



**Annual
Report**

2023/24

MISSION STATEMENT

The Pitt Rivers Museum wants to become a welcoming space to all where stories are shared by many voices. Working collaboratively and creatively with staff, volunteers, and communities we will transform how our iconic collections are engaged with, both online and in the museum. In an increasingly disconnected world, we want to inspire empathy and deepen cross-cultural understanding.

Cover image: Lisa Dewhurst (left), Indigenous Curator of the Nlaka'pamux Nation, and Shirlee Frost (right), a master beadwork artist of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, examine a Chilkat blanket robe (accession number 1951.2.11) in the Visiting Researchers' Room
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“This year, the museum launched the Director’s Circle for those supporters who make a significant contribution to the work of the museum. We are all so grateful for the generosity of our donors, which makes such a difference to the work that can be done.”

CHAIR’S FOREWORD

Professor Jane Shaw

Chair of Board of Visitors

Image © Robert Taylor



The sheer range of the activities and projects of the Pitt Rivers Museum (PRM) over the last year is, as in previous years, impressive. For example, 2024 has seen the opening of a series of displays across the museum, including fifteen new Hawaiian quilts, as part of the Hawai’i Ma uka to Ma kai programme. This exhibition was developed in a collaboration between the indigenous people of Hawai’i and the wider Pacific and our museum curators. Such collaborations with indigenous communities around the world are now a hallmark of the Pitt Rivers’ distinctive way of doing things. Our museum curators continue to be engaged in research, especially collaborative research, and to publish widely. The superb range of programmes for schools and for the public attracts large numbers, demonstrating the museum’s outstanding capacity for outreach.

The Pitt Rivers – like many other museums today – receives many requests for the restitution of objects from its collection; all of these requests must go through the appropriate and lengthy procedures to see if the claims have merit, and to assess whether they need to be taken to the University Council. This work is additional and time-consuming for the museum staff, and yet they do it with great professionalism and dedication, such that the Pitt Rivers is seen as a leader in this area, and is often asked for advice on how to proceed by other museums.

This year, the museum launched the Director’s Circle for those supporters who make a significant contribution to the work of the museum. We are all so grateful for the generosity of our donors, which makes such a difference to the work that can be done. If you feel able to help with the museum’s activities in this way, please be in touch. And I hope that everyone reading this report will consider becoming a Member of the Pitt Rivers, which brings many benefits, and provides a crucial element of support (<https://www.prm.ox.ac.uk/membership>).

Presiding over all of the many activities of the museum is our Director, Professor Laura Van Broekhoven. Congratulations and warm thanks to her and all the museum staff on another excellent year.

2024/25 will mark my final year as Chair of the Board of the Visitors, before I step down in September 2025. It has been a real joy to be engaged in the work of this extraordinary museum and its team, doing such innovative and exciting work.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading 'Jane Shaw' in a cursive script.

FROM THE HEAD OF GARDENS, LIBRARIES AND MUSEUMS

Richard Ovenden

Head of GLAM

Image © John Cairns



The University of Oxford has been entrusted with the care of the 32 million collection items held in its Gardens, Libraries and Museums (GLAM), a responsibility which dates back to the origins of the University in the 13th century when its first archival records were stored in strong chests, kept originally in the University Church. In the 21st century that responsibility continues to be of major importance for Oxford, but the approaches and methods taken to care for its collections have changed.

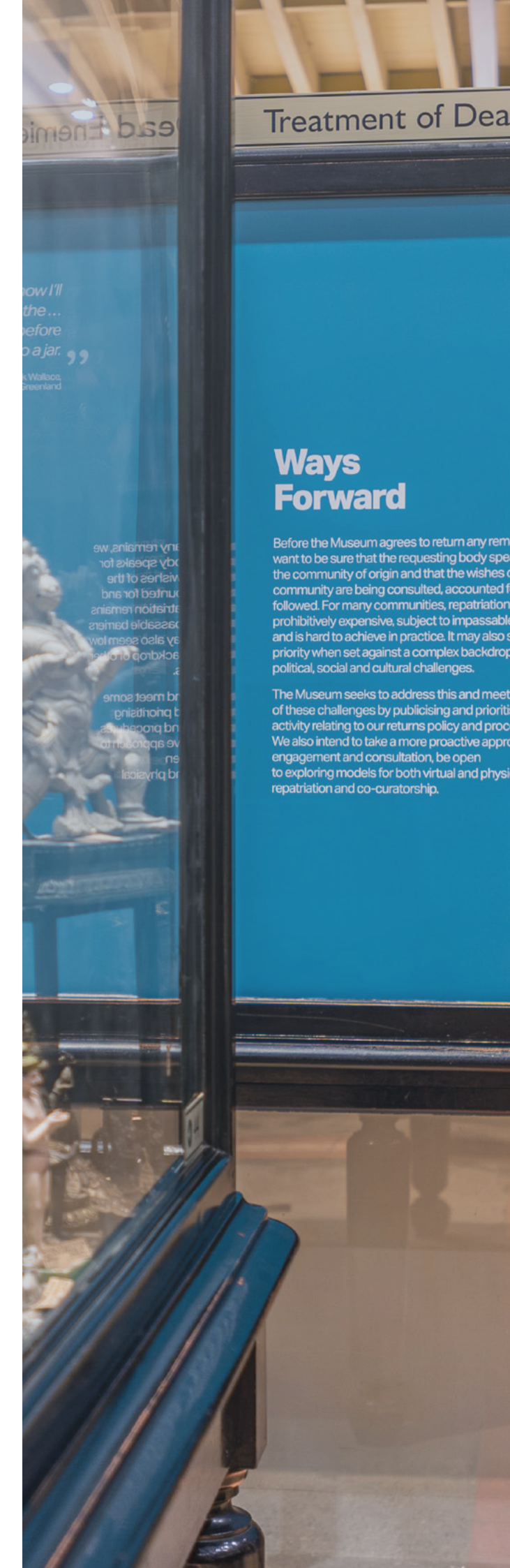
“Learning from indigenous practices and entering into a dialogue with those communities is bringing valuable new knowledge, insights and approaches...”

The Pitt Rivers Museum has always been on the forefront of these changes, and as you can see from this annual report it continues to demonstrate the leadership and appetite for innovation for which it has been known since its foundation in the 19th century. The museum is profoundly rethinking its approach to caring for collections, by focusing on communities of origin and their relationships to objects in the museum with which they have a strong connection. Learning from indigenous practices and entering into a dialogue with those communities is bringing valuable new knowledge, insights and approaches into the practice of the museum and its staff. At the same time, cutting-edge scientific approaches are being blended into these rethought cultural practices in a truly new 21st century. New links for the University have been forged by this approach with communities in Africa, Australia, India and other countries. The Pitt Rivers plays a strong part in ensuring the University's global ambitions are meaningful. These new curatorial practices are also being supported through major research council grants, which the staff of the institution have been able to secure through their academic prowess.

The Pitt Rivers Museum is a key part of the group of scientific and cultural collections known as GLAM. The museum has been an integral part of a key GLAM initiative, the Collections Teaching and Research Centre (CTRC), and will be moving its collections into new state-of-the-art storage facilities there in the coming year. GLAM's collective digital programme has also supported the museum in its work to share its collections and knowledge about them to broader audiences globally.

The Pitt Rivers Museum is one of the world's great collections of ethnography and anthropology and its work continues to uphold the traditions of the museum and the University of Oxford in caring for and sharing them to the highest standards: I have much pleasure in commending this annual report.

Richard Ovenden





“In May, we celebrated our 140th anniversary and commenced the work towards our 150th in 2034: this year, we drafted the curatorial outlines for a refurbishment masterplan...”

DIRECTOR'S INTRODUCTION

While it took the Pitt Rivers Museum's visitor numbers slightly longer to recover from COVID than other GLAM sites, we have seen a spectacular recovery of those numbers to an average of 110% of our pre-COVID records, which has been heartening. This year marked the first year that the PRM finances benefited from the Delafield Endowment, which markedly changed the museum's difficult financial position even under the current economic circumstances, and an unexpected decrease in our Higher Education Funding Council for England Research England grant. Keeping this in mind, and while some significant costs had to be taken this year to update our audience counting and security systems, the PRM ended the year with a small surplus, thanks to continued spending constraints on the one hand and growth in commercial and research income on the other. In May, we celebrated our 140th anniversary and commenced the work towards our 150th in 2034: this year, we drafted the curatorial outlines for a refurbishment masterplan and have now started the work on a case for support with the GLAM Development Office. The aforementioned small surplus can be invested, therefore, in a first phase of planning to make the museum fit for the next century and we have identified an architecture bureau to work on this with us.

In November we opened the Nothing Without Us: Experiences of Disability trail that Curating for Change Fellow Kyle Jordan had worked on for the last two years. A remarkable Late Night event including a British Sign Language choir showed what a truly inclusive museum might look like with everyone welcomed and involved in a wide range

of events across the museum. June marked the opening of a new series of exhibitions, the culmination of over three years of research and collecting work by Marenka Thompson-Odlum, who co-curated with artists, curators, researchers, quilters and other representatives of the indigenous peoples of Hawai'i and the Pacific.

On the operations side, we made several crucial and urgent investments. Firstly, at the very beginning of this new academic year, we invested in a new visitor counter system to ensure we were counting our visitors in consistent ways with other GLAM sites, and most importantly with our closest neighbours: The Oxford University of Natural History (OUMNH). Last year we noticed that our numbers seemed to be lagging behind other GLAM sites and that the conversion rate of visitors coming in from the OUMNH had significantly dropped. Some analysis showed that this might be due to using an out-of-date visitor counter system that was free, but no longer supported by its makers. We were also wondering if it had something to do with our Critical Change programme, which we visibly introduced into the museum at the reopening after the pandemic. Were fewer people visiting because the human remains were off display? Were fewer people visiting because we had made changes that upset them? We were ready to do more research into the matter, but also wanted to make sure we were comparing apples to apples, not oranges. And lo and behold... when the new visitor counter system was in, it showed our numbers were actually up, not down!

DIRECTOR'S INTRODUCTION

This does not mean we cannot improve on those numbers: we are conscious that some of our wayfinding has room for improvement (anecdotally and from visitor surveys, we know some visitors keenly want to visit the PRM but never find the door to our part of the building. Hence, although some of our visitors may think they visited, they only saw the Natural History Museum). Working with our GLAM colleagues from the marketing and communications team, and our colleagues at the OUMNH, we are now seeking to improve wayfinding so people will know that if they just walk past the dinosaurs and take a left at Darwin's statue, they'll find the little wooden door to a whole other world called the Pitt Rivers Museum, where we celebrate humanity's many ways of being and knowing through making. We also upgraded our security systems, which was required as part of our accreditation. These are crucial investments, often entirely invisible to visitors, but ensuring the safety of visitors, objects and staff, and making the museum fit for our present times.

“Behind the scenes we have started four new externally funded projects which have increased knowledge production, partnership and networking capacities, and financial resilience.”

Behind the scenes (and increasingly this also translates into public programming) we have started four new externally funded projects which have increased knowledge production, partnership and networking capacities, and financial resilience:

- A £730k project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), called Making the Museum, is already yielding some amazing outputs described in this annual report and recorded on our website, including a brilliant film showing how the museum came to life through music and the spoken word at a Late Night event in May (<https://youtu.be/azmMxmGlwfo>).
- A £330k project funded by Arts Council England (ACE), Rethinking Relationships, started about a year ago, and is aimed at building trust around African collections. It is the continuation of a Department for Culture, Media and Sport seed-funded collaborative project with the Horniman Museum, Liverpool Museums and Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (MAA) Cambridge. We are partnering with museums, communities and heritage institutions in Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana, Nigeria and Uganda and also reaching out to people living in the UK with roots in these countries, ensuring we connect with these important constituencies around the collections in our institutions. This project is already starting to lead to significant partnerships being established with National Museums Kenya, National Museums Uganda, museums in Ghana and Nigeria and the Pan African Living Cultures Alliance based in Tanzania.
- In June we received the very welcome news that our £90k bid to the John Ellerman Foundation had been granted for a new project called Changing Curatorial Legacies. This is a unique opportunity to continue to develop co-curatorial practice with indigenous curators from all over the globe, led by two of the museum's curatorial change makers: Faye Belsey and Marenka Thompson-Odlum. Collaborating with communities linked to key PRM collections, including those from underrepresented groups, they will develop workshops to explore new interpretive themes for the museum's redisplay. In collaboration with our design team, they will also experiment with design concepts from indigenous curators and artists to update displays within a framework of collaborative and cross-cultural curation. They are trialling this by adapting labels, object assemblages and displays to reflect contemporary themes and indigenous perspectives. This includes incorporating new acquisitions, addressing harmful displays and integrating cultural rituals and protocols into the museum.
- A project funded by the Oxford University Public Policy Challenge seeks to work with partners in the sector to find ways to adapt and manage the ivory policy that has now come into play in the UK as a result of the 2018 Ivory Act.

This kind of work does not go unseen by the sector, and we are very proud to say that this year we won the prestigious Museums + Heritage Community Engagement Programme of the Year Award, with the unique and informative MultakaOxford project. This project continues to ensure that the museum does transformational work not just with communities from across the globe, but also with those that live close to us, shape our community and are helping us to create a museum that feels like everyone belongs.

In May we were also happy to have been nominated for the Vice Chancellor's Diversity Award, for creating an inclusive research culture. We won in the category of Community Engagement, alongside our GLAM colleagues.



Professor Laura Van Broekhoven
Director

THE YEAR AT A GLANCE



HAWAII

Ma uka to Ma kai: Quilting the Hawaiian Landscape

Visitors to the museum were invited to journey through the Hawaiian landscape in a special exhibition that showcases the contemporary works of the Honolulu-based Poakalani Quilters, the innovative designs of fashion icon Manaola Yap and the visionary planetary futurism of Solomon Enos.



Digital innovation

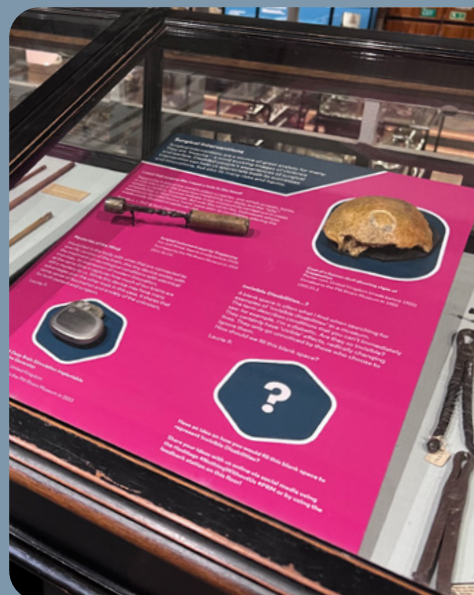
In June 2024 a new virtual scan of the museum galleries was launched on the website, enabling visitors to browse all three floors of the museum remotely for the first time. New displays and updated interpretation are enhanced by audiovisual content and interactive elements.

Late Night events

In November 2023 visitors attended an evening to celebrate Curating for Change at the Museum, and in May 2024 we jointly hosted an event with the Museum of Natural History, which explored the theme of water.

Curating for Change

In November 2023 the museum launched the Nothing Without Us: Experiences of Disability digital trail across the galleries, which was co-produced by Kyle Jordan, the Curating for Change Fellow, as part of a national project to create curatorial career pathways for d/Deaf, disabled and neurodivergent people in museums. The resulting work has formed a strong legacy, including the co-producers' artworks made for the trail being accessioned into the permanent and handling collections.



MultakaOxford Award winners

Multaka was awarded the prestigious Community Engagement Programme of the Year award at the Museums + Heritage Awards in May 2024. The project was recognised for the impact the community and person-led practices have had on individual people, project partners and the museum sector.



In numbers...

110%
visitor numbers
vs pre-COVID records

140th
anniversary of the
Pitt Rivers Museum

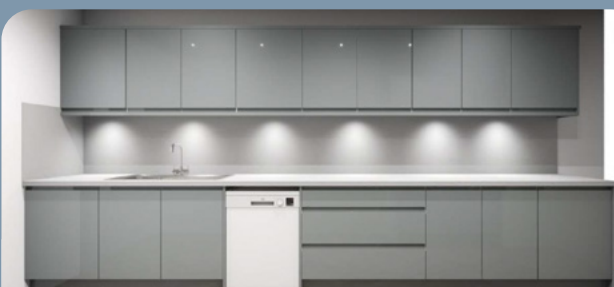
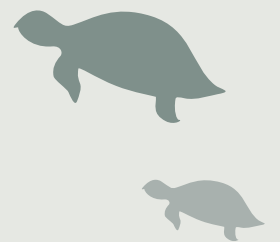
15,195
photographic negatives
scanned
before being packed and
moved into freezer storage

Research Projects

£730k
Making the Museum
funded by AHRC

£330k
Rethinking Relationships
funded by ACE

£90k
Changing Curatorial Legacies
funded by the John Ellerman Foundation



Building improvements

A full refurbishment of the staff kitchen area took place, creating a clean, modern and functional space for all staff to enjoy.

Commercial and Operations

During 2023/24 we improved our grant management systems, increased visitor numbers and increased our commercial income. With a new audience development plan our focus continues to be on growth, engagement and service excellence for all our visitors. In support of this we will be aligning our HR work by moving to join GLAM HR Shared Services in 2024/25.



MUSEUM HIGHLIGHTS

Quilting the Ahupua'a

The quilts depict the stories and knowledge that the group wanted to share with their audiences.

In 2010, artist Mahele Thompson began working with the Hawaiian Islands Foundation (HIF) to create a series of quilts that would tell the story of the Ahupua'a. The aim of the project was to work collaboratively with artists, historians, and educators to create a series of quilts that would tell the story of the Ahupua'a.

These quilts reflect the stories and knowledge that the group wanted to share with their audiences. The quilts were created by Mahele Thompson, a Hawaiian artist and educator, and the Hawaiian Islands Foundation (HIF). The quilts were created in 2010 and 2011.

The quilts were created by Mahele Thompson, a Hawaiian artist and educator, and the Hawaiian Islands Foundation (HIF). The quilts were created in 2010 and 2011.

Every time a quilt is given to someone you love, you are giving love.

-Cory Serrano, Pūhāhonu Quilt

The Hawaiian Kingdom and the Ahupua'a

In 1795 Kamehameha the Great, united the islands under a single rule for the first time. He redistributed land according to tradition among local ali'i (chiefs). Kōnōhiki (head land steward) oversaw how Kānaka (people) used land within each ahupua'a (land segment). Under this system there was no private land ownership, all were entitled to a share of what was produced from the soil or taken from the sea.

The great land division

The Great Māhele (great land division) of 1848 was an attempt by King Kamehameha III to protect land from being appropriated by foreign powers and interests even if sovereignty was lost. It transformed the lands of Hawai'i from a shared value into private property - a system recognised by looming colonial forces. The land was divided amongst the crown, ali'i and kōnōhiki (chiefs and managers) and the government. The intention was to encourage Native Hawaiians to submit formal claims of ownership to the government lands. However, this ultimately failed due to rampant corruption. The result was that areas were snapped up by foreign investors for purposes such as commercial farming and the whole system of the ahupua'a began to break down.

In 1893 the Hawaiian Monarchy was legally overthrown, and Queen Lili'uokalani imprisoned. The Government and Crown Lands were consolidated and confiscated by the United States to be managed as a public trust.

Please help us preserve these beautiful quilts by avoiding to touch the exhibits.

Ke wa kani ho'o o He'eia.
The rain of He'eia that sounds like the tapping of walking canes.

Mahele

Mahele

MUSEUM HIGHLIGHTS

Hawai'i Ma uka to Ma Kai: Quilting the Hawaiian Landscape

The museum's exhibition *Hawai'i Ma uka to Ma kai: Quilting the Hawaiian Landscape* opened in June 2024, a culmination of four years of work. The exhibition celebrates Hawaiian culture, showcasing the intricate relationship between the natural environment and human creativity. The title itself, which translates to 'From the Mountains to the Sea', encapsulates the geographical, biological and cultural journey reflected in the artworks and artefacts on display.



Top: Exhibition launch event
© Tim Hand Production

Above: Revisiting Robert Louis
Stephenson in the Pacific display

“The narrative of all the quilts altogether depicts the concept of the *ahupua'a*. An *ahupuaa* is an ancient land division system used in Hawai'i, which usually extends from the uplands to the sea...”

