

# World Gallery opens at the Horniman Museum and Gardens

Public opening: 10 am, Friday 29 June 2018



Over 3,000 objects from around the world exploring the fundamental question of what it means to be human go on display this week as the Horniman's much-anticipated World Gallery opens to the public.

The 600 sq m gallery opens following a major redevelopment of the historic South Hall to provide a bright and contemporary setting for the Horniman's world-class anthropology collection.

A number of new acquisitions, special commissions and interactive exhibits are showcased alongside important and intriguing objects from the Horniman's collection – including many on display for the first time in a generation.

Through vibrant and thought-provoking displays, the World Gallery showcases historic and contemporary objects from all five inhabited continents to show visitors some of the ways that people live their lives, looking at common virtues of love and compassion, trust and friendship, dignity and courage. Visitors are invited to discover and celebrate the beauty and diversity of the world's cultures, and to share a sense of belonging and pride in human creativity and resilience.

The World Gallery is divided into four interlinked spaces. An **Introductory area** welcomes visitors into the gallery, where audio-visual installations and displays explore the sentimental attachment people have to objects; **Encounters** has rich displays showing examples of ways of living across different times and places; **Perspectives** is an area that reflects on how and why we categorise, describe and understand the world; and **Horniman's Vision** gives an overview of the Horniman family and the museum's history.

The gallery space is completed with a beautiful display of kites and banners hanging from the newly renovated ceiling vault. Collected and commissioned from Guatemala, China, London and beyond, these emblems signify our human instinct to come together in celebration, play or protest. Highlights include kites by Ahmadzia Bakhtyari, a London-based kite-maker from Kunduz, northern Afghanistan, and a banner created by South East London artist Ed Hall with Horniman volunteers, inspired by the long tradition of Trade Union banners.

Launching on the anniversary of the current Museum building opening to the public on 29 June 1901, the World Gallery will continue Frederick Horniman's ambition 'to bring the world to Forest Hill'. Drawing on the knowledge, perspectives and voices from a wide range of community groups and individuals, and in collaboration with



contemporary artists, photographers, film-makers and activists, the World Gallery was developed by Horniman staff in collaboration with over 200 people from its local, national and international networks and communities.

Made possible thanks to a £3.3m National Lottery grant, the World Gallery is part of the Horniman's mission to encourage a wider appreciation of the world, its peoples and their cultures, and its environments.

**Nick Merriman, Chief Executive of the Horniman, says:** *'The World Gallery is an important reminder that we all share one planet, and that the things that unite us are greater than those that divide us. Promoting understanding between cultures and a sustainable world, the World Gallery could not be more timely or relevant. We are extremely grateful to all of our partners and funders who have made the World Gallery possible, and we look forward to welcoming visitors to this wonderful addition to the Horniman.'*

**Robert Storrie, Keeper of Anthropology at the Horniman, says:** *'The opening of the World Gallery is a major milestone in the Horniman's history that will once again place Anthropology at the centre of the Museum. It has been a pleasure to help curate the World Gallery with so many inspirational people. We hope that our visitors will explore some of the many different ways that people can understand and describe the world we all share, and draw inspiration from examples of humanity's resilience, creativity and compassion.'*

**Justine Simons, Deputy Mayor for Culture and the Creative Industries, says:** *'The new World Gallery at London's Horniman Museum illustrates how people from different countries and cultures have lived, worked and prospered together from ancient civilisations to the present day. London is a melting pot of diversity, where we don't just tolerate difference, we celebrate it. Our city couldn't be a more natural home for the new World Gallery.'*

**Matt Hancock, Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, says:** *'The Horniman's new World Gallery is an inspiring and diverse celebration of human creativity. Every one of the 3000 items tells a story, and through cutting-edge technology and innovative displays, will be made more accessible to visitors now and into the future.'*

### **Introductory area**

The entrance to the gallery introduces the ways in which objects connect people, and the powerful emotions they can evoke. A series of audio-visual digital installations shows people from the Horniman's community groups, volunteers, spiritual leaders, collectors and anthropologists talking about objects that have personal meaning for them. These films, presented alongside a display of objects selected for their emotional resonance, will encourage visitors to reflect on objects that hold meaning in their own lives.

### **Encounters**

The Encounters present examples of ways of living from Africa, the Americas, Asia, Oceania and Europe, representing some of the Horniman's strongest collections. They explore what it means to live a human life in different times and places.

- The **African** encounters display objects relating to people living in bustling cities, vast deserts and dense rainforests. They explore aspects of life in Nigeria and South Africa, as well as the Mbendjele people of the Congo basin and the Tuareg people of North Africa. Objects include: a full sized model camel complete with Tuareg saddle and equipment, objects collected from a Lagos market stall in 1980s, a pink beaded waistcoat from South Africa from the 1970s, an Mbendjele women's basket containing everything needed to make a home in the Central African rainforest.
- The **American** encounters look at indigenous peoples of the North American Plains, the Arctic, the First Nations of the Pacific Northwest Coast and the Wai Wai people of Guyana and Brazil. They highlight a shared indigenous American understanding of generosity and respect as the basis for all social relations. Objects include: poisoned arrows from the South American rainforest, a Native American tomahawk, an Inuit sealskin parka, and a Tlingit robe.
- The **Asian** encounters focus on the cultures of China, the Himalayas, Nagaland and Thailand, revealing the diversity of religious belief and cultural practice in the world's largest continent. Objects include:

Chinese paper offerings for use in the afterlife, a Tibetan tsampa container, Nang Talung puppets from Thailand, and warrior headdresses from Nagaland.

