

# MAKERS AND FAKERS:

HOW COPIES, REPLICAS, CASTS AND  
FAKES 'MAKE' MUSEUM COLLECTIONS



MONDAY 30TH SEPTEMBER & TUESDAY  
1ST OCTOBER 2024

Pitt Rivers Museum  
S. Parks Road, OX1 3PP

FREE TICKETS | REGISTER ONLINE



# MAKERS AND FAKERS:



## HOW COPIES, REPLICAS, CASTS AND FAKES 'MAKE' MUSEUM COLLECTIONS

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Historically, museums have been spaces for material experimentation, the practical manipulation of objects, and the testing of hypotheses. Objects were modelled, moulded, reproduced, and shared with others. They were faithfully copied, used, damaged, and fixed as part of experimental investigations into their possible uses and the technology behind their making. Annual Reports of the Pitt Rivers Museum describe students at the museum making “flint implements...spinning or weaving” and puzzling out “the scales of... musical instruments”. A now infamous anecdote involves the censure faced by a museum curator following an incident with a thrown boomerang in the nearby University Park.

Casts and copies of unique or rare objects were faithfully made so as to share with other museums and audiences, as well as to facilitate embodied interactions. Rare photographs and artworks were rephotographed and reprinted for display and dissemination, and photographs of objects were exhibited to ‘stand in for’ the real thing in displays, alongside rubbings, moulds, and paper squeezes. The replica or facsimile gained a value and status as simulacrum but also as an object that could more readily teach the body about its referent than the fragile original could ever do.

Museums also acquired ‘fakes’, objects purporting to be something that they are not. These ‘fakes’ were often made by similar or even identical processes to those used by museum workers for experimental purposes, and distinctions between benign copies and malicious fakes were often lines drawn through the politics of gender and class (Briefel 2018). Some ‘fakes’ even gained notoriety—becoming collectable objects in their own right, and many ‘fakers’ went on to instruct museum professionals in the skills of their trade.

Not all copies were made inside the museum’s walls. Moulds for casts and paper squeezes were often made on colonial expeditions, and involved the labour of many—often unacknowledged hands (Reynolds-Kaye 2022). As Foster has noted, ‘replicas embed many stories and embody considerable past human energy’. Thinking critically about replicas and copies requires a commitment to recognising the networks of people and things—both within and outside of museum spaces—which made their production and circulation possible.

Experimental practices in museums have declined steadily over the years, and yet the products of this activity remain in collections in the present. Whilst distinctions between ‘authentic’ and copied objects have always existed in museums, the appetite for displaying copies and models for teaching and research purposes diminished rapidly in the second half of the twentieth century. Whilst some early practices such as the once celebrated cast galleries have become historical objects in their own right, they now mostly occupy ancillary rooms or corridors, except where they have become too integral to remove, such as most large dinosaur skeletons in natural history museums. And yet in recent years developments in 3D and computer modelling have bought replication back into the forefront of museum practice.

This two-day object and practise-based workshop brings together makers, academics, and museum practitioners to consider the nature and role of copies, casts, replicas and fakes in museums, the social and cultural practices that gave rise to them, what we can learn from them, and what museum futures they may have.

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# MAKERS AND FAKERS: CLOSED SESSIONS



WORKSHOP SPEAKERS ONLY

OBJECT  
HANDLING

*Monday 30th September | Visiting  
Researchers Room*

## **11:00-12:30**

*Object Handling facilitated by Dr Chris Morton (PRM), Dr Beth Hodgett (PRM), Dr Andrew Shapland (Ashmolean), Dr John Pouncett (Institute of Archaeology, Oxford) & Dr Karl Smith (Institute of Archaeology, Oxford)*

Closed session for workshop speakers only. Object handling of casts, copies, replicas, fakes and models from the PRM & Ashmolean Collection.

REPLICA  
MAKING

*Tuesday 1st October | Old Library and  
Blackwood Seminar Room*

## **09:00-12:00**

*Replica making facilitated by Dr James Dilley of Ancient Craft & Graham Taylor of Potted History*

Closed session for workshop speakers only. Join Dr James Dilley and Graham Taylor as they lead us through the process of flint knapping and making a replica Samian-ware pot.

# MAKERS AND FAKERS: DAY 1 | TALKS



REPLICAS,  
MODELS & FAKES

13:30–15:15 | Lecture Theatre

## PROFESSOR SALLY FOSTER

*University of Stirling*

New Futures for Replicas: Reasons to rethink and revalue the contribution of makers and their craft

## DR ANDREW SHAPLAND, DR JOHN POUNCETT & DR KARL SMITH

*Ashmolean Museum | Institute of Archaeology, Oxford*

Replicating Knossos at the Ashmolean's 'Labyrinth' exhibition

## PROFESSOR PATRICIA KINGORI

*Nuffield Department of Population Health | Somerville College, Oxford*

Taking Fakers Seriously

FLINTS AND  
EOLITHS

15:30–17:00 | Lecture Theatre

## DR JAMES DILLEY

*Ancient Craft*

Replicating Ancient Craft

## PROFESSOR ROY ELLEN & ANGELA MUTHANA

*University of Kent*

Eoliths in Context: Neither hoaxes nor frauds \**Pre-recorded presentation*

## DR HELEN WICKSTEAD

*Kingston University*

Photography and Archaeological Stone Collecting: From the discovery of deep time to the eolithic controversies

# MAKERS AND FAKERS: DAY 2 | TALKS



FAKERS AND  
MAKERS

13:00-15:00 | Lecture Theatre

## REBECCA LOUGHEAD

*Society of Antiquaries*

Fakes in the History of the Society of Antiquaries

## AMALIA WICKSTEAD

*UCL | Ashmolean Museum*

Casting the British Empire: Plaster copies of classical sculpture and colonial complicity

## DR ELAINE CHARWAT

*UCL | Oxford University Museum of Natural History*

Replica-makers as authenticators: The curious case of William P. Pycraft

REPLICA POTS,  
POTTERY AND  
TECHNOLOGY

15:15-16:30 | Lecture Theatre

## GRAHAM TAYLOR

*Potted History*

Potted History

## DR SARAH DOHERTY

*Department of Continuing Education, Oxford*

Scrapes, Strings and Striations: Replicating an Ancient Egyptian potter's wheel

PLENARY  
DISCUSSION

16:30-17:00 | Lecture Theatre