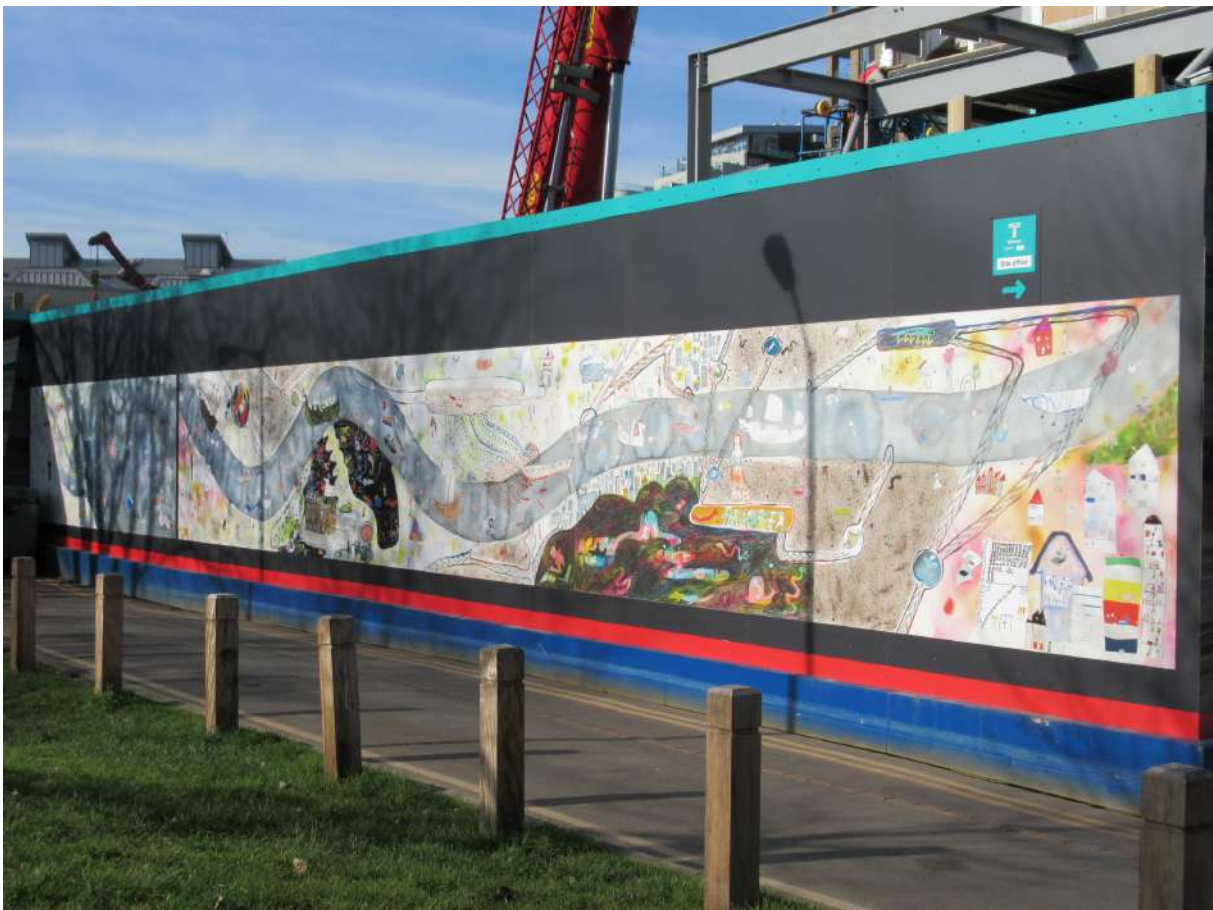


Falconbrook Pumping Station Hoarding Engagement Activities

Introduction

Inner Eye, Child's I, 2018

A collaboration between Elinor Stanley and pupils from Falconbrook Primary School commissioned by Tideway



Inner Eye, Child's I installed on the hoarding at Falconbrook Pumping station. Photo: Bridget Sawyers

Inner Eye, Child's I is a fantastical collage made for the hoarding at the Falconbrook Pumping Station construction site in Wandsworth. It was created by artist Elinor Stanley in collaboration with twenty-five pupils from Falconbrook Primary School following a series of workshops in autumn 2017.

In the workshops, Elinor took the children on an imaginary journey through the history of the River Thames and all of the interconnected conduits of sewers, plumbing and hidden rivers.

