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LONDON SUGAR & SLAVERY



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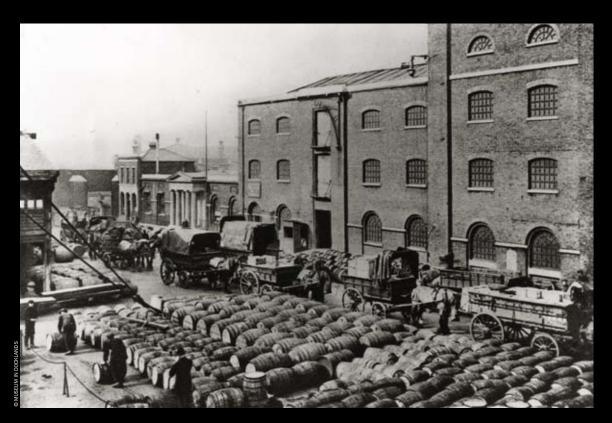
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No.1 Warehouse West India Quay in 1910 and today as Museum in Docklands.





LONDON, SUGAR & SLAVERY GALLERY REVEALS CITY'S UNTOLD HISTORY

What is London's dirty big secret? What does a sweet cuppa have to do with a terrible crime against humanity? What product links millions of enslaved Africans and London's Dockers? How did English ladies and freedom fighters in the Caribbean find themselves united in struggle? Who really led the abolition campaign for the transatlantic slave trade? And what price freedom?

Once the fourth largest slaving port in the world, London's involvement in the transatlantic slave trade will be revealed on 10 November when Museum in Docklands opens a new permanent gallery, *London, Sugar & Slavery.* The gallery will reveal an untold history, which joins the dots between ordinary Londoners with a taste for the sweeter things in life, arch-capitalism, despoiled West African civilizations and the thriving multicultural city we enjoy today.

Personal accounts, film, music, interactives and over 140 objects will bring home the complexities and humanity of the issues around the roaring trade in sugar and people, slave resistance and the abolition campaign, and the legacies of the enduring relationship between London and the Caribbean.

The gallery will challenge what people think they know about the transatlantic slave trade and show how this terrible traffic made the London we know today.

David Spence, Director of Museum in Docklands said: "We hope that the gallery will help Londoners from all backgrounds understand their own heritage and identity

better. People may find it uncomfortable, but to grasp this is to begin to understand many facets of society today, including attitudes towards race and the melding of British, African and Caribbean cultures."

Colin Prescod, Chair of the Institute of Race Relations and advisor on the gallery said: "Over some three centuries, transatlantic slavery and the associated 'triangle trade' generated extraordinary profit, amassed unimaginable wealth, and spawned obscenely inhumane brutalities on a massive scale. Museum in Docklands' bold new gallery demonstrates that these events were pivotal in the history of London's and Britain's rise to world dominance, and that they bequeathed a discomfitting legacy in a complex heritage."

Catherine Hall, Professor of History, University College London and advisor on the gallery said: "London, Sugar & Slavery' has helped me to think about my city – how the fruits of slavery are built into the environment in which we live – and how relationships between people, right into the present, have been shaped by that history. The gallery is a must for all Londoners."



Catherine Hall



Colin Prescod



David Spence







1 View of the West India Docks by George Underwood, about 1814. This spectacular view shows the full range of warehouses around the north quay. © Sir John Soane's Museum

The West India Dock and warehouse complex, which now houses Museum in Docklands, are the physical manifestation of London's corner of the so-called triangle trade. Completed in 1802, it was the largest dock complex in the world, the $\pounds 600,000$ bill having been paid by the monopolistic sugar merchants, plantation owners and slave traders who levered the profits from the thriving trade in sugar and people.

Ships sailed from the Dock outside this building to West Africa where they purchased enslaved Africans and transported them to the Caribbean. After selling their human cargo, the same ships, loaded with sugar from the plantations, returned to London. The sugar produced by enslaved Africans was housed in this building.

