

# TESTIMONIES



LONDONERS' STORIES  
ABOUT THE 1948 OLYMPIC GAMES AND  
LONDON 2012 OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES

*Lorenzo Belenguer - Lead Artist*



Wembley has a place in my heart

We are very fortunate to be living in London at the time of the Olympic Games and I feel really proud to be part of that.

I'd really like to watch the tennis final & being at Wimbledon it will add an extra dimension

Wembley for me  
a major part of my

It's quite exciting for us to know that we're part of the 2012 Games, we're going to be part of a historic event. It's a once in a lifetime opportunity.

As the 1948 Games took place during World War 2 it was a more recent Olympics

## *How did* TESTIMONIES *begin?*



TESTIMONIES was created by Lorenzo Belenguer in response to London residents looking to have a more active role in the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and aims to empower conversation about this historic event, to compare with the 1948 Olympic Games and provide a legacy.

A call to participate was sent out during 2010 via the Brent magazine (distributed to over 99,000 households), several sport associations, newspapers, Brent Council and Brent Artists' Resource emailing lists, the Youth Parliament and many other distribution networks. The artist selected the participants with a special interest about the most inspiring stories and to show the great diversity in London.

TESTIMONIES records Londoners' personal stories and expectations about the 1948 Olympic Games and the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. These are turned into audio broadcasts, an App and a game and will be heard all over Wembley Arena square and in other venues during the summer 2012.

Munira Mirza, Advisor on Culture and Youth to the Mayor of London Boris Johnson, said: 'We want as many Londoners as possible getting involved in the 2012 Games, being inspired by both the sporting action and the wide-ranging programme being planned as part of the Cultural Olympiad. TESTIMONIES is a wonderful project, connecting local people to one of the most exciting years in London's history and creating a fascinating record for long after the athletes have run and the medals have been won.'

Lorenzo Belenguer, the lead artist and the project's founder, explains that 'this a grassroots art venture and its basic question is: what sort of relationship do we want Londoners to have with the Olympics? If we want Londoners to play a bigger part in the London 2012 they have to be shown how their experiences matter, that you do not need to be a gymnast to be an integral part of the Games. By giving voice to some Londoners' personal memories about the Olympics, we are showing what they have lived, what the relationship they have had and the relationship they do have with the Games. The implicit question is: what is yours?'

### *Notice*

These are transcripts of recorded interviews conducted for the TESTIMONIES project. The interviews lasted an average of two hours and edited to about one minute per participant. Therefore, the reader should remember that this is essentially a transcript of the spoken, rather than the written, word.

The complete interview can be listened from the Brent Archives. A copy of the cd with the testimonies recordings can be obtained upon request. Please email Lorenzo Belenguer on [londonertestimonies@gmail.com](mailto:londonertestimonies@gmail.com) or write a letter to:

*Lorenzo Belenguer*  
*The BAR Gallery at Willesden Green*  
*Willesden Green Library Centre*  
*95 High Road*  
*London NW10 2SF*

My name is *SUSAN*  
And this is my TESTIMONY.



The '48 Olympics seem now a very long way off but when I was little, I was always a very keen swimmer and all I wanted to do was to take part in the Olympics when I grew up. Eventually, I really got much much better and I was an Olympic possible, and I became an Olympic probable, and eventually I was chosen to swim in the 100 metre freestyle in London in the Olympics. Well, the Olympics were a fantastic event. We were swimming at Wembley in the Wembley pool and we were lodged all over the place and I was staying with my teammates in St Helen Laws wood.

With the Olympics ceremony, it was nothing like what they expect nowadays from Olympic ceremonies. There was a- The countries were going in and the Olympic flame was brought in and the Olympic flame was- was put up in Wembley- If I remember rightly. I'm not quite sure after all these years. I remember it wasn't- They had no performances. It was not like Beijing or the other I have seen on television because it was [pause] all about the sport.

I learnt English in Hungary in the gymnasium. In fact, the captain of the Hungarian team asked me to translate all the time so this was a bit tiresome because just before my race, about half an hour before, he also asked me to translate and I said: "Oh my god this takes so much out of me in this heat and I'm going to swim the race of my life!"

We travelled by public transport, by Underground. We haven't- probably- Probably some bus connections, but we certainly didn't have any special mini cabs or cars or bus. And '48 was like opening a new world after the Second World War. And it's wonderful that the next Olympics will, are going to be had in London because it's just absolutely wonderful how time repeats itself. And strangely enough, economically, there seems to be troubles again.

*Susan Halter*  
*Retired Teacher/Swimmer 1948 Games*

My name is *Rachel*  
And this is my TESTIMONY.



