olympic sport.

Of course professional womens' boxing goes back a lot further – and tantalisingly, its source is said to be local. Indeed, 300 years ago this month – June 1722 – one of the first recorded female boxing matches was advertised between Elizabeth Wilkinson and Hannah Hyfield, heralded by a bold printed challenge in the *London Journal*.

Ms Wilkinson's spiel, an 18th century version of 'trash talk', read thus: "I, Elizabeth Wilkinson, of Clerkenwell, having had some words with Hannah Hyfield and requiring Satisfaction, do invite her to meet me on the Stage, and Box with me for three guineas, each Woman holding Half a Crown in each Hand, and the first Woman that drops her Money to Lose the Battle."

The venue was the notorious Hockley-in-the-Hole – a ghetto in the environs of Back Hill and Ray Street in EC1. Of course, Hannah talked back, saying that she would give Wilkinson a "good thumping". But Wilkinson won the three

# Sport of queens



Few pictures exist of early female boxing but this artists impression sets the tone

guineas prize, about £1,000 today.

In 1722 Wilkinson was on her way up. Her life story is a bit hazy, but sources suggest that she was romantically linked to Robert Wilkinson, a prizefighter and murderer who was executed in September 1722. She changed her name to Elizabeth Stokes, due

to a new marriage to boxer James Stokes with whom she fought in mixed doubles – now a forgotten format.

No doubt, Wilkinson was tough. Pre-Queensberry Rules in 1867, the sport was bare knuckled and allowed gouging and kicking, while dressed in petticoats,

stockings and shoes. This uniform put Wilkinson on a more professional footing than the lower end of the market, where women fought topless for pennies, and the custom of holding a coin in the hand forced each pugilist to punch rather than scratch, and to keep a fist for as long as possible.

Wilkinson went on to fight Martha Jones and Irish fighter Mary Welch, and as her fame grew she was upgraded from the mere "boxing champion of Clerkenwell" to the "famous Championess of England" and the "European Championess". One contemporary account called her a "bold Amazonian Virago".

On becoming Mrs Stokes, her boxing matches moved to his ring near Sadler's Wells, and by 1726 she claimed to be undefeated, saying "I always come off with victory and applause." With the same immodesty as a modern fighter like Conor McGregor, in 1728 she couldn't miss the opportunity to disrespect challenger Ann Field from Stoke Newington, described as an "ass-driver". As Wilkinson said, "...the blows which I shall present her with will be more difficult for her to digest than any she ever gave her asses."

Wilkinson was a pioneer, but her sport remains controversial, stuck with paternalistic concerns of female behaviour, safety and lewdness. Despite the establishment of a Women's Boxing Club in 1920s London, the then Mayor of Hackney wrote that women boxers were a "gratification of the sensual ideals of a crowd of vulgar men." Some still recoil, but we can surely agree that the champion of Clerkenwell – namely Elizabeth Wilkinson and her half-crown holding fists – deserves a place in sporting history.

Queen Elizabeth also features in another anniversary this year – the 40th year since the St Luke's Leisure Centre on Central Street EC1 opened. Later to become the St Luke's Community Centre, it existed prior to that date but became a community hub at that point. "It's an exciting milestone for our charity," said Michael Ryan, CEO of St Luke's.

St Luke's [www.slpt.org.uk/our-history](http://www.slpt.org.uk/our-history)  
For Islington Council see [www.islington.gov.uk/advice/voluntary-and-community-sector/queens-platinum-jubilee-2022](http://www.islington.gov.uk/advice/voluntary-and-community-sector/queens-platinum-jubilee-2022)  
Islington Local History Centre will be showcasing photographs of Her Majesty's visits to Islington between 1953 and 2000. It runs until Friday, 22 July. See [www.islington.gov.uk/libraries-arts-and-heritage/heritage/local-history-centre](http://www.islington.gov.uk/libraries-arts-and-heritage/heritage/local-history-centre)  
Residents are encouraged to send their own Platinum Jubilee pictures to [local.history@islington.gov.uk](mailto:local.history@islington.gov.uk)