Because of this history the building is an important site of memory for the African Diaspora. In recognition of this, an application for UNESCO World Heritage status is being prepared together with partners in West Africa and Barbados.

Until the 1600s sugar was regarded as a luxury

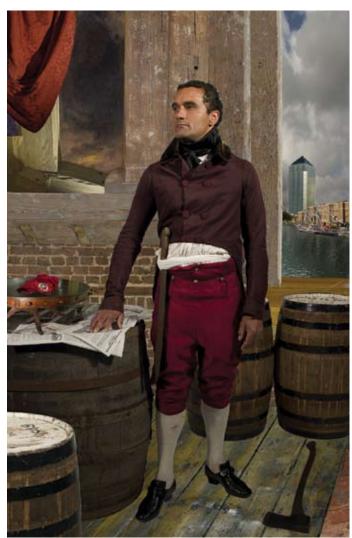
commodity only available to the wealthy. After 1700 drinking coffee became increasingly popular in England and the demand for sugar increased. New methods of mass cultivation on plantations resulted in imports to Britain expanding by 800 per cent and merchants quickly realised that fantastic profits could be made from sugar production. But it required a mass supply of cheap labour.

2 Coffee cups, 1700s with Diversity Manager June Bam-Hutchison. The increasing demand for the bitter tasting coffee, especially in the London coffee houses, stimulated the demand for sugar. Coffee was also grown on British slave plantations in the Caribbean. © Museum In Docklands

3 Slave Trade. Engraving by J.R. Smith after a painting by G Morland 1788. Morland's original painting was intended to emphasise the pain of a family being forcibly separated. Unusually, it also shows an African slave trader in the background. © Museum In Docklands

European nations developed a well organised mechanism for supplying plantations with an abundant supply of labour. Many African people and states fiercely resisted the trade, but others cooperated and profited by it.





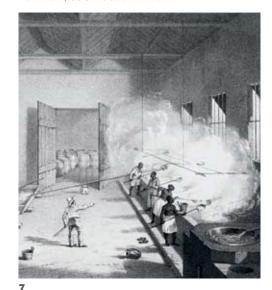
By the late 1600s London's slave trade activity on the west coast of Africa was organised by the Royal Africa Company and after 1750 by the Company of Merchants Trading to Africa. Both 'bought' the support of a number of local African merchants and rulers who acquired captive people from the interior and assembled them for sale at the coast. Africans collaborating in the trade also organised workers to maintain the company forts, carry people and supplies from shore to ship and supplement the crews of slave ships. As the trade became more profitable it fostered a new African 'elite' in the coastal areas and contributed to destructive divisions in African society.

Over 3,100 ships departed from London to carry nearly a million Africans into slavery. By the 1790s a quarter of Britain's income came from imports from the West Indies. Profits from plantation products and the sale of enslaved people created vast wealth in Britain, and London in particular.

4 George Hibbert, 1811. The West India Dock Company was dominated by London's richest slave owners. Its first chairman was the slave owner George Hibbert, who led the campaign against the abolition of the slave trade. The dock was used by at least 22 known slave trading ships between 1802–1807 © Museum in Docklands

5 Preliminary study of a reconstructed portrait with Lloyd Gordon as Robert Wedderburn, 2007. Laserchrome photograph on dibond aluminium. The Museum has commissioned artist Paul Howard to respond to the Hibbert portrait by placing a 're-constructed portrait' of the radical activist Robert Wedderburn alongside. Robert Wedderburn was born in Jamaica in 1762. His father, James Wedderburn, owned a large sugar plantation on the island. His mother, Rosanna, was an enslaved African on the plantation. When she was pregnant, Wedderburn sold her to Lady Douglas, stipulating that the child that she bore should be free from birth. Robert Wedderburn was brought up on the Douglas' estate and later recalled that as a child he witnessed both his mother and grandmother being whipped. He became a sailor, arriving in London in 1778. Wedderburn preached simultaneous revolution of the poor in Europe and enslaved Africans in the West Indies, being jailed many times during his campaign to end slavery. © Paul Howard

This wealth laid the foundations for Imperial dominion. But to justify the enslavement of millions of men, women and children, African people had to be debased in European's minds. Ignorance and misinformation led to a dismissal of African cultures and their rich and complex







history, an assault on African identity and generations of brutal exploitation.

