

**Open School East
Year 2
2015**



“Open School East is of a generation of new thinkers and leaders who illuminate new possibilities. Since its launch, Open School East has developed a unique approach blending learning, public programming and commissioning. It has created a truly independent and thought-provoking space that caters for early career practitioners, local residents and the broader public in equal measure. Open School East is a promising new model.”

– Peter Heslip, Director, Visual Arts, Arts Council England

About

Located in a former library and community centre in De Beauvoir Town, East London, Open School East is a unique space that brings together:

- A free study programme for 14 emerging artists;
- A multifaceted programme of events and activities open to all.

Open School East was founded in 2013 in response to spiralling tuition fees and student debt. It was instituted as a space for artistic learning and production that is experimental, versatile and highly collaborative.

Central to Open School East's approach is a commitment to foster cultural, intellectual and social exchanges between artists and the broader public. We do this by opening our study programme outwards, responding to our locality and providing an informal environment for the sharing of knowledge and skills across various communities – artistic, local and otherwise.



Mission & Vision

Open School East creates an environment for artistic learning that is free, collaborative and brings together diverse voices. We do this by providing tuition and studio space to emerging artists, and by producing and hosting cultural events, social activities and projects for and with everyone.

Our vision for the next 5 years is:

- To promote artistic excellence by increasing our support to emerging artists and equipping them with the tools to become resourceful and self-sufficient;
- To widen access to our programmes, in particular for young people and those without opportunity to develop artistically;
- To nurture our independence of thought and organisational autonomy, while developing new partnerships across sectors and geographies;
- To stimulate and influence debates around contemporary art, learning and access, through collaborative research and programming;
- To become sustainable both financially and physically, by securing the necessary income for our activity and a long-term home.

Open School East's strategy focuses on developing these principles within the following areas of activity:

- The Study Programme
- The Public Programme
- The Commissioning of projects

The Study Programme

Open School East is an innovative model of an artists' study programme that engages socially and culturally with its local context. Free to attend and non-accredited, the study programme runs across twelve months and is principally self-directed, creating platforms for the associate artists to develop their practice.

We provide a unique environment for artist-led learning through:

- Shared studio provision;
- Tuition and mentorship from international practitioners, theorists and curators;
- Support in the production of artistic projects.

Working individually and in groups, the associates take responsibility for the direction of their own learning by shaping the teaching programme around their practice and their shared interests. In lieu of paying fees, they take an active role in devising or assisting with public events and activities in and around the building.

Tuition takes place two days per week, and is delivered through a combination of workshops, lectures, seminars, site visits, tutorials and group crits, by artists and arts professionals including: Ed Atkins, Pablo Bronstein, Marvin Gaye Chetwynd, Maria Lind, Ahmet Ögüt, Sally O'Reilly, Daniel Sinsel and Ellis Woodman.

In 2015 OSE's core team of mentors was composed of artists Matthew Darbyshire, The Otolith Group and Olivia Plender; curators Janna Graham and Marijke Steedman; and writer John Douglas Millar.

“Having moved from the Southwest for the programme, OSE has enriched my work through challenging discussion and the diverse activities organised with my peers. Being part of OSE has enabled me to meet and work with members of different local communities, to programme events that interrogate cultural and social issues, and to begin fruitful collaborations with other OSE associates (which in a short time has resulted in an invitation to work with the Tate).”

– Marie Toseland, 2015 associate

The Associates

Associates at Open School East are emerging artists with or without a BA, MA or formal artistic qualification. They are selected following a yearly open call sent locally, nationally and internationally, and according to the following criteria: artistic quality; a recognised need to access free and non-conventional education; the ability to work collaboratively and to enter into a meaningful dialogue with local audiences and publics from further afield.

The associates in 2015 are:

Mathis Collins, Afshin Dekhordi, Daniel Kelly, Leslie Kulesh, John Lawrence, Kristin Luke, Paul Maheke Ngamaha, Sophie Mallett, Hari Rajaledchumy, Tina Rowe, Shiri Shalmi, Marie Toseland, Michael Whitby, Laura Yuile.