I'm related to sports in the sense that I play football for Arsenal Ladies and England and also I coach football, I work in different primary schools around the area of Brent and Harrow, and I also run a children's football team called Given Trekkers UFC. We will have a team, a woman's football team, in the Olympics so fingers crossed that I can train hard and get into that team. So hopefully, obviously, myself and my teammates will be there and playing and be role models to the younger generation that can watch us, and look at us in the Olympics. I mean, at the moment the focus is playing- getting into the England squad for the World Cup, and then after that obviously the individuals- Everyone will be training and doing their best to be picked to play in the Olympics 'cos as a female footballer, it's not something that you would ever, sort of, think that you could play in the Olympics. It's now a chance, probably a once in the lifetime chance, because it's being held here. They're allowing us to compete and football, with that being the biggest game in this country- They're allowing us to compete. So, you know, it would be an honour to play in the Olympics and to be a part of it, obviously here in England, in London, so it'd be great. Growing up in this country and football means so much to everyone, it's sort of- It's bred into you as you're growing up. You know who to support and what to do and how to play the game and- and everyone knows about it so- It's so easy to get involved with, you haven't got to be rich to play football, you know, all you need is the ball, you don't even need a goal sometimes, you know, you can make a goal out of jumpers and stuff like that in the local park. So that's why football was so attractive to me: everyone knew how to play it. I've even, you know, played football and coached with people that don't speak the same language but because of football, we understand each other and we can get on. So that's why I've always loved football and that's why I choose to play: I enjoy it. So watching it at the Olympics, yeah, would be brilliant.

*Rachel Yankee*  
*Footballer England Team*

My name is *Sebastien*  
And this is my TESTIMONY.



I'm a football coach and I've been coaching since around 2006. I coach a team in Kingsbury called Springfield Football Club and I have my own soccer school in Millhill and yeah, I really enjoy that and I really love coaching kids as well.

I think the Games would help the kids in particular because I feel like kids need inspiration and just watching people and being able to imagine with their family and just- And places they could be in a couple of years time, that would really help them.

I also think it would just help people be happy as well, because a lot of people are just unhappy. Obviously, people losing jobs and stuff so even if it's a while away I think people will just cheer up a bit, you know.

I'd really like to watch the tennis final. Hopefully it will be Rafael Nadal versus Roger Federer. And it being at Wimbledon I think will just add an extra dimension, in particular. Wimbledon is the probably greatest place to play any sport, I think, in the world and Nadal will be by then at his peak and Federer will be quite old and having some grey hairs, but he's still a legend. I mean, I think that would be the best for sport, to see that two great giants. And I think having great sport stars as well makes the Olympic just a bit more special. Just so the kids can see really what it takes to be great and really just aspire to be and kind of, step into their shoes just for one day. Even though it's on TV, they can just visualise and really enjoy the whole emotions of the game and just watch the great spectacle.

*I'd really like to watch the tennis final & being at Wimbledon it will add an extra dimension*

*Sebastien Kapembwa Knight*  
*Football Coach*

My name is *SUZANNE*  
And this is my TESTIMONY.



I just remember that nearly everything was- took place actually in Wembley so it was all was very- all very concentrated in there and you used to get- I mean Wembley was full of people walking, and, you know, I mean extra people. You could certainly see it in our road, every day people- It was really very busy walking up and down, great entertainment! [laughs]

I think I probably wasn't as keyed into sport at nine as I was subsequently in adult life, and I think my parents took me to these things so that I could then say that I had been to the Olympics because it was an opportunity not to missed.

But I do remember seeing Fanny Blankers-Koen run the race and win it of course, and so I suppose for me, that's the main star of the event. Although these other names that keep coming up I- Once my memory is jogged I remember hearing about them and knowing about them at the time- I don't actually, I started to pick up and remember Zatopek and Perrier, but I don't actually remember many other of the personalities.

"You probably heard something about the odd winner on the radio..." Quite possibly, but you'd didn't have commentaries and things like you do now, like a whole sports programme. You wouldn't have had any of that. Oh, but we didn't have television and in the newspaper you'd get the odd photograph. Possibly. But I mean, the coverage wasn't anything not anything like the sort of thing you'd get now.

*Suzanne Schindler*  
*Retired Window Dresser*



My name is *Taneesha*  
and this is my TESTIMONY.



In a sense, it will make a difference. But the only thing that is actually a worry to me is the fact that: when they have finished with the Olympics what are they going to do with the building? You know because, there is so many things for the youngsters or the youth or the next generation today. They don't really have much things to do, they got no community centres. So that's the kind of thing I'm worried about: I'd like to see something happen for the next generation. Having two children myself, you need to see something for the younger generation because if you don't have anything, it's not going to make a difference.

Basically, like the children have sport days at school, they should actually have a way of having a day for the children to have their own children or Olympics, kind of thing, or the young generation to make them have a taste of what it actually feels like to be in the sports or the athletes' shoes, you know. Because there are so many things that the younger generation can do or should do, but no one has actually given them the opportunity or opened the door for them.

*Taneesha Roberts*  
*Single Mother*

My name is *Don*  
and this is my TESTIMONY.



I'm interested in the sporting side and I've always been interested in the Olympics since I can remember.