"We make the man worthless, and, because he is worthless, we retain him as a slave. We make him a brute, and then allege his brutality, the valid reason for withholding his rights". Abolitionist Thomas Fowell Buxton. Speech in the House of Commons. May 1823.

6 Cast of the Head of a Yoruba man, about 1100–1400. Exquisitely crafted artefacts such as this sculpture of a Yoruba man demonstrate the skill and art of a sophisticated culture predating the arrival of Europeans in West Africa.

© Trustees of the British Museum

7 The Sugar Boiling House, Antigua, from West India Scenery... from sketches taken by Richard Bridgens, 1836. During the harvesting period the boiling house was in use 24 hours a day, six days a week. The environment and dangers created by furnaces and vats of boiling liquid was that of an industrial factory and the people working here were highly skilled. © Museum in Docklands

Vastly outnumbered by their enslaved workforce, plantation owners attempted to maintain control by terror and

brutality and the undermining of communal identity. Real names were replaced with false 'slave' names; family members were separated; those speaking the same language were sent to different plantations; permanent relationships between men and women were discouraged; and any signs of African cultural practices were forbidden. Despite these restrictions, a new African-Caribbean culture emerged.

8 "A Negroes Dance in the Island of St Dominica". This etching and aquatint by Agostino Brunias was engraved by L.C. Ruotte and dates from about 1773. European observers frequently recorded the dance and brightly coloured dress of enslaved and free Africans in the colonies. Portrayals were often derogatory, emphasising light hearted merrymaking that appeared almost childlike and care-free. In reality such gatherings had dignity and deep spiritual meaning – and served culturally to help enslaved people regain what they had lost through slavery, by forging new social networks and creating a new identity.

© Museum in Docklands

A key artefact in the new gallery, the surviving papers of Thomas and John Mills, who owned plantations in St. Kitts and Nevis, provides us with glimpses into the lives of both the enslaved and the slaver. They provide important insight into life on the plantation, revealing, for example, that men and women would be flogged severely for 'running away' or being in the wrong place, breaking sugar cane, selling their clothes – or for any possible sign of resistance. Other punishments included being put in chains, iron collars or masks, or even being locked in an oven-like hot-house for days on end without water. In 2008 we intend to digitise, catalogue and make available to the public through our website this rare and valuable archive.

9 Mills papers These working papers cover the period 1752–1771, and 1776–1777. Particularly affecting is a plantation journal of 1776–1777, which details the daily work undertaken by "negroes" on the Mills' estates.

© Museum in Docklands

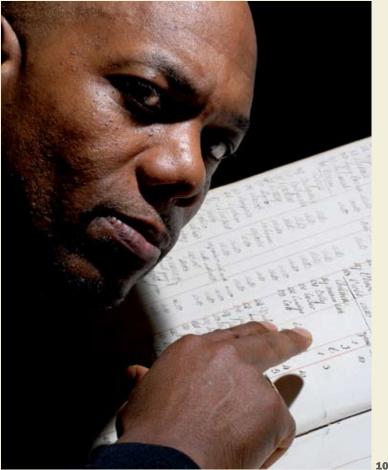
10 Burt Caesar, actor, director, and advisor on the gallery, says: "For all British citizens of West Indian origin the Mills papers are vital documents in the often hidden or 'lost' history of slavery in the islands. As someone born in St. Kitts, and now living in London, these papers are even more important. On a personal level, there may be a direct family connection: a 'Caesar' is listed in the Mills papers. And on the grander scale of historical legacy, they provide further evidence of the long established link between the West Indies and England. My fellow Kittitians and I are descended from survivors of one side of a brutal and profitable trade which always had London at its centre." © Museum in Docklands