The pupils were introduced to a wide range of drawing and painting techniques alongside research into the history of the River Thames and the River Wandle. They looked back through history at the different people who lived alongside the river and the trades that connected London to the rest of the world. Exploring mysteries of the deep and imagined possible futures they wove themselves and their families into a rich river narrative.

Formed in two parts, the first part of the artwork depicts the mouth of the River Wandle where it meets the Thames, while the second part focuses on where the River Thames runs through Wandsworth. *Inner Eye, Child's I* presents the pupils' imaginative view of the world. Romans, monsters, engineers, and mermaids cavort through the subterranean sewage systems and waterways to create a modern take on the *Mappa Mundi* – a medieval European map of the world. Up close, it reveals the details of many strange meetings and discoveries between characters.

Credits

Elinor Stanley in collaboration with Abdihakim, Kristian, Danielle, Abbie, Daniel, Abdulahi, Suheyb, Jaydyn, Nia, Yaqoob, Umran, Suriyah, Gloria, Yahye, Yazeed, Armaan, Hrefna, Munira, Daniel, Shergill, Sabrin, Ansh, Kamillah, Maison, Lily-Marie.

Thanks due to

Alex Gilmour, Lead Engineer, Tideway; Dr Pamela Greenwood, Archaeologist; Cayne Schooley, Class Teacher, Falconbrook Primary School for their contributions to the workshops. Michael Sacco, Graphic Designer. Sarah Pieniek-Jones Deputy Head, Falconbrook Primary School, Susie Gray, Cultural Planning Manager, Enable Leisure and Culture, Paul Gunn, Thames Water Utilities Limited and Eoin Ryan, Site Agent, Falconbrook Pumping Station, as members of the artist selection panel.

About the Artist

Elinor Stanley works with drawing, painting and performance to explore how humans use myth and illusionary narrative to make sense of the world, considering how these myths impact on contemporary concerns. She wants audiences to find their own narratives within her work, narratives that are ambiguous, intimate and tangible. www.elinorstanley.com

Artist's Brief



Workshop. Photo: Ania Bas

Elinor Stanley's brief was to develop designs for the hoarding at the Falconbrook Pumping Station construction site in collaboration with Falconbrook Primary School pupils and others identified by the artist.

The overarching theme of the River Thames has been identified as the main focus of this site-specific commission, the artist is asked to develop the theme with the children. The artist was also asked to consider project elements or components such as water, movement, time and ecology and place, which may also inform the artwork in addition to the rich historical context.

Development of Artist's Proposal

The artist developed her initial proposal and proposed to run seven sessions, each looking into a different aspect of the river. The artist was accompanied for two of the sessions by specialists with knowledge of the River Thames: a Tideway engineer and a local historian and archaeologist.

Workshops



A riverside walk as part of the first workshop. Photo: Ania Bas

Workshops took place between 7 November and 7 December 2017. The first workshop on 7 November 2017 involved a trip to the Falconbrook Pumping Station, the River Thames and to the site where the River Wandle meets the River Thames. The walk proved to be an important way of connecting these locations on foot as many children, although all locally based, have never been to the river and were not aware how close they lived to it. During the walk the pupils made drawings of the Pumping Station as well as both rivers.



Presentation by Alex Gilmour, Tideway Engineer. Photo: Ania Bas

The second workshop on 16 November 2017 took place at the school with half of the session dedicated to a presentation by Alex Gilmour, Tideway Engineer leading on Falconbrook Pumping Station. Alex outlined the history of the sewers and explained to pupils the current challenges of the overflowing system and the rationale behind the tunnel. Elinor followed the presentation by inviting pupils to create drawings of old sewer systems. They also prepared scraffitto drawings for the following session.



Drawing activities. Photo: Ania Bas

The third workshop on 27 November took place at the school where Elinor invited the pupils to look at medieval maps of the area and then map their own area and think of local landmarks that they pass on their way to school. They also created river monster drawings on prepared scraffitto papers. The pupils continued working with the idea of sea and river monsters during an 'exquisite corpse' activity and finally created 3D creature using plasticine.

