

## ACCOMPANYING EVENTS

### Symposium: Audience as Commissioner

Sat 31 Oct, 3–5pm, £5/£3 conc, Clore Studio

Over the past two years, two major projects have been realised as part of our SLG Local programme: Heather and Ivan Morison's *Shadow Curriculum* and *The Signs Project* on Sceaux Gardens housing estate. This symposium offers a chance to reflect back on both projects, opening with a keynote talk by Heather Morison.

### Teachers' Discussion Evening

Wed 4 Nov, 4.30–6.30pm, Free, Clore Studio

Join artist Heather Morison, teachers and SLG staff in a discussion about Heather and Ivan Morison's residency at Highshore School, a mixed needs special secondary school in south London. Come along to find out more about the SLG's partnership work with teachers and to discuss upcoming opportunities for local schools.

### Exhibition Tours

Daily, 1pm and Last Fridays, 7pm, Free

Join the SLG's gallery assistants for an informal, drop-in tour of the current exhibitions; Thea Djordjadze: *Ma Sa i a l y e a s e - d e* and Heather and Ivan Morison: *Shadow Curriculum*.

*Booking for most events is essential, book online or call 020 7703 6120.*

*Fans pay less for tickets – join today and receive a free SLG tote bag: [www.southlondongallery.org/fans](http://www.southlondongallery.org/fans)*

*This gallery guide is printed on recycled paper. If you do not wish to keep this guide, please consider returning it at the end of your visit so that it can be reused.*

## ALSO ON AT THE SLG

### Thea Djordjadze: *Ma Sa i a l y e a s e - d e*

Until 29 Nov 2015

Main Gallery, Free

# HEATHER AND IVAN MORISON: SHADOW CURRICULUM

2 OCT – 29 NOV 2015  
FIRST FLOOR GALLERIES  
ADMISSION FREE

EXHIBITION GUIDE

# SLG

South London Gallery 65–67 Peckham Road, London SE5 8UH

020 7703 6120 [mail@southlondongallery.org](mailto:mail@southlondongallery.org)

[www.southlondongallery.org](http://www.southlondongallery.org)

Twitter: @SLG\_artupdates, Instagram: @southlondongallery



Supported using public funding by  
ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND



Bloomberg

**HEATHER AND IVAN MORISON:  
SHADOW CURRICULUM  
2 OCT - 29 NOV 2015**

**No school that day.  
Instead we left the city to cut down the tallest tree in the forest.  
The chainsaw was noisy.  
It fell towards us, whoomph, a terrific wind full of pine needles.  
Then split it into three.  
Brought here on a lorry, to our school, left in our playground.  
We stripped the bark, carved scales into it, painted it black with tar.  
We played on drums and danced whilst it was loaded onto carts.  
Six stallions, foaming, pulled it through the streets of London towards our new school.  
There, cranes put it up again, like it was in the forest, now held with big metal rings.  
Now it is like a sign in the sky announcing school is here.  
A finger pointing towards the stars.  
And we play around it. It smells. It is heavy.  
It is the Lightning Tree.**

*Heather and Ivan Morison, 2015*

**An overview of *Shadow Curriculum* by Nicola Sim, doctoral researcher, Tate/The University of Nottingham.**

This exhibition tells the story of a two-year exchange between artists Heather and Ivan Morison, and students and teachers from Highshore School, a mixed needs special secondary school in south London. The central character of this story is a 34m high Douglas fir tree, which would be felled from a forest and brought to live with the school, as an agitating focus for making, playing and debate about the future. The film and artefacts on display are records of the tree's journey from Sussex woodland to Peckham, where it provided physical and imaginative material for the school to weave through its curriculum.

Work began in 2013, when Highshore was on the verge of major change, with a move to a new school site planned for the following year. Heather and Ivan Morison collaborated with the art department and the wider school in this daunting period of transition to realise their bold idea. They were inspired by the community tree-felling traditions of southern Italy, where villagers participate in ritualistic celebrations of the tree as a symbol of renewal. Their idea held particular resonance for Highshore students and staff, who would be leaving behind a much-loved weeping willow in the playground of their old school.

