# POOR Collective’s pavilion gives night workers in London a visible voice for the first time



UK-based design studios POOR Collective and Wiggle Wonderland have created a vibrant, artwork-covered pavilion to highlight the often overlooked contributions of the City of London's night workers. Called *Unheard Voices in the City*, this colourful open-air pavilion was situated in the courtyard of St Bartholomew's Hospital and formed part of the London Festival of Architecture 2025. The initiative was organised in collaboration with the London Museum and aimed to celebrate the vital but frequently ignored roles of night-shift workers including market traders, hospital staff, and black cab drivers.

According to data from the Living Wage Foundation, around 26 percent of London’s workforce operates during night or evening hours, making the needs and experiences of these workers a significant yet underrepresented community within the city's workforce. POOR Collective’s architectural designer Akmaral Khassen explained that the main goal of the installation was to amplify the ‘unheard voices’ of London’s night-time economy and communities. The artworks within the pavilion were co-designed with local night workers from Smithfield market, hospitals, nightclubs, and 24-hour cafes, formed through surveys and drawing sessions conducted at places like St Bartholomew’s Hospital, Fabric nightclub, and Ferrari’s café.

The pavilion’s structure, a coral-coloured timber frame, was reclaimed from a previous project by Wiggle Wonderland and repurposed as an open-air art gallery. The artwork itself, made from weatherproof MDF panels, is designed for reuse elsewhere by the London Museum following the pavilion’s dismantling. This approach underscores POOR Collective’s broader commitment to sustainable and community-driven design, where existing structures are adapted and reimagined to serve local needs—an ethos reflected in their prior work in Barnet and Wood Green, where local youth have been engaged to reshape community spaces.

Khassen emphasised the importance of revealing the hidden nightlife of London that supports the city’s functioning around the clock. Despite the central role these night workers play, there is limited data on their experiences and aspirations. Through the installation, POOR Collective sought to reveal their stories, highlighting both the challenges they face—such as invisibility and lack of recognition—and the crucial contributions they make to the city’s vitality and continuous operation.

The *Unheard Voices* pavilion ran from mid-June to early July 2025, forming part of the London Festival of Architecture, which this year featured over 450 events centred on the theme of ‘Voices’. The festival aimed at amplifying underrepresented perspectives in urban development and design. Other contributions within the festival echoed similar themes of inclusion and sustainability, underscoring the importance of diverse community involvement in shaping London’s built environment.

POOR Collective, which stands for Power Out of Restriction, is a socially engaged design studio that focuses on involving young people and often excluded communities in transforming public spaces across London. Celebrated recently with the Emerging Design Medal at the London Design Festival, the studio is increasingly recognised for its impact on the city’s design discourse by embedding social equity into architectural practice.

