

For immediate release

**HORNIMAN**  
MUSEUM  
& GARDENS



## **Horniman brews up a new exhibition – 茶, चाय, Tea**

A new exhibition at the Horniman Museum and Gardens in south London will explore the many stories of Britain's national drink, asking us to consider what's really in our cup of tea.

**茶, चाय, Tea** (Chá, Chai, Tea), opening on Saturday 7 October 2023, will reveal tea's complex history and myriad of meanings – from its popularisation and globalisation connected to stories of imperialism and colonial violence, to inspiring artistic expression, cultural customs and national identities, it is simultaneously deeply personal and political.

The tea stories on show span millennia, connecting communities across the world. The exhibition's name, **茶, चाय, Tea**, (Chá, Chai, Tea) reflects the global reach of the world's most popular drink after water, enjoyed by billions of people.

The exhibition will also consider the founding history of the Horniman Museum and Gardens itself, using wealth made through the Horniman's Tea business.

Highlights of the exhibition will include:

- plant specimens and tea samples from the collection of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew
- teacups and pots from China, India, the UK and beyond including beautifully decorated Chinese porcelain-ware and a Indonesian tea-set made entirely from cloves
- a crossbow on loan from the British Museum and a display of opium pipes, exploring the link between Britain's tea trade and the Opium Wars in China
- promotional tins, models and posters used to market Horniman's Tea
- tea recipes from different cultures, for visitors to try at home
- co-developed installations, videos and interventions exploring the relevance of tea across cultures today
- a series of three rotating 'takeovers', including work from UAL (University of the Arts London) fellow Maia Conran.

Navjot Mangat, Senior Curator of Social Practice at the Horniman Museum and Gardens, says: 'The history of Britain's favourite drink is far more complex, emotional and international than we might expect. From the origins of the *Camellia sinensis* plant and tea-drinking culture in China, to tea's global spread and relationship to empire and identity, the **茶, चाय, Tea** exhibition brings together a multitude of voices and stories into a compelling blend of personal, historic and artistic explorations of our daily cuppa.'

The exhibition has been developed in partnership with organisations including Bollo Brook Youth Centre in Ealing, The British Asian Collective, Cuppo Bubbo in Herne Hill, THIRST (The International Roundtable for Sustainable Tea), Grass People Tree, Hackney Chinese Community Services and Matheson Bosanquet Tea Estate in Tamil Nadu, India, as well as artists and academics.

To complement the exhibition, the Horniman will offer a series of events including tea tastings, themed family crafts, language tours of the exhibition and more.

**茶, चाय, Tea** is supported by The Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund – delivered by the Museums Association, and by The Radcliffe Trust.

Entry to the Horniman and to the exhibition is free.

### Ends

Horniman Press Office - Tel: 020 8291 8166 - [press@horniman.ac.uk](mailto:press@horniman.ac.uk)

Picture attached shows: Stoneware teapot, credit Horniman Museum and Gardens

### Notes to Editors:

- The **Horniman Museum and Gardens** was [Art Fund Museum of the Year 2022](#), the world's largest museum prize.
- 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 an acclaimed aquarium, alongside a World Gallery of anthropology and a flexible arts and exhibition space, The Studio. Indoor exhibits link to the award-winning display gardens – from medicinal and dye gardens to an interactive sound garden, Butterfly House and an animal walk – set among 16 acres of beautiful, green space offering spectacular views across London. [horniman.ac.uk](http://horniman.ac.uk)
- The **Horniman Museum and Gardens** relies on income from ticket sales, memberships, the shop and the Café to help care for the Gardens, animals and Aquarium residents, to run events and to look after the collections. The support of returning visitors, our supporters and their generous donations are more needed than ever. [horniman.ac.uk/support-us](http://horniman.ac.uk/support-us)
- The **Horniman Museum and Gardens** is core-funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and since 1990 has been governed by an independent charitable trust, registered charity no. 802725.

- On 29 July 2019 the **Horniman Museum and Gardens declared an ecological and climate emergency**, pledging to place carbon reduction and environmental issues at the heart of its work. The declaration – and the subsequent **Climate and Ecological Manifesto**, published in January 2020 – is a consolidation of existing work and a commitment to renewed ambitions to reduce the Horniman’s environmental and pollution footprint, increase biodiversity, and inspire others to do so. Find out more about the Horniman’s manifesto commitments and progress so far at [horniman.ac.uk/climate](https://horniman.ac.uk/climate).