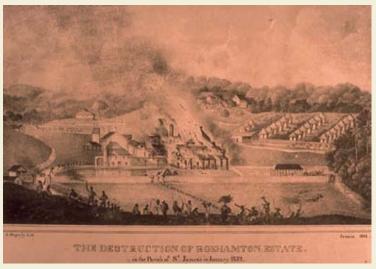
Africans resisted enslavement constantly. It is now estimated that as many as one in four slave ships experienced a revolt. In the early 1700s Africans escaping from enslavement in Jamaica formed Maroon communities who fought a series of wars against the British. Additionally, armed uprisings including those in St. Kitts (1639) and Haiti (1791) show a determination to be free and destabilised the slave economy.

11 The Destruction of Roehampton Estate, in Jamaica in January 1832, by Adolphe Duperly. Originally published as a picturesque view in 1820, this print was adapted in 1832 to portray the burning down of a slave plantation. In 1831 a strike led by the Baptist preacher Sam Sharpe led to widespread rebellion in Jamaica and was a major turning point in the struggle for emancipation. © The British Library

The publication in 1791 of Tom Paine's *The Rights of Man* fanned debate about freedom and human rights. For many people the condition of enslaved Africans was a violation of those rights – as was the treatment of sailors, many of whom were press ganged into service and flogged on ships. The campaign against flogging and impressment in the Royal Navy became linked to the campaign against slavery. The writings of freed Africans conveyed the evil nature of the slave trade to the British reading public. The writings







of Ottobah Cugoano, Ignatius Sancho, Olaudah Equiano, Phillis Wheatley and Mary Prince were widely read. The works challenged readers' misconceptions about slavery and personalised the plight of enslaved people. The experiences they described provided a powerful and crucial propaganda tool for the abolition movement.

12 Ignatius Sancho, from the frontispiece to Letters of the late Ignatius Sancho, an African. To which are prefixed, memoirs of his life. 1782. Portrait by Francesco Bartolozzi, after Thomas Gainsborough. Born on a slave ship, Sancho's writing consisted mainly of letters to correspondents and newspapers, often condemning slavery. © Museum in Docklands

It took over 50 years of almost constant political campaigning to persuade the British Parliament to pass Acts to abolish both the slave trade and slavery itself. The abolitionists were well organised. They employed a lawyer, formed support networks, kept records of supporters and arranged anti-slavery meetings across the country. The campaign pioneered modern-day pressure-group tactics to engage ordinary citizens, producing specially designed campaign material, using printed propaganda, mass petitions, consumer boycotts and speaking tours.

The Abolition campaign was the first in which women played a leading role, and they radicalised the movement. This is the more remarkable because women did not have the vote and were discouraged from being involved in politics. A network of women's Abolitionist societies had formed by 1825. It was pressure from the women's organisations that forced the male dominated Anti-Slavery Society to declare, in 1830, support for an immediate end to slavery.

13 This table, from about 1823–1833, was owned by Thomas Fowell Buxton, the Member of Parliament responsible for steering the Bill for the Abolition of Slavery through the House of Commons. It was used by members of the Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery to draft the Abolition Bill. It is on loan from London Borough of Newham. © Museum in Docklands

14 This Abolition sugar bowl, from about 1825, shows the image of the enslaved African kneeling in chains. It was designed by Josiah Wedgwood and adopted as the seal of the Society for the Abolition of Slavery in England in the 1780s, but the way that the figure was seen to be pleading or begging actually helped to create ideas of Africans as passive victims. Wedgwood's original design featured an enslaved man. The later image of a woman reflected the role of women in the campaign. The bowl is inscribed on the reverse with "East India Sugar not made By Slaves. By Six Families using East India, instead of West India Sugar, one Slave less is required'. © Museum in Docklands



