

FLOW

New Works by Emily Allchurch

21 May – 20 June 2026

Catalogue of Works

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We are pleased to present FLOW, a collection of twelve new works by Emily Allchurch that follow the River Thames over the course of a year as it runs from the Cotswolds to the North Sea.

The Thames is England's longest river, flowing through nine counties on a 215-mile journey from its source in Gloucestershire to Southend where it meets the North Sea. It represents a fluid history of the country through traces of centuries of human activity: from Magna Carta's Runnymede, the locks, weirs and embankments of the Industrial Revolution, modern interventions such as the creation of the Thames Path from historical towpaths, hydro-power at Reading, and the Thames Flood Barrier.

In 2025 Emily Allchurch followed its course over a calendar year, exploring 12 locations, one for each month of the year, from January at its source at Thames Head in the Cotswolds to the mouth at Southend-on-Sea in December. Each location, spaced at around 20-mile intervals, was chosen to show a different facet to the story of the Thames today. The series unfolds from the almost timeless pastoral landscape of its upper reaches, via the ultra-managed river banks of London, to the industrialised stretches east of the capital. The works celebrate the natural beauty to be found along the entirety of the river, despite the pressure from human impact.

As with all of Allchurch's work, every scene is an intricately constructed digital photographic collage assembled from many hundreds of photographs she takes on location, the resulting image capturing the essence of her experience of being there at that time of year. While these are her own compositions, they take inspiration from Hiroshige's 'One Hundred Famous Views of Edo' (1856-8) in their vertical format, sense of place, and use of near/far devices. Themes explored include the seasons, flora and fauna, topography, and the use (and abuse) of the river – from leisure activities and power generation to more reckless interventions such as litter and pollution.

In early 2026, a complete set of FLOW was acquired by the Imperial Health Charity to be permanently displayed in a newly-refurbished wing at Charing Cross Hospital, West London later in the year. FLOW at James Freeman Gallery will be the first time the full collection is exhibited.



FLOW: January - Thames Head

Archival C-type print, edition of 15 + 2APs, 2026

Image size: 72cm H x 48cm W / Framed size: 76.6cm H x 52.6cm W



FLOW: February - Lechlade

Archival C-type print, edition of 15 + 2APs, 2026

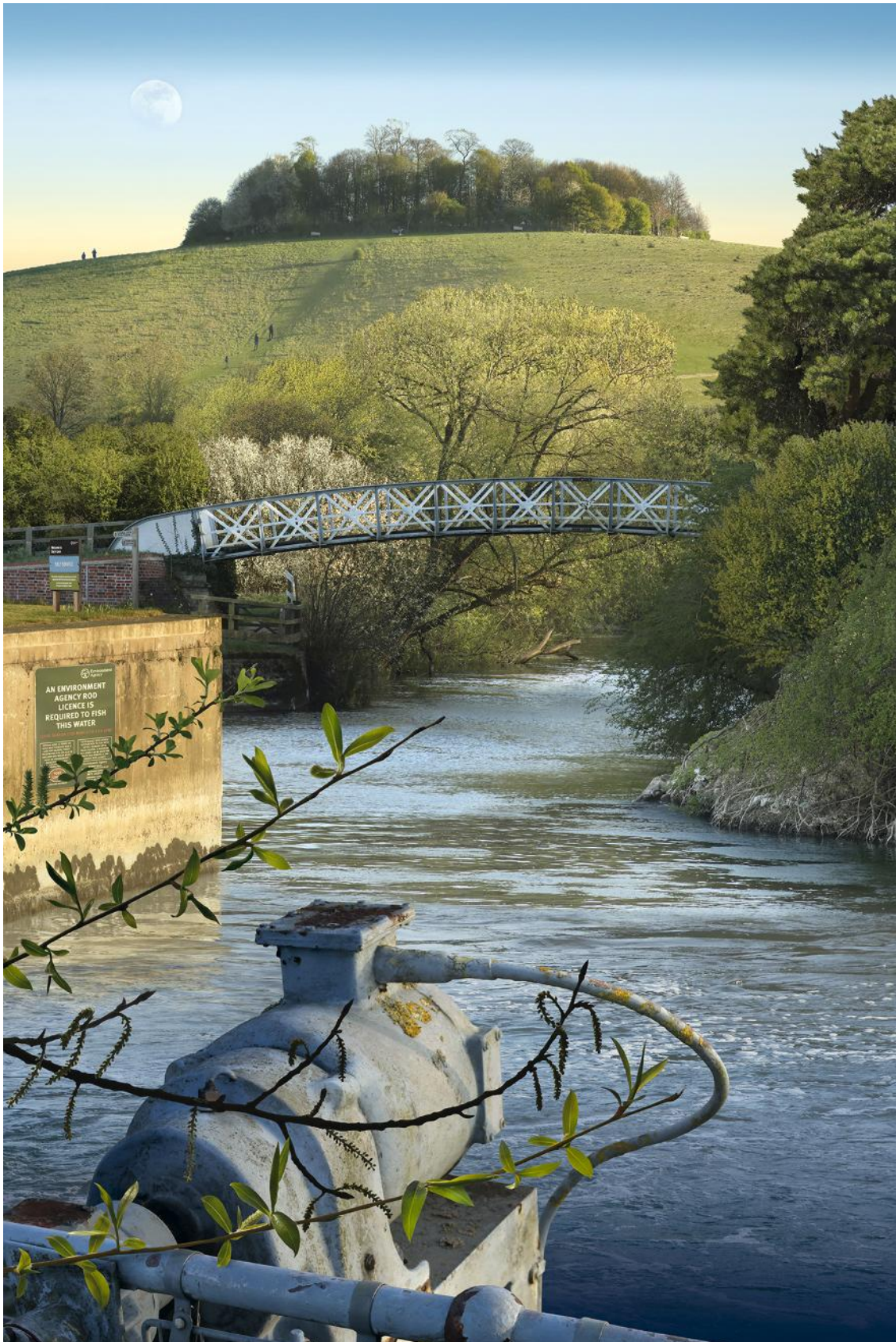
Image size: 72cm H x 48cm W / Framed size: 76.6cm H x 52.6cm W