The film witnesses key milestones in the project: the spectacular tree-felling presided over by 150 pupils and teachers; the transportation of the tree to Highshore; the carving and painting of the bark and the final movement of the work on horse-drawn carts for installation at the new school site where it stands today. While the work itself is contained within Highshore's grounds, passers-by can peer up and see the towering *Lightning Tree* from the street. According to the artists, its name is a nod to a type of tree that grows in the Amazon, taller than any other, which acts as a guiding landmark, or natural lighthouse for people navigating the rivers.

This new public commission is part of a rich history of works in art, design and literature, which take the tree as a potent metaphor for life, growth and learning. From the *Tree of Life* motif of the Arts and Crafts movement, to more contemporary examples by the likes of Joseph Beuys and Gustav Metzger, tree imagery has long been associated with utopian ideals and calls for social change. For *Shadow Curriculum*, the tree is a catalyst for an ambitious venture and a generator for creative pedagogies, which are central to Highshore's own curriculum, yet can be undervalued in the wider secondary school system.

Under the custodianship of Highshore School, the curious tree and the story of its appearance may eventually become part of school folklore. For now it stands as a reminder of a period of transition and change, and signifies a flag in the ground for the school community, as they claim the new site as their own.

[www.southlondongallery.org/heatherandivanmorison](http://www.southlondongallery.org/heatherandivanmorison)

**Photography is permitted in the galleries.**

**Please refrain from touching all objects in the exhibition.**

*Sponsored by Bloomberg as part of SLG Local. With thanks to Highshore School and Frances Williams.*

**Biography**

Heather and Ivan Morison (born UK, 1973 and Turkey, 1974 respectively) have established an ambitious collaborative practice over the past decade that transcends the divisions between art, architecture and theatre.

They have exhibited widely across UK, Europe, Australia, Canada and the USA. Key projects include *Sleepers Awake*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2014; *All's Well That Ends*, Schauspielhaus Bochum, Germany; *Smile All the While*, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, 2014; *Shadow Curriculum*, South London Gallery, London, 2013-15; *Skirt of the Black Mouth*, Tate Modern, London, 2012-15; *Nuclear Family*, National Theatre of Wales, 2013; *Black Pleasure*, Eastside Projects, Birmingham 2013; *Anna*, The Hepworth, Wakefield, 2012;

*Cave*, MK Gallery, Milton Keynes, 2012; *Black Pig Lodge*, Southbank Centre, London, 2011; *Mr. Clevver*, Contemporary Art Spaces Tasmania, Australia, 2011; *Plaza*, Vancouver Art Gallery, Canada, 2010; *The Black Line Void*, Derry, Northern Ireland, 2009; *Black Cloud*, Situations, Bristol, 2009; *Journée des Barricades*, One Day Sculpture, Wellington, New Zealand, 2008; *And So it Goes*, representing Wales at the 52nd Venice Biennial, 2007. Their book, *Falling into Place*, a fictionalised account of their large architectural shelter works, was published by Bookworks in 2009, and is currently being made into an audio book by Palaver Press, New York.

Heather and Ivan Morison are represented by Works|Projects, Bristol, UK and Clint Roenisch, Toronto, Canada.



Photos: Wig Worland

**LIST OF WORKS**

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| 1. <i>Shadow Curriculum</i> , 2015<br>Single channel projection, duration 17 min. Commissioned by the SLG<br>Filmed by Pete Telfor | 3. <i>Light Sleepers Awake</i> , 2015<br>White pine<br>45 x 25 x 12cm                      | 5. <i>Waves on Small Ponds</i> , 2015<br>Bone, lacquer<br>50 x 22 x 25cm |
| 2. <i>Large Trees Uprooted</i> , 2015<br>Bone, lacquer<br>90 x 25 x 42cm   | 4. <i>Smoke Rises Vertically</i> , 2015<br>Chestnut, bone, tar, lacquer<br>298 x 30 x 36cm | 6. <i>Public Demonstrations</i> , 2015<br>Drill cotton<br>244 x 152cm    |