- The **Oceania** encounters explore ways of thinking and living in Australia, Papua New Guinea, Fiji and other islands of the Pacific Ocean. They reflect on the shared respect people have with land and sea and how objects can create and reaffirm family and ancestral ties. Objects include: spectacular headdresses and masks from Papua New Guinea, barkcloth dresses worn in Fiji today for 1st and 21st birthdays, 19th-century bottle glass spearheads from Western Australia and a 'wave' of shell body ornaments from across the Pacific region.
- The **European** encounters reveal a strong connection between contemporary life and the distant past. Travel, trade and its consequences are explored with a focus on England, Poland, Sweden, Italy and the Mediterranean. The encounters demonstrate a curiosity about other cultures that has been part of the European worldview for thousands of years. Objects include: the prow of a Libyan refugee boat, protective charms worn by First World War soldiers, a Mamuthones costume from Sardinia, and objects commonly found on a Christmas table setting from Sweden.

A number of contemporary artists have been commissioned to create works for the World Gallery. These include a dress by Nigerian fashion designer Alafuro Sikoki-Coleman, inspired by a female god, Woyingi, once exclusively worshipped by the Ijaw people of southern Nigeria, and a Kiribati Eco-Warrior helmet by New Zealand artist Chris Charteris, which speaks to the importance of resourcefulness when facing the challenges of climate change. There is also a work by Lynette Nampijinpa Granites, an indigenous Warlpiri artist whose painting is central to the Oceania encounter, and a tattooed self-portrait sculpture by Temsuyanger Longkumer, a Naga artist working in London.

Children are invited to interact with some of the exhibits for a multisensory learning experience. They can touch intricately tooled Tuareg metalwork, arctic seal and reindeer skin and a digital coral reef, smell aromatic herbs used by Bhutanese ritual healers in the Himalayas, listen to epic First Nations' stories from the Pacific Northwest Coast, and play in a Lagos market stall.

### **Perspectives**

Perspectives presents objects in a variety of categories such as 'Textiles', 'Miniatures' and 'Curiosities', posing questions about how we classify the world around us, about who decides what a thing is, and about whose knowledge is important. Perspectives also examines what anthropology is and explores fieldwork undertaken by anthropologists who collected or donated material to the Museum. The Horniman has also worked with members of its Access Advisory Group to co-curate a display of objects linked to representations of disability and mental illness.

### **Horniman's Vision**

Horniman's Vision provides an overview of the Museum's history and ethos through the life of its founder, Frederick Horniman, who set out in the 19th century to 'bring the world to Forest Hill.' The displays include ancient Egyptian artefacts, pipes from around the world, a huge Cloisonné vase and items of natural history from Surrey House, Frederick's family home, which he opened to the public on the site of the present museum. Horniman gave his museum and its collections to 'the people in perpetuity' in 1901 to help them discover the world – a legacy that lives on in the new gallery.

The World Gallery forms a major part of the museum's ongoing redevelopment programme thanks to lead support from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and the generosity of a number of Trusts and Foundations, businesses and individuals. The next stage of the project will be The Studio, opening in October 2018. The Studio is a repurposed contemporary arts space in which the Horniman will collaborate with artists and local community partners to create displays and events that respond to the collections.

[horniman.ac.uk/worldgallery](http://horniman.ac.uk/worldgallery) | #WorldGallery | @HornimanMuseum

**Ends**



**For media enquiries relating to the World Gallery please contact:**

Hannah Vitos or Emily Saunders at FLINT

T: 020 3463 2084 | E: [hannah.vitos@flint-pr.com](mailto:hannah.vitos@flint-pr.com)

T: 020 3470 0093 | E: [emily.saunders@flint-pr.com](mailto:emily.saunders@flint-pr.com)

**For the Horniman Press Office, please contact:**

T: 020 8291 8166 | E: [press@horniman.ac.uk](mailto:press@horniman.ac.uk)

**The World Gallery** is part of the Horniman's wider anthropology project, which also includes development of The Studio – a new, co-curated, contemporary arts space responding to the Horniman's anthropology collection opening later in 2018. Find out more about the project at [www.horniman.ac.uk/about/anthropology-redisplay](http://www.horniman.ac.uk/about/anthropology-redisplay).

To complement the opening of the World Gallery, the Horniman will also open a photographic display by Bryan Alexander showing contemporary indigenous Siberian ways of life, a new Grasslands Garden highlighting grasslands and prairie landscapes in North America and South Africa, and a Shared World summer programme of events and activities reflecting the themes of the Gallery.