During 2020, Research Curator Dr Marenka Thompson-Odlum began working with the Poakalani Hawaiian Quilting group as part of a contemporary collecting project at the museum, funded by the Art Fund. The aim of the project was to work collaboratively with artists, makers and practitioners to challenge the narratives often presented in museums about their specific cultures and/or localities. When Marenka reached out to Cissy Serrao, current head of the Poakalani group, she had a simple brief: that the quilts should reflect the stories and knowledge that the group wanted to share with our audiences. The result was that the Pitt Rivers Museum is now home to fifteen new Hawaiian quilts.

The narrative of all the quilts altogether depicts the concept of the *ahupua'a*. An *ahupua'a* is an ancient land division system used in Hawai'i, which usually extends from the uplands to the sea and is defined by varying geographic boundaries. The *ahupua'a* contains all the necessary environmental zones and natural resources to sustain life. Each quilt encapsulates unique patterns and designs that reflect specific elements of Hawaiian flora and fauna, and cultural symbols. The tradition of quilting in Hawaiian culture represents the connection between the people and their environment, as well as the passing down of knowledge through generations. Visitors to the exhibition can observe how these designs often tell stories or convey meaning, creating a dialogue between the past, present and future.



Above: Simon Grennan and Cissy Serrao
at the exhibition launch
© Tim Hand Productions

Right: Detail of one of the Hawaiian quilts
created for the exhibition



MUSEUM HIGHLIGHTS

Hawai'i Ma uka to Ma Kai: Quilting the Hawaiian Landscape

In addition to the quilts, the exhibition spreads across the entire museum, featuring work by contemporary Hawaiian artists and designers such as Solomon Enos and Manaola Yap, their work delivering the message of their ancestors in a new medium. A vibrant display, executed in partnership with the Remediating Robert Louis Stevenson project, blends the museum's archival material with new graphics of Stevenson's work to rethink his well-known Pacific-based tales from a more indigenous perspective.



Moreover, the exhibition addresses contemporary issues facing Hawaiian communities, such as climate change, cultural preservation and the ongoing impacts of colonisation. It serves as a platform for critical discussions about these challenges and highlights initiatives within the community to address them. By incorporating these themes, the museum not only showcases the beauty of Hawaiian art and craftsmanship but also emphasises the ongoing relevance of these traditions in contemporary society.

This exhibition stands as a tribute to the resilience and vibrancy of Hawaiian culture, presenting a multifaceted exploration of how the Hawaiian landscape is quilted together through art, tradition and community. By bridging the past with the present, it illuminates the continuing significance of place and cultural expression in shaping identity, thereby enriching the broader conversation about cultural diversity and environmental stewardship.



Above: Exhibition catalogue published with Common Threads Press
© Tim Hand Production

Left: London School of Hula and 'Ori performance at the exhibition launch
© Tim Hand Productions

Right: Sculptural Hulu Nēnē dress made by fashion icon Manaola Yap on display in the galleries



MUSEUM HIGHLIGHTS

Curating for Change

In September 2022 Kyle Jordan started as Curating for Change Fellow at the Pitt Rivers Museum, in a joint placement with the Ashmolean Museum. Curating for Change, a national project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Art Fund and ACE, was run in partnership with the Accentuate programme of the Folkestone-based digital media company Screen South. The fellowships aimed to create curatorial career pathways for d/Deaf, disabled and neurodivergent people in museums, and each fellow was tasked with developing co-produced displays for their museums.

After an initial exploration of the museum's collections database, Kyle identified hundreds of potential objects to explore through a disability-focused lens. When thinking how best to bring out these narratives, particularly within the unique layout of the Pitt Rivers, Kyle decided the best approach was to work closely with a group of co-producers with a diverse range of lived experience of disability, in order to bring out new and exciting perspectives on the collections.



Above: Harebrained made by co-producer Hannah for the trail

“Seeing this Bright Pink centring of disabled voices, I found joy in my walkthrough today. I particularly like having labels and thoughts from disabled museumgoers and appreciated the diversity of body-minds represented.”

Anonymous visitor feedback

Running eight sessions over the course of May–July 2023, Kyle and his co-production team, supported by Zena McGreevy and Beth McDougall, set about defining the themes of what would eventually become Nothing Without Us: Experiences of Disability, a gallery trail that traversed all three floors of the museum. Their stories collectively explored the themes of Form and Function, Precarity and Violence, and Care, and looked to make their mark on cases such as Human Form in Art, Writing and Communication, Votives, Medical and Surgical Instruments and Clubs.



Above: Gallery graphics for Nothing Without Us trail

Below: Nothing Without Us trail booklet

With Alan Cooke and Josh Rose innovating with the design, Katherine Clough creating the digital trail webpages, and Louise Hancock supporting with the media outputs of the display, Nothing Without Us: Experiences of Disability was launched to the public on 16 November 2023 (the start of Disability History Month). The following week, on 24 November, the museum's Late Night event paid special attention to the Curating for Change project, and the museum saw over 1,600 visitors during the course of the evening.



Nothing Without Us: Experiences of Disability received glowing reviews and reactions from visitors, and Kyle carried out multiple tours of the trail for both staff and visitors, including community groups such as Down's Syndrome Oxford and MyVision Oxfordshire. Through its use of accessible formats such as easy read and audio description, Nothing Without Us: Experiences of Disability has helped to inspire new ways of thinking about our displays. The resulting work has formed a strong legacy, including the co-producers' artworks made for the trail being accessioned into the permanent and handling collections.

“Nothing Without Us was different – not just educational, but transformational. I found it deeply moving to be given such vivid insights into other people's lives, and also an immediate sense of connection at being invited to think about the same artefact alongside the contributors.”

*Prof Erin L Thompson,
John Jay College (CUNY)*

MUSEUM HIGHLIGHTS

Research visits

We are pleased to report on the continued growth of the visiting research programme over the last year, facilitated by the collaborative work and 'open access' approach of staff across the objects, photographs and manuscript collections departments. Since August 2023 the number of research visitors has increased with a noticeable rise in large group visits and university teaching, and the type of engagement activities undertaken has diversified as visitors approach the collections in new ways.

We have welcomed delegations of cultural practitioners, educators, makers, musicians and artists to the research space, bringing exciting opportunities for the museum to build lasting relationships with communities and deepen our awareness of different cultural and spiritual care. In January 2024, collections staff ran a two-day workshop in collaboration with Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA) titled Amulets, Charms and Witch Bottles, during which 'magical' objects were explored through interaction led by curators and spiritual pagan practitioners. Object Handling sessions were combined with open discussion, group crafts and spiritual practices such as knot magic, helping to reframe how the folklore collections are understood and represented.



Above: Yukon First Nations delegates and staff from the Yukon Arts Centre examine historic textiles from the museum's collection, including a pair of moose-hide moccasins (centre) with floral embroidery
© Mike Thomas/Yukon Arts Centre

Other group visits this year included: American and British secondary school teachers discussing the transatlantic slave trade (Museum of the American Revolution/Balliol College); a conference sponsored by the Leverhulme Trust titled Photo Studios in Focus; and a session on the history of beer-making in South Africa from the Paul Mellon Centre (Yale University). As every year, there were also taught sessions for the University of Oxford's Master's course in Visual, Material and Museum Anthropology (VMMA), including classes using the museum's object and photograph collections, on curating for contemporary exhibition, and a new module option on Provenance Research and the Ethnographic Archive. For this latter, students were encouraged to write up the results of their research as blog articles for publication on the museum's website (www.prm.ox.ac.uk/blog).

Left & Right: Yukon First Nations delegates in the museum research room

In June 2024, we hosted a group of indigenous curators, elders and tribal leaders representing nine of the fourteen Yukon First Nations. The group had sessions to view and handle traditional clothing from the Northwest Coast and Yukon regions, followed by a beadwork class in the Old Library, which Pitt Rivers staff and members of the public were invited to attend. This was a brilliant occasion of exchange which demonstrated the role that cultural collections in museums can play in telling stories, sharing knowledge and bringing people together.

“ Since August 2023 the number of research visitors has increased with a noticeable rise in large group visits and university teaching. ”



MUSEUM HIGHLIGHTS

Doctoral work

We are delighted to report that Thupten Kelsang passed his doctoral viva with flying colours when it was held at the museum on Tuesday 24 April 2024. The Director acted as his internal examiner and Professor Louise Tythacott, from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, was the external. Thupten started working closely with the Pitt Rivers during his MSc in VMMA, when he devised a unique case display in the historic heart of the museum in collaboration with members of the Tibetan exile community in the UK. He continued to benefit from the skill and advice of many PRM staff as he developed his pioneering doctoral research project on Reanimating Tibet in Museums and in which the museum was one of the primary case studies. In this study, reconnecting museum collections from Tibet with members of Tibetan diasporic communities around the world and rethinking the ways that museums might work with Tibetan material in future, Thupten has been at the forefront of investigating how decolonising and indigenising methods actually work in practice.

Thupten has since been awarded a two-year post-doctoral fellowship funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) at the Victoria and Albert Museum, which is further testimony to the fact that he is being recognised as an upcoming leader in these areas. Many congratulations to Thupten on both of these magnificent achievements!



Above: Thupten Kelsang after passing his doctoral viva, with his supervisor Clare Harris

A new staff area

The staff room/kitchen is a vital facility that supports staff comfort, well-being, and productivity. The kitchen refurbishment was undertaken to address issues related to outdated appliances and wear and tear, and to create a more modern, functional space that meets the needs of employees.

Right: The staff area in the museum before refurbishment and a virtual mock up of the new kitchen design



MUSEUM HIGHLIGHTS

MultakaOxford

MultakaOxford is based both in the Pitt Rivers Museum and the History of Science Museum and is funded by Alwaleed Philanthropies. This year was the third of its current five years' funding, and in the Pitt Rivers and through its outreach it engaged with 5,700 visitors in person. This collaborative and person-led project has had another incredible year of activities in the museum and across Oxfordshire. The project works with people from all over the world who have made their home in Oxfordshire and has created a structured volunteer programme which allows for activities and spaces for intercultural dialogue for people across Oxfordshire.

Multaka Conference

This year the inaugural Multaka Conference, planned and delivered by a large committee of staff and volunteers, was held over four different venues. The conference attendees went on a journey of understanding the project's mission, ethos and progress. The project volunteers took centre stage along with the museum Directors and European projects, giving keynote speeches as well as facilitating the interactive stations, pop-up exhibits, displays and musical performances as the museum celebrated the impact of the project. Attendees joined from all over the country and beyond, with project partners from the Multaka International Network also taking part in the day.



*Above: Photos from the Multaka conference hosted at the Pitt Rivers Museum, featuring examples of work created by Palestinian communities
© Claire Williams Photography*

*Right: Multaka conference attendees on the entrance steps of the History of Science Museum in Oxford
© Claire Williams Photography*



MUSEUM HIGHLIGHTS

MultakaOxford

Activities for Children
and Young People

Oxfordshire Scouts

Over 150 children and young people from the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts were welcomed into the museum in January for an exciting day of Adventures Around the World, co-created by Multaka volunteers, most of whom had been scouts in their respective countries. The young people took part in interactive trails in the museum, object-based quizzes, craft and activities and much more, helping the children understand the importance of learning about design, innovation and sustainability in tool-making across the world.

Reading Ukrainian School

Ukrainian volunteers from Multaka took the lead on inviting the young students and parents from the Reading Ukrainian School, delivering tours of the museum in Ukrainian and sharing some of the important Ukrainian artefacts on display.

Multaka and work experience

The project teams at the Pitt Rivers Museum and the History of Science Museum worked together to create an engaging programme of activity for seven Year 10 students from Didcot High School in May 2024. Students joined us for a week to learn from various departments at both museums, to understand the broad scope of career opportunities in museums and learn about Multaka's work with people from around the world, championing intercultural dialogue and understanding through sharing art, culture and science in both museums.

Collaborative Projects

Iffley Academy

The Multaka team and volunteers worked collaboratively with GLAM's Arts Engagement Officer Miranda Millward to co-create and deliver creative learning sessions at Iffley Academy, a school for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, based in East Oxford. A group of volunteers from Ukraine, Sri Lanka and Iran delivered a rich programme of learning experiences and workshops for the young people to learn all about the art, culture, history and even cuisines of their home countries. Activities included food tastings, presentations, quizzes, and arts and crafts.

British Academy

In June/July, Multaka was invited to take part at the British Academy Summer Showcase. Researched and led by a Multaka volunteer, the interactive session included Pitt Rivers Museum handling objects.

It encouraged participants to explore the objects from around the world, delve into how tangible and intangible cultural heritage can be discovered, appreciated and upheld through the keeping, sharing and making of objects, and think about which personal objects and stories represented their own cultural identity.

The Museums + Heritage Awards

Multaka was awarded the prestigious Community Engagement Programme of the Year award at the Museums + Heritage Awards in May 2024. The project was recognised for the impact the community and person-led practices have had on individual people, project partners and the museum sector.

*Below: MultakaOxford at the Museums + Heritage Awards ceremony
© Hayley Bray Photography and the Museums + Heritage Awards*

“Deep, broad, impactful, authentic and genuine were a few of the words used to describe this winning programme by an organisation at the top of its game, in undertaking strategically impressive work.”

Museums + Heritage Awards 2024



DISPLAYS AND EXHIBITIONS

Permanent displays

Work to the permanent displays has mainly focused on the first floor Lower Gallery, where conservation staff have been upgrading the fittings and materials in the desktop cases to ensure that they meet contemporary archival and conservation standards. A wall case displaying umbrellas was also upgraded, in collaboration with the Display Technician and Mount Maker. The umbrellas were removed, enabling them to be checked over by conservation staff, and the case was repainted. The Display Technician made new mounts and improved the layout of the case, to ensure that the umbrellas are no longer overcrowded and are easier for visitors to see.

In the Court Gallery on the ground floor, a new curtain was made to cover the *Ahu'ula* – a red, yellow and black feather cloak from Hawai'i. Visitors can draw back this curtain to see the cloak and read the interpretation. At other times, the curtain is closed to protect the feathers from fading due to exposure to light. This cloak inspired the original commission for the Poakalani quilting group, who made the quilts for the museum displayed in the special exhibition *Hawai'i Ma uka to Ma kai: Quilting the Hawaiian Landscape*.

Left: View of redisplayed umbrella case on the first floor of the museum

Top Right & Middle: Umbrella case before it was redisplayed showing condition of the objects

*Bottom Right: A new curtain was fitted to the *Ahu'ula* case*



Special exhibitions and displays

HAWAI'I

Ma uka to Ma kai: Quilting the Hawaiian landscape

12 June 2024–30 June 2025

Special Exhibition Space/Long Gallery
(Ground Floor)

www.prm.ox.ac.uk/exhibitions-and-case-displays

This is the first Pitt Rivers special exhibition to include installations throughout the museum that collectively weave together Hawaiian and Pacific, narratives of the past, present and future through contemporary and historic *mea no'ēau* (skilfully created works). They are listed under their various titles and locations below.

Ola i ka wai/Water is life Dancing the Ahupua'a

Long Gallery (Ground Floor)

www.prm.ox.ac.uk/event/dancing-the-ahupuaa

This features a photographic series and film specifically made by the London School of Hula and 'Ori (LSHO) for the exhibition. The choreography in the film and images focuses on the source of life – water. On display are two quilts made by the Poakalani Quilters, whose iconography is linked with hula and water. LSHO is a cultural dance school and community that aims to uphold and reinterpret the practices of Hawaiian Hula and Tahitian 'Ori within a modern metropolitan context.

Ma uka to Ma kai: Quilting the Hawaiian landscape

Special Exhibition Space (Ground Floor)
www.prm.ox.ac.uk/event/ma-uka-to-ma-kai

Contemporary Hawaiian quilts made by the Honolulu-based Poakalani Quilters are curated in a narrative following the *ahupua'a*, a Hawaiian land division extending from the mountains to the sea. *Ma uka* (toward the mountains) and *Ma kai* (toward the sea) are more than mere directional references in Hawai'i. They embody the *Kanaka Maoli* (Native Hawaiian) understanding of care and access to natural and cultural resources within the *ahupua'a*. Traditionally, Hawaiians fostered a balanced ecosystem through sustainable practices. Disruptions to this in recent times have had a devastating effect. Visitors can watch films illustrating the negative impacts on flora and fauna, and current activities that are revitalising indigenous practices for a sustainable future.

*Right: Ola i ka wai/Water is life
Dancing the Ahupua'a
in the Long Gallery*





Special exhibitions and displays

Hulu Nēnē By MANAOLA

Artist Case, Court (Ground Floor)
www.prm.ox.ac.uk/event/hulu-nene

Sculptural Hulu Nēnē dress made by fashion icon Manaola Yap, a designer and cultural practitioner from Hawai'i. The dress is made from a textile that simulates Hawaiian *kapa* or bark cloth.

Revisiting Robert Louis Stevenson in the Pacific

Archive Case, Lower Gallery Entrance (First Floor)
www.prm.ox.ac.uk/event/revisiting-stevenson

Contemporary drawings by Hawaiian artist Solomon Enos and British artist Simon Grennan, from graphic adaptations of Robert Louis Stevenson's Pacific fiction. The adapted stories are set in late-nineteenth-century Hawai'i, Sāmoa and French Polynesia. This display, which includes late-nineteenth-century Pacific photographs and artefacts from the collections, was curated by members of the Remediating Stevenson Project.

Unfinished – a poem by Carol Ann Carl

Fishing Display, Upper Gallery (Second Floor)
www.prm.ox.ac.uk/event/unfinished

A poem written from the perspective of 31 pearl shell tools that the museum has historically described as 'unfinished shell shanks of a fishing hook'. Carol Ann Carl is a daughter of the island of Pohnpei in the Federated States of Micronesia and an entrusted keeper of traditional origin stories.

Mo'olelo of the Ahupua'a: A Re-imagined Journey into a Hawaiian Ecosystem

Didcot Case Lower Gallery (First Floor)
www.prm.ox.ac.uk/event/solomon-enos-ahupuaa

Mo'olelo of the Ahupua'a tells the various stories of living, working, playing and learning within a sustainable landscape. These are themes within the epic Hawaiian myth *Hi'iakaikaipoliopole*, depicted in a series of paintings on display created by contemporary Hawaiian artist Solomon Enos.



Above: *Mo'olelo of the Ahupua'a: A Reimagined Journey into a Hawaiian Ecosystem* case installation

Left: *Unfinished* by Carol Ann Carl in the Upper Gallery

Special exhibitions and displays

Hidden Histories – Historia Zilizofichwa

5 December 2023–24 November 2024

Wall Case Display, Lower Gallery (First Floor)
www.prm.ox.ac.uk/event/hidden-histories

Members of oral history project Hidden Histories share their experience of showing images of *makaramo* clay figures in the museum since 1958 to residents in Tanga. A coastal region of Tanzania, this is 15 miles away from where these figures were acquired by colonial official Ralph Tanner.



Above: Hidden Histories display

Wandering in Other Worlds: Evenki Cosmology and Shamanic Traditions

23 September 2022–September 2024 (now ongoing)

Case Installation, Court (Ground Floor)
www.prm.ox.ac.uk/event/wandering-in-other-worlds

This collaborative display, curated by Alexander Varlamov, Galina Veretnova and artist Anya Gleizer, invites visitors to find out more about Evenki cosmology and shamanic tradition and how these relate to objects in the Pitt Rivers Museum. The display was enhanced by interactive sessions for visitors using Virtual Reality (VR) headsets and film footage taken in Evenkia by Anya Gleizer. A series of drop-in sessions for visitors to the galleries was delivered from autumn 2023 to summer 2024 to accompany the main display. The 360-degree film can also be viewed online via the exhibition website.



Above: Wandering in Other Worlds case installation

Unmasked: Spirit in the City

28 January 2023–7 January 2024

Special Exhibition Space/Long Gallery (Ground Floor)
www.prm.ox.ac.uk/event/unmasked

A collaboration between Port Harcourt-born British Nigerian artist Zina Saro-Wiwa and Oxford anthropologist Professor David Pratten, this exhibition combines anthropology and contemporary art to capture the complex emotional stories behind the cultural practice known as masquerade.



Above: Unmasked: Spirit in the City

Dwelling: In This Space We Breathe by Khadija Saye

27 July 2021–31 August 2022 (extended to 31 August 2023)

Installation (Second Floor)
www.prm.ox.ac.uk/event/khadija-saye

A series of nine silkscreen prints by Gambian-British artist Khadija Saye (1992–2017) exploring her fascination with the migration of traditional Gambian spiritual practices.