The first one I really remember is 1956 and they all went on in these exotic places. So 1956 was Austria, 1960 was Rome, 1964 was Tokyo and all those places seemed so far away then. I mean, like Rome seemed so far away, now it feels really close in terms of using the plane and things. So- the- I- I mean sometimes, like the

Australian Olympic Games, it's taking place in the middle of the night so you can't- you can't watch it. And at first those first lots of Games weren't on television live, so it was only with people like Sebastian Coe winning his medals in- I can still remember watching it at home and leaping up and down when he won a medal.

I think we bought a new colour telly just for the Olympics: our first colour telly. So those were- I mean- I was- I was really interested in the Olympics, I was really interested in athletics. I used to do a lot of athletics at school and I would model myself on some of the athletics heroes like Roger Bannister. And there's a Jamaican runner called Arthur Wint who used to have a very long stride and pulled his muscle, famously pulled his muscle, in one of the Olympics just as he was trying to finish off, and he had stop because he was grimacing in pain.

So I used to try to model myself on that and even I remember thinking when I was about 24: "do I still have a chance to get into the British Olympics team?" And it was a complete fantasy, I mean there was no way I could start training at 24 and get in the Olympics team. The reason was there was- I think the oldest winner of the 400 meters had won that year and he was 30 and I thought: "well I've got six years before I peg out completely." [laughs]

*Don MacDonald*  
*Training/Enterprise Manager*

My name is *Paulette*

And this is my TESTIMONY.



I actually moved to Appleton in Wembley, Middlesex when I was six years old and some of my greatest memories were going to Wembley market. My first Saturday job, I used to sell football programmes and so my two bases were QPR ground and also at Wembley stadium. And so for me, the highlight of every season was selling football programmes at the FA cup finals. The- The-

The fans would get so excited and so hyper and- Like they'd be rushing in with, like, seconds before kick off and they'd give you 20 pounds for a- for a 50p program and they'd be like "yeah, yeah, yeah, keep the change and keep one" and we were like, coining it.

I think looking back with my adult eyes I mean- What a joy you know, that we just took for granted and we probably moaned a little bit about my Saturday job. But yeah, looking back yeah, great tips.

And the old Wembley for me... Oh yeah, it's a major part of my childhood, major part of my life. I remember where I was when the announcement was made that we'd won: I was in Russell Square at a conference and I remember being really edgy and itchy in the chair thinking, "uhhm I wonder how we're doing, I wonder how it's going". And I remember going out to a lunch and there was like a buffet, and there were like murmurings and murmuring and then someone was like, "we won". And then I was like "we won?! We won?! Oh my god we won!" I was so, so excited.

For me, the impact that I'm really hoping, and I'm already witnessing, that the Olympics come into London on the sporting arena, is that the conversations are changing amongst young people. Get on board and enjoy it!

*Paulette Harris-German*  
*Actor, Presenter*

My name is *Malcolm*

And this is my TESTIMONY.



Yes, I did go to the opening ceremony and I have with me here the programme that I had there. I think the big contrast with today is how laid back it all was. People turned up there, the King came and said his piece after all the athletes got on the middle. Then there was a bit of a hiatus while nothing much happened, and they tried to get the birds and the doves and the pigeons to fly. It was a hot day and they weren't fancying it. And then we children went on to the actual ground itself and got autographs of some of the athletes.

And I think the contrast is it was not stage managed. They marched on in order and marched off in order, but there was no- no fireworks and there was very little security, that's the other big contrast with what happens today. You could just walk in there and walk around. As I said, we could hop over the fence and mingle with the athletes and they were very happy for us to do that. Well, eventually some commissioner or something said you know, "run away sonny." [laughs] But there was no great pressure.

The numbers of events were small. No- There were no women's athletics beyond 400 meters. I don't think so, there were very few events for women so they only had, you know, in the hurdles. I mean nowadays, the women run as many events as men do, don't they, but there was no question of a women's marathon or anything like that so- I mean, it was quite cleverly done: the opening ceremony was on the Thursday. The Friday started the athletics, but it's all the heats and things, you know, for subsequent races. And then you had the Saturday and the Sunday, and in those days the bank holiday Monday was the first Monday in August. So the bank holiday Monday- You got the Saturday, Sunday and bank holiday Monday as first three days- So they had a good crowd for those three days. But then after that, the attendance dropped off quite appreciably because people were at work and there wasn't television- I don't think they covered it with television.

*Malcolm Tappin*  
*Retired Structural Engineer*

My name is *Monna*

And this is my TESTIMONY.



I live in Kingsbury. It's right on the borders of Wembley and so where I'm living now, the Wembley stadium can be seen from my bedroom window, so all the time it was being constructed, particularly when they were constructing the arch, I watched it as it was being built. And now when they light it up, it just looks beautiful. I think it's a real honour to have the Olympics in London. I think that's the word I would use. I think, as we draw closer to the time, I think people will start to realise exactly what a big thing it is to have this here in London. And it's a real opportunity for us to, sort of, welcome the world and be hosts in the true sense of the word. And I think that is something that will escalate in the next year or so. And then when we finally get to the year and start counting down to the opening ceremony, I think that will be so exciting. So it should be fantastic.