FLOW: March - Oxford

Archival C-type print, edition of 15 + 2APs, 2026

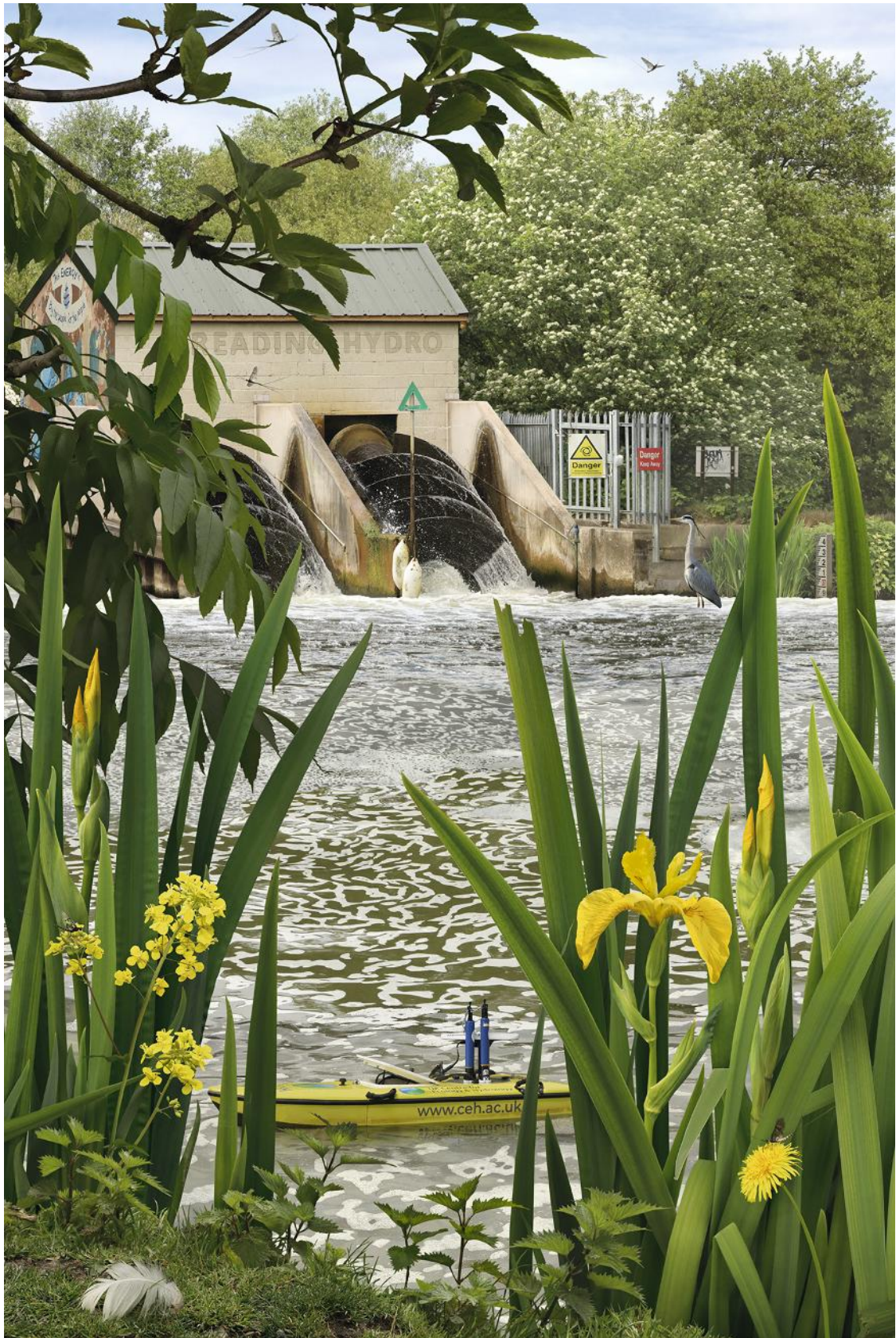
Image size: 72cm H x 48cm W / Framed size: 76.6cm H x 52.6cm W



FLOW: April - Dorchester-on-Thames

Archival C-type print, edition of 15 + 2APs, 2026

Image size: 72cm H x 48cm W / Framed size: 76.6cm H x 52.6cm W



FLOW: May - Reading

Archival C-type print, edition of 15 + 2APs, 2026

Image size: 72cm H x 48cm W / Framed size: 76.6cm H x 52.6cm W



FLOW: June - Marlow

Archival C-type print, edition of 15 + 2APs, 2026

Image size: 72cm H x 48cm W / Framed size: 76.6cm H x 52.6cm W



FLOW: July - Runnymede

Archival C-type print, edition of 15 + 2APs, 2026

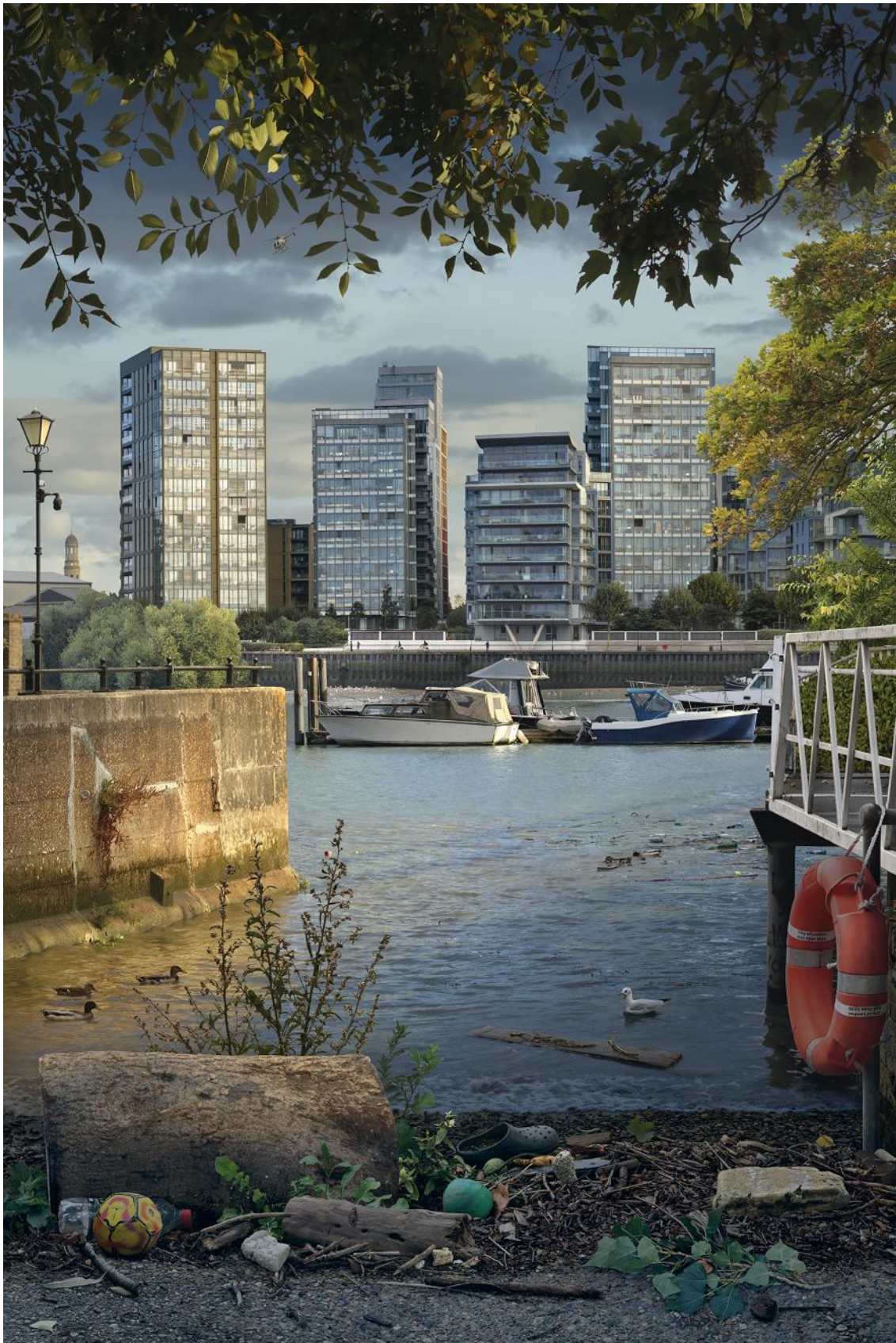
Image size: 72cm H x 48cm W / Framed size: 76.6cm H x 52.6cm W



FLOW: August - Hampton

Archival C-type print, edition of 15 + 2APs, 2026

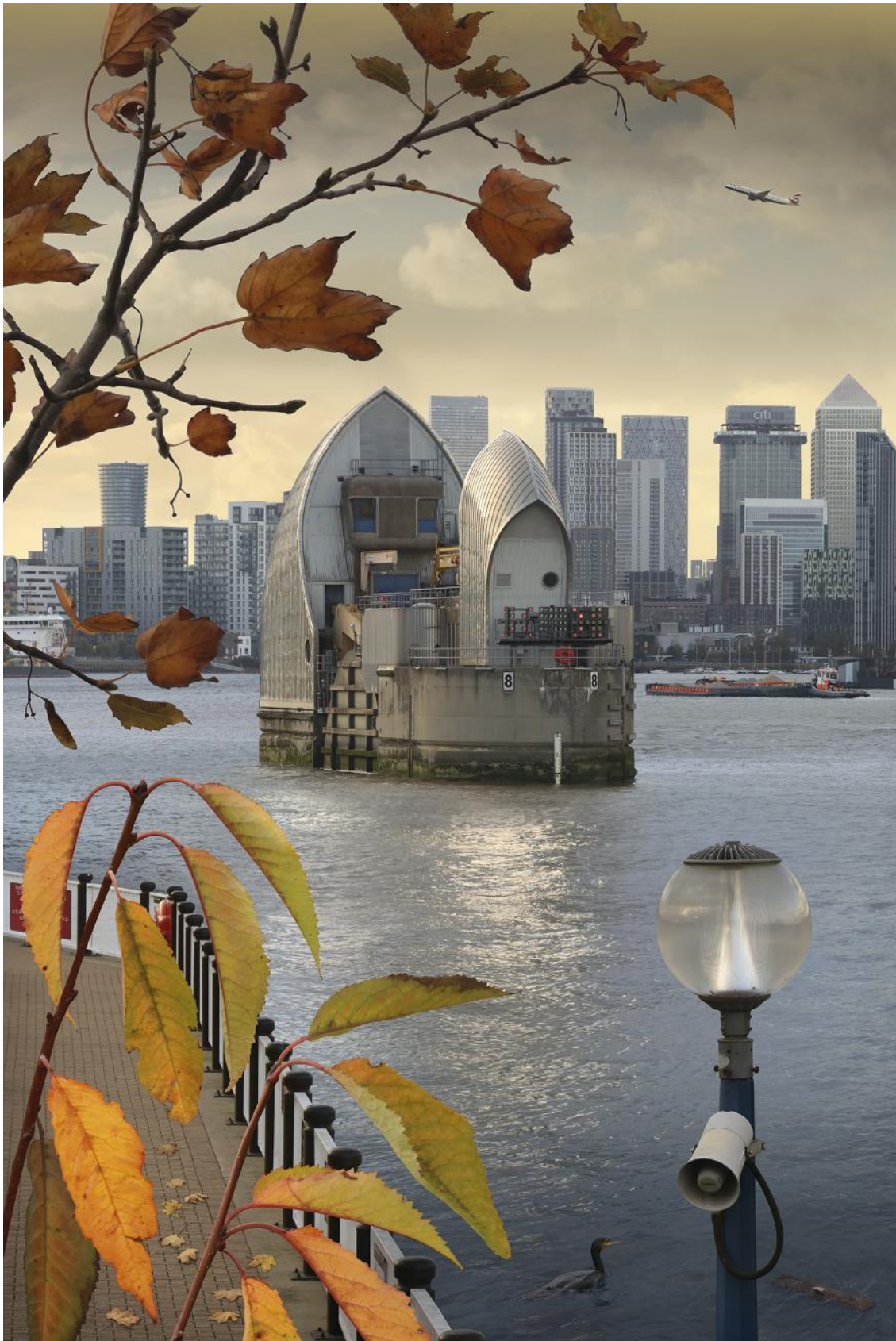
Image size: 72cm H x 48cm W / Framed size: 76.6cm H x 52.6cm W



FLOW: September - Fulham

Archival C-type print, edition of 15 + 2APs, 2026

Image size: 72cm H x 48cm W / Framed size: 76.6cm H x 52.6cm W



FLOW: October - Thames Flood Barrier

Archival C-type print, edition of 15 + 2APs, 2026

Image size: 72cm H x 48cm W / Framed size: 76.6cm H x 52.6cm W



FLOW: November - Gravesend

Archival C-type print, edition of 15 + 2APs, 2026

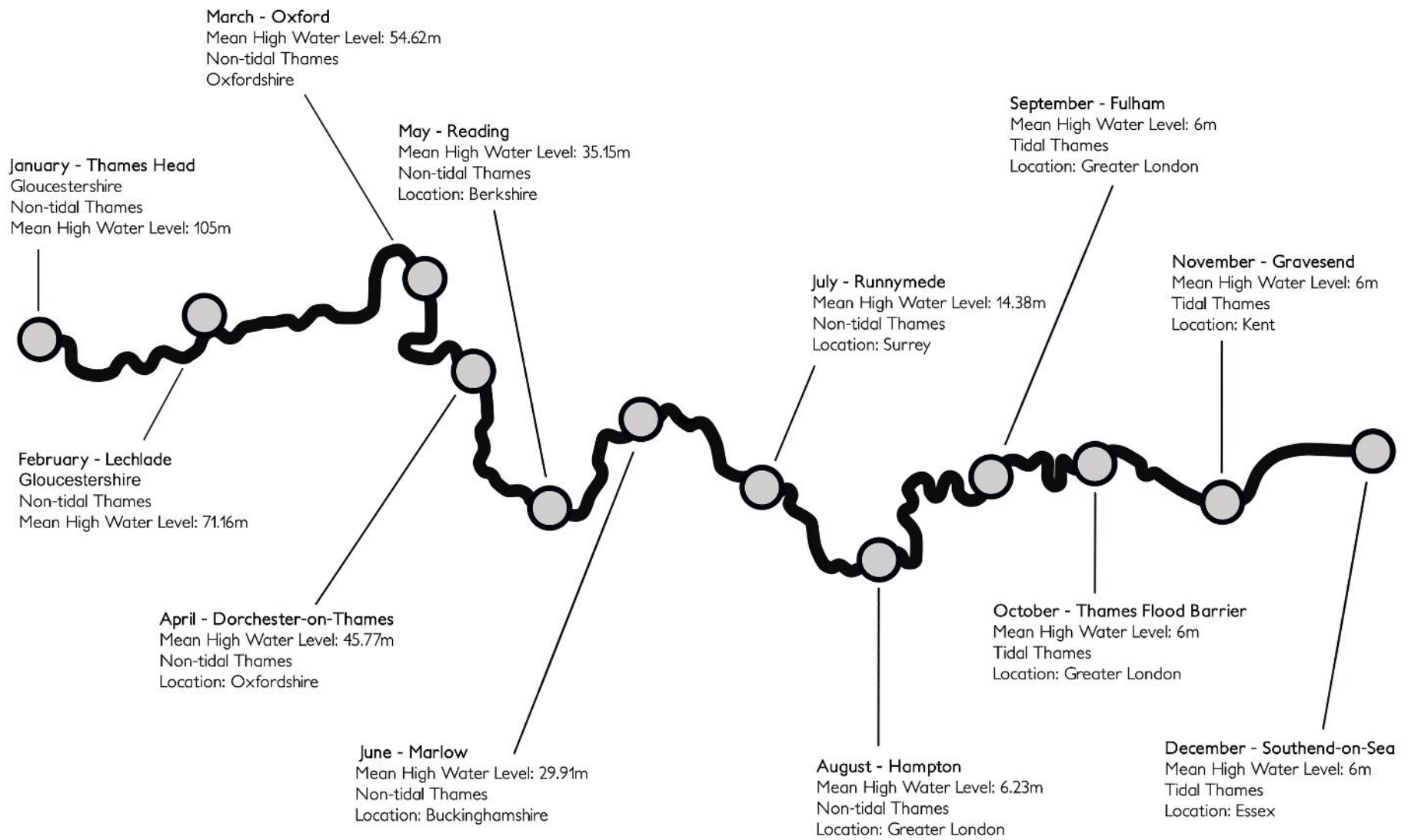
Image size: 72cm H x 48cm W / Framed size: 76.6cm H x 52.6cm W



