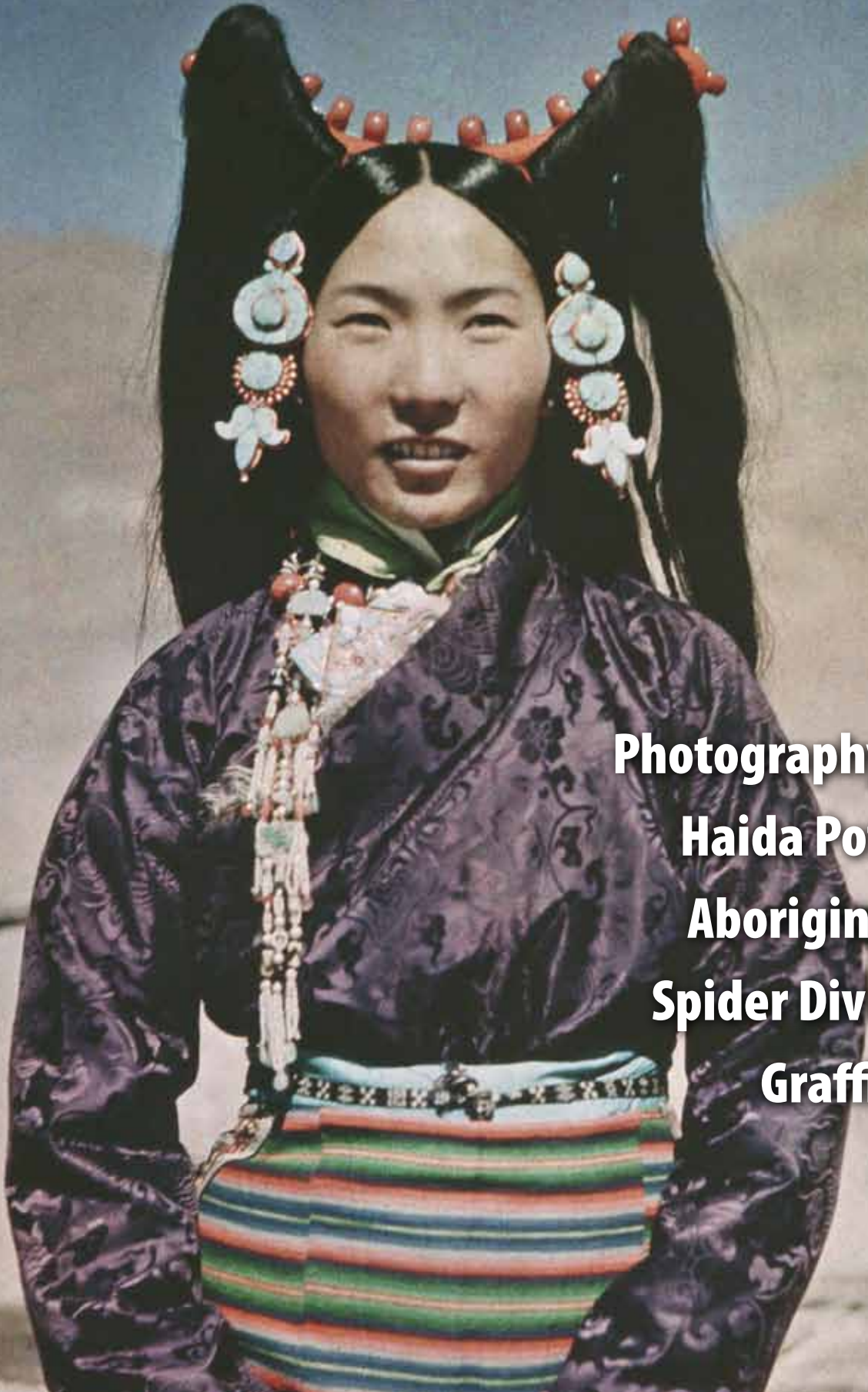


The Friends of the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford Magazine



Photography in Tibet
Haida Potlatch
Aboriginal Art
Spider Divination
Graffiti

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Editorial

I am still pinching myself that I am able to edit a publication for such a wonderful museum and at the privilege I have of working with such erudite and helpful staff members at the Museum and personnel on the editorial committee. I would like to thank everyone involved in putting this issue together. I would particularly mention the efforts of Alan Hughes. As Graphic Designer he has put in long, faithful and skilled service and we thank him so much for all his hard work.

