

# TESTIMONIES



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

*Lorenzo Belenguer - Lead Artist*



The BAR Gallery at Willesden Green  
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[www.LondonersTestimonies.com](http://www.LondonersTestimonies.com)

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## **Londoners Get Personal with the Olympics – TESTIMONIES launch event**

Launch event: Thursday 22 September 6pm-9pm

20 September to 14 October

Open daily 2pm to 6pm – Free entrance

Next month Brent Artist Resource will host a launch event for TESTIMONIES - a Cultural Olympiad and Inspire Mark project created to explore Londoners' stories and experiences before the Olympics in 1948 and today.

With the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games just around the corner TESTIMONIES will turn the tales revealed into audio broadcasts that will be heard all over Wembley Arena Square (pending to approval) and in other venues during the summer 2012.

TESTIMONIES is an exciting initiative supported by £30,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) exploring Londoners' stories and expectations before the Olympics in 1948 and today – in advance of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Created by Lorenzo Belenguer in response to London residents looking to have a more active role in the Olympics TESTIMONIES aims to empower conversation about this historic event and provide a legacy for the 2012 Olympics. By inviting people that competed or witnessed in the 1948 Olympic Games to share their story, we aim to draw comparisons between both Olympic Games held in London and reveal both the similarities and differences between then and now.

The launch event is open to all Londoners and will give everyone the chance to talk to those that have provided their testimony, including residents who were at the 1948 London Olympics; experts in Oral History from the British Library and the Sydney Olympics; staff from Wembley Stadium and Arena and just everyone who wants to come and talk about the Olympics.

**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 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, explained:

“This is a grassroots venture linking art with history 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 London 2012 they need to be shown their experiences matter, and that you don't need to be a gymnast to be an integral part of the Games. By giving a voice to Londoners' through this project we are offering people the chance to take part in this living legacy and share what matters to them about these forthcoming games. So the question is: what is your story?”

Brent Museum and Brent Archives are delighted to have the opportunity to work in partnership with Brent Artists' Resource and display some of the material we hold relating to the 1948 Olympics as part of the Testimonies project. TESTIMONIES is a three year project that started in March 2010 and will continue until March 2013.

END

Notes to editors:

- High Resolution images can be downloaded from <http://www.flickr.com/photos/LondonersTestimonies>
- You can also find out the latest contributions via:  
  
**Facebook:** [Testimonies London](#)  
**Twitter:** [TestimoniesLDN](#)  
Join the conversation #ThisIsMyTestimonyLondon  
  
**Vimeo:** [Testimonies London](#)
- **TESTIMONIES** is a £65,000 project with a £30,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund and is supported by the Brent Council and Brent Artists Resource. It is one out of the eight projects in Brent that received approval from LOCOG (London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games) to be one of the Inspire Mark projects for the London 2012 Games. Testimonies can be broadcast anywhere around London and a 'Make your own Testimony' kit that will be provided to local councils and community groups.
- An Olympic and Paralympic first, the **London 2012 Inspire programme** enables non-commercial organisations across the UK to link their events and projects to the London 2012 Games in an official scope. From Wales to the East of England, from the South West to Yorkshire and Humber - more than 1000 projects and events have already been awarded the coveted Inspire mark for their work in one of six areas: sustainability, education, volunteering, business, sport or culture.
- **Brent Museum and Brent Archives** are based at on the first floor at Willesden Green Library Centre. The permanent museum display reveals the fascinating stories behind Brent's social history, and the exhibition galleries host in-house, touring, and

community-curated exhibitions. The archives hold the records of Brent Council and its predecessors, as well as schools, religious institutions, businesses, and many other local organisations and individuals, and can help you find out more about the local area and its history, as well as research on many other subjects. We are delighted to have the opportunity to work in partnership with Brent Artists' Resource and display some of the material we hold relating to the 1948 Olympics as part of the Testimonies project.

- Using money raised through the National Lottery, the **Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)** sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported 30,000 projects, allocating £4.6billion across the UK, including £868million in London alone.

**For more information:**

Please see [www.LondonersTestimonies.com](http://www.LondonersTestimonies.com) If you would like to be kept up to date on the project's progress, please contact [LondonersTestimonies@gmail.com](mailto:LondonersTestimonies@gmail.com)

For Brent Museum or Brent Archives to find out more about Brent's Olympic history, contact [museum@brent.gov.uk](mailto:museum@brent.gov.uk) or [archives@brent.gov.uk](mailto:archives@brent.gov.uk) or call 020 8937 3600 to find out more.

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