In addition to £3.3m from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Horniman's anthropology project is supported by: the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Arts Council England, The Wolfson Foundation, The Garfield Weston Foundation, The Foyle Foundation, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, The Fidelity UK Foundation, The DCMS Wolfson Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Viridor Credits Environmental Company, The Pilgrim Trust, The Sackler Trust, The Andor Charitable Trust, The Goldsmiths' Company Charity, The Charles Hayward Foundation, the John S Coates Charitable Trust and the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation alongside a number of generous groups and individuals.

[horniman.ac.uk/worldgallery](http://horniman.ac.uk/worldgallery) | [#WorldGallery](https://twitter.com/WorldGallery) | [@HornimanMuseum](https://twitter.com/HornimanMuseum)

**The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).** Thanks to National Lottery players, the Heritage Lottery Fund invests money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about - from the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife.

[www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk) Follow HLF on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram and use #NationalLottery and #HLFsupported.

**Ralph Appelbaum Associates International (RAA).** Ralph Appelbaum Associates (RAA). The World Gallery at the Horniman is designed by RAA's London studio, established in 1998 by Mr Phillip Tefft, Director of UK Operations. RAA led the 3D design, graphic design, content coordination, and art direction of media and interactives for the Gallery, from Concept Design in 2015 through to completion this year. The World Gallery is the fifth RAA commission at the Horniman, and the result of a long-term creative partnership spanning two decades. Previous collaborations include the Music Gallery, Hands-on Base, Nature Base, and a masterplan for the garden. RAA is proud to support the Museum to bring Frederick Horniman's vision into the 21st century. During this project, RAA worked closely with Keeper of Anthropology, Robert Storrie, to develop interpretive principles based on the egalitarian ethos of anthropology. This resultant scheme celebrates the diversity and beauty of the world's cultures, enabling visitors to explore human lives and ways of living from a multitude of perspectives.

Phillip Tefft, Director of RAA, London: *"RAA is delighted to have led the interpretation design of the Horniman's internationally significant anthropology collection. Translating the Museum's vision into a rich interpretive experience was an exciting, collaborative journey. This latest gallery brings alive a multitude of community voices in diverse and immersive ways, reaffirming the values and generous spirit of Frederick Horniman, and embedding it in the ethos of the museum today."*

**MICA Architects (MICA).** MICA Architects have completed work at the Horniman to refurbish its Grade II\* Listed South Hall Gallery and redisplay the anthropology collection. The fundamental element of the project was to reintroduce natural light into the listed buildings with an approach that safeguarded the collection and reinforced the exhibition design. MICA also carried out improvements to the infrastructure including new environmental controls and a gallery opening to improve connection and orientation throughout the museum.

MICA is a new architectural practice from Gavin Miller and Stuart Cade, the partners of Rick Mather Architects, which builds upon the reputation of design quality established by the partners over 20 years. The practice's approach has been developed over the last four years, with projects including the Fair Field cultural master plan in Croydon; strategic London-wide master planning for TfL; complex heritage sites at King's College London, Lincoln's Inn, and Jesus College, Oxford; two landscape and public realm schemes in Lancaster; and a new London square at Centre Point.



**The Horniman Museum and Gardens** opened in 1901 as a gift to the people in perpetuity from tea trader and philanthropist Frederick John Horniman, to 'bring the world to Forest Hill'. Today the Horniman has a collection of 350,000 objects, specimens and artefacts from around the world. Its galleries include natural history, music and anthropology and an acclaimed aquarium and a Butterfly House. Indoor exhibits link to the award-winning display gardens – from medicinal and dye gardens to an interactive sound garden and an animal walk – set among 16 acres of beautiful, green space offering spectacular views across London.

Our visitors come time and again to enjoy our collections, exhibitions and gardens and also participate in our exciting range of events and activities. We also make our spaces available for hire including our stunning Grade II listed Conservatory built in 1894 and modern Gardens Pavilion. The Horniman Museum and Gardens is core-funded by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and since 1990 has been governed by an independent charitable trust, registered charity no. 802725. The Horniman Museum and Gardens also receives funding from Arts Council England as one of its National Portfolio Organisations.

**Opening times and admission.** The Horniman Museum is open daily 10.00am-5.30pm, except 24 – 26 December, when it is closed. The Gardens open at 7.15am Monday to Saturday and 8.00am on Sunday and Bank Holidays, and close at sunset. Entry to the Museum and Gardens is free but charges apply for the Aquarium, Butterfly House and some special exhibitions and events. Horniman Members and Benefactors go free – [horniman.ac.uk/members](http://horniman.ac.uk/members).

**Access.** The Museum and the Gardens are both wheelchair and pushchair friendly with accessible toilets. Limited on-site parking is available for disabled visitors – call 020 8699 1872.

**Travel.** The Horniman is situated on the South Circular Road (A205) in Forest Hill, London. It can be reached easily by train to Forest Hill from Highbury and Islington, Whitechapel and Canada Water (on the London Overground line), London Bridge (15 minutes), London Victoria, Clapham Junction and East Croydon, and by local buses (176, 185, 197, 356, P4).

**Funding raised by  
The National Lottery**

and awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund



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