15 Abolition of slavery commemorative coin, about 1790–1830, held by Press Officer Stacey Witter. These were minted and sold to raise funds for the campaign. However once again the image used was that of the African as 'worthy' recipient of British justice. © Museum in Docklands

16 This Abolition campaign purse, about 1820–3, held by Curator Anna Elson, has been loaned by the Religious Society of Friends in Britain. Anti-slavery images appeared on pamphlets and books, jewellery and snuff boxes and even women's hair pins. © Museum in Docklands

Campaigners were euphoric when the 1833 Abolition Act was passed, and the former slave owners revelled in the £20,000,000 they were awarded for their 'loss of property'. But freed Africans found that, for them, emancipation was not so clear-cut.

To avoid a sudden disruption of the plantation system, Africans freed by the 1833 Act were made to serve an 'apprenticeship'. This lasted at least six years, during which they were to be obliged to continue working on the plantations for low wages. This arrangement was regularly abused by plantation owners, and for many freed Africans conditions were worse than before.

17 This note in the Mills papers records the compensation received by the Mills family from the government at Abolition. © Museum in Docklands

We will never know precisely how many people of African origin lived in London during the 1800s. Records like the national census did not state a person's race or ethnicity. However, evidence of the widespread presence of African men, women and children can be found in paintings, studio portraits, newspapers, wills, baptism and church records, as well as prison and hospital records.

18 Biographical details about ordinary members of the African diaspora in Victorian London are rare. Unable to pay for portrait photographs their images can often only be found in hospital records. This photograph of Caroline Maisley is on a hospital Asylum Admission Paper from November 1898. Without this photograph of her we would have no way of knowing she was of African descent. At the time of her admission to the Colney Hatch Asylum Caroline was 27 and married to a dock labourer. She was discharged in September 1899. © London Metropolitan Archives

19 Cutting Down a Fetish Tree, Sierra Leone, about 1850. This image illustrates European attempts to destroy African culture. It was published by the Church Missionary Society to publicise its success in stamping out what it viewed as 'primitive' beliefs. © Museum in Docklands





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20 Disabled African Man Selling Potted Plants, about **1800**. This man might always have been disabled, or may have lost his legs through illness, military service or enslavement. © Museum in Docklands

Even as Abolition was enacted in the 1800s a process of colonisation – the designing of a 'racialised' world and the adoption of racism – began. Derogatory and offensive images of African people had been used in an attempt to justify enslavement. In the 1800s such images reinforced ideas of white racial supremacy and Imperial domination.

22 Racist representations of African people became an everyday part of young people's popular culture. As late as the 1950s Wizard ran front page comic strips with racist images like the ones shown here. On loan from Leslie Braine Ikomi.

21 Tobacco pipe bowls moulded in the form of African heads were very common in the 1800s, and reflected the connection between tobacco and the slave plantations of the Americas. While some images were crude representations, others were beautifully crafted.

© Museum in Docklands

By the twentieth century London was the cosmopolitan capital of an empire of hundreds of millions of people. Colonial subjects from all over the globe made London their home. Some came for political reasons, to protest against the injustices of colonialism and to seek reform, others for economic reasons, as migrant labour assisting Britain's reconstruction after the Second World War. But London was not always a welcoming place, and many new arrivals were forced to live in the city's poorest housing, take badly paid jobs and often faced abuse. Racism and the struggle against it lie at the heart of their story.

Many who came to Britain during and after the Second World War brought new and sometimes challenging cultural and political ideas with them. In turn music, literature and intellectual ideas in London were influenced and enriched by these new perspectives.

23 'Island in the sun' music score. Harry Belafonte was born in New York in 1927, but his Jamaican ancestry heavily influenced his world. An active civil rights campaigner he also popularised Caribbean calypso music during the 1950s.