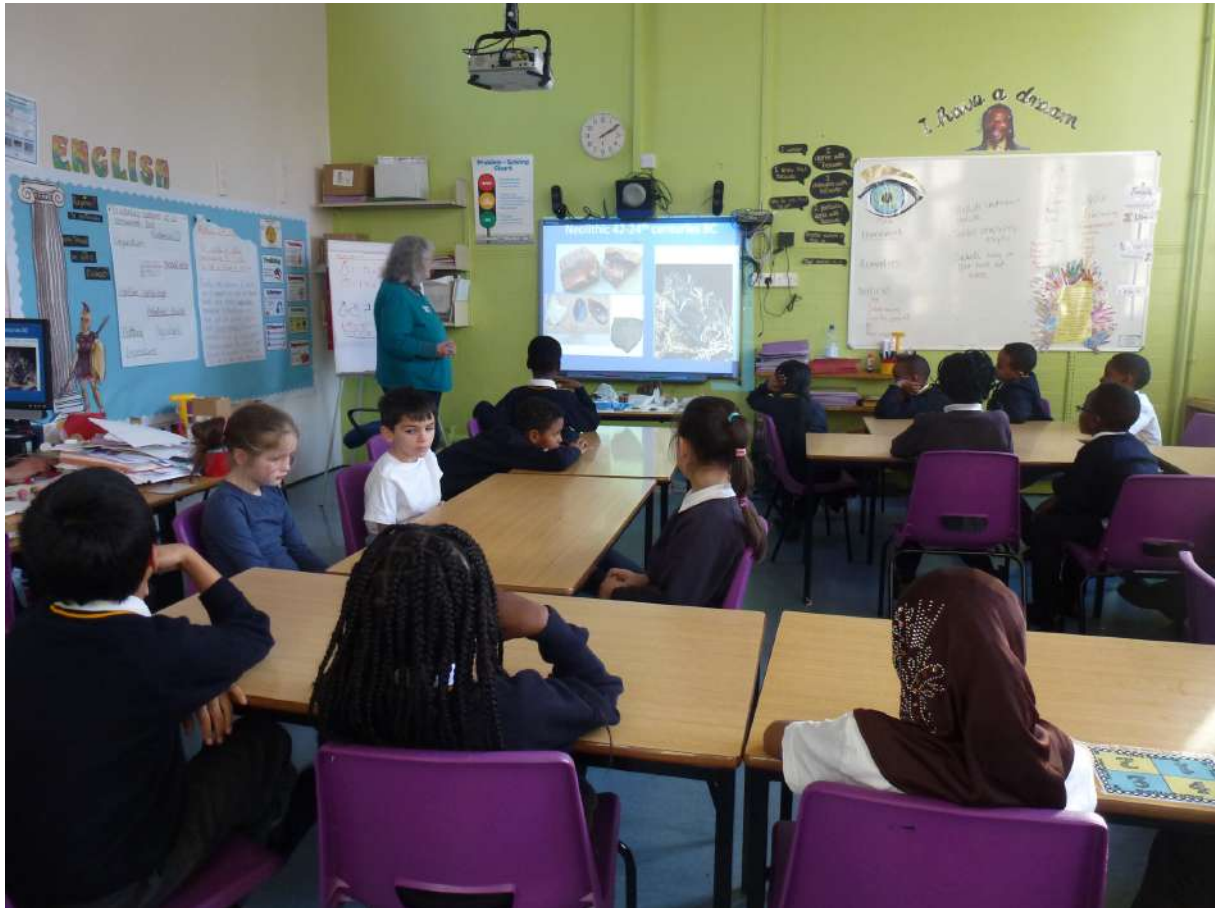


Creating hats. Photo: Ania Bas

During the fourth workshop on 23 November the group looked at the multicultural history of the River Thames. A presentation began with Neolithic human remains, which had been found alongside the Thames and then moved on to the Roman invasion and the birth of Londinium, near present day London Bridge. They looked at the The Wendles (legendary Vikings that feature in the Wandsworth crest) and discussed trading since medieval times, particularly between the 17th and 19th century when boats from all over world brought different goods, trades and people. The group also looked at the Huguenots as refugees that fled France from religious persecution to settle in Wandsworth. They were cloth makers as well as hat makers. Following on from Alex's discussion about how Victorian hats denoted a person's role, and a look at Roman and Viking helmets and the hats of the Huguenots everyone made their our own hat. The children worked with paper plates, silver bowls, paper, glue and paint to make the hats, some were based on historical ones seen in the presentation, others from imagination. This was followed by group work to design a boat, carrying goods and with figure heads, which resulted in some excellent drawings. The pupils gave presentations, each playing the part of a sailor, and telling the class where they had come from and what goods they had onboard.

During the fifth workshop on 24 November the pupils were given more insight into the River Wandle. The industrial history of rivers inspired the children to create paintings that showed the river's timeline and how heavy use of the river led to its pollution. Some children created further images of fish and imaginary beings living in the river. After that the group wrote short texts about their characters linked to the life of the rivers and the hats that they wore. Some chose to be fish, Romans, scientists etc. the pupils performed these to the rest of the class.

