

MEDIA RELEASE

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Threads of Connection: A Creative Response to Our Textile Heritage

Museum of Norwich

Wed 23 Nov 2022 – Sat 25 February 2023



A new community exhibition opening on 23 November at Museum of Norwich presents textile works created by local women inspired by Norwich's rich textile heritage.

Over the last year, *ArtatWork CIC*, a local not for profit organisation that creates art-based projects to promote wellbeing and good mental health, has been collaborating with The Museum of Norwich on the *Threads of Connection* project.

The year-long project, funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, has been undertaken by ArtatWork's wellbeing group for women whose members have been researching Norwich's textile industry in a creative way.

Through visits, talks, creating and making, the participants have gained new knowledge and become experts in their fields of research. What's more, they've harnessed their creativity to bring our textile heritage to life. This exhibition showcases all their beautiful work.

Melanie and Holly from ArtatWork explains more about the process: *"Through our collaboration with The Museum of Norwich, we have been made to feel very welcome. This, along with our other visits, helps build confidence in accessing gallery and museum spaces. The women have gained an understanding of the industry through visits, talks, creating and making. The project has been very fast-paced, with museum visits, field trips, and talks every three weeks from heritage and textile specialists. The women have become experts in their own fields (such as the relationship between Holland and Norfolk's textile industry, lace in Norfolk, Victorian fashion, etc. The women co-created the final exhibition and the quality of their work and time they put into it is truly inspiring. Furthermore, we have been very fortunate to have two brilliant volunteers who have helped make this project an extra special one.)"*

Alison, one of the participants in the groups says: *"This project has kept me on my toes, every day I learn something new and exciting and at school I hated history."* Hannah Henderson, Curator at the Museum of Norwich, says: *"It has been such a pleasure to collaborate with Art at Work on this year long project. We are so impressed with the quality of the art works created and the level of interest and passion shown by the participants involved. We are sure our visitors will love the exhibition."*

Cllr Margaret Dewsbury, Cabinet Member for Communities, Norfolk County Council, says: *"Threads of Connection is well named as it links contemporary creativity with Norwich's textiles heritage. More than that it celebrates the human connections that creative work can foster in a truly inspiring exhibition. Congratulations to all involved."*

The resulting *Threads of Connection* exhibition uses creativity as a way to bring the textile industry alive for others. In addition to sketchbooks and visual research, the exhibition features large-scale collaborative arts and textiles pieces to truly stunning effect.

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For further information, requests for interview and high res images contact:
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Notes to Editors

1. ArtatWorks

ArtatWork is a not-for-profit Community Interest Company who offer arts activities as a means of promoting wellbeing. We encourage people to rediscover their creativity, in a fun and collaborative way, thus increasing good mental health.

<https://artatwork.co.uk/>

2. Museum of Norwich at the Bridewell

The Museum has been a merchant's house, a house of correction, a tobacco warehouse and a shoe factory. Now the Museum of Norwich tells the stories of the people who helped create our modern city. The Museum of Norwich is part of Norfolk Museums Service is part of Norfolk Museums Service, a multi-award-winning service comprising ten museums and a study centre. NMS is now regarded as one of the leaders in the museum sector and from April 2018 has been a National Portfolio Organisation for Arts Council England and was successful in retaining this funding in 2022. Norfolk Museums Service is a partnership between Norfolk County Council and Norfolk's district councils, funded through council tax, earned income and grants. www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk