

THE SPIRIT OF THE SALTERS LIVES ON

Lake Gallery, Salter Space // 11 September – 2 October 2022

Wednesday – Sunday, 11am – 5pm

This exhibition celebrates Ada (1866-1942) and Alfred Salter (1873-1945), the remarkable couple who transformed Bermondsey in the first half of the 20th century through social reform, improvement of health and housing, and a 'beautification' programme. In 1922 Ada became the first female Mayor in London and Alfred was elected MP. As we face the climate crisis, worldwide homelessness and a global pandemic, their three key issues of environment, housing and public health have never been more relevant.

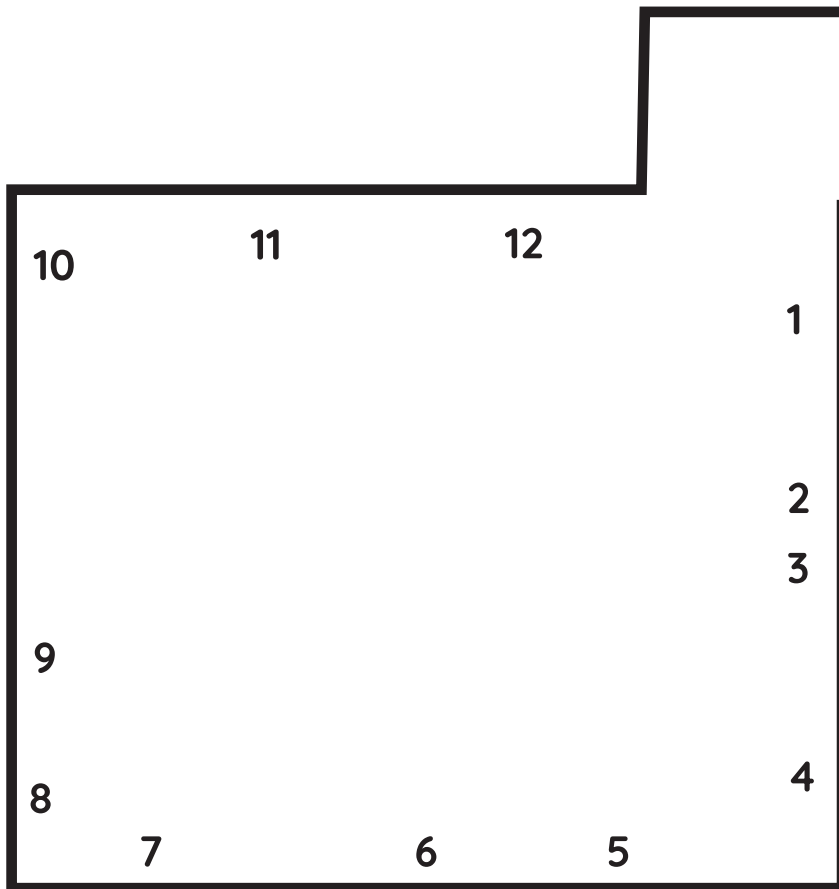
First and foremost the Salters were pacifists and publicly against all war. For this they were controversial figures according to some and were attacked verbally and physically, despite all the good they had done for their community. The bombing during World War II destroyed much of the beauty they had created in Bermondsey, yet their principles have permeated into the fabric of our society and still live on today.

This exhibition is part of the year-long project the Salter Centenary and curated by Sheila Taylor, Salter Centenary Coordinator.

www.saltercentenary.org.uk

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LAKE GALLERY, SALTER SPACE



1. Selected historical photographs, thanks to Graham Taylor

These photographs give a brief insight into some of the Salters' life and work in London and worldwide, over three themes: Buildings now gone; Beautifying Bermondsey; Colleagues and campaigns.

**2. Elsie F. Ball
Painting of Thorpe House**

Elsie Ball was born in Raunds in 1921, where she lived until her death in 2015. A keen amateur painter, she was described as a lovely, gentle person. She gave this painting to the editor of the local history magazine, Rachel Henderson, who kindly donated it to Graham Taylor when he was writing Ada's biography. It shows Ada's family home.