But having the Olympics here in London, in terms of making a difference for sport, I think it really will inspire people to think about being much more physical, as well as young people themselves, you know, taking the initiative and training already. Even without the financial backing, they're doing it, so there is that movement from just watching something and thinking, "oh yeah it's happening there," to actually, "I can be a part of this". The opening ceremony, I would love to be there if not the closing ceremony, just to be involved in that in some way, would be great just- Even if it is just watching it- think it will be a fantastic event. But I think some of the long distance running, because of the stamina like you say, the actual- What people go through, no matter how you can watch it on TV, you really feel for the athletes- I think to watch it, you know, in real life, must just be amazing. So I think for me it will be the running events that I'd love to go and see. It's inspiring young people already now, like you say. In the schools there are projects and things that are, looking at the contribution you can make towards the Olympics and what will happen afterwards. And those young people- I mean, now it's, sort of, a few years time they'll be the young adults and they'll be, sort of, you know, leading. So hopefully it'll have inspired them as well.

*Monna Rizvi*

*Chartered Librarian*

My name is *NEIL*

And this is my TESTIMONY.



I've been working in sport journalism since the Beijing Olympics and I'm also a keen football fan. I don't play so much anymore but I still follow the premier league.

I think the Olympics will be the best way to recruit youngsters into sports, into some of the more obscure sports as well as, you know, football and other national sports. And I think that the infrastructure and the development of Stratford will help to regenerate the area.

I'd like to get to Wembley because I used to steward in the media lounge, so I used to see the press file past and I'd like to be working there and- And yeah, work there in my own right and get to Stratford and see the venues there.

I guess the event people will be looking out for will be the sprint- the 100 meters. But the trouble with that is that it's over in ten seconds, so it is a highlight but blink and you miss it. So I would like to see that, though.

I remember when the new logo was unveiled, it was quite a shock and I think it may be because the colours were quite garish, with the colours that were bright pink and bright green. But it's actually grown on me quite a lot so I do quite like the logo now. And the mascots I've seen is similar as well: it's bit of a shock when you first see them, they've got one eye- I think one of them has one eye and [laughs] it's a bit scary, but I think that they'll grow on people's affection.

The Royal Mint with London 2012 have organised the competition to design coins a 50p coin for each Olympic sports, so they're 29 in total and my football design was chosen. It's a diagram explaining the offside rule and- So yeah, I was obviously quite pleased about that so that'll be in the shops, so it's obviously good to be able to contribute to the Olympics in that way, in a small way.

*Neil Wolfson*

*Production Journalist*



My name is *Priyesh*  
and this is my TESTIMONY.



It should be really good and prestigious when they open the Games, because that's what- that's the first impression that people will get when they're coming in from different countries to London and that's what they'll see, that's what they'll reflect upon us. So it's really important that we represent ourselves properly by a good opening, and closing ceremony as well.

I think it will encourage people to be more sportive, because people don't really get to see much sport at such a high level in London or in this English area, because it's all going on abroad, or you see about it in the papers. But I think, it's really important to inspire young people here, and it will make more people inspired with sport because they'll see it at a closer level, and they'll see that it's actually near them, so if they can go and see it they'll be inspired by- It'll be a new experience for them to- to remember for a long time.

*It should be great and prestigious when they open the games because that's what, that's the first impression that people get when they're coming in from different countries to London*

*Priyesh Patel*  
*Student*

My name is *PETER*  
And this is my TESTIMONY.



It's a complicated exercise. Each event takes a minimum lead time of 12 weeks to organise, with some big events like the Olympics and the Champion League final, those events can take years to organise. But a small event, 12 weeks minimum. And it takes a lot of people, a lot of different departments to organise roughly 6,000 people to work here on event days.

We're having a number of meetings with the Olympics people. They're called LOCOG and the staff are all based over in Canary Wharf, in Docklands, and they come here for meetings every month. And we decide how we're going to change the buildings for them; how we're going to make the building secure for them; what our staff are going to wear and who's going to do all the tasks for them: cleaning, security, stewarding. And it involves a lot of difficult negotiations, but they seem to be going well now.

*Peter Swordy*  
*Operations Manager Wembley Stadium*

My name is *Ronald*  
and this is my TESTIMONY.



Well the '48 Games came at a time when we were just recovering from the War with the rationing and things like that, and everybody were trying to readjust. And not like today, you have so many things, like television, that can help.

Years ago, in '48, you didn't have the television sets; you were restricted to the cinema really.