We would like to welcome Juliet Eccles who will take over his responsibilities from the next issue and thank her for the enthusiasm she has shown. Going forward we hope to bring you the best quality magazine we can and would invite you to send any suggestions to my email address on the back page including any offers to write an article for the publication.

We want you to enjoy the magazine as much as we enjoy putting it together. We are particularly looking for younger visitors who would like to write a piece about their favourite object and draw it for our delight. Please see as an example the charming piece from Dora Thompson, aged 12, on Page 10, 'A Younger View'.

However, we welcome ideas and contributions from members of all ages so if you have something wonderful to contribute or have been sitting on your ideas please feel free to contact me – don't hide your light under a bushel! We want the magazine to reflect the whole of our membership so if you feel we have unintentionally neglected any important area we want to hear from you!

Dawn Osborne, Editor

Cover image: The wife of the dzongpon of Gyantse 1936 1998.157.87-P © Pitt Rivers

AUTUMN 2017 has been another outstandingly successful period – with over 455,000 visitors 2016/17 was the Pitt Rivers' most successful year ever. 35,200 visitors made it our busiest September compared to previous years: nearly 7,000 up! It takes the continuous effort of all staff to deliver a visit that keeps everyone coming back for more. On 29 September the Curiosity Carnival event was held in Oxford. We had over 1,700 people in the Museum. It was our biggest Public Engagement with Research events ever and a resonating success. The ending of the VERVE project has made us all realise how much the museum has been transformed in the past year. A fantastic film was made at the end of the project that tells how the project was lived by the team: <https://vimeo.com/235761584>

The Old Power Station (OPS) project continues its diligent work cataloguing and packing the collections stored at OPS; over 60,000 have been packed now. The lift into the Radcliffe Science Library (RSL) has been delivered and the racking for the RSL sub-basement will start in the next months so that we can start moving the collections in by February 2018.

The Library has moved up to transform the first floor, integrating our books and manuscripts collections into the research area, thus ensuring that research and teaching on the collections remain at the core of our activities.

In the next few months we will be transforming the shop; we successfully applied for a minor works grant and also received 'in kind' support from Conran and Partners who worked closely with our team of technicians to develop the new designs.

Laura van Broekhoven,
Museum Director

Between Friends

ONE of the Friends' most exciting events is the annual Kenneth Kirkwood Day. The 2018 event is being organised, as usual, by Shahin Bekhradnia, and the topic is *Communication* in four different world cultures and mediums. Four expert speakers will cover its varied aspects from the geography of Internet groups via Brazilian ethnomusicology and the concept of *tong* in Chinese political culture to wayfinding in the Pacific.

More details are on the back page and in the enclosed flyer, so save the date: Saturday, 10 March. The income from this event contributes to the Kenneth Kirkwood Memorial Fund, established in memory of Kenneth's contribution to the Friends, of which he was a founding member in 1984. It funds aspects of the Museum staff's work.

This year I am delighted that it has contributed to the PRM's important work on decolonialisation, which recognises our responsibility towards the communities whose cultures, including some human remains, are represented in the Museum. Two staff members who are involved in the care of this sensitive material, and the removal of some of it from Osney to the Radcliffe Science Library basement, were supported this year. They presented a paper entitled *Moving Human Remains* to the annual conference of the International Committee of Museums of Ethnography at the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC. The theme of the conference was *Migration, Home and Belonging*. Another staff member received a KK grant to attend the conference *Reckoning with History: Colonial Pasts, Museum Futures and doing Justice in the Present* at the Research Centre for Material Culture in Leiden in the Netherlands.

Gillian Morriss-Kay,
Chair of the Friends



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New subscription rates

After nine years at the current rate, the subscription is increasing on 1 May, 2018. If you change to Direct Debit by 1 May 2019 you can continue at the old rate until then. Please see your recent letter from the Membership Secretary for all the details.