Above: Museum staff installing the Dwelling: In This Space We Breathe display

MUSEUM AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Family activities

Programming for family learning activities over the last year has included Object Handling sessions, drawing activities, autism-friendly open mornings and a variety of school holiday activities. In 2023/24, almost 9,000 people took part in the activities and events which took place at the museum. In addition, two new self-guided trails were also introduced for families: Wonderful Winter and World of Water, which highlight a range of objects on display.

School holiday activities

A programming highlight took place in October 2023, when the Multaka team and volunteers collaborated with the Play! team to create and deliver an exciting programme of activities focusing on playground games. Through a series of engaging discussions, training and planning sessions, staff and volunteers worked together to select games from around the world to share with families. Over two days of activity, families could follow a printed trail to find the eight different games positioned throughout the museum, collect stickers along the way and even win some small prizes.

Over the following school holidays, programming involved craft activities inspired by the collections, and music and storytelling events, as well as Object Handling sessions focusing on Springtime in Ancient Egypt and Dolls from around the World.



*Above: Museum staff and volunteers ran the Smelling the Past activity as part of the family learning programme for the Festival of Social Science in October 2023
© Chaz Snell at Plastic Goldfish*

Autism-friendly openings

The early morning openings, delivered in partnership with the Museum of Natural History and the visitor experience teams, support families with neurodivergence. They enable families to enjoy a relaxed visit to the two museums and provide a quiet environment to look around the collections on display.

Right: Kokeshi dolls used in the Saturday Object Handling activity

Object Handling

A free, drop-in activity which runs on Saturdays, Object Handling provides visitors with the opportunity to touch real objects from our handling collections. The objects selected for the activity are always themed to a particular topic, exhibition or project, and represent a range of cultures from around the world. The activity is led by a brilliant team of 14 trained volunteers, who engage visitors in thoughtful conversations to help them to discover the people, places, and stories behind the objects. Across the 40 sessions which have taken place in this last reporting year, Saturday Object Handling has engaged with 2,169 visitors of all ages.

Through the Play! project, the current selection of objects used in Saturday Object Handling was based on the theme of Dolls. Research into the museum's collections of dolls and partnerships with originating communities have allowed us to uncover the stories behind these dolls and their makers, which we have been able to share with visitors through Object Handling. New additions to the handling collection for this project have included Kokeshi dolls from Japan, a Hopi doll from North America, a jointed pottery doll from Greece and a Nenets Uko doll.



Family activities

Festival support

The annual Festival of Social Science took place in the museum over two days in October 2023. This event is led by the Social Science Division's research impact and engagement team, in collaboration with the Pitt Rivers' family learning and research team and Oxford Brookes University. The theme for the festival was lifelong well-being, and encouraged visitors of all ages to engage with current social science research through fun, creative family-friendly activities and discussions.



Above & Right: Members of the public enjoying the activities at the Festival of Social Science in the museum
© Chaz Snell at Plastic Goldfish

“We saw loads of participation and smiling faces. There was a real sense this had enhanced the family visit.”

Feedback from a member of the Inspiration Station volunteer team

Inspiration Station

Returning for its third year, the Inspiration Station was delivered every Wednesday and Thursday afternoon throughout the school summer holidays. Families were encouraged to explore their creative side with a range of playful drawing activities, and all materials were provided. With support from the GLAM volunteer service, a new team of eight volunteers was recruited and trained to deliver the activity each week. Over the course of six weeks, almost 1,000 visitors of all ages took part in this creative activity.



“Thank you for hosting this project which was a pleasure to take part in. It made me look carefully at the objects so I could sketch them. By choosing a theme of repetitive patterns it made sketching purposeful. It reminded me how much I enjoy sketching and galleries/museums. 10/10 love it – made my day. Thank you again.”

Written feedback from a visitor taking part in the drawing activities at the Inspiration Station

Primary school activities

In the heart of the museum 93 taught sessions were delivered to 2,542 primary school children as part of booked group visits from September 2023 to July 2024. A total of 3,588 children visited in this time period as part of group visits, with 1,046 choosing to use self-guided resources to explore the collections. This is comparable with the previous academic year, which reflects current capacity in terms of staffing and space. There continues to be a strong uptake in sessions from home-educated groups, several teenagers having visited regularly since they were toddlers!

The primary school programme was delivered with the help of 12 volunteer guides: Linda Teasdale, Sukey Christiansen, Kay Symons, Olivia Goodrich, Fiona Fraser, Richard Bahu, Emma Coleman-Jones, Karen Hayward, Sif Laerke-Hall, Marianne Brunier, Dawn Clements and Stella Rastovac. Termly training meetings for guides continued, covering a wide range of subjects from receiving audio description training for supporting visually impaired students to finding out about the redisplay of the Benin Case from Dr Chris Morton.

A new sustainability session called What, No Plastic?! – Problem-Solving with Materials was piloted with 150 pupils from three different schools. In this interactive session pupils explore alternatives to plastic as they investigate materials used in a range of cultures in the past, present and future. They explore issues of ‘reduce, reuse and recycle’ as they tour the museum with a trained Primary Guide, and handle unusual materials such as mushroom and pineapple leather.



Above: Recycled metal lid basket from Zimbabwe

“It’s a brilliant and engaging session where children can show their understanding of the world and think creatively.”

Feedback from a Year 5/6 teacher

Target Oxford City Schools continued to be supported through involvement with the IntoUniversity scheme, which involves PRM visits from partnering schools. The theme of the visit tends to be Adaptation, so we look at how Inuit people have problem-solved to survive living in extreme cold, utilising the incredible collections in the museum. Provision also continues to be made available to pupils and groups with special educational needs, with individual considerations and adaptations being made where necessary.

“93 taught sessions were delivered to 2,542 primary school children as part of booked group visits from September 2023 to July 2024.”

Teacher training has continued, with involvement in a Cherwell School-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) day in May 2024 for primary and secondary school teachers. There has also been a partnership with Oxford Brookes School of Education, with short placements in the public engagement team for students undertaking a BA in Primary Teacher Education in October 2023. These form part of student cultural placements, and are designed to develop an understanding of the educational provision at the cultural venue.



Above: Rebecca McVean facilitating a workshop

The formal learning team continued to support the Multaka team in how to reach out to volunteers who want to be involved in the schools’ programme. This entailed the Primary Lead, Rebecca McVean, running a session in October 2023 to look at the school system in the UK. This was followed by volunteers signing up to observe museum-taught school sessions.

Secondary school and further education activities

Secondary and further education students continue to enter the doors of the Pitt Rivers Museum in their thousands, taking delight and inspiration from the wonderful objects in its collection. During the year, the galleries were visited by 8,464 secondary school students and 1,984 further education students. Between August 2023 and July 2024, 2,513 secondary and further education students from the UK and overseas took part in 111 taught sessions in the museum. The African Kingdoms session has seen increased popularity this year and has received development support from Dr Ashley Coutu and Dr Lennon Mhishi in relation to material connected to the Benin and Asante Kingdoms. Students now have a deeper understanding of objects and their complex histories through many voices and perspectives.

Outreach and access

Through our continued engagement with the Undergraduate Admissions and Outreach department at Oxford University and through close work with specific Oxford college outreach teams we have continued to support programmes that widen opportunities for young people nationally. Attending and presenting at termly outreach meetings has enabled successful partnerships to develop. One such partnership with Jesus College produced a bespoke programme for students with heritage connections to Pakistan and Bangladesh from schools in the Tower Hamlets area of London.

The British Bangladeshi and Pakistani Programme pilot supported 60 students from 12 different schools across Tower Hamlets. The pilot programme ran in September 2023 and then a similar number of students participated in July 2024. It received great feedback from students and interns, who enjoyed handling museum objects, exploring selected objects in the galleries and presenting their learning to the group. Content for the programme was co-designed by Oxford University summer interns, many of whom also had heritage and research connections to Pakistan or Bangladesh.

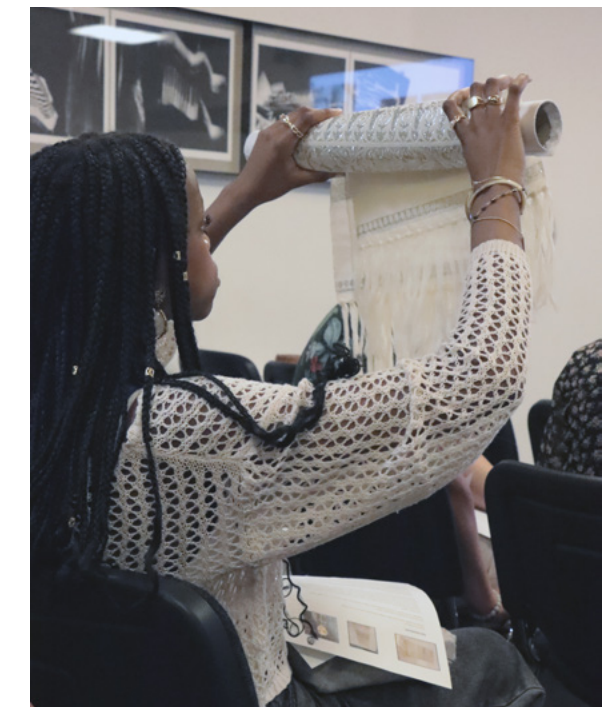
“During the year, the galleries were visited by 8,464 secondary school students and 1,984 further education students.”

This year also saw the first collaboration with Wadham College's Access to Banking programme in April 2024, which is aimed at Pupil Premium students in Year 12 from non-selective state schools. The programme aims to develop the core transferable skills relevant both for studying any subject at a top university, and for a career in the banking sector. Students on the residential programme visited the museum in April 2024 and took part in a bespoke session designed to develop these skills. In the session, 12



students from ten different schools learned about the history, present and future of the museum and its collections and then handled some museum objects, including currency from many different countries all over the world. In April 2024 the learning team also welcomed Target Oxbridge to the Pitt Rivers once again. Target Oxbridge is an organisation which supports Oxbridge-facing year 12 students of African or African Caribbean heritage. Students visited the Research Room to participate in a session led by Melanie Rowntree and Bryony Smerdon, learning about the history of the museum and focusing on objects from a variety of African kingdoms. Many thanks are due to our colleagues in Collections for their support with this afternoon workshop.

In the Summer of 2023, the Pitt Rivers hosted students from the St John's Inspire Scholars programme. The sessions sat within the programme's summer school offer. Around 60 students from a diverse range of schools took part in sessions where they handled and discussed objects, developing critical thinking skills. Using objects from Haida Gwaii as a case study, students explored concepts such as coloniality, assimilation and epistemicide. To further develop their speaking and listening skills, students then chose handling objects from different geographic locations and time periods to present to one another.



Above: Student from the St John's Inspire Scholars programme
© St John's College, Oxford

Above left: Access to Banking programme students from Wadham College handling currency © Wadham College, Oxford

Secondary school and further education activities

Study Day – Resisting Silence

In November 2023 the learning and research teams collaborated with the History of Science Museum to host The Resisting Silence Study Day, on the Atlantic Slave Trade. The day was an enormous success, with 35 students from local Oxfordshire state schools attending. Dr Marenka Thompson-Odlum's keynote 'Resisting silence: the history of the erasure of slavery from museum collections' was extremely well-received by students and teachers alike. Dr Ashley Coutu, Dr Thompson-Odlum and Melanie Rowntree also hosted workshops on material from the Benin Kingdom and the Asante Kingdom as well as on other West African trade objects. Students enjoyed learning about Ashley and Marenka's visit to excavate a sugar plantation in St Lucia, experiencing a filmed recording of powerful and thought-provoking poetry written in response to the project and performed by a local St Lucian poet.

This study day was shared with the History of Science Museum's learning team and with Dr Jane Webster, Visiting Fellow at Magdalen College Oxford.



Above: Students from King Alfred's School during the Resisting Silence Study Day
© Pam Stokell

Events for adults

Research spotlight series

A series of Public Engagement With Research gallery talks featured at lunchtimes on the last Monday of the month during term. Researchers brought cutting-edge, cross-disciplinary research to life in these interactive gallery talks, covering wide-ranging topics from women's reproductive health to conservation issues. Visitors had the opportunity to connect with objects and images from the collections and get to know the work of visual and evolutionary anthropologists, curatorial activists, healthcare researchers and many other specialists who are accessing the museum to take their research in new directions and to connect with new people.



The Gathering Place: Africa

On 4 May 2024 there was an evening of original music, performance, art and creative participation to explore diverse African arts, culture and heritage at the Pitt Rivers Museum. Contemporary artists from South Africa, West Africa and Oxford came together to re-engage and share newly created work grown from historical sounds, images, objects and histories within the museum's collections. The evening featured Xolile 'X' Madinda, Rawz, Lydia Idakula, Ndukwe Onuoha, Isaac Emokpae, Maka and Donna Ogunnaike.



Above: Rawz performing at The Gathering Place: Africa event

Left: Collage created at The Gathering Place: Africa event

Events for adults

Late Nights

On 24 November 2023, a staggering 1,619 visitors attended an evening to celebrate Curating for Change at the Pitt Rivers Museum. There was a programme of activities to mark Disability History Month and the new museum trail Nothing Without Us: Experiences of Disability, which explores the collections through a new lens. The event was programmed by Curating for Change Fellow Kyle Jordan and a team of local co-producers. Both the Museum of Natural History and the Pitt Rivers were open after dark with activities hosted by researchers, creatives, community groups and staff. Programming in the Pitt Rivers included well-being zine-making workshops and British Sign Language (BSL) choir workshops.

Curating for Change exists to create strong career pathways for d/Deaf, disabled and neurodiverse curators, currently seriously under-represented in museums. Trainees and Fellows work within host partner museums nationally to produce exhibitions, events and blogs, exploring disabled people's histories while gaining skills for careers in the sector. Curating for Change is delivered by Screen South and Accentuate, working with over 20 museums across England; it is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Art Fund.

On 17 May 2024 there was another Late Night at the Pitt Rivers Museum and the Museum of Natural History, which jointly explored the theme of water. There were 877 visitors to the Pitt Rivers who had the opportunity to follow a special Water trail to find favourite water-related objects chosen by the visitor experience team. People listened to the sounds of the rain forest, including Bayakan rain-drumming, in a specially composed soundtrack using material from the sound archives. They could also meet artists and researchers, and explore water issues in different societies with talks, craft activities and tours.



Above: Members of the public on the Clore Balcony enjoying activities at the Water World Late Night

Opposite: The museum lit up for the Water World Late Night



Events for adults

Yukon bead workshop

On Thursday 13 June 2024 a delegation of Yukon First Nations artists was welcomed to the museum to view objects from the Yukon in the Pitt Rivers collections. This was followed by a beading workshop for members of the public to learn more about indigenous culture and craftsmanship, led by Shirlee Frost, a master beadwork artist of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, and Indigenous Curator Lisa Dewhurst. Nine adults were joined by Pitt Rivers Museum staff to learn various bead layout techniques through hands-on demonstrations and step-by-step guidance. The workshop coincided with the opening of the *Honouring Our Future: Yukon First Nations Graduation Regalia* exhibition at Canada House, a collaboration between the Yukon Arts Centre and the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre.



Above: Staff and researchers at the Yukon Bead workshop © Mark Thomas

Craft workshops

The conservation team led two adult workshops, using objects from the museum collections as part of the inspiring learning experience. Nine people learned to make harvest trophies from Penny Maltby of the Ministry of Straw in October 2023, while in February 2024 Polly Pollock taught eight participants how to make coiled baskets in a two-day workshop.

Windrush lecture

The annual Windrush Day Memorial Lecture took place in June 2024 in collaboration with the Oxford Windrush Group at the Pitt Rivers Museum, led by Junie James. For this year's lecture, the film *Daughters of the Windrush: The Descendants' Stories*, was delivered by filmmaker and producer Bea Freeman, and highlighted the experiences of women – wives, daughters and granddaughters of the Windrush generation. The film celebrates the women, largely forgotten by the history makers, who helped to change Britain and British identity. Earlier in the day there were outreach handling activities at FloFest in Florence Park, a festival in a local East Oxford community centre.

Adult activities co-ordinated with the GLAM Community Engagement team

Community outreach

The community outreach team delivered 165 outreach sessions to more than 2,200 people over the course of the year, representing the Pitt Rivers as part of the GLAM family. With continued focus on supporting health and well-being within the community, the groups that were engaged included mental health groups, hospitals, health and well-being support groups, prisons, probation services, older people's groups and homelessness charities.

Meet Me

Meet Me, a GLAM monthly social group for older people, ran in the Pitt Rivers with a Multaka-led tour and two sessions themed on Smells of the Past. In these latter sessions, facilitated by Beth McDougall and researcher Melody Li, the 35 participants sampled six smells of items in the Pitt Rivers collection (including 'Tylor's Magic Onion' and a Chinese ink slab) and created their own new 'smell' words.

Touch Tours

The Touch Tour group joined the Pitt Rivers for two sessions this year, co-ordinated and delivered by GLAM community engagement officer Susan Griffiths. Group members explored mystery objects and were given a personal tour of the Nothing Without Us: Experiences of Disability trail by Curating for Change Fellow Kyle Jordan.

Adults with learning disabilities

In May 2024, the GLAM-wide programme of workshops for adults with learning disabilities won the Vice Chancellor's Community Partnership Award, which recognises colleagues who have partnered with others to make a positive difference locally, nationally or globally. Thanks to its positive impact the programme is now embedded in the community team's core work, offering a continuous, capacity-filled line-up across all of the GLAM venues, and is increasing the scope for more inclusive access to venues and collections. There have been two popular sessions in this time period: Pattern and Printmaking, exploring patterns from around the world and printing tote bags; and Weaving around the World, looking at woven objects and having a go at weaving to take home.



Above: Representatives from GLAM receiving the Vice Chancellor's Community Partnership Award recognising the programme of workshops for adults with learning disabilities © GLAM



HIGHER EDUCATION, TEACHING AND RESEARCH

Research community update

This year the Pitt Rivers research team was honoured to be shortlisted for a Vice-Chancellor's Award in the Research Culture category and attended the award ceremony at the Sheldonian Theatre on 8 May. The team's nomination, titled 'Growing an inclusive research team at the Pitt Rivers Museum', focused on the transformation that has taken place in recent years in the size and nature of the team. Following a strategic rethink several years ago, the team comprises a diverse and inclusive group of 12 research staff (five were submitted to the Research Excellence Framework 2021) and five collaborative doctoral students. While across the PRM real achievements have also been made in increasing the number of staff identifying as from the Global Ethnic Majority (from 3% in 2017 to 14% in 2022), even greater strides were made in our research team, with 50% of staff as GEM and 66% female (2023).

Has this focus on creating a thriving and more diverse research team delivered successful research? Since 2018, £2.35m has been successfully awarded for projects involving the PRM – an enormous increase on previous periods. These projects have involved collaborations with new partners at universities and organisations in the UK and internationally, and our reputation as a centre for research grows as our team itself reflects the wider world. Diverse research teams do indeed lead to better research, as shown by the extraordinarily rich contributions detailed in this report.

Left: (L-R) MSc Archaeology students Vanshika Poddar, James Wright, Rylee Dejong, and Rotem Lelior presenting objects in the Pitt Rivers collections for the 'Archaeology of Colonialism' course taught by Ashley Coutu

Research community update

Research staff activities

Professor Paul Basu joined the PRM research team in October 2023 as a curator, and is Professor of Anthropology in the School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography. He is no stranger to the museum, having previously served on the Board of Visitors and conducted research within the collections, most recently as Principal Investigator of the AHRC-funded Museum Affordances/[Re:] Entanglements project, in which the PRM was an institutional partner.

One highlight of Professor Basu's first year was a collaboration with Taruwa, a collective of UK-based Nigerian artists and performers. With the support of the University's Participatory Research Fund, a workshop was organised in which the artist/performers chose objects from the collections that they wished to explore and discuss. Following the workshop, each developed a new creative response to the objects or to the museum more generally. These were performed at a very successful evening event, curated alongside the Making the Museum project, entitled Gathering Place: Africa.