# Going platinum

## It's London Square Open Gardens Weekend on 11–12 June. Here's what you can see in our area



Daron Pike and Erika Rosivatz (pictured) have helped Clerkenwell Green Preservation Society to maintain planting at the cattle trough in Clerkenwell Green. The vibrant colours include geraniums and bacopa, blooming in the old watering hole for cattle on their way to Smithfield market and this planting should hopefully see the trough through to October

**The Golden Baggers Garden, Golden Lane Estate**  
In the Golden Lane Estate, adjoining the Ralph Perring Centre, between Basterfield House and Hatfield House (EC1Y 0ST)

Open Saturday 10.30–16.30,  
Sunday 11:00–16:00

This old nursery playground was turned in 2010 into the thriving Golden Baggers community food-growing space. There are now 42 individual boxes for growing fruit, vegetables, salad crops and flowers, a communal herb garden, soft fruit, potted apple trees, grapevines, a small wildlife area and a children's shed and digging box.

**Home-made cakes and refreshments available**  
**Dogs on leads**

**Culpeper Community Garden N1**  
N1 0FJ

Saturday 10.00–18.00,  
Sunday 10.00–18.00

This community garden project has won many awards and received the RHS National Certificate of Distinction. The garden has a communal lawn, ponds, rose pergola, wildlife area and a dry garden, inspired by Beth Chatto as part of Islington's climate-change adaptation strategy. Culpeper Community Garden works with disadvantaged community groups, provides a teaching resource to local primary schools and stages events and activities for members and locals.

**Homemade cakes and teas (Sunday only)**  
**Picnics allowed**

For tickets and more information, including themed walks including some of these gardens see: [londongardenstrust.org/whatson/log2022/guided-tours](http://londongardenstrust.org/whatson/log2022/guided-tours)

**Barbican Wildlife Garden**  
EC2Y 8BR

Open Saturday 10.00–17.00,  
Sunday 10:00–17:00

Fann Street won the RHS and London in Bloom Level 5 Outstanding 'It's Your Neighbourhood Award' for the fourth year in 2021. The garden aims to enhance biodiversity in the City with a meadow, orchard, fernery, two ponds, native species hedges and composting areas.

**Plants for sale**  
**Refreshments**  
**Picnics allowed**

**The Lever Street Community Garden**  
Lever Street opposite Mora Street  
EC1V 3SW

Saturday 13.00–17.00,  
Sunday 13:00–17:00

Launched in 2013, has 17 raised wooden beds, which enable local people to grow vegetables, fruit and flowers. These are surrounded by fruit trees, shrubs and flowers and composting facilities. The garden received Islington's Pontecorvo prize in 2014, and judged to be Islington's Best Community Park in 2019.

**Picnics allowed**

**Mecklenburgh Square**  
WC1N 2AD

Open Sunday: 12.00–17.00

A two-acre garden laid out in 1810-12, remaining close to the original design. Sections devoted to plants from New Zealand and medicinal herbs. Children's play area, tennis court.

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LSO St Luke's

# WHAT'S ON Summer Music at LSO St Luke's

### Soundhub Showcase

A composer-curated evening of new music and fresh sounds, crossing genres and artforms.  
*Wednesday 15 June 7pm*

### Free Friday Lunchtime Concerts

Curious about classical music? Try a bite-sized concert, with introductions and Q+A. Free entry, just turn up!  
*Friday 17 June (relaxed) @ 1 July 12.30pm*

### Symphonic Sounds

Hear the full London Symphony Orchestra performing spellbinding melodies in an intimate setting.  
*Friday 17 June 7pm @ Tuesday 5 July 6.30pm*

### Choral Concerts

David Lawrence conducts the LSO Community Choir and Islington's largest choir make their debut at LSO St Luke's.  
*Saturday 9 @ Sunday 10 July 7.30pm*