Please contact: Membership Secretary **Rosemary King**
at: rhking17@gmail.com or **01367 242433**

Friends help purchase new Aboriginal art



Christian Thompson on the Lower Gallery next to the new acquisitions;
Below: Othering Capt Cook glimpsed between visitors at the opening event

Both photos: Edmund Blok

IN June 2017 the Museum redisplayed the central section of the Aboriginal art displays on the first floor balcony to show three works by the Australian Aboriginal artist Christian Thompson (Bidjara people, Queensland). Two of the works are from his recent series *Museum of Others*, and one of them is an earlier work *Desert Melon* which was gifted by the artist after his exhibition *We Bury Our Own* in 2012. The Museum bought three pieces in total from Thompson's *Museum of Others* series with the assistance of the Friends, the V&A Purchase Grant Fund, and the Museum's own acquisition funds.

Why did the Museum buy them?

In 2010 Christian Thompson became one of the first two Aboriginal students to study at the University of Oxford. During



his studies in Fine Art, Thompson was invited by me to make an exhibition in response to the Museum's photographic archive. The resulting exhibition *We Bury Our Own* (2012) was a great success and a website and video about this exhibition are available at www.prm.ox.ac.uk/christianthompson.html

Thompson has continued to draw inspiration from the PRM's collections and histories, and the series *Museum of Others* critically engages with the Museum's history and those who were

significant in the development of its Oceania collections. In the two works from the series displayed (*Othering the Explorer, James Cook* and *Othering the Anthropologist, Walter Baldwin Spencer*), Thompson creates a mask from portraits of these two historical figures, asking: "how did you divide up and classify your world?" and in so doing inverts the colonial gaze. This artwork is particularly significant given the new display of objects collected during Cook's voyages in Oceania at the opposite end of this gallery, as well as W. Baldwin Spencer's role in the development of the PRM's Australia collections. The display previously contained paintings of ground art made by Spencer at the Wollungua totemic ceremony of the Warumungu people of Northern Territory and donated to the Museum in 1903.

Why has the Museum changed the display?

The Museum's permanent displays have always been refreshed periodically to reflect new acquisitions or to enhance the conservation of objects. But the main reason to install this new display was to replace artworks by a European observer of Aboriginal Australian art from more than 100 years ago with some contemporary artwork by an Aboriginal artist. The Museum undertook a significant amount of audience research before and after the display was refreshed, and the findings show a 17% rise in interest by visitors to the new central display, and 30% of staff members stating that they will use the display more in their work as a result. Most of the artwork in the Australian art displays was made in the recent past, with many of the Arnhem Land paintings created in the 1980s. It is important to remind our audiences that being an Aboriginal artist today can mean many things – you might live in a remote location and make artworks that reference more traditional styles, or you might live in an urban centre such as Melbourne and make digital art. All of this artwork reflects the extreme diversity of Aboriginal experience today, which is reflected in the diversity of art production, and the Clore Learning Balcony is an ideal location to discuss with students the issues that Christian Thompson's work raises, such as Aboriginal identity, colonialism, representation, museum history, and many other themes.

Dr Christopher Morton

Curator of Photograph and Manuscript Collections

The great box



Photo: Robert Rappaport

As Friends will remember, in 2015 the Museum's seminar room was taken over for a month by Haida carvers Gwaai and Jaalen Edenshaw, who made an exact replica of the 'Great Box' down to the direction, angle and depth of every carving stroke. The new box went home to Haida Gwaii, along with the knowledge of its master artist's technique. It has been used to teach Haida art to young people and has inspired many in the community.

In March, I had the opportunity to see the new box in action, at a potlatch to witness Gwaai and Jaalen's father Guujaaw take on the responsibilities of the hereditary chief of the Ravens of Skedans. I think I am the first Oxford faculty member and PRM staff member to be formally invited to a potlatch, and it was a very great honour.

Hosted by the Ravens of Skedans at Skidegate, the first day of the potlatch was a memorial service for the beloved deceased chief Gidansda. The second day of the potlatch saw Guujaaw installed in his new chiefly role as Gidansda. Events included the raising of a memorial pole with clan crests just outside the community centre at Skidegate, two memorable feasts of traditional Haida food including seafood chowder, k'aaw (herring roe on kelp), and sea urchins. Dancing on both days featuring masked dancers representing supernatural beings and crests associated with the Ravens of Skedans. The second day of the potlatch wound up about 3am: it was quite the 'do'!