Over the year, Professor Basu served on various advisory boards, including the House of European History in Brussels, the Käte Hamburger Kolleg Inherit: Heritage in Transformation at Humboldt University Berlin, and the Museo delle Culture (MUDEC) in Milan. With colleagues at MUDEC, Professor Basu organised a workshop and public event on the theme of Curating Uncertain Ethics. Professor Basu also took up office as President of the Arts Council of the African Studies Association (ACASA) at its Triennial Conference in Chicago, where he was also recipient of the ACASA Curatorial Excellence Award in recognition of his 2021/22 exhibition *[Re:]Entanglements: Colonial Collections in Decolonial Times*.

Finally, as a member of the teaching team on the VMMA MSc/MPhil programme at Oxford, Professor Basu introduced a new Provenance Research course, taught with the support of the museum's collections staff. Students critically engage with often colonial collection histories by each researching an object, image, sound recording or film from the museum's collections. While learning collections-based research skills, the students create enhanced database entries for their chosen items and publish their findings as blog posts hosted on the PRM website.

Dr Ashley Coutu ran the Festival of Social Science activities in the PRM on 27–28 October 2023 with colleagues from the PRM and Social Science Division's Research Impact and Engagement Team and Oxford Brookes University. The theme was lifelong well-being and coordinated 15 different activities with Oxford researchers in the PRM over the two days.

Dr Coutu was invited as a keynote speaker to the Shifting Frontiers in Late Antiquity conference at the University of Santa Barbara, California in September 2023. Her keynote was entitled 'Zooming in on ivory: how scientific methods are shaping our understanding of global late antiquity.' Dr Coutu was invited as a speaker at the More-than-Human Heritage in East-Central Africa and European Museums workshop at the Africa Museum, Tervuren, Belgium in March 2024 and gave a talk entitled 'Uncovering life histories of ivory objects in museum collections.' Dr Coutu was also an invited speaker at the Archaeology of the Ivory and the Ivory Trade – Current Approaches and Future Directions workshop at Aarhus University, Denmark in May 2024 and gave a talk entitled 'Scientific approaches to archaeological ivories.'



In October 2023, Dr Coutu and colleagues at the Ashmolean, V&A, and the Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) won funding for the Challenges of the Ivory Act from the Oxford Policy Engagement Network public policy challenge fund. Dr Coutu and Project Assistant Thandiwe Wilson ran two workshops on ivory identification, in December 2023 at the V&A and in April 2024 at the PRM and Ashmolean. These were held to train museum colleagues and ivory policy team members from the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the UK Border Force and DEFRA.

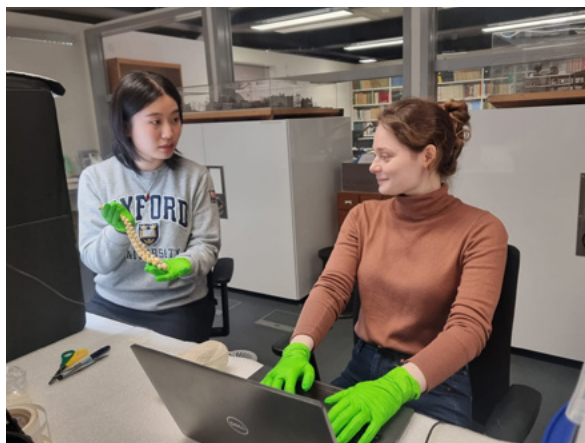
In April 2024, Dr Coutu ran an event for families as part of the TORCH April Fakes Day, using objects from the handling collection to teach children about detecting the difference between real and fake ivory objects.

Above: The Identifying Ivory workshop facilitated by Ashley Coutu

Left: Professor Kokunre Agbontaen-Eghafona (Professor of Cultural Anthropology, University of Benin, Nigeria) visiting the Pitt Rivers Museum to research collections from the Benin kingdom, Nigeria

Research community update

Professor Clare Harris was working 80% of her time for the School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography (SAME) in all her usual teaching roles as Lecturer, Supervisor, Course and Seminar Convenor, and examiner. She also supervised six DPhil students, two of whom successfully defended their theses this year. In addition, she was Chair of Examiners for all the graduate degrees in SAME and served on the appointment panels for the Statutory Chair in Social Anthropology and a Departmental Lectureship in VMMA.



Professor Harris' work for the Pitt Rivers primarily consisted of making progress with the four-year, AHRC-funded project on which she is Co-Investigator. Entitled Decolonising the Museum: Digital Repatriation of the Gaidinliu collection from the UK to India, the project is led by Professor Arkotong Longkumer of the University of Edinburgh and employs a team of researchers from India who are working with members of Naga communities in three states of Northeast India. A major highlight of Professor Harris' year was the opportunity to travel to one of those states – Nagaland – in December

2023 to learn more about the region and to witness the incredible work of the project researchers in setting up workshops, interviews and pop-up exhibitions to share the digitised avatars of the Gaidinliu collection with many local people. Their responses to this experiment in digital return and distribution have been extremely positive so far. Professor Harris' visit to Nagaland coincided with the annual Hornbill festival, a celebration of Naga identity in dance, music and food, all of which were much appreciated, apart from snacking on toasted spiders! After Nagaland, she returned to Darjeeling to visit long-standing contacts there and to make new ones, including with the members of the Confluence Collective, a group of young scholars, artists and photographers from the Sikkim/Darjeeling/Kalimpong area.

Back in Oxford, another highly enjoyable event was a multi-disciplinary workshop on photographic studios that was devised by Emily Stevenson, Leverhulme Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Pitt Rivers, and co-organised by her with Professor Harris and Dr Chris Morton in April 2024. Some of the papers from that workshop are due to be published in a special issue of the journal *History of Photography* which the three organisers will co-edit.

Rounding off an exciting year, Professor Harris attended the conference of the European Association of Social Anthropologists in Barcelona. Finally, in June 2024 Professor Harris was officially appointed as the next Head of the School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography, a three-year role starting in October 2024.

Professor Dan Hicks continued to run three major research projects: Re-Connecting Objects (funded by Volkswagen Stiftung), Action for Restitution to Africa (funded by Open Society Foundations) and The Restitution of Knowledge (funded by AHRC and The Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft). Each project will reach completion during the academic year 2024/25. Professor Hicks' last book *The Brutish Museums* was named Joint Winner of the Elliott P Skinner Book Award of the Association for Africanist Anthropology.



During the course of this year Professor Hicks submitted the first and second drafts of his next major book, *Every Monument Will Fall: a Prehistory of the Culture War*, which will be published by Penguin (Hutchinson Heinemann) in 2025. Professor Hicks also published a book chapter in Onyekachi Wambu's book *Empire Windrush: reflections on 75 years and more of the Black experience* (alongside Bernardine Evaristo, Zadie Smith, Salman Rushdie, Ben Okri and Phyllis Wheatley, among others) and articles in *Architectural Review*, *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Art Newspaper*. Professor Hicks was also appointed as Chair of Judges for the 2023 English PEN Hessel-Tiltman Prize. In summer 2023 Professor Hicks took up the role of External Examiner for the landmark Master's in Museum Studies at the University of Leicester. He also joined the Peer Review College of the Economic and Social Research Council.

Left: Dan Hicks' upcoming book Every Monument Will Fall: a Prehistory of the Culture War and Empire Windrush: reflections on 75 years and more of the Black experience, to which he contributed a chapter

Opposite: MSc Archaeological Science students Pengpeng Chen and Anna Wood volunteering to catalogue and photograph objects from a handling collection

Research community update

In January 2024 **Dr Lennon Mhishi** completed two projects as a Co-investigator with Imagining Futures-funded groups: the Prisoners of Love project, with colleagues at the University of the Arts London, the University of Ghana, the Blackfoot in Calgary, the University of Leithbridge and the Horniman Museum, among others; and Nursing Nostalgia, focused on material culture and memory-making among Zimbabweans in the UK. In April Dr Mhishi took part in a workshop in Oslo as part of the Sustaining the Otherwise project, focused on thinking about restitution and beyond, especially with artistic interventions and practice as ways of reimagining material culture and archives. In May he took part, with artist Fungai Marima, in the *Reconnecting Objects* exhibition in Dakar, as well as workshops with Sustaining the Otherwise. In May Dr Mhishi was awarded an AfOx grant to work with colleagues in Ghana on Thinking with Water, at the intersection of water as cultural heritage, indigenous knowledge and practices, and the legacies of extractivism.

Above (L-R): Ashley Coutu, Thandiwe Wilson, Marenka Thompson-Odlum, Chris Morton, and Laura Van Broekhoven from the museum research team pictured in Oxford



Dr Beth Hodgett joined the PRM research team in March as a postdoctoral researcher on the Making the Museum project, after finishing a PhD entitled 'Life in Photographs: Archaeology, Assemblage and Temporality in the Archive of O.G.S. Crawford' in December 2022. Since joining the Making the Museum team Dr Hodgett has been delving into data on makers and photographic subjects currently held in the PRM database, and has been awarded a £10k Digital Scholarship at Oxford grant to support this work. Dr Hodgett has also been collaborating with visiting makers to arrange carving demonstrations, pop-up musical performances, Late Night takeovers and flint-knapping workshops. Their current research focus explores the potential of applying archaeological methods and theory to explore museum collections, a topic which is explored in a forthcoming article 'Making the Museum and the archaeology of the Pitt Rivers Museum collection.'

Dr Christopher Morton continued to balance curating the photograph, manuscript, film and sound collections with leading research activity at the museum and acting as deputy to the Director, as well as contributing teaching and assessment to the University. In September Dr Morton presented a paper on the E H Duckworth photographic collection titled 'The photographic construction of welfare colonialism: *Nigeria* magazine 1937–1953' at a symposium held at the University of Cardiff. Part of the winter was spent preparing a new display of the Kingdom of Benin material on the Lower Gallery, with Dr Ashley Coutu and partners in Nigeria. In March, Dr Morton began his major new three-year AHRC-funded research project Making the Museum, joined by postdoctoral researcher Dr Beth Hodgett and Project Officer Dr Becky Martin. The project began with two creative residencies by music makers Rawz and Xolile Madinda, leading to an event at the PRM in May titled The Gathering Place: Africa. In April, Dr Morton co-convened and presented a paper at a PRM research workshop with Dr Emily Stevenson and Professor Clare Harris on studio photography in different social and historical settings, supported by the Leverhulme Trust. During Trinity Term Dr Morton hosted Kileni Fernando from Namibia as the first San Visiting Fellow at the PRM, co-organised with AfOx and !Khwa ttu San Heritage Centre in South Africa, funded by the James A Swan Fund.

Dr Vibe Nielsen worked on her postdoctoral research project Decolonising Museums: Changing Curatorial Practices at the Pitt Rivers and Quai Branly (2021/24), funded by the Carlsberg Foundation, until January 2024. Dr Nielsen is in the process of completing a monograph based on her ethnographic fieldwork, which has taken place at the Pitt Rivers Museum, Musée du Quai Branly (Paris) and Museo delle Civiltà (Rome).

In March/April 2024 Dr Nielsen undertook a month-long research stay at the Huntington Botanical Gardens in Los Angeles, awarded by Linacre College through a Leeds Hoban Linacre/Huntington Fellowship. In May 2024 she began a three-year research project at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek and the Department of Arts and Cultural Studies at the University of Copenhagen. As the Principal-Investigator of the project 'Passion or Politics? The art collection of Carl Jacobsen in a socio-economic and cultural-political context 1878–1914', funded by the Ny Carlsberg Foundation, Dr Nielsen is investigating the collections of art and plants at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek and its international connections. She remains affiliated with the Pitt Rivers Museum as Associate Researcher and with Linacre College as Research Fellow.

Research community update

Dr Marenka Thompson-Odlum spent much of this year working on the PRM's special exhibition *Hawai'i Ma uka to Ma Kai: Quilting the Hawaiian Landscape*. The exhibition brings together Hawaiian quilters, designers, artists, farmers, activists and schools to look at Hawaiian ecological practices from the past, present and future. Dr Thompson-Odlum was also invited to Taiwan by the Seediq National Assembly in December 2023 to take part in a ten-day cultural exchange and present at a symposium on the museum's work with global communities. In March 2024, she hosted a Seediq and Atayal delegation at the PRM as they researched the indigenous Taiwanese collections.



Above: Marenka Thompson-Odlum (far right) in the museum, next to the digital touch table that hosts a bespoke app developed by the partner organisation in Hawai'i

Right: Marenka Thompson-Odlum was invited to Taiwan by the Seediq National Assembly in December 2023 to take part in a ten-day cultural exchange



Above: Marenka Thompson-Odlum with members of the Hawaiian delegation in the museum

Dr Thompson-Odlum was a member of the UK delegation to Malaysia on the British Council's Human-Nature project. During this trip, she made connections with indigenous communities and artists from the Malaysian peninsula, Sarawak State and Sabah State, with the aim of fostering future research on the Malaysian collections.



With regard to her research and academic teaching, **Professor Laura Van Broekhoven** was asked to present several keynotes and spoke at international conferences in Melbourne (Science Museums and University of Melbourne), Budapest (International Committee for Museums and Collections of Ethnography conference), Oxford (Worcester College), Boston (North-Eastern University) and London (Museum of the Home). She published two articles in Routledge publications: one article in edited volume *Pragmatic Imagination and the New Museum Anthropology*, detailing the outcomes of the first phase of the Maasai Living Cultures project, and the other in the Routledge *Handbook of Museums, Heritage and Death* on the Tsantsa Project with Shuar representatives and the Universidad in San Francisco, Quito. She co-supervised four DPhil students, and was on the committee of Thupten Kelsang's successful viva.

Professor Van Broekhoven sits on various boards as member or chair, including the Commission of Colonial Collections, which advises the Dutch Government on repatriation (repatriation to Sri Lanka and Indonesia took place in 2023); the MAA Committee; the Ruskin Committee and the Eton College External Collections Committee. She is part of the faculty of Oxford Cultural Leaders and in the 2023/24 academic year continued to develop work with Maasai, Evenki, Naga and Shuar communities towards reconciliation and redress.

Balfour Library

The Library continued to support the research and teaching of the Schools of Anthropology and Archaeology, as well as Pitt Rivers Museum staff. During the year, Librarian Mark Dickerson again liaised with Bodleian Libraries' staff regarding local circulation setup and data cleaning. As Archives Officer, Mark also supported manuscript visits and enquiries, including VMMA postgraduate students, tours for work experience students, and museum staff induction tours.

Archives records were enhanced, including those for E B Tylor's correspondence and for the Balfour, Blackwood, Pitt Rivers and Pitt Rivers Museum papers. Image licensing for publications and exhibition use continued (with 273 images processed for 81 clients).



Above: Librarian Mark Dickerson



COLLECTIONS AND THEIR CARE

Object collections

2023/24 was once more a year of collections upheaval, with several uncertainties around the moves of collections from temporary and unfit storage to the new purpose-built CTRC. The move of the textile collections scheduled for July–September 2023 was unfortunately delayed. As a result of these delays collections staff, particularly Bryony Smerdon, have worked tirelessly to provide access to collections, with inaccessible stores often requiring objects to be brought to the main museum. The whole team is very much looking forward to being able to welcome visitors and researchers to the new stores and to provide the access and care that we feel the collections deserve.

Julia Nicholson retired as Curator and Joint Head of Collections in May 2024. She will be much missed. Her passion for the collections and their documentation and access created a legacy which few people in museums can claim. We look forward to her forthcoming publication *Intrepid Women: Adventures in Anthropology* (Bodleian Publishing, February 2025).



There have been several notable visits to the collections this year. These have included staff and students from the University of Wisconsin American Indian education programme; Annette Pierre (Kalispel); and Coast Salish artists and makers Jordan Wilson, Atheana Picha and Eliot White-Hill and musician Ariana Tikao. We were also delighted to welcome members of the European Lock Collectors Association, curators from Swiss Cottage Museum, artist Beniah Matheson, researcher Fran Edwards, and Cameron Woolford, Head of Collections at Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

Above (L-R): Laura Van Broekhoven, Julia Nicholson and Beth Joynson at Julia's retirement function

Object collections

In January Faye Belsey and Bryony hosted a workshop as part of the MOLA project Amulets, Charms and Witch Bottles, funded by a grant from the MOLA Impact Acceleration Account. (<https://www.mola.org.uk/discoveries/news/iaa-project-blog-amulets-charms-and-witch-bottles-reflections-engaging-spiritually>).

The need for detailed provenance research has become increasingly urgent over the past year. Increased numbers of enquiries about the possible return of objects have required increased numbers of provenance reports. Joanna Cole, Assistant Curator of Provenance, has worked on several object-specific reports as well as broader regional reports. In June she began work with the Association on American Indian Affairs on the provenance of Native American ancestral remains. Once provenance has been clarified we will reach out to individual Nations to discuss the future of these collections. Joanna and Bryony have also been supporting the VMMA course on provenance, run by Professor Paul Basu.

Faye and Anya Gleizer presented a paper on the Evenki project at the conference Thinking with and alongside Critical Indigenous Scholarship (<https://www.torch.ox.ac.uk/event/thinking-with-and-alongside-critical-indigenous-scholarship>).



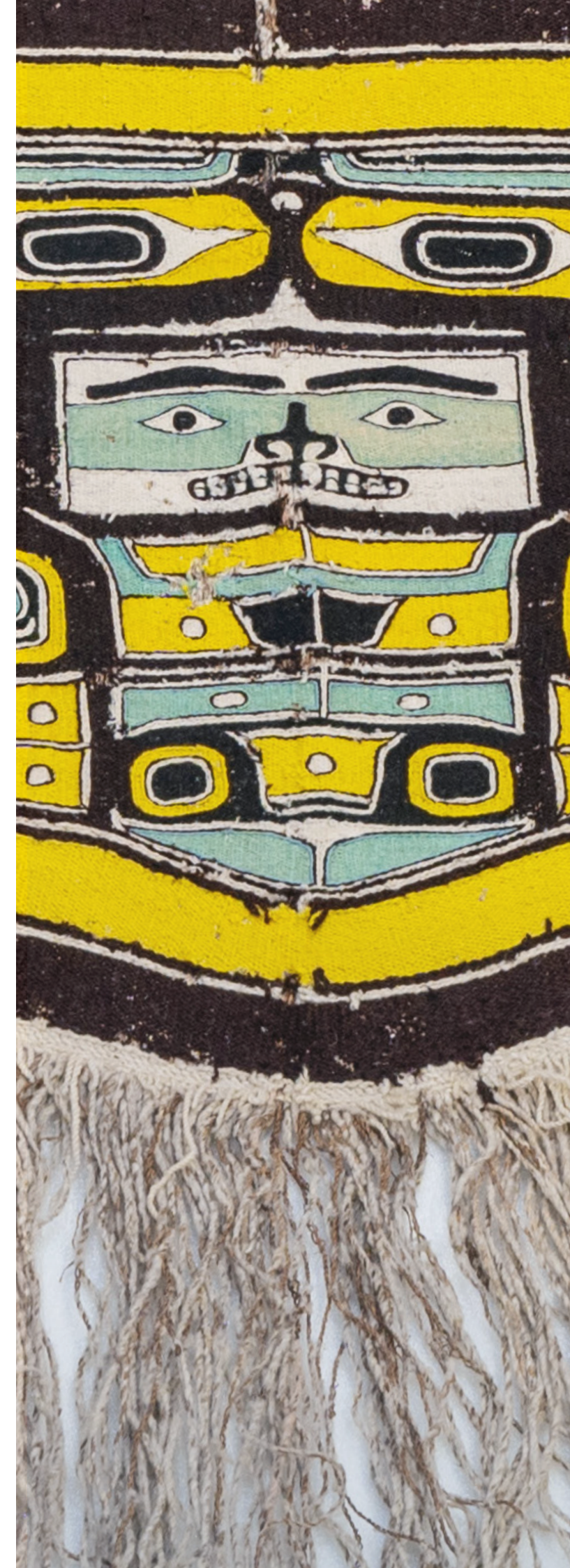
Faye and Joanna both attended the 2024 Museum Ethnographers Group conference in Norwich while Marina and Bryony welcomed members of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies to discuss the Australian collections and their possible futures.

In June the team supported the Encounters Fellowship programme run by the National Museum of Australia with two days of workshops in the museum. One of the fellows, Jamie Hampton, was able to spend time with secret/sacred material in the museum. Also in June the team hosted a delegation of members of the Yukon First Nation who spent time with the collections and in the museum. The delegation generously ran a thoroughly enjoyable beading workshop as part of their visit.