A relative worked at Wembley stadium and he used to chat about them, but mainly people in those days had had the War and most of them were trying to get established again, and from my angle I was starting to try- I had started a business and I was concentrating on that and I had no chance to go to the Games anyway. And I had- In those days definitely, the newspapers used to- used to buy one every day and that's where you got most of your information.

*Ronald Giles*  
*Retired Businessman*

My name is *Anastasiya*  
and this is my TESTIMONY.



I never really used to watch football, but I've found World Cup really interesting. It was really fun to watch with my dad so I think when the Olympics will come on TV, that'll be fun as well, 'cos I never really watch any sports.

Maybe 'cos my mum really wants to go, so maybe I'll just go with her because it only happens like once in a few years, so you don't know when's going to be the next time we'll have an Olympics in London. So yeah, I probably will go. So

maybe, like, the closer we'll get to it, the more excited I will be. Yeah.

*I think when the Olympics would come on TV  
I think that would be fun*

*The closer we'll get to it the more excited I will be*

*Anastasiya Kurlovich*  
*Student*

My name is **JUNE**  
and this is my TESTIMONY.



I didn't unfortunately [laughs] attend any of the games, although I was always a quite keen in sport. I was 18 at the time and- And I don't know why I didn't get round to going [laughs]. All I remember, basically, is that the swimming took place at the Empire Pool, Wembley.

I used to go there ice skating and I was aware that a local person, Judy Grinham, actually won a gold medal, I understood, and she was a local person, she lived in Willesden, I think she lived in Neasden. And after the council then gave a presentation to recognise her achievement in what is the Old Spotted Dog in Willesden High Road and they had a big hall at the back and they put on this big presentation-y thing, and I did go to that [laughs].

I think, because it was just after the war, I think that was probably why, you know, it was not quite so huge as it is these days. There weren't so many sports and they were sort of distributed further around the country.

*As the 1948 Games took place shortly after World War 2 it was not so spectacular as more recent Olympics. There were less countries taking part, and certainly fewer sports involved.*

*June McMahon  
Retired Election Agent*

My name is **Liesa**  
And this is my TESTIMONY.



I think- I think it would in a positive way. Because, it will increase young people's awareness and knowledge about sports and stuff and- and just motivate them to- what to- I don't know dedicate their time in something that will benefit their body, I guess. Because, I know music is something that's- that- that they find passionate and stuff. And probably most of them aspire to want to be like pop stars or singers, or something like that. And by having like, sort of, like, fame attached to the Olympics being in London, maybe that would want to- want to do- Pursue something in sports because of that, I guess.

I would love to, one day, do like a marathon or something, like, have someone sponsor me. But, I've always wanted to learn how to play tennis, because I actually like watching Wimbledon but I don't understand any of it, like the points scoring system. And whoever I'm watching it with, I'm a bit of a pain because I don't understand it and they have to keep explaining it to me and then I'll forget. But it just looks like what the other person do- It just looks really interesting and fun, and yeah. Probably tennis I'd say.

I do find the runners really impressive and I think it's just amazing what they can put their bodies through and how long they can run and last for, really. I think they're amazing, so I'll be looking out for those- for them during the Olympics.

*Liesa Bacchus  
Artist*

My name is *Eunate*  
and this is my TESTIMONY.



Well I've only seen one, the Beijing one, but I thought it was like really good- really different and, like, the coordination and everything was really good. And yeah. I liked- well, yeah I remember watching Rafael Nadal a lot. Me and my family, we woke up early to watch him and everything. We were supporting him, and yeah.

Well, runners like Usain Bolt, like, 'cos there's so many like, so fast and that and then mostly like- I don't know like- African and Jamaican, they're amazing at running and just watching them it's like- They look like superheroes like- no one can do that it's just- and- Also, I think Rafael Nadal was really good at the tennis 'cos, like, he didn't give up- he- You could see him he was really tired like, about to die, but he just kept going.

*I've only seen one, the Beijing one.  
I thought it was really good, really different  
and the coordination and everything was  
really good.*

*Eunate Meruelo-Rubio*  
Student

My name is *Laura*  
and this is my TESTIMONY.



I have visited Wembley over the years and I feel a link with Wembley, the stadium, because I think the first time I ever went to Wembley stadium was when I took a group of very excited little children there as a birthday outing. And the delight when we walked up the 39 steps to the royal box, where the medals and trophies were always given. That's one of my earliest memories of going to Wembley stadium with all these children, and

I don't know who was more excited: [laughs] me or them. But it was a great day. Yeah, Wembley has a place in my heart.

We're very fortunate to be living in London at the time of the Olympic Games and I feel really proud to be part of that. Although, personally, I'm not a sporty person, I do recognise the utmost importance of sports in schools and for our children, because it generates and fosters all the things we've talked about: the unification, the- the having to get on with each other, working in teams, team work. I mean there's nothing like building relationships.