The new Great Box was front and centre, quite literally, in the

potlatch, being placed right beside the speaker's podium with the hereditary chiefs' table curved around this key space. The large TIFF file I supplied of the front of the box was used to make an enormous banner which hung behind the hereditary chiefs' table, so that the design showed as a backdrop to the chiefs and their regalia. The design for the chief's seat used as part of the ceremony was taken from a sibling box that Gwaai and Jaalen have found at the Field Museum in Chicago as the result of the PRM/Great Box project.

During the installation of the new chief Gidansda, the new Great Box was filled with the chief's regalia. Once again, it is a box of clan treasures, used as it was meant to be before the old one was collected. It was opened by his close women relatives and matriarchs, and they unpacked it and dressed him in his regalia before he danced a Chief's Dance to accept the role placed upon him with the regalia. Over a thousand people in the hall witnessed this transformation and acknowledged Guujaaw's new role and title, which is what a potlatch is: a gathering to conduct clan business, witnessed by guests who are feasted and given gifts to honour their responsibility to uphold what they saw.

This event was precisely what the revisions to the Indian Act, the Potlatch Ban (1884), forbade and what the assimilation policies tried to kill. It was about the continuity of lineage and community history, renewing governance, and asserting Haida identity in the face of that history. For me, the new Great Box is a symbol of the homecoming of all the Haida items that were removed from Haida Gwaii during those very difficult decades, and a symbol of the determination of the Haida people to retain their culture. It was wonderful to see the Pitt Rivers Museum contributing so strongly to this process.

The Great Box project has sparked the recent fund to support visits to Pitt Rivers Museum collections by indigenous communities of origin. See more on this fund and how you can support such work at: www.prm.ox.ac.uk/support

Professor Laura Peers
Curator for the Americas Collections



Photo: Geoff Horner

Top: Historic and new Great Boxes together, Pitt Rivers Museum, 2015. The historic Great Box PRM 1884.57.25 was acquired by General Pitt-Rivers before 1877; Left: New Great Box at potlatch for Chief Gidansda, Skidegate, 2017. The box is flanked by clan coppers, witnessing and carrying clan honour, and the chief's seat

Spider divination in the Cameroon

DAVID ZEITLYN, Professor of Social and Cultural Anthropology in Oxford gave the friends a suitably spellbinding talk for the October lecture. Since 1985 David has been visiting Cameroon where he has studied *ngam* or divination using spiders or crabs as a tool for decision making. Male diviners clear an area around a hole where spiders about as large as the palm of a hand live and the diviners use a circular guard, often a pot without a bottom, to cordon off a working space into which they put a stick and a stone on opposite sides and place leaves with divination markings over the hole. After covering the pot with a lid to simulate night for these nocturnal arachnids they then tap quickly on the pot and leave the whole apparatus, coming back about half an hour later to read the results. They previously devised a question with two answers allocating one to the stick and one to the stone. If the leaves are clustered around or point towards the stick or stone the answer is clear. The experiment can be repeated with

polarity reversed to verify results or to clarify them.

With matters such as who will be chief, whether a spouse has been unfaithful and whether someone is guilty of a criminal offence the spider's answer is taken extremely seriously, although experienced diviners may determine that a spider is lying and put down medicine to calibrate



Photos and line drawing by David Zeitlyn

Above: Spider Divination Pot; Below: Spider Used for Divination

their spider at regular intervals. If the leaves are pulled down the hole this is often interpreted as death but it can be of a pig or a cow, so a further question will be necessary to clarify matters. Most popular are questions about health and marriage.

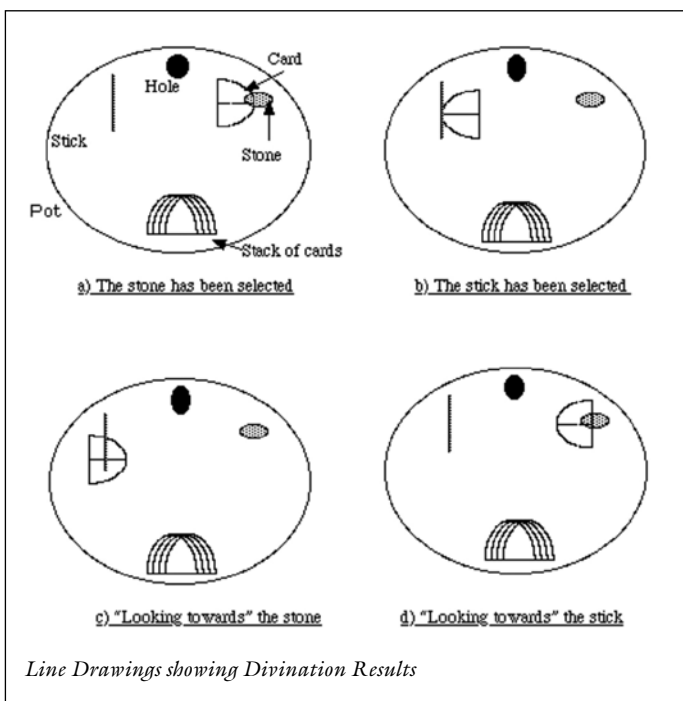
Professor Zeitlyn has analysed over 600 real cases and also has used a computer simulation to test diviners and found a remarkable consistency in what they say about particular results,