In March 2024 the Rethinking Relationships project began. The museum is delighted to welcome Nicola Stylianou (Project Coordinator), Tom Fearon and Joel Fagan (Relationship Managers) to this exciting project focused on building trust and rethinking practice. The project will focus on communities and collections from Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda and will be split across four UK museums – the Pitt Rivers Museum, World Museum Liverpool, the Horniman Museum and the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge. The Museum Ethnographers Group will also be a partner in the project. Several events will be held through all the partner institutions. The team have started working on partnership agreements with African partners and reaching out to UK diaspora groups. The project runs until the end of 2026.

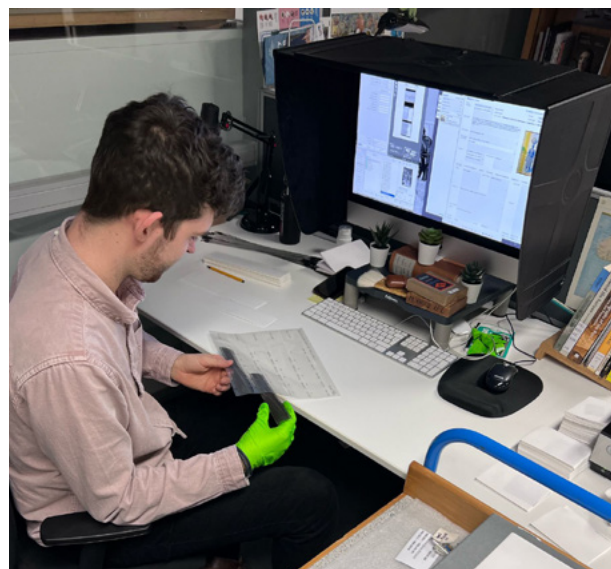
*Left: Shirlee Frost, a master beadwork artist of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, holding a historic Gwich'in garment made from caribou hide (accession number 1884.88.8)
© Mike Thomas/Yukon Arts Centre*

*Right: Close up view of a Chilkat blanket robe (accession number 1951.2.11)
© Mike Thomas/Yukon Arts Centre*



Photograph, manuscript, film and sound collections

At the end of February the department bid a fond farewell and thank you to Curatorial Assistant Oliver Anthony, who had come to the end of his digitisation project focused on the PRM's cellulose nitrate negatives (<https://pittrivers-photo.blogspot.com/2023/09/safeguarding-our-celluloid-past-care.html>). During his nine-month project, Oliver scanned a staggering 15,195 negatives across 80 collections and packed and moved into freezer storage a total of 23,873 negatives in 61 boxes. A further 94 cine film reels were also packed and frozen. This project, supported by the University's Risk Management Fund, has dramatically reduced the risk associated with the cellulose nitrate collections by freezing them, which reduces the degradation process and thereby any gases produced as a result; it also reduces any risk of temperature-related combustion. By scanning them before freezing, research access has also been significantly enhanced.



Above: Curatorial Assistant Oliver Anthony at work scanning negatives in the museum

“During his nine-month project, Ollie scanned a staggering 15,195 negatives across 80 collections.”

Much time has been spent this year addressing backlogs of cataloguing and digitisation. Archives Officer Mark Dickerson has added large amounts of new information to the Collections Management System (CMS) for the archive collections, making these collections searchable online for the first time. Senior Assistant Curator Philip Grover developed a new volunteer programme of digitisation and cataloguing activity on the collections, especially material from Northeast India by J H Hutton which was awaiting processing, helping to make much new material available for research for the first time.

Right: Frontispiece of The Sema Nagas (1921) by J H Hutton catalogued during the year by digitisation volunteers and the photograph that inspired the book cover

Additions of note to the collections this year included a new portrait of HH the 13th Dalai Lama, Thubten Gyatso, and other photographs from the family of Lionel Hughes-Hallett; and a further collection of over 600 prints and negatives taken by Darrell Walters in Tibet in the 1940s, donated by Roger Mouland. Possibly the most significant donation, however, was the collection of diaries, notebooks and other archive material relating to Louis Sarno during his time in the Central African Republic recording Baka music, of which the PRM holds an extensive collection.



Above: A group portrait of men in Cyprus wearing traditional dress, taken in 1922 by Leonard Halford Dudley Buxton. One of over 23,000 negatives that were digitised and moved to freezer storage



Conservation work

The Conservation team are Jennifer Mitchell, Andrew Hughes and Jeremy Uden.

This year we finished redisplaying one of the historic 'shop-front' cases on the first floor, the glass of which was replaced in 2023. The Umbrellas case posed a bigger challenge than the other sections, and we needed to work with Exhibition/Display Technician and Mountmaker Josh Rose and Technical Designer and Maker Alan Cooke to create the complex new display.

We have been working on other aspects of the permanent displays too this year. We continue to refurbish the desktop cases in the Lower Gallery by removing the objects inside, sealing the bottoms of the cases with aluminium barrier film to prevent acidic vapours from the wood affecting susceptible materials such as shell and ivory, and replacing the backing fabric with museum-grade material. The display objects were then cleaned, photographed and replaced.

We have helped to make other changes in the permanent galleries: we removed a No 9 case with its display of head rests from the Clore Balcony, and moved Recycling, the other No 9 case situated there, to the far end of the balcony away from the door. This opened up the space for visitors and others who use the balcony. We also removed the Chinese Ceramics case from the Court.



Above: An umbrella receiving conservation work during redisplay of the Umbrellas case

This year the team has also worked on the Hawaiian exhibition, especially mounting a dress made by the designer Manaola, which required a custom-made mannequin made from linen buckram and starch paste and padded to fit, as we couldn't find a commercial mannequin that was small enough.



Above: Rangi Te Kanawa, a Māori textile conservator who visited the museum to work on a Hawaiian cloak

We have participated in visits from originating community members this year, notably Jamie Hampton of the Warlpiri community who came to look at objects from his community in the Pitt Rivers' collections. We are helping him compile a guide to looking after Aboriginal objects back in the community. We also worked with Rangi Te Kanawa, a Māori textile conservator who came to work on a Hawaiian cloak in the conservation lab, at the request of Noelle Kahanu, Indigenous Curator of the exhibition in Cambridge for which the cloak is being lent.

In November 2023 we represented GLAM at the University Digital Festival at Jesus College at which we presented our Plastic Fantastic project to a University audience. We were also asked to write an essay for OUP Publication *Early Music in the 21st Century*, which will be published in November 2024. We collaborated with TORCH and the Department of Engineering on the Ancient Aerophones project led by Sir Jonathan Mills, which involved CT scanning and printing several musical instruments from the Pitt Rivers collection.

We have been able to carry out more work on pesticide residues in the collections thanks to our association with Cranfield University. A student from the Forensic Investigation MSc investigated pesticide residues in one of our empty cases (Treatment of Dead Enemies) and the results will help us understand how contaminated our historic cases are.

Much of our time this year has been taken up with preparing and packing loans. Loaning institutions included the Ashmolean, Bodleian, Sainsbury Centre and the State Library of NSW, Sydney.

The Conservation team have organised two workshops for adults this year, holding them in the conservation lab and using objects from the collections to help with teaching. We held a Harvest Trophy workshop with Penny Maltby in October 2023, and a two-day coiled basketry workshop in February 2024 with Polly Pollock.



Above: 3D printed recorders on display at the University Digital Festival

Jennifer and Andrew had training on wax conservation in a GLAM-wide session. The training was given by Chris Woods (wax seals) and Valerie Kaufmann (wax objects), using examples from the Pitt Rivers collections.

Digital Asset Management System

2023/24 has been a year of finalising the migration process into the Digital Asset Management System (DAMS) and picking up any stragglers. Most notably, several thousand images that had been copied over from CDs have now replaced lower quality derivatives that had been uploaded to DAMS as part of the initial migration. These images have ranged from slight improvements in quality to replacing low quality .jpg files with high resolution .tiff files. This sweep has also picked up some images that had been missed in the original migration, such as the image shown (a statue with cymbals on its feet). This means that the best possible pictures are now representing our objects in DAMS, in our CMS and most importantly, in Collections Online.

Further work is currently underway to make sure the sweep is completed, and everything of importance is migrated from our servers on to DAMS.

Staff from collections, photographs, and exhibitions have continued to digitise more materials and upload every single day. Thanks to their efforts, the total number of DAMS records now exceeds half a million, and counting.

Right: An image of a statue from Myanmar, discovered during the migration clean up and added to the DAMS

Moving forward, the focus will be better integration between our CMS and DAMS systems, including being able to link a resource to multiple modules in the CMS, such as conservation and exhibitions, and enabling an image depicting multiple objects to be replicated across those resources without the need to upload a duplicate image each time. Further to this, film and sound collections will finally be able to be integrated with their records, allowing information about these resources to pass through. This work is part of the Phase 3 integration upgrades across MuseumPlus and ResourceSpace, and is expected to be completed by the end of 2024.

More digital assets and better documenting and cataloguing of such assets is a very exciting, positive step towards better digital access to the collection. The aim for next year is to carry forward and expand upon this step to make the digital representations of our collections the best they can possibly be.

“Staff from collections, photographs, and exhibitions have continued to digitise more materials...thanks to their efforts, the total number of DAMS records now exceeds half a million, and counting.”



SOCIAL MEDIA, WEBSITE AND DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

Digital engagement

This year has seen a variety of digital projects, from a programme of VR headsets being used in the galleries to deliver immersive experiences, to a new virtual tour of the galleries online, in addition to continued digital interpretation and support for exhibitions at the museum. Additional key preparation work has been undertaken with the museum's website anticipating the migration in 2025 from the University's old platform, Mosaic, to its new site, Fresco.

Wandering in Other Worlds – virtual reality headsets in the galleries

A key digital project delivered from September 2023–May 2024 was the piloting of digital interpretation (immersive film on VR headsets) alongside established museum Object Handling activities for the Wandering in Other Worlds project. Over 1,000 visitors participated in the activities, which were delivered in timed slots over 29 days across the year with over 80 volunteer hours.



The activity

Following the installation of the co-curated *Evenki Cosmologies* display in the museum Court and an artist residency with Galina Veretnova in October 2023, a programme of digitally facilitated drop-in activities was developed with artist and researcher Anya Gleizer as part of the Wandering in Other Worlds project.

The focus of these sessions was to bring 360-degree footage filmed in Evenkia into the museum, to deepen visitors' knowledge about the project behind the display. Anya edited two short immersive films which were loaded onto Oculus VR headsets. The shorter film depicts a two-minute sleigh ride with young people in Evenkia. The slightly longer, five-minute film documents a journey across a lake to a chum (yurt-like structure) to hear the story of why the wolf howls at the moon. Both films provided opportunities for visitors to travel 'virtually' to the Evenki landscape, aiming to build deeper understanding of Evenki culture. Sharing these films could also be seen as reciprocating the experience of Evenki community members, who were able to view the Pitt Rivers Museum virtually in 2019 through footage which Anya took with her to Siberia.

Left: Wandering in Other Worlds activity set up in the museum galleries

In addition to the two films, visitors were encouraged to view and handle two pieces of stunning beadwork made by Galina during her time at the museum. In the first half of the programme we also used a large touch screen on wheels to share a 360-degree video, which visitors could navigate within by using their fingers to rotate the immersive view. In the second half of the activity programme we used an iPad to share the video and the project website with similar touch-screen engagement.



Above: The bespoke storage for the beadwork, VR headset and the wider kit created by Andrew Hughes

“VR experience was the best part of my trip!”

Feedback from visitor evaluation

“Over 1,000 visitors participated in the activities, which were delivered in timed slots over 29 days across the year with over 80 volunteer hours.”

Preparation and planning

The Digital Projects Officer worked with Anya to prepare training material for using the VR headsets and Object Handling with GLAM volunteers. A call for volunteers was prepared with the GLAM volunteer team, highlighting the use of the VR technology to ensure volunteers were comfortable with using new technology in the galleries. Four training sessions with GLAM volunteers were run, two in autumn 2023 and two in early 2024. Anya also provided additional information for volunteers to share with visitors, explaining the significance of the beadwork including the colours and the motifs of the diver bird and *solnishko* (little sun), as well as further context on the wider project.

Andrew Hughes from conservation kindly created a bespoke storage solution for the beadwork, VR headset and the wider kit, ensuring their safe storage and to make it easy to set up and pack away the activities safely in the galleries.

Digital engagement

Engagement and evaluation

In total over 1,012 visitors engaged with the pop-up activities across the 29 sessions delivered in the year. These are impressive figures considering that most activities were run on a weekday afternoon in the museum, and only two visitors could experience the timed video pieces at a single time. Most of the sessions were only an hour long; however, we extended the time of the sessions to 90 minutes for the second half of the programme, and we made some weekend sessions two hours long to help accommodate interest in the activity. The weekend sessions were busier. The sessions took place on different days of the week to reach different audiences in the museum as well as to accommodate other museum activities already taking place in the location of the *Evenki Cosmologies* display.

“A really pioneering way to engage people, particularly as there is so much to see. It helps you learn and focus on a particular area.”

Visitor feedback

Eight GLAM volunteers completed the training and delivered different sessions, and their enthusiasm and skills in talking with visitors greatly enhanced the sessions. In total over 80 volunteer hours supported the delivery of this project.

“Thank you! The VR format is wonderful and immersive. Great way to tell a narrative and move people.”

Visitor feedback

We collected some evaluative feedback with short surveys throughout the sessions, in relation to research undertaken by Anya. In 2024 we worked with GLAM Evaluation Officer Felicity McDowall to see if we could expand on the data gathered, especially in relation to the museum's strategic aim of deepening cross-cultural understanding. We were also interested to see if we could capture and measure emotional engagement with the different media in the activities, with a focus around the immersive video (VR) alongside tangible heritage with the beadwork. Overall, the evaluation showed that combining new technologies (VR) with more established museum engagement methods (Object Handling) was successful. Further, the involvement of enthusiastic volunteer team members was strongly reflected in the feedback. The sessions were a success, with the technology providing digital experiences in a facilitated activity and engaging museum audiences with the new display, helping the project to deepen cross-cultural understanding.

Right: Galina Veretnova testing the VR headset in the museum



Digital engagement

New virtual tour launched

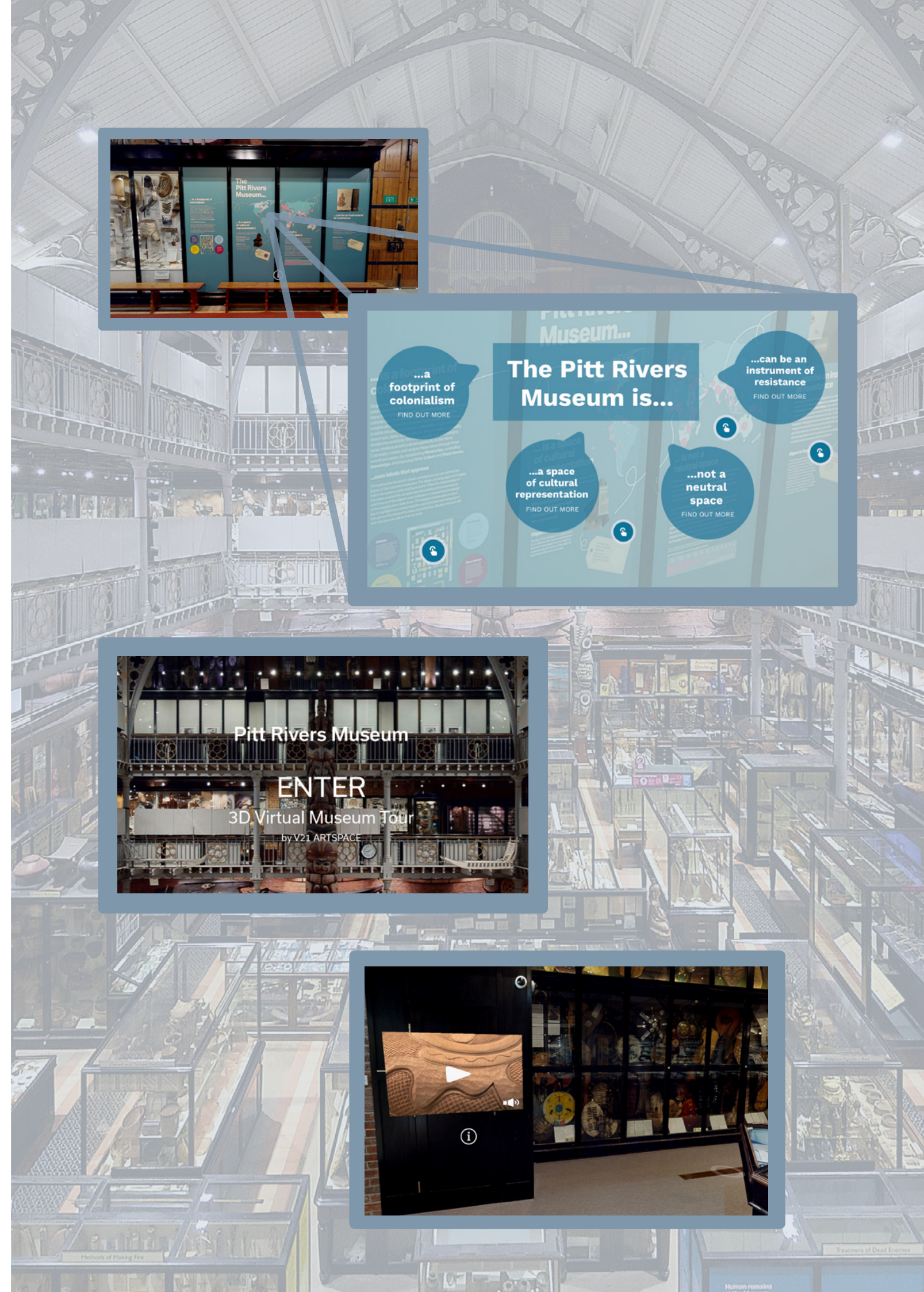
In June 2024 a new virtual scan of the museum galleries was launched on the website, enabling visitors to browse all three floors of the museum remotely for the first time. The previous virtual recording was a partial scan that showed the galleries as they were several years ago. When the museum reopened after the pandemic closures in 2020, new installations in the galleries introduced some of the critical changes in thinking about the displays and the museum's history. These have been recorded on the new virtual tour with additional interpretation embedded at specific cases, enabling the new display text to be read in the virtual galleries as well as incorporating audiovisual content and interactive elements.

For example, when a remote visitor views the Introduction case in the virtual tour, a clickable information point brings up a slide with multiple interactive buttons. This has allowed us to share the key interpretative concepts written on the physical intervention panels on display in a more suitable way for engaging online while journeying through the virtual space of the museum, along with introductory audio by Research Curator Marenka Thompson-Odlum.

Three videos highlighting Ainu culture relating to collections in the museum appear on each floor of the museum. On the ground floor is a film highlighting the *Tonkori* Among the Spires project featuring Ainu *tonkori* maker and player Oki Kano and his band, and Japanese artist Eiko Soga. The second floor displays *Autumn Salmon* (2017), a video created by Eiko Soga responding to Ainu salmon shoes on display in the case nearby. A short film showing Nibutani-based Ainu artist Tōru Kaizawa carving the work titled *Ukoku* is shown on the second floor in the virtual tour. These films were part of commissions from Research Curator Marenka Thompson-Odlum's New Collecting Art Fund award, and bring performance and artist/maker processes into the gallery spaces among the displays.

The stairwell was also scanned in the virtual tour, allowing visitors to gain a greater insight into navigating the physical aspect of the museum. The virtual tour is therefore a great tool for helping communicate the atmosphere and physicality of the museum, helping visitors to plan a visit in advance. It currently sits on the Visit Us section of the museum's website.