'This is my island in the sun

Where my people have toiled since time begun I may sail on many a sea

Her shores will always be home to me'

On Ioan from Leslie Braine Ikomi © Museum in Docklands

24 'The Soldier Boy from Caroline' music score, by Jake Mahoney 1942. In 1942 over 10,000 African-American servicemen arrived in Britain. The racial segregation of the United States' Army also highlighted racial prejudice in Britain. The British government did nothing to challenge it. On loan from Leslie Braine Ikomi © Museum in Docklands

25 'Civilization' music score. An example of the degree to which derogatory images of Africans became part of popular culture. The 'noble savage' and the cigar-smoking man (in silhouette) are both racialised stereotypes.

On Ioan from Leslie Braine Ikomi © Museum in Docklands

Throughout the 1970s and 80s what came to be called Black communities came under attack not only from











individuals but also from agencies of the state, including the police. In 1958 the Notting Hill riots saw not only White mob attacks on new Black residents, but also the emergence of communal Black resistance to racism.

26 Demonstration against racist restrictions on immigration, 1962. Workers and students marched together at this demonstration organised by the Movement for Colonial Freedom. Ratta Singh, from the Indian Workers Association and Claudia Jones both addressed the crowd.

© Henry Grant Collection, Museum of London

27 Claudia Jones speaking at a rally, 1962. Born in Trinidad in 1915 Jones moved to the USA as a child but was deported to England in 1955 following her communist activities. Editor of the West Indian Gazette, she was a leading civil rights campaigner.

© Henry Grant Collection, Museum of London

Couples in 'mixed' relationships have been the target of racist propaganda since the early 1900s. Today 'mixed-race' or 'dual heritage' people account for about one sixth of all ethnic minorities in Britain, and are thought to be London's fastest growing ethnic group.

The exposure of racism in social institutions, has led to individuals coming together in community self-help, protest and campaigning organisations. The need to combat racism has been placed firmly on the establishment agenda.

Multiculturalism and diversity have come to be seen as defining features of contemporary London, challenging traditional accounts of the past, demanding a retelling of the stories through which we understand our identities and offering a real cause for celebration in the life of our city.

28 Until the 1970s those of African and Asian descent were excluded or received limited support from trade unions. In the 1980s, under pressure from organisations such as the Black Trade Union Solidarity Movement, unions began to take issues of racism in the workplace more seriously, as this TUC workbook on racism from 1983 shows.

© TUC Educational Trust / Museum in Docklands

29 Racist sticker produced by the British Movement, 1976.

© Museum in Docklands collection

30 The New Union Club (after George Cruikshank, 1819), by Timo Lehtonen, 1994. Timo Lehtonen, the son of a Finnish mother and Nigerian father, produced this painting in response to Cruikshank's 'New Union Club'. Among the many characters in the Cruikshank engraving is a child who is depicted as literally half black and half white. Lehtonen's image reflects the torn cultural and personal identity which racism sometimes inflicts on those of mixed parentage.

© Timo Lehtonen / Museum in Docklands

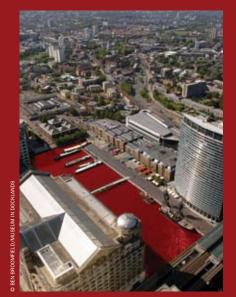








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Museum in Docklands explores London's connections with the world through the 2000 year history of the river, port and people. Across four floors of interactive displays the Museum's unique collection takes you on a journey through stories of the Thames and surrounding areas from Roman settlement to the urban regeneration of Canary Wharf. A changing programme of activities caters for visitors of all ages and includes gallery tours, storytelling, drama, talks by historians, films and guided walks through Docklands. Museum in Docklands is part of Museum of London. www.museumindocklands.org.uk