Now, Stratford is already forming a picture in people's minds of stadium, Olympics so- And it's great. Olympic Games: if somebody says to me, "who is the most memorable person?" two people jump out and that's little Olga Korbut from Belarus. Here came this little girl who took the nation by storm. Took the world by storm actually. The other person that leaps out is Daley Thompson, the decathlete. He was gorgeous to look at but absolute brilliant all rounder.

But I don't think we are going to lose sight of what it's all about: it's about the Games, it's about prowess of our Olympic sportsmen and women and let's celebrate it!

*Laura Munton*  
Artist/Teacher

My name is *Kinga*  
and this is my TESTIMONY.



I think young people will like, look up to, like, what's happening. So I think they will like, change and maybe pick up a sport and also, like, schools will, like, maybe get ideas for new sports to do in school so, like, more activities are going on so, like, children can go off to school and at lunchtime to, like, do something.

I think it will have a positive effect but then again, like she said, we don't know how long it will last. But it will be, like, positive for maybe a few months or something and everyone will be, like, all happy and stuff and get engaged in sports.

*Kinga Pilarska*  
Student

My name is *John*  
and this is my TESTIMONY.



It's quite exciting for us to- to know that we're part of the 2012 Games. We're one of those venues that weren't on the list to be host venues right from the start, so we never took it for granted- We never took it granted that we were going to be a host venue. When the news came out that we were there, was an excitement within the team that we were going part of an historical event, which is what the Olympics is really. It's a once in a lifetime opportunity for the people working here to be part of it and for the people that are going to be coming to visit Wembley at that time. It's- it's a huge event for us.

I think the Olympics mean a big deal to the host city anyway: the influx of visitors that you get, the focus, the attention that is suddenly on that host city. As we saw from the last time in Beijing, it's the global media that focuses and- And London is a global city, everybody knows it obviously, but the focus is quite intense at that time. So I think the- the reaction of the local community, the- meaning the greater London community, and the businesses: everybody connected with it is going to make for quite a time. I think you will see a lot more events that- that take place that reflect the Games that are taking place, especially because the Games are on, we certainly- Our own company will be involved with producing concerts especially for the Games, so we look forward to that.

*It's quite exciting for us to know that we're part of the 2012 Games, we're going to be part of a historic event. It's a once in a lifetime opportunity.*

*John Drury*  
General Manager Wembley Arena



## *Lorenzo Belenguer*

### *Lead Artist*

Lorenzo Belenguer is an artist and an arts manager. Having founded the Rogues Gallery, an artists' group which exhibited in vacant shops, he then went on to successfully run the Brent Artists Resource for five years, developing a close working relationship with its Board of Directors.

Lorenzo has been involved in numerous arts projects, with funding from the Arts Council, Awards for All, Heritage Lottery Fund and the European Social Fund with many projects recommended by the BBC, The Guardian and Timeout magazine to their viewer and readership as part of their exhibitions must sees for London.

His projects have had impact on and generated involvement from within the community. He ran the photographic project "Willesden Green High Road at The Gallery" in which a group of artists archived and documented the High Road with photographs and a video. This project trained people in documenting their local heritage. He co-managed with Susan Roberts from the Bridging Arts, a "Stitch in Time" with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Through a series of workshops, talks and visits to various places, the project produced a series of textile panels forming a lasting testimonial to the experience and heritage of women in the early 21st century. A "Stitch in Time" had a high visual impact and communicated with people across different religious, cultural and racial groups and gave women a much needed creative platform for their views, hopes, aspirations and experiences as well as a chance to learn sewing skills that are no longer typically taught in schools but which are an important part of the heritage of this country.

Lorenzo as a practising artist transforms metal objects into sculptures that evolve from the visual rhetoric of Minimalism and double as 'canvases'. Belenguer is like a hunter who trawls the city for found objects, sometimes sourced as locally as the back garden of the studios' church. This use of found objects can also be seen metaphorically in his series of drawings based on fashion adverts. Within this series he finds and focuses on the individual within those fashion adverts. These drawings were selected for a group show at the Tate Modern in May 2010.

## *The TESTIMONIES Team*

A good project needs a great team. Everybody was asked to respond to the following questions:

1. *What are you providing to the TESTIMONIES project?*
2. *What have you learned from being involved in the TESTIMONIES project?*
3. *What is your job in the project?*
4. *Website (or email address)*

## *Advisory Committee*

### *John Blandy*

1. I give advice .
2. There is more talent in your own backyard than you suspect.
3. Adviser.
4. [www.johnblandy.co.uk](http://www.johnblandy.co.uk)

### *Zerritha Brown*

1. Support with developing the project and linking it to the London 2012 Games. To lead on Arts and London 2012 engagement for the residents and businesses in Brent.
2. It's great to reflect on the history of the Games as well as record new aspirations for the London the 2012 Games.
3. Brent Manager for Arts and London 2012.
4. [www.brent.gov.uk/brent2012](http://www.brent.gov.uk/brent2012)