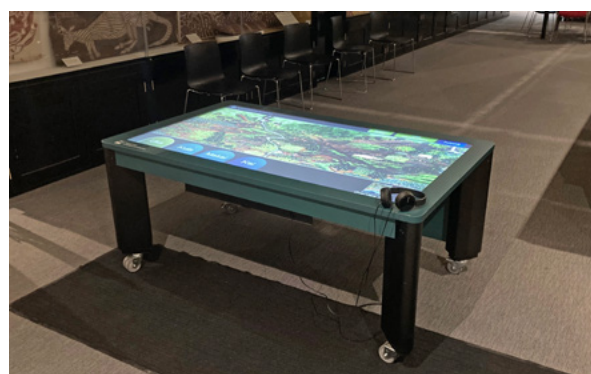
Right: Images from the new virtual tour showing the interactive elements that appear on the tour stops as a visitor journeys around the galleries



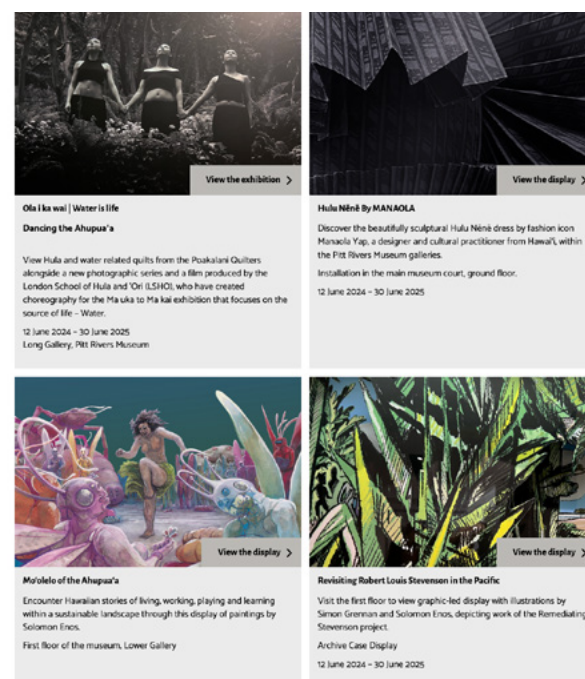
Web-based interpretation created for temporary displays and special exhibitions

Special Exhibition – Hawai'i *Ma uka to Ma kai: Quilting the Hawaiian Landscape*

Towards the end of the reporting year (spring/summer 2024) work focused on providing a new suite of webpages for the special exhibition and various corresponding displays through the museum. The main exhibition page *Ma uka to Ma kai* documents the journey through the Hawaiian landscape as experienced in the physical exhibition space: it begins in the mountain forests with the narrative following the river moving down through the *ahupua'a*, irrigating *kalo* (taro) terraces, before flowing into a *loko i'a* (fishpond) at the coast. Monochromatic photographs used in the exhibition divisions have been reformatted as horizontal image breakers defining each exhibition section, with highlighted quilts included online, encouraging visitors to visit the physical exhibition and/or buy the book available.



Above: The *Ka Nohona Ahupua'a* app was developed by Kamehameha Schools' team and uploaded to the digital touch table in the museum galleries



Above: Additional webpages were created for the various elements of the Hawai'i exhibition

Six additional webpages were made for the various additional displays and exhibits forming part of the whole exhibition. For the ground floor, the centrality of water to the functioning of the *ahupua'a* and to life itself is portrayed in works by the London School of Hula and 'Ori (LSHO). Bespoke choreography was created by LSHO for the *Ma uka to Ma kai* exhibition focusing on water as the source of life, with the webpage sharing photography and quotes, as well as linking thematically to some of the quilts also on display in the exhibition.

Additional webpages created for the exhibition installations include images of the sculptural Hulu Nēnē dress by fashion icon Manaola Yap, online audio of discussions on the *Ahu'ula* (feather cloak) by Hawaiian historians, biologists and a music professor, and an online recording of the poem 'Unfinished' performed by the author Carol Ann Carl, whose poem appears as an installation across the fishing displays on the top floor.

The Pitt Rivers Museum also gives a big *mahalo* (thank you) to the Kamehameha Schools' team for working with us to bring the *Life in the Ahupua'a* digital experience into the museum. On the first floor of the museum an interactive touch table has been prepared with an exciting interactive learning experience around the concept of the *ahupua'a*, a traditional Hawaiian land division that extends from the mountains to the sea. Developed as a classroom tool by Kamehameha Schools in Hawaii, the app allows visitors to further engage with Hawaiian culture, especially language, through an illustrated map that follows the same journey as the exhibition, from the mountains to the coast of the Hawaiian landscape.

With the exhibition opening in June 2024 there are several other digital programming ideas in the works, as we look forward to developing further digital *mo'olelo* (storytelling) for ongoing exhibition programming over the next year.

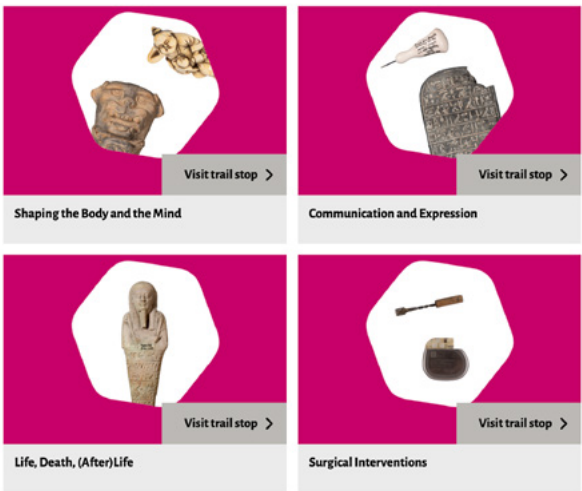
Right: Detail of a quilt in the Hawai'i exhibition



Web-based interpretation created for temporary displays and special exhibitions

Curating for Change

A new project webpage was created for the Nothing Without Us: Experiences of Disability trail that launched in November 2023. Working with the project team led by Curatorial Fellow Kyle Jordan, the webpage included a range of downloadable resources in different formats for accessibility as well as six additional webpages to correspond to the six trail stop locations in the museum galleries. These additional webpages made the trail content accessible remotely online, with large images of the trail objects; QR codes in the gallery and in the large-print guide produced for the trail also link to the online content. The museum collaborated with Curating for Change to pilot using Navilens codes – large, colourful alternatives to QR codes that are designed to increase access for visually impaired people. Content on the webpages was also made available on the Navilens app so that the text context could be more easily auto-read by Navilens app users.



Website audit and preparations for migration

An audit of the website was begun in the second part of the reporting year, assessing over 800 live webpages made since the website was created on Mosaic five years ago. From this initial audit, webpages were identified for deletion and large file formats replaced with smaller versions of digital assets to help reduce storage and running costs for the site. While good practice, this audit highlighted further potential work to prepare for the whole website to be migrated to a new University platform, Fresco, which is currently in development. This includes possible changes to navigation and improvements for web accessibility, which are planned for ongoing consultation and action over the next year. While it is expected that Fresco will maintain much of the core functionality of the existing platform, it is anticipated that the site will have a new contemporary look and feel and updated editing options that should make maintenance of the site easier for staff in the future. Work continues throughout 2024 on reviewing existing webpages and updating content ahead of a migration expected in mid-2025.

Left: Curating for Change trail stops were recreated on the PRM website

Social media and website

As an organisation with limited marketing and advertising resources, we rely heavily on our website and social media platforms as the main channels for communicating news, research, events and activities to our audiences. We currently use X (formerly Twitter), Facebook and Instagram, plus a slowly but steadily growing YouTube account. Although there is considerable overlap between the channels, each one has its particular strengths, with X being the best for putting out very immediate news, advertising events and sparking discussion; Facebook is good for promoting events and longer museum updates; while Instagram is picking up followers who appreciate all the highly visual content on offer from the museum.

2023/24 has continued to be a fairly unsettled time for social media users, with frequent design and function amendments on all platforms, particularly X. Due to the organisational restructuring at X headquarters, many of the features which made the platform so user-friendly have either disappeared or been modified, often without warning, making it more difficult to track progress and insights. The number of subscribers to X continues to fall as people turn to other platforms, with statistics showing that the number of global users fell to 335.7 million in 2024 from a high of 368.4 million in 2022. This drop is reflected in our figures, which continue to shrink, going from 44,530

in August 2023 to 44,150 in July 2024. Our Facebook following continues to grow, albeit quite slowly, going from 19,049 to 19,475 in the same period, while Instagram is our fastest-growing channel, going from 23,480 to 25,280 followers.

As always, a glance through the year's posts reveals the hugely diverse goings-on in the museum, with amazing activities for local and global audiences, ground-breaking research, dynamic partnerships with local groups and indigenous communities, and insights into the collections and conservation work – plus updates on how the museum regularly hits the headlines with its pioneering work on decolonising the collections.

On X, key campaigns over the year included a programme of posts for the Play! project, highlighting the research carried out by members of the local Chinese community into musical instruments collected in China and now in the collections; Multaka tours, focusing on different themes such as Magic, Ukraine, and What it is to be Human; the popular Wandering in Other Worlds display linking to Evenki objects in the collections; and the fascinating and hugely varied Research Spotlights series.

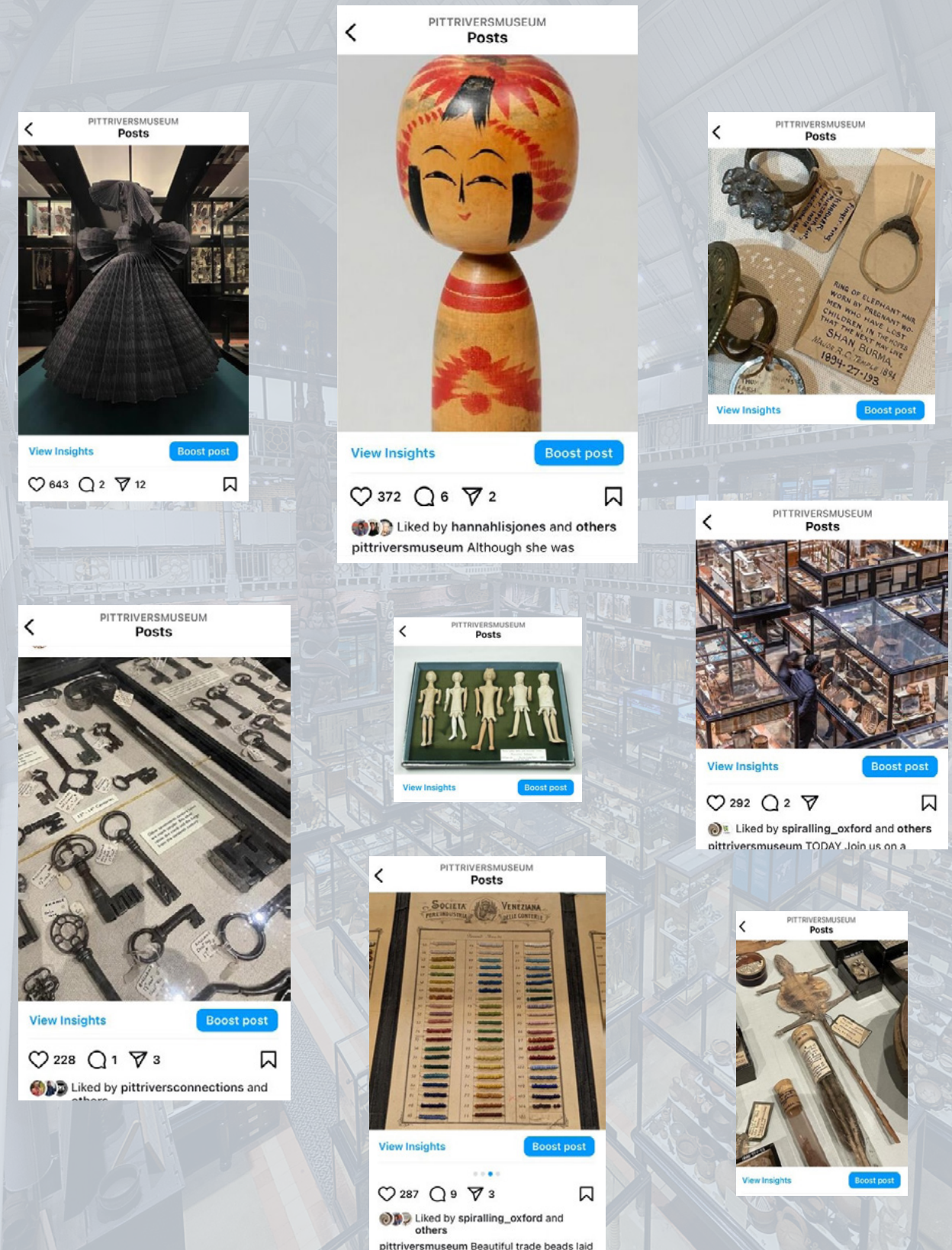
Social media and website

A quick scan of the most popular X posts gives a good snapshot of the range of content. A post announcing the launch of the Nothing Without Us: Experiences of Disability trail, co-curated with Curating for Change, received 26,000 impressions and 165 likes. News of a repatriation ceremony returning ancestral remains to Australian First Nations communities received 15,000 impressions and 187 likes, while a post refuting an incorrect story in the national press about an Igbo mask having been removed from display received a massive 110,000 impressions and 594 likes, showing how interested people are in the work taking place and how much public support there is (although there will always be critics as well!) However, the surprise 'hit' post had nothing to do with the collections, conservation or research work – a picture of a lost soft elephant toy waiting to be reclaimed received 12,000 impressions and nearly 300 likes!

On Facebook, the most popular posts related to events and displays highlighting indigenous groups: a behind-the-scenes conservation talk with a Māori weaver and a Hawaiian conservator; a film screening of an amazing Evenki reconciliation ceremony which took place in the galleries; and a post about the stunning Hulu Nēnē dress by Hawaiian fashion icon Manaola Yap, which had a reach of 6.5k with 102 reactions. Similarly, posts about the collections had a high number of hits. The #PhotoFriday posts featuring photos from the archives and displays proved popular; a post showing one of the Native American portraits featured in Shane Balkowitsch's display *Collaborating with the Past* had a reach of 8.4k with

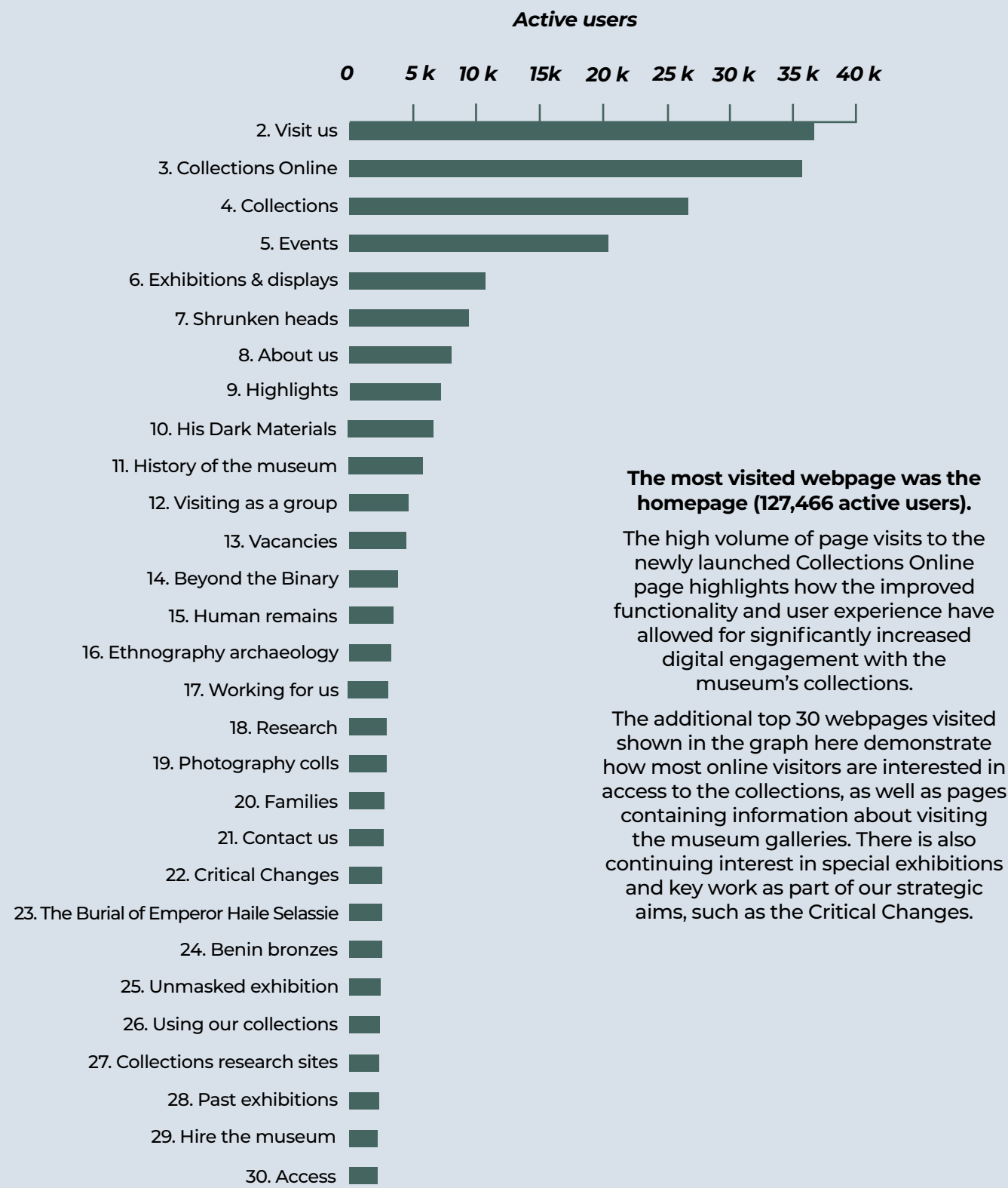
76 reactions, while a behind-the-scenes shot of trade beads laid out in the conservation laboratory and a reminder about accessing the online collections had a combined reach of nearly 15k with over 300 reactions.

Instagram followers were equally interested in the work of the museum; the year's most popular post announced the Australian repatriation ceremony with a reach of 9.8k and 1,000 likes. However, posts about the collections proved most popular; a regular series of #CloseUp posts scored highly with our followers, picking out individual objects in the densely populated cases – a dried gecko used for medicinal purposes, an absurdly huge key, an elephant-hair ring worn by pregnant women who have lost children, a tiny scissors amulet to protect against split ends... Also gallery-based was a post reminding visitors to find the little wooden mice hidden in the cases, which had a reach of 7k with 351 likes. Emphasising the fact that the collections are constantly updated, posts relating to modern popular culture also scored highly. A post for the *His Dark Materials* trail showing the ingenious seal intestine parka rated highly with a reach of over 4k and 285 likes; and linking to the release of the Hollywood *Barbie* film, we posted that the Pitt Rivers Museum is also the proud owner of several Barbie dolls, reaching nearly 7.8k followers who responded with over 250 likes. Just a small reminder that Pitt Rivers Museum never ceases to inform, delight and surprise!



Website data

Most visited pages on PRM website Aug 2023-July 2024



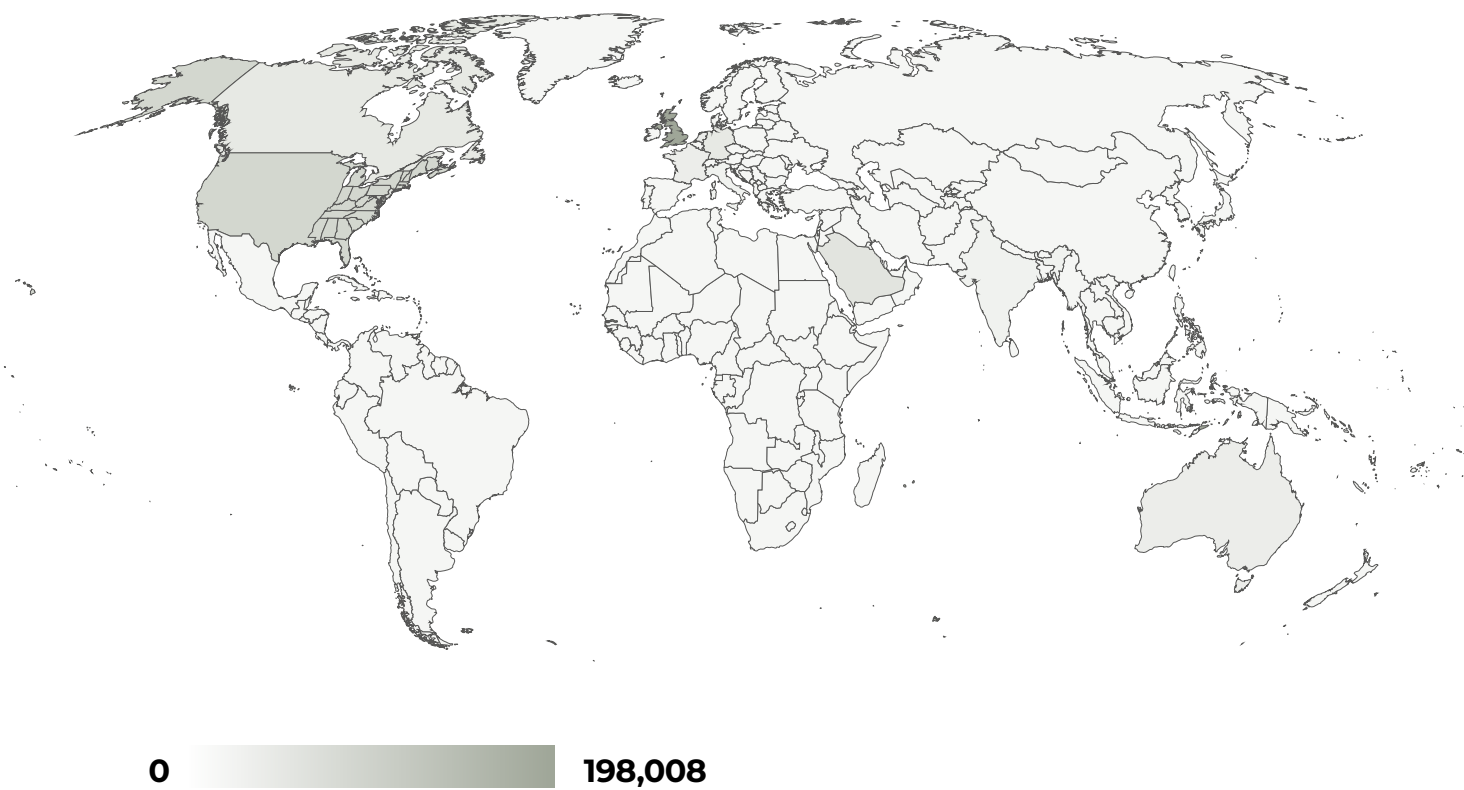
The website continues to attract a global audience, with a concentration of views from Europe (especially the UK), North America and Australasia.