The OSE alumni:

Last year's associates have gone on to exhibit and be commissioned by organisations including Film and Video Umbrella, the Serpentine Gallery, Art Licks, Modern Art Oxford, and the Harris Museum in Preston.

Former associates continue to work collaboratively and programme events and projects in the building, engaging in dialogue with the current associates and forming a growing alumni community.



Associate Projects: Highlights

Laura Yuile's work and research during her time at OSE has centred around global flows of capital and urban spaces of speculative investment – in particular the role that current property developments within London play in reinforcing the notion of a World City and the effect this has upon everyday domestic life. She has been developing a new video and a body of sculptural works made from household products and debris; considering questions not only of economic investment but of our investment in language, labour and material and where the corresponding lines lie between need, desire and excess.



Sophie Mallett has spent the past year exploring sound's intersection with politics, affect and value, working with networked online communities to develop a new body of work. Combining surface metrology, geo-satellite technologies and microworking, Sophie is developing compositions that reimagine the potential of national anthems in a globalised present. She also collaborates with associate **Marie Toseland** to create live collective listening experiences. 'Live ASMR' explores unseen physical responses from a social perspective; to define where solipsism meets community.

Over the last year, **Paul Maheke Ngamaha** has been investigating ideas of decoloniality and emancipation through a poetic yet political inquiry about the environments we inhabit and our subjectivities. At the intersection of feminism and critical geography, his ongoing project 'Tropicalité' is looking at the body as an archive to be reinvented and a territory to be decolonised. While at OSE, he often convened dance as a practice of resistance to question sex politics, identity policing, Black body representations and their relationship to exoticism or notions such as agency and empowerment.

2015 International Artist Residency

In partnership with Gasworks, and with the support of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, we welcomed Portuguese artists **Carla Cruz** and **Antonio Contador** for six months.

The duo worked in the shared studios alongside the associates, and developed 'Finding Money, London & Paris Diary', the second iteration of a project focused on an everyday occurrence: finding money in the streets of London and Paris where each of them is based.

'Finding Money' was initiated in 2011. The year-long cycles of performative search are recorded through an ongoing diary published within the context of the residency at Open School East. This narrative documentation has served as the main source of material for other public events such as walks, talks, astrological consultations, broadcast readings and magic sessions.



Events Programme

Our events programme enables interactions between the artistic community, the local neighbourhood and the broader public.

The events include screenings, skills-based workshops, lectures, walks, performances, concerts, reading groups and social gatherings. They are organised by, and in dialogue with, Open School East's various users including neighbours, projects' participants, partner organisations and OSE associates, alumni and staff.

Some events are one-offs, while others are recurring features, for instance:

- **The Bad Vibes Club**, a reading group and lecture series on negative ethics led by OSE alumnus Matthew de Kersaint Giraudeau;
- **OSE's monthly film club**, which this year has explored the topics of collective filmmaking and community representation since the 1960s;
- **Culture, Technology & Power**, an introduction to Cultural Studies in 9 lectures, taught by senior academics moonlighting from their day jobs at University of East London.



Activities

Open School East invites Hackney residents to utilise the space as a cultural resource. We run participatory projects, offer various short courses and training opportunities, and welcome groups to devise their own activities.

Highlights include:

- Every Tuesday we welcome **Hackney Stream**, a group of over 55s working under the slogan 'community adventures led by citizens of the pre-digital era'. They propose: tablet training and help; monthly dance parties; traditional cooking; art-making workshops and social events.
- **New Ways of Seeing**, a 10-week long community photography project involving workshops, excursions, dialogue and technical activities. Developed with Shoreditch Trust, the project was delivered by artist Helen Cammock and supported by associates Tina Rowe and Michael Whitby.

“Taking a camera and looking through it has brought some light back into my life. I have been to new places because I have wanted to see differently. I have started to see light again and I want this to remain in my life.”