LSO St Luke's, Old Street  
[lso.co.uk/lsoستlukes](http://lso.co.uk/lsoستlukes)





FEATURE

**BY OLIVER BENNETT**

Barts Pathology Museum at Queen Mary University of London is one of EC1’s great secrets. Up three robust flights of stairs in the labyrinthine St Bartholomew’s Hospital, it suddenly opens out into a glorious high Victorian galleried space, crammed with exhibits. “It is a bit like a Tardis,” says Steve Moore, the Museum’s resources and facilities manager. “You come up those stairs, through the doors and into this great big room.”

In an elegant if timeworn space – in particular, the glass roof is in need of maintenance – the museum has a certain magnificence. But it is its extraordinary collection that is the real draw. Up spiral staircases are galleries with wrought-iron balconies, where more than 4,000 medical specimens are labelled into various body parts – brains, lungs, hearts, livers et al – separated from their hosts and sitting in perpetuity in vitrines filled in formaldehyde.

On the ground floor are larger exhibits and fascinating set-pieces. There’s one devoted to John Bellingham, who shot Prime Minister Spencer Perceval at the House of Commons in 1812 and was hanged at Newgate Prison three days later. How did the museum get his colour mugshot? “We got a grant to get a computer-generated image based on his skull,” says Moore. It’s as if he was in the room.

A few years ago, this priceless collection was in a poor state. Then in 2010 a donation helped renovate it, and now it’s considering its future. As the 900th anniversary of St Barts approaches next year, the museum is currently thinking about how best to bring it to the public, and is working with Culture Mile (see page 14).

One hindrance to opening it up further – it is already open to speciality visits – is that the Pathology Museum is still used for its original purpose of teaching, as a part of Queen Mary’s Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry. On a recent visit, medical students on the ground floor were busy practicing on dummies. Minds are meeting as to how the teaching and museum aspects might work together.

“It’s an extraordinary resource that’s available to researchers and the community, full of potential for new collaborations” says Dr Molly McPhee, arts and culture strategy officer for Queen Mary.

At the same time, adds Moore, the museum isn’t necessarily needed as

The exhibit of John Bellingham, who shot Prime Minister Spencer Perceval at the House of Commons in 1812



Behind the scenes at the museum

One of the country’s most fascinating museums is in EC1 – and we’re likely to hear more about it soon

a teaching tool in the digital era. But there’s still value in students viewing the effects of disease, and it’s very real. One corner of the

cultural value,” says McPhee.

The question is how to best do that. With such a demand for grisly ‘dark tourism’ –

“This priceless collection is considering its future”



with horror attractions like the London Dungeon and Gunther von Hagens’ Body Worlds being tourism hits – could the museum could achieve a new audience? As part of the calculus of how to present the museum and keep it alive and maintained, many ideas are under discussion.

Whatever the outcome, the museum will likely move far beyond being merely grisly into a social history domain. “One of the museum’s



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most interesting aspects is how a lot of the diseases on show, like syphilis and tuberculosis, don’t occur in the same way now,” says Steve Moore. “They show how London has developed.”

One tragic exhibit, for example, shows how chimney sweeps were prey to testicular cancers – which led to the Children’s Act – while another shows old London lungs before the Clean Air Act of 1956. Yet another shows the dreadful results of working at the Bryant and May factory in Bow, which led to the Match Girls’ Strike in 1888 – a foundation of the Trades Union movement. There’s an exhibit devoted to 18th century pioneer of Barts’ surgeon Percivall Pott, the first to prove a link between certain occupations and cancer. “It was as a result of Dr Pott’s studies into hernia that we have the concept of ‘peer reviewing’ scientific data before it is published,” says Moore. Throughout the museum it’s remarkable to see how disease has led law and politics. “The legal history aspect of the museum is particularly fascinating,” says Moore.

