



Tributaries



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Reflections on
public art and water
18 October 2023
6-8.30pm

The Line is a free public art trail in East London that connects Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and The O2, following the waterways and the line of the Greenwich Meridian. Its outdoor exhibition programme offers a journey through a dynamic urban landscape where everyone can explore art, nature and heritage for free.

The Line is delighted to partner with CREATURE (Centre for Creative Arts, Cultures and Engagement) and Arup Phase 2 in organising a free symposium which will draw together artists, water specialists and researchers to explore how site-specific art responds to water. East London's increasing vulnerability to flash flooding and water pollution will be a starting point for a discussion on how art, the socio-political and the ecological are intertwined.

This event will include an exclusive screening of *The Lay Shaft Drive is Down*, a new film commission by artist Helen Cammock reflecting on the historical context of the House Mill in East London and the River Lea that flows beneath it.

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Performance by Helen Cammock

The Lay Shaft Drive is Down documents Cammock's new site-specific spoken word and sung performance at the House Mill, Bromley-by-Bow on 17th September, imagined on the occasion of The Line's exhibition, *Tributaries*. Taking the House Mill as its starting container, *The Lay Shaft Drive is Down* considers mills in relation to water, to industry, to food, to hardship and nurture: the tie to the colonial relationships that bind both people and production through contentious, often violent, yet sometimes radical histories.

Helen Cammock, *The Lay Shaft Drive is Down*, 2023 (film still). Courtesy of the artist.



Helen Cammock is an artist working across film, photography, print, text, and performance. She produces works stemming from a deeply involved research process that explore the complexities of social histories. Central to her practice is the voice: the uncovering of marginalised voices within history, the question of who speaks on behalf of whom and on what terms, as well as how her own voice reflects in different ways on the stories explored in her work.

[@cammockhelen](https://www.instagram.com/cammockhelen)
www.helencammock.co.uk

Speakers



Joseph Cook is an anthropologist, creative practitioner, and boater based at University College London, where he leads the UCL Citizen Science Academy. Interests include nomadic lives, healthcare, and London's industrial history. Cook recently collaborated on *Navigating the System*, a boater healthcare project recently exhibited in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

[@narrowboat_joseph](https://www.instagram.com/narrowboat_joseph)
www.josephcook.me
www.navigatingthesystem.co.uk



Lison Sabrina Musset is a French-Brazilian visual artist, curator and the co-founder of The Collective Makers; an organisation that supports local and international emerging visual artists. She has worked in partnership with The National Maritime Museum since 2022 and has co-curated and co-produced the *Our Connection to Water* exhibition alongside artist Joseph Ijoyemi.

[@thecollectivemakers](https://www.instagram.com/thecollectivemakers)
[@creativimensionart](https://www.instagram.com/creativimensionart)
www.rmg.co.uk/whats-on/national-maritime-museum/our-connection-water



Sonia Levy's inquiry-led artist practice explores shifting engagements with non-human worlds amidst prevailing Earthly precarities. Her work operates at the intersection of knowledge practices challenging Western expansionist and extractivist logics. She has exhibited internationally and published with MIT Press and Thames & Hudson.

[@sonia_levy](https://www.instagram.com/sonia_levy)
www.tba21.org/liquidintelligence



Martin Shouler is Arup's London Water Leader working across infrastructure and building engineering. Martin's work in urban water resilience has brought him into contact with cities and communities dealing with too much, too little and too polluted water. He has been involved in a wide range of projects, both in the UK and overseas, (including research, design and consultancy work) for public and private organisations.

[@arupgroup](https://www.instagram.com/arupgroup)

About *Tributaries*

Tributaries explores artistic responses to our relationships with bodies of water. Situated in The House Mill, the exhibition brings together five artist films that critically engage with water through global histories and geographies of trade, colonial legacies and the climate crisis. As the world's largest surviving tidal mill and a building that is increasingly impacted by flooding, the House Mill's context – past and present – is foregrounded in this exhibition. The films, like tributaries, flow into an important conversation about the ways we live with water.

Contributing artists: Martha Atienza, Ursula Biemann, Hanna Ljungh, Daniela Medina Poch and Elizabeth Gallón Droste, and Alberta Whittle

Tributaries has been realised in partnership with Arup Phase 2 and is funded by Arts Council England and Cockayne – Grants for the Arts.



Schedule

6:00-6:10

Dr Jacek Ludwig Scarso —
Introduction

6:10-6:25

The Line — Reflecting on *Tributaries*

6:25-6:40

Film screening – Helen Cammock,
The Lay Shaft Drive is Down

6:40-7:05

Panel Presentations – “How does
your practice respond to human
relationships with water?”

7:05-7:45

Panel Discussion

7:45-8:00

Q&A

8:00-8:30

Drinks Reception

Image credits

1. Ursula Biemann, *Deep Weather*, 2013, 9-minute video (film still). Courtesy of the artist.
2. Hanna Ljungh, *How to Civilize a Waterfall*, 2010, 4-minute video (film still). Courtesy of the artist and Filmform. Image: Martin Edelsteen.
3. Alberta Whittle, *between a whisper and a cry*, 2019, 41-minute video (film still). Courtesy of the artist and The Modern Institute/Toby Webster Ltd., Glasgow.