– Rabah Guenem, New Ways of Seeing participant



Open Cinema

Falling under our Activities programme, Open Cinema is OSE's flagship participatory project for 2015. Open Cinema is a collective adventure in digital filmmaking and sharing that offers **free training** and the opportunity to collaborate on the production of a **2-day cinema event** focusing on Hackney.

Working with artist Neil Cummings and a pool of film professionals and enthusiasts, we meet every three weeks to **learn and share skills, make films and work from existing film material** which we source. Organised with up to 40 participants, the final event will include new films made individually & collectively; a programme of existing feature films & documentaries; discussions; broadcast; food and other means of sharing this collective adventure.



“Working with Open School East has been a wild, exciting roller coaster ride. An astonishing array of people have participated, the most diverse in age, background and experience I have ever worked with; from moving image professionals, enthusiasts to complete beginners. We have collectively learnt skills in expert-led workshops, watched material together, interviewed, filmed, laughed, edited and generously shared results. Peer learning at its best.”

– Neil Cummings, Open Cinema facilitator and artist

Troy Town Art Pottery

Troy Town Art Pottery is a unique ceramics facility for artists. It was devised by artist Aaron Angell and commissioned by Open School East as a response to dwindling ceramics access in London. Troy Town Art Pottery is fully equipped and is available to use for 4 resident artists at a time for two-week periods.

Troy Town Art Pottery aims to promote ceramics as a sculptural corollary to painting and drawing. It is a place for emerging artists to learn ceramics skills, while also serving the associate artists and the local community.

To date, Troy Town has:

- Hosted **48** resident artists;
- Provided **188** local residents with an introduction to ceramics workshops;
- Worked with charitable organisations including The Manna Project, Intoart and Headway, as well as the local Hackney New School and City Academy, Hackney, to deliver tailor-made workshops.

Residents artists in 2015 have included: Richard John Jones, Olga Cerkesova, James Unsworth, Anthea Hamilton, Pascal Nichols, Charlie Duck, Andrew Mealor, Shama Khanna, Renee So, and Candice Lin.



Selected Press

'Creative schools: the artists taking education into their own hands'

The independent Open School East challenges the traditional university model, creating a network of individuals and a much freer – and cheaper – space to learn, experiment, and critique and be critiqued.

– Maggie Gray, Apollo

'What future for London's Open School East?'

Open School East, an independent art school in Hackney, East London, has become in less than a year something of a flagship for self-organized educational initiatives. But like with all experiments, the real challenge isn't starting out but staying open. [...] With university fees tripling, and art progressively pushed out of the core school curriculum, art education in Britain has turned into a contested territory, fought for by leading figures such as artist Bob and Roberta Smith and Tate director Nicholas Serota.

– Coline Milliard, Artnet

'Alternative art schools: a threat to universities?'

A former library in Hackney may seem an unlikely venue for London's most talked-about new art school. The 1970s Rose Lipman building lacks the architectural wow factor of Central Saint Martins King's Cross campus, but demand for places on the postgraduate Open School East in De Beauvoir town is high.

– David Batty, The Guardian

In Numbers

January – December 2015

- Open School East supported the artistic and professional development of **14** emerging artists, and **2** Portuguese residency artists. They were selected out of **165** applications.
- The associates received ongoing mentorship from **7** artists, curators and writers, and teaching from **32** practitioners, delivered through workshops, lectures, seminars, site visits, tutorials and group crits.
- The associates developed **6** collaborative projects delivered in the locale, and our open studios – showcasing the artists' work – attracted **473** visitors.
- **1,675** emerging artists and art students benefited from OSE's public seminar and talk series, and from direct contact with key practitioners.
- Our workshops have enabled **1,303** East London residents to learn new skills in photography, digital animation, filmmaking, ceramics and casting.
- **2,285** people have attended our public debates, screenings, live music and social events.