Which brings us to an ethical aspect of Barts Pathology Museum: we are looking at parts of dead humans. Is this acceptable any longer? Moore explains that the Human Tissue Authority were concerned about a decade ago that the museum’s exhibits might encourage disrespectful behaviour. But he adds that while the public has visited the museum since – albeit in a limited way – there hasn’t been one case of anyone disrespecting the exhibits.

In fact, it could be argued that the interest in disease and social history is a humanitarian tool. Is it possible that after Covid, the public interest in disease could give the Pathology Museum a new popularity? Euston’s Wellcome Collection attracts many with themed exhibitions on medical matters, and in that spirit perhaps Barts Pathology Museum could become a thriving museum on the Culture Mile trail – even a local resource. “We think it can be an incredibly rich public engagement space that builds relationships with communities,” says McPhee. And part of that is the local heritage factor, as many of the objects in the museum came from the denizens of inner London from the 18th to 20th centuries. Their past has already informed our future – and will continue to do so.

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COLUMN

The name game Does a name follow a sense of community or vice versa?

BY DAVID WILCOX

One of my favourite children’s books is You’re Called What? by Kes Gray, in which the Ministry of Silly Animal Names offers creatures like the Ice Cream Cone Worm and Blue-Footed Booby the chance to change their names. Part of the fun is that the names and creatures are real.

Things aren’t quite so strange in EC1 – but neighbourhoods in the south are getting second names, or designations. Who is in or out of various zones can be confusing.

A few years ago the City of London designated its north west boundary district Culture Mile. Next year there is likely to be a Business Improvement District. Each element has its own boundary, because each serves a different purpose.

That’s on top of traditional Ward names like Farringdon Within, Farringdon Without, Aldersgate, Cripplegate and Castle Barnard, which generally come to the fore at elections. In answer to the question “where do you live” people are more likely to say Barbican, Smithfield, Golden Lane Estate or maybe “near St Pauls”. In Clerkenwell, some still refer to the old borough of ‘Finsbury’, as still seen in manifestations such as Finsbury Library and Finsbury Town Hall, but the possibility of getting it mixed up with Finsbury Park in the north of the borough bordering on Haringey is too great. Other than that, it’s a mixed bag, with Mount Pleasant, Farringdon and St Luke’s all vying for attention within the wider EC1 area.

The area south of Smithfield, where I live, now has hundreds more residents largely due to a major development by Helical Bar. They decided the scheme should be called Barts Square, which resonates with St Bartholomew the Great, and Barts Hospital. The older name is Bartholomew Close – from the church lands – but maybe that sounded too suburban.

Barbican residents are currently mounting a campaign against development plans for London Wall West – better

known as the site of the Museum of London and Bastion House. They rightly argue that the significance of the development extends beyond the boundary of the site, and so want to involve their neighbours in Farringdon and Cripplegate, as well as Aldersgate. The Barbican Association has floated the idea of The Barbican Quarter to describe an area embracing Golden Lane Estate, Smithfield, Barts Square and beyond.

I’m not sure about the name, but I can see the need for a wider conversation. Other major developments of over the next decade include refurbishment of the Barbican Centre, the new Museum for London in Smithfield, and new uses for the main market buildings when traders agree to the move to Dagenham.

If proposals for parliamentary boundary changes go through, the City will no longer have an MP in common with Westminster, but with south Islington neighbourhoods. What will that constituency be called, and will the change strengthen links between City and Clerkenwell?

Behind the matter of names and zones is something more important – our sense of belonging to a place, with some shared understanding of who’s who, and what’s happening. That was clearly important during the pandemic, when some estates and neighbourhoods were

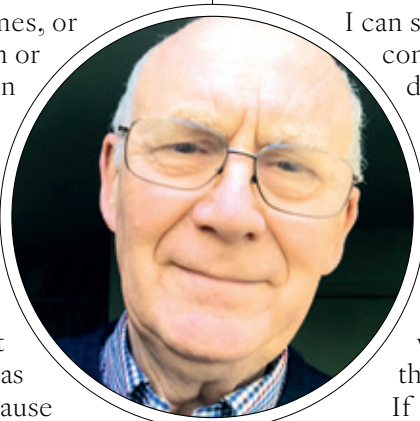
able quickly to organise mutual support. Walking through Smithfield into Clerkenwell I get a sense of the “hidden village” tour guides talk about ... but does it feel like that for residents?