With this installation, POOR Collective and Wiggle Wonderland have not only brought visibility to night workers but also created a platform for dialogue about their needs and experiences, challenging the broader city to acknowledge and value the workforce that sustains it after dark.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dezeen.com/2025/07/30/poor-collective-unheard-voices-pavilion/), [[4]](https://www.flolondon.co.uk/all-posts/what-to-do-and-see-at-the-london-festival-of-architecture-2025), [[5]](https://www.culturecalling.com/london/news/london-festival-of-architecture-2025), [[6]](https://www.thecityofldn.com/event/london-festival-of-architecture-in-the-city-2/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dezeen.com/2025/07/30/poor-collective-unheard-voices-pavilion/), [[2]](https://www.dezeen.com/2025/07/30/poor-collective-unheard-voices-pavilion/), [[4]](https://www.flolondon.co.uk/all-posts/what-to-do-and-see-at-the-london-festival-of-architecture-2025)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.dezeen.com/2025/07/30/poor-collective-unheard-voices-pavilion/), [[3]](https://www.ft.com/content/dbae177c-930d-41e3-bdab-82b3fa617ddc)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.dezeen.com/2025/07/30/poor-collective-unheard-voices-pavilion/), [[3]](https://www.ft.com/content/dbae177c-930d-41e3-bdab-82b3fa617ddc)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.dezeen.com/2025/07/30/poor-collective-unheard-voices-pavilion/), [[2]](https://www.dezeen.com/2025/07/30/poor-collective-unheard-voices-pavilion/), [[4]](https://www.flolondon.co.uk/all-posts/what-to-do-and-see-at-the-london-festival-of-architecture-2025), [[5]](https://www.culturecalling.com/london/news/london-festival-of-architecture-2025), [[6]](https://www.thecityofldn.com/event/london-festival-of-architecture-in-the-city-2/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.dezeen.com/2025/07/30/poor-collective-unheard-voices-pavilion/), [[3]](https://www.ft.com/content/dbae177c-930d-41e3-bdab-82b3fa617ddc), [[5]](https://www.culturecalling.com/london/news/london-festival-of-architecture-2025)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dezeen.com/2025/07/30/poor-collective-unheard-voices-pavilion/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.dezeen.com/2025/07/30/poor-collective-unheard-voices-pavilion/> - UK studios POOR Collective and Wiggle Wonderland have designed an artwork-covered pavilion to draw attention to the City of London's night workers. Named Unheard Voices in the City, the colourful open-air pavilion was located in St Bartholomew's Hospital courtyard as part of the London Festival of Architecture 2025. The installation aimed to spotlight the unheard voices of the City's night market traders, hospital staff, and black cab drivers, with artworks co-designed with Smithfield's night-time communities.
3. <https://www.ft.com/content/dbae177c-930d-41e3-bdab-82b3fa617ddc> - An article highlighting POOR Collective's approach to architecture, focusing on repurposing existing structures to benefit communities. It discusses their work in Barnet, where they collaborated with local youth to reimagine a sports pavilion, and in Wood Green, designing the Rising Green Youth Hub through direct input from its users. The piece also touches on the collective's advocacy for design that incorporates voices often excluded from decision-making processes.
4. <https://www.flolondon.co.uk/all-posts/what-to-do-and-see-at-the-london-festival-of-architecture-2025> - A guide to events at the London Festival of Architecture 2025, including the 'Unheard Voices of the City' installation by POOR Collective in collaboration with the London Museum. The installation, set in the historic courtyard of St Bartholomew’s Hospital, highlights the lives of those who keep the City moving at night—market traders, hospital staff, shift workers, club-goers, and others. It was presented within Wiggle Wonderland’s open-air gallery and ran from 14 June to 6 July 2025.
5. <https://www.culturecalling.com/london/news/london-festival-of-architecture-2025> - An overview of the London Festival of Architecture 2025, themed 'Voices', featuring over 450 events across London. The festival aims to amplify underrepresented perspectives in shaping the built environment. Highlights include the 'Unheard Voices of the City' installation by POOR Collective, which brings to life the stories, voices, and experiences of the City of London at night, running from 13 to 30 June 2025.
6. <https://www.thecityofldn.com/event/london-festival-of-architecture-in-the-city-2/> - Information about the London Festival of Architecture 2025 in the City of London, focusing on the theme of 'Voices'. The festival includes various events, such as the 'Unheard Voices of the City' installation by POOR Collective, which brings to life the stories, voices, and experiences of the City of London at night. The installation was set in the historic courtyard of St Bartholomew’s Hospital and ran from 13 to 30 June 2025.
7. <https://www.fleetstreetquarter.co.uk/events/london-festival-of-architecture-2025> - Details about the London Festival of Architecture 2025 in the Fleet Street Quarter, including the 'Whispers' installation by Oskar Zieta. The festival, themed 'Voices', aims to amplify underrepresented perspectives in shaping the built environment. The 'Whispers' installation, running from May to September 2025, addresses thinking on planning for future generations, valuing diversity, leveraging innovation, and working in partnership.