Supporters and Partners 2015

Programme Supporters:

Arts Council England
The Ampersand Foundation
Create
Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation

Patrons:

Charles Asprey and Lucy Moore
Alan Cristea Gallery
Gagosian Gallery
Sarah Griffin
John Morton Morris and Sally Clarke
New Art Centre
Maureen Paley
Midge Palley
Ruth and Richard Rogers
Alex Sainsbury and Elinor Jansz
Fanny Singer
Matthew Slotover and Emily King
John Studzinski
Alice Waters

Supporters:

Jeffrey and Veronica Berman
Collection Native Informant
Hauser & Wirth
Garrick Jones
Jamie Oliver
Pundersons Gardens
Stuart Shave / Modern Art
Sutton PR

Supporting Artists:

Aaron Angell
Pablo Bronstein
Michael Craig-Martin
Ellen Gallagher
Ryan Gander
Antony Gormley
Sanya Kantarovsky
Linder
Christian Marclay
Ciara Phillips
Jesse Wine

Friends:

Gemma Cairney
Rachel Cass
Louise Congerton
Zoe McLeod
Lulu Peyraud
Will Riordan

Partners:

Barbican
Cornubian Arts and Science Trust
Create
Critical Practice
Gasworks
Hackney Museum
Hackney Stream
Shoreditch Trust
University of East London, CCSR



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CREATE



Support Open School East

Help us provide artists with free education and develop a far-reaching public programme by becoming a supporter of Open School East.

Levels of support and benefits:

Friends: £25 to £250

- Name recognition on the Friends list in print and online
- Advanced invitations to open studios and special events

Supporters: £500 to £1,000

- Name recognition on the Supporters list in print and online
- Advanced invitations to open studios and special events
- Visits to the School and artists' studios hosted by the Directors of OSE

Patrons: £1,500 plus

- Name recognition on the Patrons list in print and online
- Advanced invitations to open studios and special events
- Visits to the School and artists' studios hosted by the Directors of OSE
- Invitation to an annual reception with the associate artists, Faculty and Board

Open School East is looking for anchor patrons who will help secure the organisation's future.

For more information on how to support Open School East, please contact co-director Anna Colin: anna@openschooleast.org or +44 (0) 7974 134 352.

Account information:

Open School East
HSBC, 283 Mare St, Hackney, London E8 1PJ
Sort code: 40-03-19
Account number: 41545078

IBAN: GB20MIDL40031941545078
SWIFT: MIDLGB22

Organisation

Team

Anna Colin, co-director and co-founder
Laurence Taylor, co-director and co-founder
Mike Brooks, general manager

Board

Ryan Gander, artist
Hadrian Garrard, director, Create London
Sarah Griffin, curator of applied arts
Sarah McCrory, director, Glasgow International and OSE co-founder
Stephanie McLaren-Neckles, co-founder, Let's Be Brief and twenty%extra
Zoe McLeod, consultant, Counterculture LLP
Justin O'Shaughnessy, independent producer
Emily Pethick, director, The Showroom
Fanny Singer, writer and independent curator
Sam Thorne, artistic director, Tate St Ives and OSE co-founder

Open School East's Board is comprised of 10 members representing a blend of experience across the art, community and public funding sectors. The Board is committed to an annual review of itself, including its ability to evaluate on behalf of Open School East the following: OSE's stated objectives; available financial and human capital resources; key performance measures; and strategic, operational and financial risks.

Contact information

Open School East
Old Rose Lipman Library
43 De Beauvoir Rd
London N1 5SQ

Twitter: @openschooleast
Facebook: Open School East
Website: openschooleast.org
Telephone: +44 (0) 7974 134 352

Open School East is fully wheelchair accessible.

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“OSE isn’t just a place to go to, it’s a place to be. A lot happens here if you’re willing to look and participate. I initially thought it was a bunch of artists and art students doing social work. I soon found out after getting involved there was much fun and learning to be had - photography, filmmaking, animation, gallery visits, radio workshops, and a lot of Caribbean food. I feel OSE has given me confidence and encouragement to do stuff I really enjoy. I’m still learning, long may it continue!”

- Stephen Manning, OSE regular