Museum in Docklands is open daily 10am-6pm Closed 24–26 December and 1 January

Annual admission ticket: Adult £5, Concessions £3 (over 60s, unwaged) Free for under 16s, NUS and disabled carers

Box Office: 0870 444 3855 info@museumindocklands.org.uk

Press enquiries: 020 7814 5503 press@museumindocklands.org.uk

Slave Map of London

Developed in collaboration with three London museums; the Cuming Museum in Southwark, Bruce Castle Museum in Harringey and Fulham Palace Museum, the London, Sugar & Slavery interactive map displays, for the first time, the Capital's hidden heritage. Users can navigate an online map to discover how over 100 different locations throughout the metropolis were involved in the transatlantic slave trade and the fight to end it. www.museumindocklands.org.uk/slaverymap

UNESCO World Heritage Status

In recognition of the importance of the building occupied by the Museum as a site of memory for the African diaspora and London's central role in the 'Triangle Trade' our ambition is to have Museum in Docklands and the surrounding conservation area inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Museum is working towards a trans-boundary serial nomination in conjunction with partners in West Africa and Barbados in the Caribbean. The Barbados Museum and History Society has agreed to become a partner in this initiative and the Prime Minister of Barbados has expressed his support for the project. The initiative is also supported by UNESCO's International Scientific Committee of the Slave Route Project.

Community Projects

Two community projects have contributed to the gallery. Unemployed people from A4E in Hackney and Inner Vision in Tower Hamlets were encouraged to 'uncover truths' about the transatlantic slave trade in order to create their own understanding of the subject. They were taught journalism and photography skills and created their own portfolios reflecting their personal response.

In a second project people from the Golden Oldies Community Care Project in Southwark were asked to explore the Abolition campaign and the propaganda produced by the campaigners. They reinterpreted the phrase "Am I not a man and a brother?" and included a dimension of contemporary comment on this historical issue. Some of the sugar bowls and slogans they made as a response will be on display in the gallery.



Schools Programme

Sessions, including drama performances and workshops, have been developed to support the London, Sugar & Slavery gallery. All are designed to enhance National Curriculum teaching from Key Stages 2 to 4. Students can meet Ellen Craft, an enslaved African who planned a daring escape from Georgia and made her way to Britain, Ignatius Sancho, the celebrated composer and letter writer, Granville Sharpe and his friend Cudjoe, join in a debate about Abolition, learn about the poetic legacy of slavery and take part in a drama workshop. Illustrated talks about London's part in the slave trade are also available. This is free for schools in Tower



The HLF has awarded £506,500 for the London, Sugar & Slavery gallery and over £14million to more than 165 projects related to the bicentenary of the Abolition of the slave trade and the slave trade generally. In addition, the HLF has given

a grant of £10,277,000 to Bristol City Council for the Museum of Bristol: The People's Story, which will include a new gallery on Bristol and the slave trade.

RENAISSANCE LONDON museums for changing lives



Renaissance in the Regions is supporting the project with £230,000. Renaissance is the Museums, Libraries and Archives (MLA) Council's £150million programme to transform England's regional museums. For the first time ever, investment from central government is helping regional museums across the country to raise their standards and deliver real results in support of education, learning, community development and economic regeneration. A network of 'Hubs' has been set up in each English region to act as flagship museums and help promote good practice. Alongside the Hubs, MLA Regional Agencies and Museum Development Officers are providing advice and support, Subject Specialist Networks have been set up, and national museums are sharing their skills and collections to ensure Renaissance benefits the entire museums sector. Renaissance is helping museums to meet people's changing needs - and to change people's lives.

Special Thanks Dr Hakim Adi Dr Caroline Bressey **Burt Caesar** Harrington Cumberbatch MBE **Professor Catherine Hall** Colin Prescod **Fabian Thompset** Dr Gemma Romain At Large Designers **Quiet Voice Production ON101** Volunteers on our community projects Staff at Museum in Docklands and

Museum of London