Does a sense of community and neighbourhood matter so much in new developments like Barts Square, where

many residents may be young City workers working long hours?

I’ll be interested to hear the results of Tom Butler’s research, reported in the Echo, that explores where people feel the boundaries of Smithfield lie. It would be fascinating to research other neighbourhoods as well.

At the moment I’m not sure we have a lot in common beyond the postcodes.



“The City will have an MP in common with South Islington, but what will that constituency be called?”

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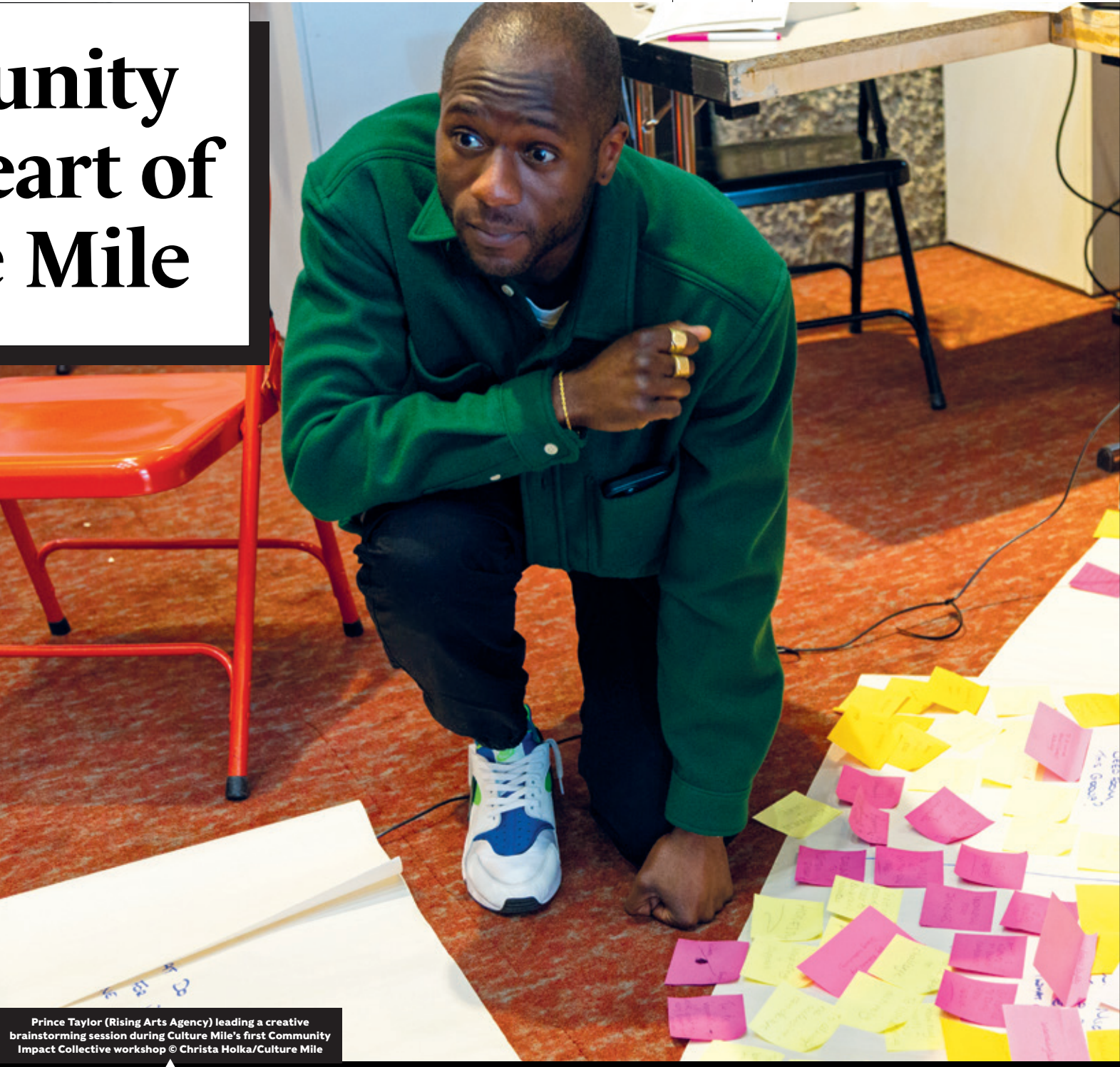