### *Abi Palmer*

1. As an Arts Manager in London and having worked on the Sydney Olympics, my role as an advisor is to provide feedback and recommendations on how to develop this community project in the best possible way for the London 2012.
2. Truly intergenerational projects really do help us all, young, old and the in betweeners, make sense of our past, here and now and to anticipate the future.
3. Arts advisor.
4. [abi\\_palmer@yahoo.com](mailto:abi_palmer@yahoo.com)

### *Robert Wilkinson*

Historian specialised in oral history (British Library)

## *The Rest of the Team*

### *Tobias Chapple*

1. I've been helping get the word out about TESTIMONIES: writing its press releases, the transcripts and just talking to Londoners about it.
2. That there's never just one story to tell and that London will always take you by surprise.
3. Press Officer.
4. tobias.chapple@gmail.com

### *Imogen Eveson*

1. I have designed the exhibition booklet for TESTIMONIES and consulted on the project's graphic identity.
2. Before embarking on this project I wasn't engaged in the Games in any way. TESTIMONIES has piqued my interest in the Games and introduced me to them from a very interesting angle, for which I am grateful.
3. Graphic Designer.
4. www.imogeneveson.com

### *Emilie Giles*

1. My role is to manage the TESTIMONIES social media accounts and to design a pervasive game and app for members of the public to engage with.
2. The importance of communities and how reflecting on a significant event can bring people together.
3. Social Media Co-ordinator and Game Designer.
4. www.emiliegiles.co.uk

### *Salesh Kapur*

1. My purpose is to convey their emotion.
2. The courage of our elders.
3. Photographer.
4. info@saleshkapur.com

### *Barbara Kyei*

1. Assistant to Lorenzo.
2. Excitement for the community.
3. Intern student.
4. barbarakyei@yahoo.co.uk

### *Tom Pritchard*

1. I am the sound engineer, I recorded and mixed all of the interviews.
2. I have learnt that everyone has a unique perspective on the Olympics.
3. Sound Engineer.
4. tcpritchard@hotmail.com

### *Eva-Maria Sanchez*

1. To the TESTIMONIES project I'm bringing over three years of experience working as a marketing and communications professional, which together with my bilingual skills should help this project to gain extensive coverage in Spain and the UK.
2. From being involved in the TESTIMONIES I have widened my understanding of the Olympic Games as a massive international celebration. Also, I have come to the conclusion that by letting people know about this project it encourages a debate about the Olympic Games that is meant to leave a longer lasting impression in people's memory.
3. Press and Communications Manager.
4. evamariash@gmail.com

### *Pau Usach López*

1. Facilitating that this project have no barriers of space and time.
2. It's a kind and very human initiative for all. It makes the Olympic Games a little bit closer to the people, more intimate and personal. I like to participate in it.
3. Web Designer.
4. www.co-creativos.es

# *Make Your Own* TESTIMONIES *Kit*



## *What is TESTIMONIES?*

TESTIMONIES is a community art venture created by Lorenzo Belenguer and launched by Brent Artists' Resource in response to London residents looking to have a more active role in the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and to compare it with the 1948 Olympic Games. It is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and supported by the London Borough of Brent.

## *What is Oral History?*

Oral history consists of information which we all gather as we pass through our lives. It is a spoken rendition of our past, our culture and our experiences. These soundbites are recorded to be preserved, to take their place as pieces of historical information and essentially, as stories.

## *How to find a story that is relevant to your community/school*

You'll probably find that everyone has their own individual view of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and with these views stories to tell. Within your community, be it your family, neighbours, friends, colleagues or classmates, everyone will have something to say about the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and some will even have something to say about the 1948 Olympic Games too. Talk to these people and ask them what they think the Olympics and Paralympic Games will bring to London and where relevant, what the 1948 event brought too. Perhaps ask them how they think it will affect your community and what their hopes are for it. Try to talk to as many people that you can, as it is important to find a range of stories within your community circle.

## *How to do it*

There are different ways that you could go about gathering people's testimonies. One could be to organise a meetup circle, where everyone gives their oral history,

another way could be to schedule a one-to-one meeting with each person who you want to record; the choice is yours! Your recording device could be a dictaphone, a laptop or even a mobile phone. The way in which you go about this is essentially up to you. Choose a method that suits you best, and use equipment which is most accessible to you.

## *How to present it*

The way in which you present people's testimonies can be any way that you like. You may favour the idea of people in your community all meeting up and giving their oral history one by one; as well as this being a chance to record what people have to say, it is also a chance for them to perform and tell their story. Another way may be to record each person's testimony separately, and then present them in an intimate or social setting. Again, the way you go about this is up to you!

## *What will you learn from it?*

By recording people reciting their testimonies you will learn something. Whether it is finding out about people's past experiences of the 1948 Olympic Games, their hopes and ambitions about the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games or how perhaps these could affect your community. This project will also teach you about communicating and reaching out to people who you know, some well and some not so well, and how to arrange community interaction and engagement. Whatever you learn from this project we hope that you enjoy the experience, and have the opportunity to record your own testimony on what the 1948 Olympic Games and London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games mean to you.