**3. Jane Deakin
Watercolour painting of Ada Salter Garden, 2022**

Jane is a local artist and member of the Bermondsey Artists Group. One of her favourite painting venues over the years has been the garden which Ada designed for Southwark Park. Officially named The Old English Garden, it was always known as 'Ada's Garden' by local people. Eventually officialdom gave way and it was renamed the Ada Salter Garden in 1943.

**4. Diane Gorvin
Process of sculpture production of Salter statues, 2014**

The original Salter statues were produced by sculptor Diane in 1995, but when Dr Salter was stolen by metal thieves in 2011 she had to start again from scratch. The community raised enough funds for her to add

Ada. This series of photographs records the process of sculpture production from source images through to the two final works.

**5. Nigel Moyce
Portraits of the Salters, 2022
3 paintings on canvas**

Art reclaimed from trees, 2022 Recycled art

A multi-media artist from Zimbabwe, Nigel has lived in England since 1999. Working in Southwark Park, he began sourcing unwanted wood for the original artworks which are currently his major creative output. The works on display here use wood from Stave Hill and backing canvas from the original athletics track in the park. Moved by the Salter story, Nigel has painted the first ever portraits of the family.

**6. The Radical Tea Towel Company
Ada Salter tea towel from the Mural for
Bermondsey, 2022**

To mark the centenary, the Radical Tea Towel Company has produced a bright new tea towel using the image from Paul Butler's mural for Bermondsey (The Blue Market Place, 2022). The picture shows Ada planting a row of flower pots, and carries her famous quotation: 'The cultivation of beauty should be considered a civic duty.'

**7. Sarah Vaughan
Photographs recording the life and death of a
Bermondsey tree, 2022**

Sarah was co-founder of Trees for Bermondsey, which aims to increase tree canopy and create green links everywhere. Regretting the loss of a tree which might have been planted by Ada, she negotiated with the council and timber company Saunders Seasoning to save the wood for re-use in the community.

**8. Image from the documentary 'Judi Dench: My
Passion for Trees', 2017**

Patron of the Salter Centenary. As a fellow Quaker and passionate environmentalist, Dame Judi identifies closely with the Salters, especially Ada. In 2014 she supported the campaign to add a statue of Ada on the Bermondsey riverfront.

**9. Leanne Werner
Photographs of environmental activists, 2022**

As a councillor, Leanne chaired Southwark Council's climate emergency scrutiny commission and became desperately concerned about the environmental crisis. She is now running Wilder, a social enterprise creating spaces for urban wildlife. Enthused by the many environmental activists carrying forward the legacy of Ada in the locality, she has recorded them on camera.

**10. Eugene Ankomah, in collaboration with young
people from Salmon Youth Centre
Installation, 2022**

Born in London of Ghanaian heritage, Eugene is internationally known for his innovative art. Like Ada, he does exceptional work with young people. For instance the collaborative tribute to Folajimi Olubunmi-Adewole (Jimi) — who heroically died saving the life of another — at the Salmon Youth Centre with its slogan 'Don't turn a blind eye to young people'. Ada claimed that the tough girls in her Bermondsey club 'looked and were as good as duchesses'. That spirit flows on through Eugene, down the generations!

**11. Karin Wach
Trauma sketches as testimony to pacifism,
2022**

Karin is a German-born artist and psychotherapist who has lived in England most of her adult life. Her work has always dealt with loss and memory. During intense therapy she recently produced extraordinary, unexpected sketches from the childhood trauma of being bombed in Hamburg. Startled by this evidence of the life-long damage which war does to children, she agreed to show them here as testimony to the Salters' pacifism. They also form part of FALLOUT, her collaboration with Chris Shaw Hughes.

**12. Peter and Sue Rogers
'Ada and Alfred' children's book, 2022**

This book tells the story of the Salters engagingly for children, focusing on Ada's beautification of Bermondsey. It uses real photographs alongside colourful illustrations that bring history to life. It is available to download free of charge from the Salter Centenary website.