

Blackfriars Bridge Foreshore Hoarding Engagement Activities

Introduction

tunnel/map/draw, 2016

A collaboration between Joy Gerrard and students from City of London School, commissioned by Tideway



tunnel/map/draw installed on the hoarding at Blackfriars Bridge Foreshore. Photo: Bridget Sawyers

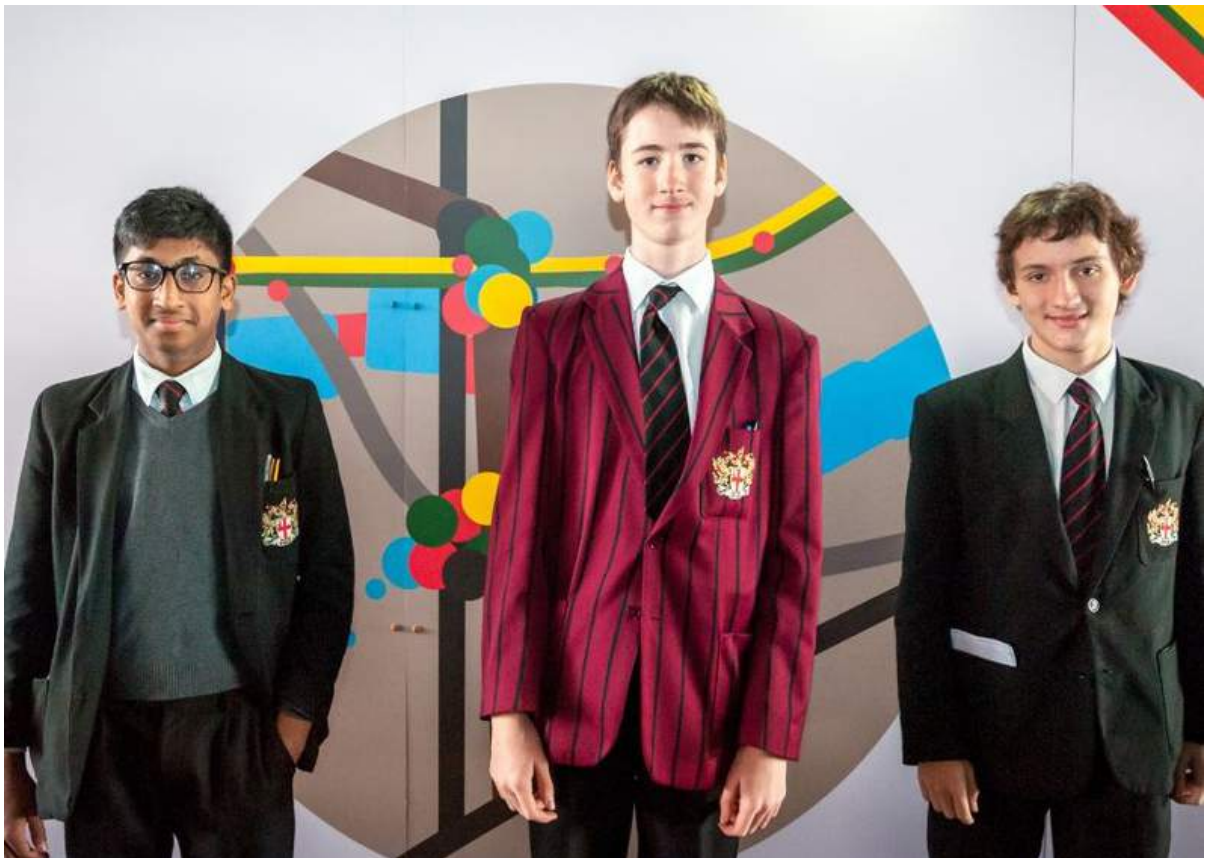
tunnel/map/draw was a temporary artwork made for the hoarding around the Tideway construction site at Blackfriars Bridge Foreshore, for the enabling works in 2016. The artwork

was the result of a series of workshops devised by the artist Joy Gerrard for 24 Year-3 pupils from the nearby boys' school, City of London School.

tunnel/map/draw responded to the great expanse of water that moves through London and the extraordinary engineering feat of the Thames Tideway Tunnel that is being created beneath the surface. Gerrard and the children considered the River from distinct but related perspectives – mapping and engineering.

Drawing inspiration from the bold visual language of artist Kazimir Malevich and the Russian constructivists, the team created 'mental' maps based on their walking routes around the River. They generated a graphic representation of the multiple levels of layering and planning that go beneath, through and around the Thames. The artwork also included a series of photographs capturing some of the hands-on experiments in the workshops to investigate the engineering concepts of how to control liquid.

Their combined efforts offer a visualisation that reveals the hidden and complex systems of transformative engineering projects in an urban setting.



City of London School pupils in front of the artwork. Photo: courtesy City of London School

Credits

Artist: Joy Gerrard, in collaboration with Tommy, Uttarayan, William, Victor, Vijay, Luc, Matthew, Joseph, Dominic, Ramkeeran and George of 3B and Magnus, Jean, Louis, Alexander, Lodovico, Rudi, Benjamin, Aryan, Brodie, Razik, James and Felix of 3M.
Photography by Katherine Fawsett and graphic design support by Parsha Gerayesh-Nejad.

Thanks due to

Ian Dugdale, former Head of Art and Design, City of London School and Claire Feeley, Exhibitions Manager, Barbican as a member of the artist selection panel.

About the Artist

Joy Gerrard is an Irish born artist who reflects on how individuals consider themselves within the world, particularly an urban world. Much of her work has involved looking at the city from above, producing visualisations of systems and networks through models, drawings and photographic works.

Gerrard studied at the Royal College of Art, London and the National College of Art and Design, Dublin. She has been commissioned and exhibited extensively across Britain and internationally.

www.joygerrard.com

Artist's Brief

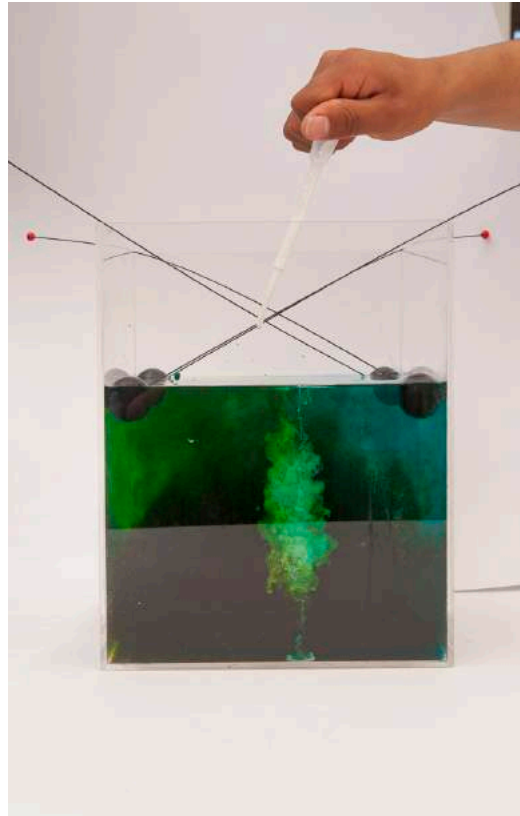
Joy Gerrard responded to a brief to develop designs for the hoarding around Tideway's construction site at Blackfriars Bridge Foreshore in collaboration with students from the City of London School.

The overarching theme of observation was identified by the school as the main focus of this site-specific commission and Gerrard was encouraged to take advantage of the school's position alongside the river and access to a rooftop terrace, which affords panoramic views of the river and city. She was asked to work with the pupils to develop the theme of observation further. Ideas around water, movement, time, ecology and place were also identified by Tideway as additional themes to explore.

Development of Artist's Proposal

Joy developed her initial proposal and planned a series of seven workshops to take place on Tuesdays and Wednesdays in May 2016, to coincide with Art and Design lessons for two groups of Third Form students (Year 9). Each session was made up of 12 students and Joy decided to give each group a specific focus. Group one focused on engineering and the control of liquid, while group two focused on tunnel mapping and construction.

Workshops



Workshop sessions exploring the control and flow of liquid. Photos: Katherine Fawsett

Group one: engineering and the control of liquid

The first workshop took place on 10 May at which Joy introduced the project. This session also included an inspiring and stimulating presentation by Stuart Williams, Lead Engineer for the central section of the Thames Tideway Tunnel before the group then went up to the roof top to enjoy some observational drawing that focused on the movement of water in the Thames.

On 17 May Joy held a class-based session with the students at which she presented her own artwork and introduced the students to other artists that use engineering in their practice. She also conducted some simple water-based experiments, flooding a range of architectural models with coloured liquid.

The following week, on 24 May, Joy continued water-based experiments and worked with the students to construct models of urban space, where they explored the flow of liquid. A photographer, Katherine Fawsett was present at this session and the resulting photographs were featured as part of the final artwork.



Rooftop observational drawing. Photo: Gemma Lloyd

Group two: tunnel mapping and construction

This group attended their first workshop on 27 April where they enjoyed a presentation by Joy about her work as an artist. The students then began making 'mental maps' of their journey into school, highlighting particular moments and sights in their commute and paying attention to the sounds and emotions they experienced. Their journeys were incredibly varied, using various modes of transportation, making for a fascinating discussion and interesting maps.

The second workshop took place on 4 May and was held on the rooftop where the students were asked to make observational birds eye drawings of the river and the surrounding buildings and structures. They were encouraged to work with a range of markers, pencils and colours.

On 11 May the students walked over the Millennium Bridge to Tate Modern, where they looked at works in the collection by Kazimir Malevich. Returning via Blackfriars Bridge, the group stopped en route to make observational drawings from the train platform, which overlooks the river.

Abstract mapping was the focus of the fourth workshop on 18 May. For this session the students worked with a range of coloured papers and stickers to make abstract maps using the techniques of assemblage and collage. They were asked to think about the layering and planning that go on beneath, through and around the Thames and incorporate elements from their previous maps to produce graphically striking works.



Pupil from City of London School in front of the installed artwork. Photo: courtesy City of London School

Following the workshops, Joy collated the drawings and maps produced by the students and the photographs taken by Katherine Fawcett to produce the final work with graphic design support from Parsha Gerayesh-Nejad. On 17 October, Joy presented *tunnel/map/draw* to the participating students and others that were interested at a special launch event for the school.

Participants

Joy engaged with 24 students from the school during the workshops and gave hand on experience of a wide range of techniques that she also uses in her own work; observational drawing, model making, photography, assemblage, and collage.



Workshop sessions.

Feedback



Photo: Joy Gerard

Visitors to the artwork commented that the hoarding made them think of 'the river as the heart of industry, and that fact that it has always been at the centre of the economy, historically.' ... 'Christmas presents, stars and planets and road maps.' And that it was 'bright, cheerful and uplifting'