proving there is a body of learning and training behind the practice. Relying on spiders arose out of a myth that the spider used to be able to speak before he disturbed the

ancestors, but belief in their powers is still strong especially in rural areas. Professor Zeitlyn has been offered his own spider as a gift instead of his computer simulation. So far he has managed not to offend by explaining it is too cold for the poor spiders in England!

Dawn Osborne Editor and Friend



Line Drawings showing Divination Results

A future for graffiti?

GRAFFITI, like posters, command our attention. Whether witty or uninspired, visually sophisticated or crude, optically arresting or numbingly repetitious, they are very difficult to ignore. Casting our eyes as we proceed through city streets or rural landscapes, they fall unwantedly into our field of vision and clamour for sustained regard. However hard we try, we cannot avoid them. Despite these noteworthy similarities, there is, of course, the major difference. Posters, carrying legally tolerated messages, are stuck up in already-designated, rented-out spaces; they form an integral part of the regulated townscape and rural roadsides. They are where they are meant to be, and where town halls allow them to be. (And if they are put up anywhere else they are usually removed.) In contrast, graffiti is not planned by municipal authorities and cuts directly through any sense of a planned environment. That is their point. They are an unofficial means of redefining surfaces and turning public spaces into political ones.

Professor Jeremy MacClancy
Professor of Anthropology, Brookes University

Photo: Bloomsbury



Example of graffiti by Banksy

'Mind the Gap' Loans from the Museum

OFTEN the only way visitors are aware that the Museum lends out objects is that there is a gap in the displays with a photograph in its place and a label indicating that the piece is on loan for an exhibition. The object may have travelled half the world away or just down the road to the Ashmolean, but in any event it has entered a new life with different interpretation placed on it and is inhabiting another home. This activity may seem simple... like packing a suitcase, taking it to its temporary destination, unpacking and placing it in a showcase, but that could not be further from the truth.

Every step of the way the Museum needs to care for an object on loan, from the starting point when conservation and collections staff need to assess whether the item is too fragile to lend, requires a particular display support or whether the proposed destination offers an environmentally stable and secure environment.

The loan of the six hundred year old Kongo raffia cushion-cover to the exhibition *The Global City, Lisbon* in the Renaissance at the National Museum of Ancient Art, Lisbon, in 2017 is a case in point. The aim of this exhibition was to recreate the mercantile heart of Renaissance Europe's foremost global city. The Kongo cushion cover was an important part of this story, as West African luxury goods, such as this, are known to have been imported to Lisbon at that time. Radiocarbon dating of the cushion-cover undertaken in Oxford in 2001 fixed the date of approximately AD 1400, making this Kongo cushion-cover one of the earliest Equatorial African textiles to arrive in Europe.

This rare textile clearly needed to be cared for while on loan. During transport and display it was supported on a padded back-board covered in cloth which had been tested for acidity



Kongo cushion-cover (1886.1.254.1) loaned to the National Museum of Ancient Art, Lisbon

and damaging chemicals. Having asked the Lisbon museum for readings of relative humidity and temperature for the relevant gallery, we were concerned about significant fluctuations which would be a threat to this fragile cloth. As a result we requested that a buffering product (Artsorb) be introduced into the showcase calibrated to 50% relative humidity, and radio-telemetric monitors installed to send us regular digital reports of the conditions inside the showcase. Through this use of technology we were able to ensure that this artefact was not placed at risk.