On the sixth session on 1 December the group created drawings of their actual houses and followed up with drawings of their ideal houses. Both drawings were made using colouring pencils and felt tip pens. This was followed with creating drawings of creatures living at the bottom of rivers and seas and pupils created different type of fish using collage.



Presentation by archaeologist and historian Pamela Greenwood. Photo: Ania Bas

The final session on 7 December was with a local archaeologist and historian Pamela Greenwood. Pamela brought to the session a number of objects found either inland or in local rivers (the Wandle, or the Thames at Putney and Battersea) and talked about how these finds allow us to peer into the past and learn about our ancestors' customs, beliefs and ways of living. The pupils then handled some of the objects and created detailed observational drawings based on these.

Participants



Workshop session. Photo: Ania Bas

Elinor engaged with a group of 25 pupils from across the year groups during the project and introduced to them a wide range of drawing, painting and sculpting techniques.

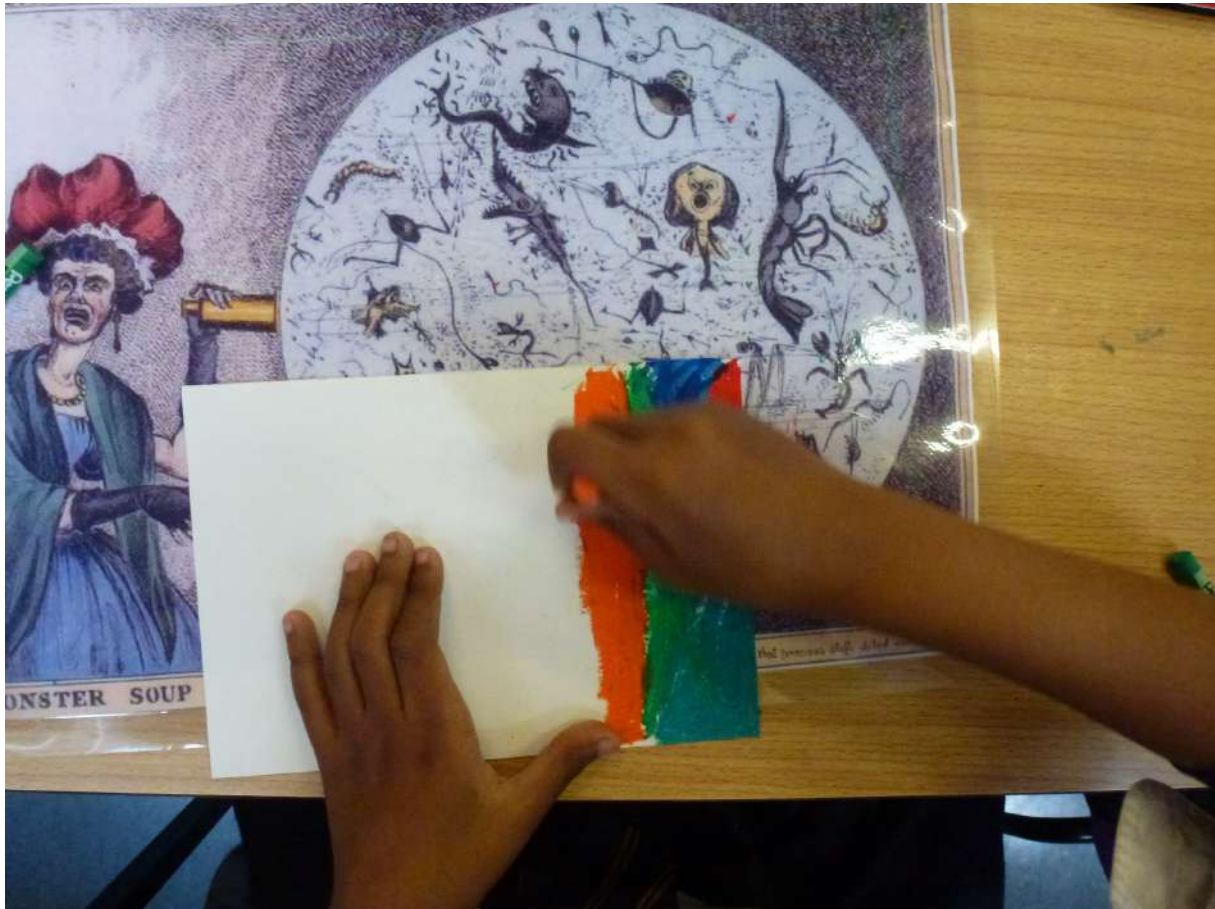
A self-portrait of each child from the school features on the final design.