A notable change this year is that visits from Saudi Arabia entered the top ten in the list of user locations.

Heat map showing user locations Aug 2022-July 2023



Heat map showing user locations Aug 2023-July 2024



Top ten user locations Aug 2023-July 2024

Country		Users			
1	UK	198,008	6	Australia	5,333
2	USA	35,274	7	France	4,815
3	Germany	5,556	8	Netherlands	3,761
4	Saudi Arabia	5,487	9	India	3,560
5	Canada	5,489	10	Italy	2,900

SUPPORTING THE MUSEUM

Membership

The Membership Programme of the Pitt Rivers Museum is a small but important and growing group of supporters, run by staff and committed volunteers, which provides an engaging and thoughtful membership programme of supporter events. Membership is open to all for a small annual fee.



Development

The Pitt Rivers Museum is incredibly grateful to our supporters, who ensure that we can continue to improve our collections and our understanding of those items within them, and that we use them to benefit not only academics, but also communities in Oxford and across the world. A special thank you is owed to:

- the Development Advisory Board for the Pitt Rivers Museum, who go beyond the museum to broaden its reach beyond our walls and advocate for our work;
- the Members of the Pitt Rivers, who are a key part of our museum community, and continue to bring fresh enthusiasm for our collections, staff, events and more;
- Art Fund, for helping us to expand our collections, as well as our knowledge of the items we acquire;
- the Helen Hamlyn Trust, for supporting the Discover and Create project;
- the John Ellerman Foundation, for their support of the Changing Curatorial Legacies project;
- the Pilanesburg Foundation, for their support of the Origins and Futures Appeal;
- the Staples Trust, for their continued support of the Living Cultures: Indigenous Voices project;
- individual donors, visitors to the museum, and those whose donations are enhanced by gift aid;
- our anonymous donors, who continue to provide vital support for the museum, our programmes and our community.

To acknowledge the significant impact our supporters make to our work, this year the museum introduced the Director's Circle. The Director's Circle hosts two events a year and is an opportunity for supporters and their guests to meet with the Director and key staff members to learn more about the museum's future activities. The inaugural event in February proved a huge success and a great opportunity to personally thank our many supporters.

We continue to look for support and philanthropic partners to continue and expand our work. If you are interested in making a gift to assist the work of the Pitt Rivers Museum or are thinking about leaving a gift in your will, please get in touch with Christina Evans (christina.evans@devoff.ox.ac.uk), who will be delighted to discuss this with you. If you are already a donor and would like to maximise your donation with gift aid, please contact cat.campbell@devoff.ox.ac.uk

Thank you again to all who have supported the Pitt Rivers Museum and our work over the last year.

Opposite: Members' exclusive Behind the Scenes event with collections, May 2024

MUSEUM OPERATIONS

People and organisation

Our staff and volunteers are exceptional and make the museum the unique place to work in and visit that it is today. In 2023/24, the museum employed over 65 members of staff and worked with just under 200 volunteers.

Administration and operations

Our administration and operations teams provide the efficient and effective professional day-to-day support required by the museum, including visitor experience services, commercial services comprising retail and venue hire, facility support services, press and media, HR, finance, planning, administration and executive services.

Leads:

- Karrine Sanders
Executive lead
- Antigone Thompson
Administration
- Beth Joynson
Executive services
- Louise Hancock
Media and communications
- Fatai Lawal
Facility management
- Hannah Bruce
Event and venue management
- Catherine Booth and Fernando Calzada
Visitor experience

Process improvements

We consistently assess and prioritise improvements that can be made in our organisational processes. During 2023/24 we improved our grant management systems and operational meeting processes, increased our commercial income, increased our visitor numbers and aligned our visitor experience. Together with a completed new audience development plan our focus continues to be on growth, engagement and service excellence for all our visitors. In support of this we will be aligning our HR work by moving to join GLAM HR Shared Services in 2024/25.

In addition to key developments, the administration team provided:

- support for embedding the Pitt Rivers Membership programme into museum operations;
- implementation of financial and HR assurances;
- secretariat support for the Executive Board, Board of Visitors and Committees;
- processing of 60% of invoices within 14 days, higher than University average;
- eight recruitment exercises;
- media and press support for several international programmes;
- filming support to companies and clients;
- 89% staff engagement with our Digital Screen Equipment programme;
- production support for successful Late Night, May 2024.



Events and venue hire

The museum's venue hire programme continues to grow and develop, offering new and returning clients the opportunity to use the unique space of the museum for events, lectures, training and activities. This year we were delighted to welcome Jessica Kong as Events and Membership Assistant, joining Hannah Bruce in leading and developing this important commercial arm of the museum.

Above: The Clore Balcony is one of the spaces available to hire for events

Right: Mohammad Al-Alwad enjoying an all-staff lunch

Carbon reduction

We are working on our carbon footprint: through the GLAM Decarbonisation programme, we began in 2023/24 to develop a baseline to reduce targets specifically for Pitt Rivers Museum systems and processes across operations and building management. A full implementation programme across GLAM will begin in 2024/25.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

We are committed to fostering an inclusive culture that promotes equality of opportunity, values diversity and kindness and provides an environment where all our staff are respected and feel included.



Health, safety and well-being

Health, safety and well-being underpin all work in the museum. As one of the first departments to roll out 'EveryDaySafe', a University-led programme which aims to achieve an action-oriented safety culture where everyone feels confident about the safety of their working environment and taking the right action to keep themselves and others safe, the Pitt Rivers is committed to ensuring that health, safety and well-being are at the core of how we work and operate in and across the museum. Supported by the Head of Facilities, teams have delivered a broad programme of proactive and reactive monitoring activities and improvements where needed. Where opportunities for improvement have been identified, such as more training for staff, these have been implemented quickly or added to the annual programme of work.



Facility management

This year we were delighted that Head of Facilities Fatai Lawal started his new role by taking up the challenge of providing the team with a much-needed new kitchen (see museum highlights). The refurbishment was undertaken to address issues related to outdated appliances and wear and tear and to create a more modern, functional space that meets the needs of employees. Fatai leads on all facilities-related aspects and challenges which arise from working in such a unique, historic building and coordinates all safety aspects across the museum, improving signage and first-aid stations and associated training for staff.

Left (L-R): Marenka Thompson-Odlum, Fatai Lawal and Mary-Ann Middelkoop at a staff 'Taste of Nigeria' lunch

Donations

Donations are critical in enabling the museum to undertake its work and we are very grateful that visitors and our supporters continued to assist the work of the museum through in-person and online donations.



Right: Kieran Brooks leading a tour in the museum



Visitor experience

Our exceptional visitor experience team not only offer a warm welcome but deliver a crucial role in enhancing the overall visitor experience and supporting the museum's donations programme and shop.

The year saw a welcome return of visitor numbers to pre-pandemic levels, with continued growth projected. Over 2023/24 new tours were developed both for daily visitors and evening groups.

The Wayfinding programme to improve external wayfinding for visitors locating and coming into the main building, which houses both the Oxford University Museum of Natural History and the Pitt Rivers Museum, gained momentum; the development plans that were submitted to University Estates and Oxford City Council for review were successful and are now in the formal planning stage. Improving visitor wayfinding on entering the building and between the two museums will be the next programme of work.



APPENDICES

A. Pitt Rivers Museum Board of Visitors as of August 2023

Professor Jane Shaw, Principal,
Harris Manchester College (Chair),
University of Oxford

Professor David Pratten, Head of
Department, School of Anthropology and
Museum Ethnography, University of Oxford

Professor Helena Hamerow, Professor of
Early Medieval Archaeology, Institute of
Archaeology, University of Oxford

Professor Paul Smith, Director, Museum of
Natural History, University of Oxford

Dr Kathryn Murphy, Senior Proctor, The
Proctors and the Assessor, University of Oxford

Dr Linda Flores, Associate Professor in
Modern Japanese Literature in the Faculty of
Oriental Studies, University of Oxford

Mr Richard Ovenden OBE, FRSA, FSA,
FRHistS, FRSE, Head of GLAM,
University of Oxford

Professor Nicholas (Nick) Thomas, Director,
Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology,
University of Cambridge

Professor Trish Greenhalgh OBE,
Professor of Primary Care Health Sciences,
University of Oxford

Professor Andrew Briggs, Professor of
Nanomaterials, University of Oxford

Ms Melanie Keen, Director, Wellcome
Collection

Ms Iliane Ogilvie Thompson, Chair,
Development Advisory Board, Pitt Rivers
Museum, University of Oxford

Dr Nick Merriman, Chief Executive and
Content Director, Horniman Museum and
Gardens

Professor Patricia Daley, Professor of the
Human Geography of Africa, School of
Geography and the Environment,
University of Oxford

Ms Evie O’Brien, Executive Director, Atlantic
Institute

In attendance:

Professor Laura Van Broekhoven (Secretary),
Director, Pitt Rivers Museum,
University of Oxford

Ms Beth Joynson (Minutes Secretary),
Executive Assistant, Pitt Rivers Museum,
University of Oxford

Professor Clare Harris, Lecturer-Curator, Pitt
Rivers Museum, University of Oxford

B. Museum staff by section

(Part-time staff are indicated by * and staff on fixed-term contracts by +)

Director

Laura Van Broekhoven

Administration

Karrine Sanders, Head of Administration,
Planning and Finance
Antigone Thompson, Deputy Administrator
Beth Joynson, Executive Assistant
Callum Collett, Receptionist

Balfour Library

Mark Dickerson, Librarian

Collections

Julia Nicholson, Curator and Joint Head of
Object Collections (until May 2024) *
Marina de Alarcón, Curator and Joint Head of
Object Collections (until May 2024), Curator
and Head of Object Collections (from May
2024) *
Faye Belsey, Deputy Head of Object
Collections
Siân Mundell, Collections Database Officer *
Kyle Jordan, Curating for Change Fellow (until
April 2024) +
Joanna Cole, Assistant Curator (Provenance)
Philip Grover, Senior Assistant Curator of
Photograph and Manuscript Collections
Bryony Smerdon, Assistant Curator (Visiting
Researchers)
Anna Grybenyuk, Digital Collections System
Manager
Nicola Stylianou, Project Coordinator
(Rethinking Relationships) (appointed March
2024) +
Tom Fearon, Relationship Manager
(Rethinking Relationships) (appointed July
2024) +
Joel Fagan, Relationship Manager (Rethinking
Relationships) (appointed August 2024) +

Collections Move Project Team

Tom Boggis, GLAM Programme Manager
Rosie Hughes, GLAM Collections Move Project
Manager +
Pete Brown, GLAM Collections Move Team
Leader (until April 2024) +
Giles Lingwood, GLAM Collections Move
Project Assistant +
Jennifer Donovan, GLAM Collections Move
Project Assistant +
Laura Malric-Smith, GLAM Collections Move
Project Assistant +
Lucy Crossfield, GLAM Collections Move
Project Assistant +

Megan Farrell, GLAM Collections Move Project
Assistant +
Sara Williams, GLAM Collections Move Project
Assistant (until May 2024), GLAM Collections
Move Team Leader (from May 2024) +

Commercial Activities

Hannah Bruce, Events Manager *
Jessica Kong, Events and Membership
Assistant (appointed January 2024) *+
Matthew Gill, Events Facilitator *
Maryam Gohari, Events Facilitator *
Callum Collett, Events Facilitator *
Colton Bradyll-Brown, Events Facilitator *
Matthew Scott, Events Facilitator *
Abdullah Alkhalaf, Events Facilitator *

Conservation

Jeremy Uden, Head of Conservation *
Andrew Hughes, Deputy Head of Conservation
Jennifer Mitchell, Conservator *

Curatorial, Research and Teaching

Christopher Morton, Head of Curatorial,
Research and Teaching and Associate
Professor
Clare Harris, Curator for Asia and Professor of
Visual Anthropology
Dan Hicks, Curator of World Archaeology and
Professor of Contemporary Archaeology
Ashley Coutu, Research Curator (African
Archaeology) and Deputy Head of Research
Marenka Thompson-Odlum, Research Curator
(Critical Perspectives)
Oliver Anthony, Curatorial Assistant (until
February 2024) +
Thandiwe Wilson, Research Assistant, Meeting
the Challenges of the Ivory Act +*
Mary-Ann Middelkoop, Researcher +
Lennon Mhishi, Researcher +
Roba AlSalibi, Researcher +
Emily Stevenson, Leverhulme Early Career
Fellow +
Vibe Nielsen, Carlsberg Foundation Visiting
Fellow, Associate Researcher (until January
2024) +
Beth Hodgett, Postdoctoral Researcher
(appointed March 2024) +
Rebecca Martin, Research Project Officer
(appointed April 2024) *+

IT

Katherine Clough, Digital Projects Officer

Exhibitions

Zena McGreevy, Exhibition and Special Projects
Officer
Alan Cooke, Technical Designer and Maker
Josh Rose, Exhibition/Display Technician and
Mount Maker *

Marketing and Media

Louise Hancock, Marketing and Media Officer

Public Engagement

Andrew McLellan, Head of Public Engagement
and Programming (until May 2024) *
Rebecca McVean, Deputy Head of Learning and
Participation and Primary Lead, Acting Head of
Public Engagement and Programming from
June 2024 *
Melanie Rowntree, Learning Officer, Secondary
and Young People (until November 2024)*
Beth McDougall, Families and Communities
Officer (Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays) and
Community Engagement Officer: Older People,
GLAM (Wednesdays and Fridays) (parental leave
from July 2024)
Anya Jung, Taking Care Project Assistant (until
January 2024) +*
Megan Christo, Play! Project Collections and
Public Engagement Officer (until December
2023) +
Michelle Alcock, Public Engagement and
Programming Bookings Officer, Learning Officer
Communities and Families (Mondays, Tuesdays
and Thursdays) (parental leave cover from July
2024) *+
Molly Appleby, Bookings Support Officer (parental
leave cover from July 2024) (Mondays, Tuesdays
and Thursdays) (appointed June 2024) *+
Nicola Bird, Project Manager, MultakaOxford +
Jumana Hokan, MultakaOxford Community
Outreach and Learning Facilitator +
Helen Adams, Head of Engagement and
Audience Support, GLAM
Maryam Gohari, Volunteering Assistant, GLAM
(until January 2024) *+
Sarah Leвете, Communities Officer, GLAM *
Susan Griffiths, Communities Officer, GLAM *
Miranda Millward, Arts Engagement Officer *
Hayleigh Jutson, Volunteering and Communities
Assistant, GLAM *
Joy Todd, Head of Volunteering, GLAM *
Caroline Moreau, Volunteer Engagement Officer,
GLAM *
Maryam Gohari, Volunteering Assistant, GLAM *+

APPENDICES

B. Museum staff by section (continued)

(Part-time staff are indicated by * and staff on fixed-term contracts by +)

Technical Services

Fatai Lawal, Head of Facility Management
Dan Homewood, Maintenance Technician
(until May 2024) *

Visitor Experience

Catherine Booth, Visitor Experience Manager
(parental leave September 2023 to March 2024)

Fernando Calzada, Deputy Visitor Experience Manager, Acting Visitor Experience Manager
(parental leave cover September 2023 to March 2024)

George Kwaider, Visitor Experience Assistant, Acting Deputy Visitor Experience Manager
(September 2023 to March 2024)

Kieran Brooks, Visitor Experience Assistant *

Navigator Ndhlovu, Visitor Experience Assistant *

Michael Peckett, Visitor Experience Assistant *

Matthew Scott, Visitor Experience Assistant *

Olya Baxter-Zorina, Visitor Experience Assistant *

Mohammad Al-Awad, Visitor Experience Assistant *

Abdullah Alkhalaf, Visitor Experience Assistant * (until January 2024)

Tayo Jones, Visitor Experience Assistant *

Colton Bradyll-Brown, Visitor Experience Assistant *

Nikita Cooke Smith, Visitor Experience Assistant *

Tara Ferguson, Visitor Experience Assistant *

Nicole Culligan, Visitor Experience Assistant *



Top: Andrew McLellan's farewell function, June 2024

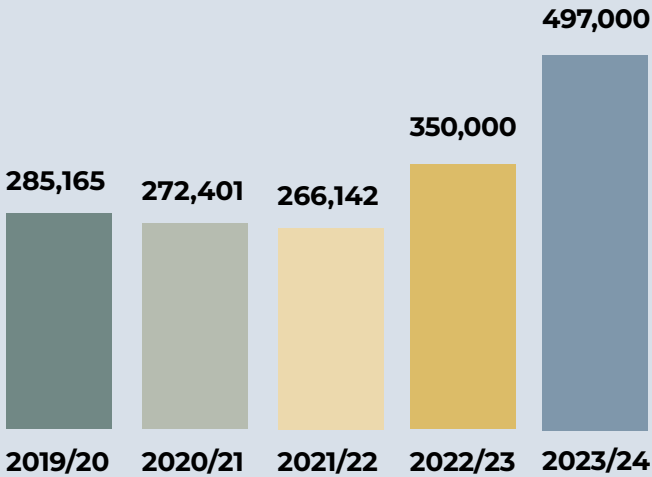
Above: Julia Nicholson at her retirement function, May 2024

C. Finance

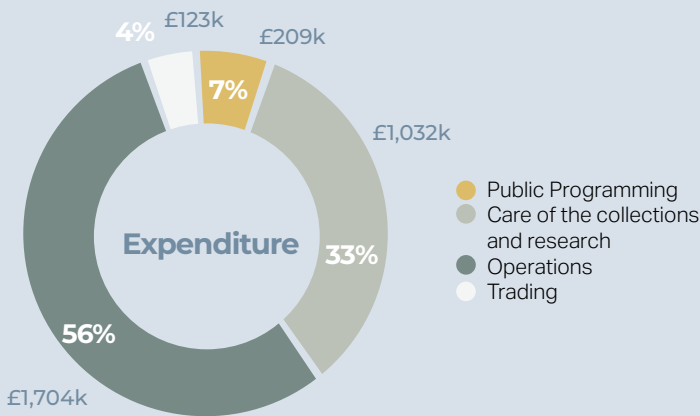
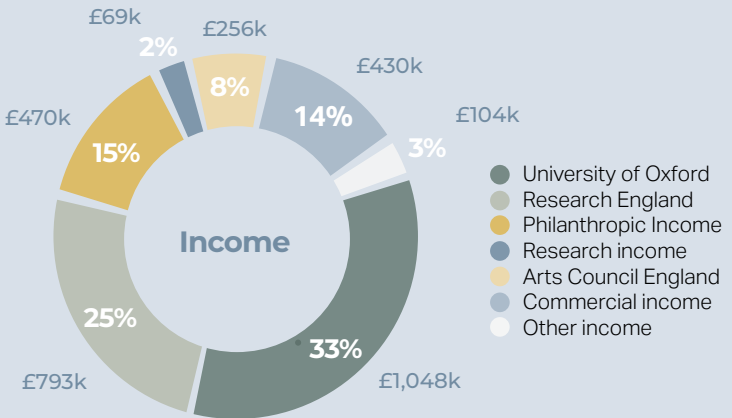
The Pitt Rivers Museum concluded the year with a surplus of £102,000. This was achieved by various sources of income, ranging from research and commercial income to donations to the museum. Within the year, USS pension contributions decreased from 21.6% to 14.5% and the Pitt Rivers Museum ringfenced funds to offset future costs for the University-wide Pay and Conditions Review. The museum achieved a £45k saving and attained the additional surplus on top of this via non-pay expenditure savings.