## *For more information*

<http://www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/furtherresources/Pages/Thinkingaboutoralhistory.aspx>

*You can contribute with your own TESTIMONY via*

Facebook: TESTIMONIES London

Twitter: TestimoniesLDN

#ThisIsMyTestimonyLondon

Vimeo: TESTIMONIES London



More copies of the TESTIMONIES booklet can be downloaded from the website below.

An update on the latest news and an App and a Game for mobiles can be obtained from

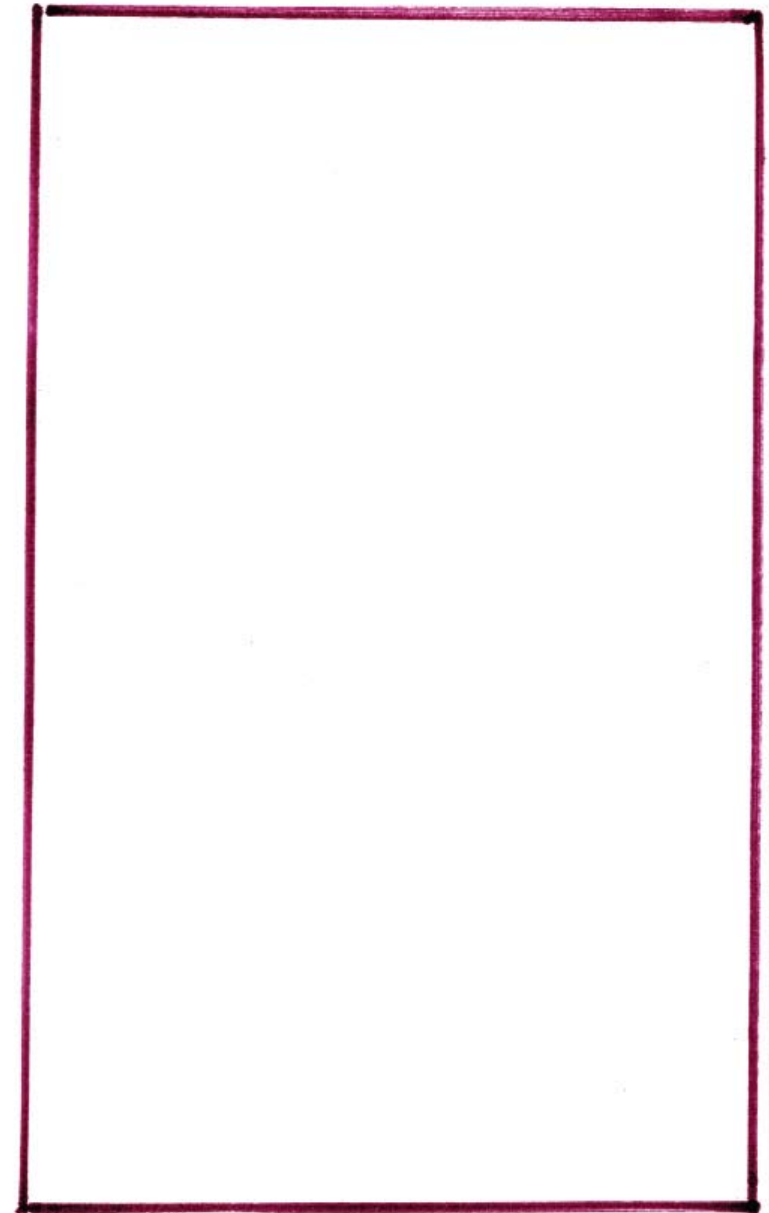
*[www.londonerstestimonies.com](http://www.londonerstestimonies.com).*

### *Thanks*

We are extremely grateful to the Heritage Lottery Fund for their grant of £30,000 and their continuous support which has enabled us to carry on the project. Thanks also to the London Borough of Brent and Brent Artists' Resource for their constant support and contributions. The exceptionally talented team and the volunteers. We could not have done this without them. The London 2012 team for giving us the privilege to be part of the Cultural Olympiad for London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The Greater London Authority Cultural Team for helping us to make things happen. Finally, and most importantly, to everybody - including yourself - for sharing your TESTIMONY with us.

Amongst many other projects, the Heritage Lottery Fund supports projects that improve people's opportunities to access, engage with and learn about heritage. Their Heritage education and access projects focus on widening participation from disadvantaged groups and people who have not been involved in heritage before.

*My TESTIMONY is*



The 48 Olympics seem now a very long way off  
AND 48 was like opening a New World  
after the Second World War.

is a major part of  
life.

I did go to the Opening Ceremony. I think the big  
contrast with today was how laid back it was.  
People turned up there, the King came and said  
his piece. It was a hot day.

ok place shortly after  
not so spectacular as  
There were less countries  
only fewer sports