# Community at the heart of Culture Mile

Culture Mile is the City of London’s cultural district, stretching from Farringdon to Moorgate. Culture Mile is working with partners throughout the area to transform the north-west corner of the Square Mile through creativity.

**Carbon Smart City**  
Every Monday evening at Fazenda Café (E1 7LE), local artist Madhumita Bose is teaming up with the Barbican Creative Neighbourhoods team and Culture Mile to deliver free crafting workshops. You can learn how to reduce waste and protect the environment by upcycling different materials into objects, gain practical creative skills, and collectively discuss various climate issues over a cup of tea and homemade cakes! All materials are provided free of charge and you don’t need any experience to attend. You just need to be 18 or over with an open mind, a positive attitude, and a willingness to learn. The workshops run until Monday 27th June. To book your space, email [community@barbican.org.uk](mailto:community@barbican.org.uk).

**Community Impact Collective**  
Over the last year, Culture Mile’s Creative Communities team noticed that knowledge and information in the City wasn’t being shared effectively among our community, resulting in voices going unheard. In an attempt to solve this, the team set out to build a network for cultural practitioners to come together and create a space for cross-sector listening, learning, and reflecting. The goal? To support culture at all levels across the City through collaborative community thinking. Enter the Community Impact Collective, a peer-support programme consisting of six workshops from April through June. Earlier this year, a diverse and representative cohort of eight candidates were recruited to



Prince Taylor (Rising Arts Agency) leading a creative brainstorming session during Culture Mile's first Community Impact Collective workshop © Christa Holka/Culture Mile

participate in the programme. Each session has been built around a different theme, with participants focusing most recently on Power, Antiracism and Decolonisation. With just three sessions remaining, topics still to cover include Sustainability, Access, and Communities in the City. At the end of the programme,

“

You can learn how to reduce waste and protect the environment by upcycling different materials into objects

”

participants will reflect on the learnings and receive £500 to continue their journey and deliver work relevant to the sessions – either as an individual or collectively. Culture Mile will be sharing resources and insights from the programme, so keep an eye out on their website and social channels over the summer for more updates.

**Imagine Fund**  
Applications to Culture Mile’s community grant-making and support scheme closed at the beginning of May. With funding of £500 and £2,000 available, the Imagine Panel are currently sifting through applications with a view to making a collective decision on the final projects soon. Last year’s projects included weekly sharing sessions for unpaid

carers, a pop-up choir, a history project on London Wall, a socially distanced singalong on the Golden Lane Estate, and a guided walk exploring the City’s floating pedways. We’re looking forward to finding out what this year’s group of projects will be!

**To find out more about the above projects and to explore what’s happening in and around Culture Mile, simply visit [www.culturemile.london](http://www.culturemile.london) or follow @CultureMileLDN on social media**

CULTURE

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# Support independent local journalism

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Here at *EC1 Echo* we do things differently. We combine professional journalism with voluntary contributions from people who live and work in the borough and create content which is responsive to and reflective of the community.

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