The artwork is the result of this series of workshops which offered the children an opportunity to be introduced to a range of art techniques alongside research into the history of the rivers and local area. Their actual drawings feature on the final design.

Over the course of seven weeks the groups looked at the different histories and people who have lived alongside the river, the trade and manufacturing from all over the world- explored mysterious deeps, imagined possible futures and put themselves and their families into this rich narrative.

The resulting artwork presents the students' imaginative view of the world. Romans, monsters, engineers, mermaids cavort through the subterranean sewage systems and waterways. From a distance, the artwork looks like a modern take on a Medieval Mappa Mundi, and close up reveals the details of many strange meetings and discoveries between characters.

Feedback from the School



Drawing activities. Photo: Ania Bas

Participants involved in the project said:

"I made new friend and learnt how to draw." Danielle

"I learnt that sewage goes to the river Thames." Daniel

"The best thing was working with everybody." Abbie

"I have enjoyed experiencing new things and the history of the River Thames. I know that Tideway Tunnel help clean all sewage." Nia

"The best thing EVER was our trip to the river Thames and seeing the connection between the Wandle and the Thames." Suheyb

"In this project I have learnt different drawing techniques. Also I know how to draw better. I have enjoyed it when Alex the engineer came. Also I would love to improve the exquisite corps. The things that I know about Tideway tunnel is that the wee and poo goes to the river Thames." Armaan

"I made new friend and I made better art also it is helping me with history." Kristian

Cayne Schooley, the teacher leading on the project said:

"The students involved gained insights into how they use the river, especially around how the sewage system works, where it runs to and the problems/issues it can cause for the Thames."

They also gained knowledge of the uses of the river, were introduced to some people who's work involves river and learned about some history of the river and area itself.

In art, the children were able to use new techniques and materials and explore different ways of expressing their ideas and knowledge. I know many of them have gained more confidence in their artistic ability and are more confident to try new art techniques.

I was surprised at the children's creativity and what they produced when they were able to just do art- without many of the normal restrictions and criteria we use in school.

I have learned a lot from this project - I am new to the area and country so have learned a lot about the history of the areas, specifically the Wandle and Thames and how they are used now compared to the past. I have also learned some new art techniques I can use in my teaching practice such as scratch art and it has made me more confident in letting students 'just do art' without so many restrictions and criteria."

Sarah Pieniek-Jones, the Deputy Head said:

"This project worked very well for us. It did not overwhelm the school but seamlessly worked within our frameworks and structures and did not disturb the school day. Elinor offered a diverse range of techniques and approaches for children to work with. It wasn't just drawing and painting. They made hats, they performed, they met a Tideway engineer and an archaeologist. Some children after a few sessions did not want to continue, but we encouraged them to carry on and their energy and enthusiasm returned. It was good for them to see this through and complete the project.

As a school our appetite for involvement in projects in the area has grown but we also want to see in the work the impact of the scale that Tideway's project offered: large scale hoarding that will be present in the area for a few years and features children's work. Project that offers longevity, visibility and showcases young talent."

Feedback from Passers-by



Inner Eye, Child's I installed on the hoarding at Falconbrook Pumping station. Photo: Bridget Sawyers

Interesting. Eye-catching. Historical. It makes me stop and reflect.

I like the fact that it is the kids' own interpretation. I found interesting to see the different boats and others elements that represent the different times. I like the collectiveness of the artwork, the gathering of thoughts of how children see London.

It's unique. Haven't seen anything like it. It flows. It is big and imaginative. I can spot mermaid! I guess it is also about pollution. All these pipes are full of something sinister. I like the boats.

I really like that it "writes up the area". I think adding a local reference, from the perspective of the locals, was a really clever idea. And it reminds people how close we are to the Thames.

I like that it's there. It's nice to have something, definitely better than a grey plan grey wall.

I think it's quite unique, there is so much going on, loads of information. It's quite a big piece of artwork, because of the size it is quite eye-catching. I like that it's not simple and there are loads of elements to it.

Feedback from the Artist



Detail of *Inner Eye, Child's I* installed on the hoarding at Falconbrook Pumping station. Photo: Bridget Sawyers

Elinor greatly enjoyed working collaborating with the pupils at Falconbrook Primary School:

"Working with the children and teachers of Falconbrook Primary School was brilliant. The children had so much energy and enthusiasm and together we learned about the vast and varied history of the river, the people who have lived along it and the travel and trade it has enabled from all over the world. The richness and variation of the children's responses was wonderful to work with"