FLOW: December - Southend

Archival C-type print, edition of 15 + 2APs, 2026

Image size: 72cm H x 48cm W / Framed size: 76.6cm H x 52.6cm W



River Thames: Image location map





Artist Profile

Emily Allchurch, born 1974 in Jersey, Channel Islands, lives and works in Hastings, East Sussex. She trained as a sculptor, receiving a First Class (Hons.) degree in Fine Art from the Kent Institute of Art & Design, Canterbury (now UCA) in 1996, and an MA from the Royal College of Art in 1999, where she began working with photography as a material. Since then she has exhibited regularly in solo and group shows in the UK and internationally.

Allchurch uses photography and digital collage to reconstruct, or closely reference, Old Master paintings and prints to create contemporary narratives. Her starting point is an intensive encounter with a city or place, to absorb an impression and gather a huge image library. From this resource, hundreds of photographs are selected and meticulously spliced together to create a seamless new 'fictional' space. Each artwork re-presents this journey, compressed into a single scene. The resulting photographic collages have a resonance with place, history and culture, and deal with the passage of time and the changes to a landscape, fusing contemporary life with a sense of history.

Her works are held in public and private collections worldwide. In 2025, the British Museum acquired a full set of the Tokyo Story series as archival pigment prints, whilst in 2023 the Royal Academy of Arts in London acquired a lightbox edition of 'Grand Tour II: Homage to Soane (after Gandy)' and the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Nancy also acquired this work along with its companion piece, 'Grand Tour: In Search of Soane (after Gandy)'. A complete set of her Tokyo Story series is also held in the permanent collection of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, with a further set in the collection of Fidelity in Tokyo. In 2020, the Museum of London acquired a lightbox version of 'Babel London (after Breugel)' to go on permanent display, when it opens at its new site in West Smithfield towards the end of 2026.

In Summer 2018, she had a solo show, *Visions of Architectural Fancy*, at the Sir John Soane's Museum in London, and in 2015 her solo show, *Emily Allchurch: In the Footsteps of a Master*, at Manchester Art Gallery, also toured to the Djanogly Art Gallery in Nottingham. Her *Albert Square, Manchester (after Valette)* lightbox, was created specially for the Manchester Art Gallery to coincide with this exhibition, and crowd-funded via the Art Fund's 'Art Happens' scheme, and is held in the Gallery's permanent collection.