The museum continued to grow commercially, seeing a strong return in venue hire income and an increase in visitor numbers. The visitor experience team welcomed over 497,000 visitors between August 2023 and July 2024, raising over £49,000 in donations. Shop sales also remained strong in comparison to previous years, with £70,000 worth of sales made within the financial year.

Building endowments and fundraising continue to be vital in maintaining and strengthening our financial resilience and we are grateful to our supporters for their much-valued and important contributions to the work of the museum.



Visitor numbers by year



APPENDICES

D. Visitor numbers, research visits and loans

Visitor numbers

Visitors continued to return to the museum post-COVID and have steadily increased year on year, reaching 497,000 visitors between August 2023 and July 2024.

Object collections

The number of research visitors to the collections remains very high in spite of store move delays. There has been a change in the profile of visiting researchers to the collections and we are now receiving many more requests to visit from communities of origin and international visitors. We are also keen to offer virtual visits to the collections, where we can give access to a much larger community group than those who are able to travel.

Loans

Faye Belsey coordinated a busy outward loan schedule both to national and international museums and galleries.

A beautiful Japanese photograph album with hand-painted photographs including that of a group of men, women and children seated under a trellis of wisteria in flower (1998.99.3) was loaned to the Ashmolean Museum for the exhibition *Colour Revolution* from 21 September 2023–18 February 2024.

Five objects: a club, two boomerangs, a spear thrower and a lancet (1931.78.16, 1935.71.1, 1886.1.1593, 1886.1.1598 and 1886.1.1600) were loaned to the State Library of New South Wales, Sydney for the exhibition *Wadgayawa Nhay Dhadjan Wari* ('They made them a long time ago'), which formed part of a larger research project Mobilising Aboriginal Objects. The exhibition displayed historic Aboriginal material culture, some 'returning to Country' for the first time in 200 years. The loan enabled more First Nations peoples to reconnect with their material heritage through engagement sessions with the objects.

A small pottery mould (1918.37.28) for making an amulet in the shape of the Egyptian god Bes was loaned to the Ashmolean Museum for a display *Fashioning Bodies in the Ancient World* as part of the project Curating for Change from 10 November 2023–8 May 2024 in the Ancient Middle East Gallery.

Ten objects (1948.12.27, 1951.2.25, 1893.67.179, 1901.38.22, 1938.8.22B, 1939.8.23B, 1897.68.12, 1941.2.111, 1939.6.23B, 1941.8.043) were loaned for the exhibition *No Simple Word for Time* which ran from 24 February–4 August 2024 at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, Norwich. The exhibition was artist Jeffrey Gibson's first solo exhibition in the UK. Gibson went on to be the first indigenous artist to represent the USA at the 60th Venice Biennale.

A kola nut bowl (1942.13.369) was loaned to the Wellcome Collection for the exhibition *The Kola Nut Cannot Be Contained* from 12 July 2023–2 February 2025.

The Story Museum, Oxford borrowed two objects (1993.10.38 and 2009.46.13) for their exhibition *Here Be Dragons* co-curated by the author of *How to Train Your Dragon*, Cressida Cowell.

Photograph, manuscript, film and sound collections

There were 508 research visits to the photograph and manuscript collections requiring the retrieval of photographs, manuscripts, film and/or sound recordings. Of these, 150 came from within the University of Oxford and 75 from other UK higher education institutions. There were 238 other visitors, including staff members of other museums and students and academics from non-UK universities, as well as community members, visual artists and private researchers.

Among more notable or longer research visits were those by Sangeeta Dasgupta (Jawaharlal Nehru University) researching the life of Sarat Chandra Roy and the development of anthropology in India; Polly Bence (University of Bristol) researching the drawings and collecting practices of Horatio Robley; Chris Walton (Bern University of Applied Sciences/Stellenbosch University) preparing an edition of correspondence between composers Howard Ferguson and Arnold van Wyk; Wendy Doyon (University of Pennsylvania) researching the life and fieldwork of archaeologist Gertrude Caton-Thompson; Emily Cornish (University of Michigan) studying Hawaiian and Māori women's engagement with photography in the nineteenth century; Benoit Hazard

(Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique) researching aspects of wells and water systems in northern Kenya; Rinella Cere (Sheffield Hallam University) researching early photography in Tibet; David Coral, photographer, researching the travels and photography of mountaineer Edward Whymper in the Andes of Ecuador; Taloi Havini, artist, researching photographs of Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, and preparing an exhibition to be held at the University of Cambridge's Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology; Niti Acharya (University of Lincoln) studying women collectors of South Asian material culture; Jane Webster (Newcastle University) researching West African photography for a wider project on the transatlantic slave trade; David Zeitlyn (University of Oxford) researching photographs by anthropologist Edward Evans-Pritchard, in preparation for an exhibition on divination to be held at the Weston Library; James Aronson (Missouri Botanical Garden) researching desert trees of the world; Ivor Agyeman-Duah consulting the Robert Rattray collection of photographs from Ghana (Ashanti); Roger Hartl (Cornell University) researching the photographs of Wilfred Thesiger; Stefano Porretti (University of Turin) researching photographs of Afghanistan (Nuristan); Tara Ferguson (Oxford Brookes University) studying the indigenous Ainu people of Japan; Hazel Corak (University of Chicago) studying scrap metal recycling industries in Turkey; Esther Ginestet (Northwestern University/Paris Institute of Political Sciences) studying the social, political and intellectual life of the African Great Lakes region, with focus on Luo speakers; Parjanya Sen (University of Calcutta) researching relationships between indigenous communities of Northeast India and the British during the colonial period; Appau Junior Boayke-Yiadom, artist, researching photographs from Ghana and developing an exhibition to be held at Modern Art Oxford; and Zoe Cormack (British Museum) researching the Natalie Tobert collection relating to pottery-making in northern Sudan.



Top: Group portrait of Archdeacon Dandeson Coates Crowther (centre) with his father, Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther, and his wife. Photograph probably by G F Packer. Nigeria. Circa 1889



Above: View of Ghaf trees (*Prosopis cineraria*), a type of large acacia, in the desert near Mughshin. Photograph by Wilfred Patrick Thesiger. Wadi al 'Arad, Dhofar, Oman. November 1945

APPENDICES

D. Visitor numbers, research visits and loans (continued)

Photograph, manuscript, film and sound collections (continued)

During the second half of this year visits were received from Nawang Tsomo Kinkar (Museum of Modern Art) researching photography and Himalayan history and culture; Verity Wilson (Victoria and Albert Museum) researching French picture postcards for a wider project on the history of European folk dress; Aina Azevedo (Aix-Marseille University/Federal University of Paraíba) researching the drawing and sketching practices of anthropologists; Patricia Hayes (University of the Western Cape) researching photography in Southern Africa and in Ghana; Gro Birgit Ween (Museum of Cultural History, University of Oslo) researching early photographs of Sami people in Norway; Maren Wirth (Freie Universität Berlin) researching historic photography from East Africa, including photographs of Maasai people; James Flexner (University of Sydney) researching missionary activities and colonial collecting in Mangareva, French Polynesia; Phil Burnett (University of York) researching a missionary collection of lantern slides; Oh Soon-Hwa (Nanyang Technological University) researching boat design in Southeast Asia; Augustin Blessing Muinao (King's College London/Mizoram University) consulting Naga collections to provide historical context for a project on Naga cyber-nationalism; Elaine Alexie (University of Alberta) studying photographs from the Inuvik Region of Canada's Northwest Territories; François-Xavier Fauconnau (École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales) studying social and cultural change in northern Bougainville; Stephen Porter (University College London) studying the history of archaeological research in Palestine during the British mandate; Rachael Chambers (National Trust) researching the personal connections of Mākereti Papakura in connection with Māori *wharehau* (meeting house) Hinemihi; Shelley Saggat (Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge) researching the correspondence of anthropologist Franz Boas; Astrid Gonzalez, visual artist, researching photographs of the Chocó people of Colombia; Susannah Russell (Australian National University) studying manuscript documentation relating to several albums of Chinese (Miao) watercolours; Kalzang Dorjee Bhutia (University of Southern

California, Riverside) researching photographs of Buddhist architecture in the state of Sikkim, India; Marcos Centeno (University of Valencia) researching photographs of the Ainu; Berthe Jansen (Leiden University) researching the coin collecting of Dutch Tibetologist Johan van Manen; Barry Rollett (University of Hawai'i) researching late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century photographs of French Polynesia; Jono Waters, writer, researching the visual history of the Kariba Dam in Zimbabwe; Jennifer Morris (British Museum) researching the Borneo collections of colonial administrator/ethnologist Charles Hose; Vu Horwitz (Yale University) studying manuscript material related to anthropologist Emil Torday; and Johanna Montlouis-Gabriel (Ohio State University) researching photographs of West African hairstyles.



Above: Interior view of a Māori *whare runanga* (meeting house), known as the *Hinemihi* meeting house, at the settlement of Te Wairoa, located close to the shore of Lake Tarawera, near Rotorua. Photograph by Burton Brothers studio. Te Wairoa, near Rotorua, New Zealand. Circa 1886

Right: Portrait of an Asante mother, 'smeared over with white clay', at her baby's naming ceremony. Part of a sequence of dry plates (glass negatives) in the Robert Rattray collection of photographs from Ghana (1921–1932) that were digitised by intern Siyu Zhou

E. Interns, volunteers and work experience

Photograph, manuscript, film and sound collections

Interns in the section included Siyu Zhou, who digitised a sequence of dry plates (glass negatives) in the Robert Rattray collection of photographs from Ghana (Ashanti) in the 1920s, and who also scanned a series of commercial postcards in the Metcalf collection from Japan (<https://pittrivers-photo.blogspot.com/2024/03/the-metcalf-family-collection-of.html>); and Elana Neher (Bard Graduate Center), who digitised a collection of eighteen manuscript letters written by Franz Boas to Edward Tylor covering the period from 1888 to 1902.

Volunteers included Patti Langton, who researched and catalogued (ongoing) the Hamo Sassoon collection of photographs from Central Nigeria relating to iron smelting and metalworking, especially among the Birom; Richard Stimpson and Marcela Abadia, who took reference photographs of letters in the Tylor Papers (correspondence boxes), in preparation for a planned transcription project; Peter Momtchiloff, who researched and catalogued the John Henry Hutton collection of photographs from Nagaland, India (ongoing); Madeleine Stringer, who digitised a sequence of original prints in the Hutton collection; Julia Grieveson and Fusa McLynn, who catalogued a collection of professional prints showing arts and crafts in Japan in the 1910s; and Charlotte de Botton, who researched and catalogued a collection of photographic prints relating to two journeys made by Ronald Kaulback to Tibet in the 1930s (ongoing).

Collections

Charlie Roberts, a first-year undergraduate in archaeology and anthropology, undertook a summer internship in the Collections department as part of the University of Oxford's programme providing paid internships for Oxford students. During his four-week internship, Charlie catalogued new acquisitions including face masks made by the artist Ai Weiwei.

History of Art intern Cindy Lu catalogued a collection of Japanese material collected by anthropologist Joy Hendry.

Elena Neher from the Bard Graduate Centre, New York, joined the Collections department for a month-long internship in June 2024 and helped with the many visits we had during this time as well as cataloguing a collection of artefacts from South America donated to the museum by anthropologist Audrey Butt-Colson.

Public engagement

The learning team supported and coordinated a number of work experience placements this academic year. Year 10 students came from Cheney School, The Oxford Academy and Didcot Girls' School to spend time learning about the work of the museum. The placement with Didcot Girls' School was run in collaboration with the Multaka programme and the History of Science Museum. In all placements, students and a member of the learning team spent time working alongside and finding out about the work of the Conservation, Design, Collections (Photography, Manuscripts and Object Collections), Photographic Services, Administration, Library and Research departments.



APPENDICES

F. New acquisitions

Donations

The museum is grateful to the following individuals for their donations.

- Alex McKay** (treaty canoe replica and the replica megaphone ‘Treaty of Niagara 1764’; 2024.9)
- David Ashcroft** (collection of carved wooden colonial and commemorative figures for the early tourist trade in Nigeria. Carved by Yoruba artist Thomas Ona Odulate; 2023.46)
- Linda Bradley** (six wooden figures representing missionaries and a map of Burundi; 2024.7)
- Audrey Butt-Colson** (a selection of objects donated by the anthropologist Audrey Butt Colson and her husband Robin during their global travels; 2023.47)
- Rosemary Crill** (white ground fabric with yellow painting of Buddha’s feet from Tibet; 2023.35)
- Jarnda Councillor-Barns** (two digital artworks by Jarnda Councillor-Barns (Perth, Western Australia) drawing on postcards in the PRM collection; 2024.11)
- Krystyna Deuss** (a collection of Guatemalan textiles; 2023.37)
- Nancy Lynah Hood** (a selection of sixteen thimbles from the extensive thimble collection of Nancy Hood; 2023.29)
- Natan Itonga** (traditional basket from Kiribati made from sea shells and pandanus leaves. The basket was made by Ms Bikam Kaumai, traditional handicraft maker; 2023.30)
- Hans Ragnar Mathisen** (artwork, map showing Sámi homeland by Sámi artist Hans Ragnar Mathisen, signed by the artist; 2023.33)
- David Thompson** (tatted doily and 3D-printed tatting shuttle; 2023.38)
- Roger Moulard** (645 negatives taken in Tibet in the 1940s by Darrell Willis; 2023.40)
- Kirsty Ryder** (charm made using a horseshoe, hag stone, feathers, rowan berries and other natural materials; 2024.8)
- Alexis Seymour-Cooper** (24 prints of Tibet and Sikkim taken by Lionel Hughes-Hallett circa 1900; 2023.48)
- John Frederick Shaw** (decorative necklace from Yemen with coloured glass inset and pendant coins; 2023.31).

Purchases

- Three Naga protest cloths were purchased for the museum by Dr Vibha Joshi. The cloths were made in memory of Luingamla Muinao and Rose Ningshen, young women raped and killed by the Indian Army and military personnel; 2023.32
- Evenki beadwork made by artist and knowledge holder Galina Veretnova. Acquired by the museum during a reconciliation ritual in October 2022 as part of the project Wandering in Other Worlds; 2023.34
- Felt shepherd’s coat and waistcoat made by Salim, the last known Kurdistan felt maker. The objects were commissioned by the PRM and were collected by Renas Babakir as part of the project Documenting the Lost Practice of Kurdish Felt and Felt-making in the Foothills of the Largo Mountains, funded by the British Museum Endangered Material Knowledge programme; 2023.36
- Musical instrument called a *Tonkori*, made from wood by Oki Kanō. The *Tonkori* is an Ainu stringed instrument that originates from Sakhdin. Purchased with funds from the Art Fund New Collecting Awards. Commissioned by Marenka Thompson-Odlum on behalf of the Pitt Rivers Museum; 2023.41
- ‘Ukouk 2’. Carved wooden sculpture from Katsura wood made by Tōru Kaizawa. The 60x60 cm circular carving features Ainu motifs and has five carved hands modelled from women of different generations in Kaizawa-san’s family. Purchased with funds from the Art Fund New Collecting Awards. Commissioned by Marenka Thompson-Odlum on behalf of the Pitt Rivers Museum; 2023.42
- 22 copper and paper tags named ‘Fire Sale’ made by Gwaai Edenshaw. The tags are made from copper which has been hammered with Haida motifs. Each tag is linked to a specific museum object as identified by the green tags (used for our reference). The tags are a commentary on the ‘price of things’, specifically Haida objects in the museum, and illustrate the discrepancy in ‘value’. Purchased with funds from the Art Fund New Collecting Award. Commissioned by Marenka Thompson-Odlum on behalf of the PRM; 2023.43

- Dress made by fashion designer Manaola Yap. The dress is made to simulate Hawaiian barkcloth. It is made up of six pieces: a large, pleated skirt, a bodice, a mesh crinoline, two pleated fan attachments and a pleated neck attachment. The fabric is dyed blue and printed with a repeated *ohe Kāpala* design. Purchased with funds from the Art Fund New Collecting Award. Commissioned by Marenka Thompson-Odlum on behalf of the PRM; 2023.44
- Plaster, paper and faux hair mask of Pitt-Rivers (the person) made by Jaalen Edenshaw. The mask is made up of copies of the various transactions through which Haida objects were purchased and ended up in the museum. The piece is called ‘Ledger Mask’ and is part of the ‘Fire Sale’ piece (see 2023.43). Purchased with funds from the Art Fund New Collecting Award. Commissioned by Marenka Thompson-Odlum on behalf of the PRM; 2023.45
- Photographic print of masquerade performer lying on floor with mask in background, from ‘Men of Ogele’ series by Zinadu Saro-Wiwa. Purchased from the artist; 2023.50
- Transfers**
- No transfers were made during the reporting year 2023/24.
- Balfour Library**
- The Balfour Library was grateful to receive donations from the following in 2023/24:
- Bagpipe Society, Ross Bowden, Jeremy Coote, Elizabeth Edwards, Mike O’Hanlon, Christopher Morton, Michael Quentin Morton, Madeleine Ridout, Analyn Salvador-Amores, Jane Webster.

APPENDICES

G. Staff publications

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Basu, P. 2024. 'Towards the Pluriversal Museum: From Epistemic Violence to Ecologies of Knowledges'. *Museums and Social Issues*.

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Modest, Wayne, Claudia Augustat, **A. Coutu, T. Wilson.** (eds.) 2023. "Spaces of Care – Confronting Colonial Afterlives in European Ethnographic Museums." Transcript Verlag Publishing.

Hicks, D. 2023. 'Declining Whiteness'. In *Empire Windrush: Reflections on 75 Years & More of the Black British Experience*, edited by O. Wambu. London: Hachette.

Hicks, D. 2023. 'The British Museum is an anachronism – here's how to fix it'. *The Daily Telegraph*

Hicks, D. 2023. 'The last remaining argument against restitution has now been lost'. *The Art Newspaper*

Hicks, D. 2023. 'Are museums obsolete?' *Architectural Review*

Morton, C. 2024. 'Enfolding History: Identities, Performances and Contexts in an Early Ethnographic Album from Natal, South Africa.' *History of Photography*, 1–18.

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Nielsen, V. 2024. 'Krav om anerkendelse på Sydafrikas museer og vidensinstitutioner'. *Baggrund* 15 April.

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Nielsen, V. 2023. 'Diversifying Public Commemorations in Cape Town and Copenhagen'. *De-Commémoration: Removing Statues and Renaming Places*, edited by S. Gensburger and J. Wüstenberg, Berghahn Books.

Nielsen, V. 2023. 'The Colonial Roots of Botany – Legacies of Empire in the Botanic Gardens of Oxford and Kew'. *Museum Management and Curatorship* Vol. 38 issue 6: 696–712.

Van Broekhoven, L. 2024. 'Unearthing Colonial Complicities in Maasai PRM collections'. In *Pragmatic Imagination and the New Museum Anthropology*, edited by Christina Hodge and Christina Kreps. Routledge. Routledge Studies in Anthropology and Museums. pp. 135–160.

Van Broekhoven, L. 2024. 'Entangled Entitlements and Shuar Tsantsa (Shrunken Heads).' In *The Routledge Handbook of Museums, Heritage and Death*, edited by Trish Biers and Mary Kate Clary. Routledge, Routledge Handbooks. pp. 208–226.



Above: Close up view of a pair of moose-hide moccasins with floral embroidery during a visit from Yukon First Nations delegates
© Mike Thomas/Yukon Arts Centre

Art Fund_



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