

Media release  
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### **A Winter of Wonder: February Half Term at The Bowes Museum**

With the first half term of the year just around the corner, The Bowes Museum has a vibrant programme planned between Saturday, 22 February – Sunday, 2 March 2025, consisting of exciting new activities, and some familiar favourites. With nature, sustainability and innovation at the heart of this year's programme, the museum celebrates 200 years of its inspiring co-founder Joséphine Bowes.

There's bound to be something to keep all the family entertained this winter, with creative workshops, insightful tours and outstanding exhibitions, all free with admission to the County Durham museum.

#### **Daily activities:**

**Museum Makes**, a self-led creative activity in the Create Space offers visitors an opportunity to explore their creativity, play with a variety of materials and immerse themselves in making at their own pace.

The insightful 11am **Spotlight Tours** continue daily, giving an informative introduction to an exhibition, collection item or the building for up to 30 minutes.

Due to demand, the majestic 252-year-old **Silver Swan** will perform twice daily at 11:45am and 2pm throughout the half term. Experience the magic and learn about its history in a brief talk by one of the museum's knowledgeable staff.

Families can pick up an interactive ***Deadly Beauty from the Medicine Box* Trail Booklet** and pencil at Reception and embark on a journey through the galleries to identify some interesting objects from the collection. Learn about blood-curdling botanicals and tragic tales of the past.

Head outside to burn off some energy in the fresh air with an **Explorer Bag** that can be collected from Reception. The pack includes a guide and magnifying glasses to help identify the birds, plants and insects that call the 22 acres of parkland their home.

#### **Activities for younger children:**

Play, and discover natural wonders and wonderful wildlife in **Nature Spotters**, a brand-new immersive activity for children aged under 10. Gather in an outdoor-inspired campsite in the Conversation Gallery from 1pm on Tuesday 25th and Friday 28th February.

**Family Story Tour** returns on Thursday, 27 February at 10:30am. All ages can learn fascinating facts behind art and objects from the *Deadly Beauty* display in this interactive tour that promises an eye-opening experience!

**Stay and Play** continues weekly on Thursdays from 10am until 4pm. This is the perfect way for the museum's younger audiences to soak up the atmosphere as they get creative in these self-led, free-play sessions in the Conversation Gallery.

#### **Activities for older children:**

**Seed Bombs** is a brand-new workshop, perfect for nature and wildlife lovers aged 12+. On Tuesday, 25 February, 2:30 – 3:30pm, visitors can create their own pollinator friendly wildflower bomb to take home with them and discover the vital role wildflowers play in supporting pollinators and boosting local biodiversity. All materials are provided for the activity.

Artist Jane Young will be on hand in the Create Space on Saturday, 22 February and Wednesday, 26 February between 1 – 3pm for an afternoon of making. Jane will lead two new **Artist Maker Workshops**, *Tiny Treasures* and *Garland of Tales*. Use mixed media to create a beautiful garland, inspired by a winter scene, *The Fable of the Fox and the Crow* (1873) and craft your own unique mouse, inspired by a dainty automaton lovingly gifted to John Bowes by Joséphine.

Betty Brown will be drawing inspiration from beloved animal objects in the collection, in *Hologram Illusions* on Saturday, 1 March between 1 – 3pm. Craft a mesmerising hologram picture, sure to amaze your friends.

Artist Maker Workshops are drop-in and recommended for ages 8+.

### **Special activities for adults:**

Zoe Allen will be leading an inspiring **Still Life Workshop** on Monday, 24 February from 1pm, the first in a series of creative sessions for adults. In this 2-hour class held in the picture galleries, participants will learn new techniques, refine their skills and draw inspiration from the remarkable artwork surrounding them.

Create a unique brooch with Take a Stitch 2 Durham on Saturday, 1 March from 1pm in a 2-hour **Brooch Making Workshop**. Inspired by *Framing Fashion*, draw inspiration from Vivienne Westwood's iconic use of tartan and feathers.

Both workshops are recommended for ages 15+, booking essential. Book [online](#).

### **Outstanding exhibitions:**

It's the final call for *Framing Fashion: Art and Inspiration from a Private Collection of Vivienne Westwood* before it closes Sunday, 2 March. Get up close to outfits, accessories and ephemera dating back to the mid-80s to 90s, from Peter Smithson's private collection. A unique selection of ensembles is displayed alongside paintings and historic fashion from the museum's collection, examining Westwood's inspiration during this period.

*From Joséphine Bowes: Trendsetters and Trailblazers* honours the legacy of artist, collector, patron of the arts, and museum co-founder Joséphine Bowes. Showcasing a contemporary continuation of the collection, this eclectic exhibition gives a flavour of where Joséphine's considerable knowledge of artistic trends might have taken The Bowes Museum next. Paintings are exhibited alongside sculptures, photography, furniture, textiles and ceramics from world-renowned artists including Pablo Picasso, Sir Grayson Perry CBE, Gillian Wearing CBE and contemporaries including Joy Labinjo, Lucy Waters, and a special commission piece by Phoebe Cummings.

The Bowes Museum, Café Bowes and the shop is open daily 10am – 5pm. Don't forget, under 18s and full-time students always go free. Enjoy a fun-filled day out and quality time with friends and family at The Bowes Museum this half term.

-ENDS-

### **Note to editors and picture desks:**

Download high-resolution images of what visitors can expect to see when visiting The Bowes Museum this [February Half Term](#).

### **About The Bowes Museum**

The Bowes Museum is a charity managing a Grade 1 listed accredited Museum and Grade 2 listed parkland in Barnard Castle. Founded by Joséphine & John Bowes 150+ years ago, this purpose-built Museum brings together an extraordinary, Designated collection of European fine and decorative art as a cultural resource for the people of Northern England, where today we celebrate artists, designers and makers.

The Bowes Museum receives funding from Durham County Council and, as a National Portfolio Organisation, receives support from Arts Council England. Arts Council England is the national development body for arts and culture across England, working to enrich people's lives. [artscouncil.org.uk](https://www.artscouncil.org.uk)

The Bowes Museum is a member of the Discover Durham partnership of attractions, whose commitment is to promote Durham as an exciting and vibrant group travel destination and to provide the travel trade with a professional and knowledgeable service. [discoverdurham.co.uk](https://www.discoverdurham.co.uk)

Admission to The Bowes Museum is £16.00 for local members (residents of County Durham and Darlington), £18.00 for members (residents elsewhere), £19.00 for a day ticket, £20.90 for a day ticket including gift aid. Under 18s, full time students and carers are free.

As a registered charity (number 1079639) The Bowes Museum needs to generate more than half of its income each year to care for the historic collection, buildings and parkland. Your donations are vital to that work. Visit [thebowesmuseum.org.uk/support/](https://thebowesmuseum.org.uk/support/) for more information.