Other ways of caring for artefacts whilst on loan are less high tech than this but equally finessed. The PRM conservation team have a reputation in the museum world for exceptional packing of crates with custom-made cut-outs in Plastazote (foam) which were previously done by hand but now make use of a laser cutter. Alternatively, large textiles are often rolled, with 'sausage' padding to reduce vibrations. Couriers from the Collections or Conservation sections have training in 'condition reporting' the object at all stages of the loan to record any damage and what to look out for during transport, unpacking and installation.

The Museum has many more requests for loans than we can accede to with current resourcing. The Kongo cushion cover alone has been loaned to three venues within the past ten years, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York in 2016 for the exhibition *Kongo: Power and Majesty*. There are clear priorities for selecting borrowers. At the top of this list are loans to indigenous communities, such as the loan of a Salish blanket which went out to Vancouver in November 2017 and which will be able to be viewed at the Museum of Anthropology and studied with weavers and members of the Musqueam community.

Julia Nicholson,

Curator and Joint Head of Collections



Above: Crate (painted PRM pink) containing Kongo cushion-cover arrives at cargo terminal, Lisbon airport; Right: Salish blanket (1884.88.9) destined for loan to the Museum of Anthropology Vancouver and the Musqueam people; Far right: Rolled Salish blanket packed in crate with padded buffers to protect it from unnecessary movement



All images © Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford

Photography and Tibet



CLARE HARRIS, Professor of Visual Anthropology in the School of Anthropology at Oxford, Curator for the Asian Collections at the PRM and a Fellow of Magdalen College is the author of *Photography in Tibet*, the first review of the history of photography in Tibet and the Himalayas. Professor Harris's latest book is the result of fieldwork in Tibetan communities and archival research and looks at the attempts of both native Tibetans and foreigners to document Tibet through the photographic medium.

The book describes how in the late 19th century Tibet remained isolated and many of the early photographs were the result of British military forays. Mainly landscapes and mountains, they also included early photographs of incredible masked dances in monasteries. Portraits of Tibetans in the context of 'racial types' taken by Benjamin Simpson, soldier and medic were exhibited in the International Exhibition of 1862 in London and awarded a gold medal. Photographic prints of Tibet became popular, along with prayer wheels and skull bowls, as souvenirs of this remote land, so much so that 'Tibetan' photos were often faked in nearby Darjeeling in north India.

In the early 20th century opportunities increased for access to Tibet by explorers and important photographs were taken by

English, French, Swedish and Russian photographers including the first photographs of the Potala, the Palace of the Dalai Lamas which were featured in *National Geographic*. Often presented in an imperialistic light, photos were sent home from the front to hit breakfast tables in newspapers in the first mass consumption of such images, but this period also saw the earliest fumbles towards an ethnographic approach in the work of British civil servants Charles Bell and Hugh Richardson. The latter now remains an authentic record of life in Tibet under a truly Tibetan regime, before the influence of China. European and American missionaries also began to visit Tibet, however since they were documenting their attempts to Christianise the population they were coming at the exercise from an entirely different perspective and the photographs of a crushed Tibetan whose protective amulet box had failed to protect a goat against a bullet are both pathetic and shocking to modern eyes. A sympathetic photographic treatment of Tibetan Buddhism was left to an Indian woman Li Gotami Govinda whose important work documented religious paintings, sculptures, buildings and individuals from the point of view of a convert.

The second half of the book concentrates on native Tibetan photography and the importance of image adoption as part of religious practice. Images of the 14th Dalai Lama were used in amulets in the mid 20th century in a spiritual fight against Chinese invasion and he, himself, aware of the importance of images became a photographer. These visual sensibilities have



Above left: *Dasang Dandul Tsarong New Year in Lhasa in 1937 1998.157.95-P*; Above: *The wife of the dzongpan of Gyantse 1936 1998.157.87-P*

been incorporated in the way that he has presented himself in pictures of himself as a simple monk in recent times in contrast to early photographs of him in sumptuous robes. The fact that his image is banned in China and, therefore now in Tibet, emphasises the importance of the image, clearly regarded as potentially dangerous to authority. Photography has been adopted in a legacy of imbuing spiritual power to images long known in Tibetan culture and religious practices. The belief that images have power gives them literal power, forces that clearly make the Chinese very uncomfortable.

Finally the book tells the story of secular photography by upper and middle class Tibetan families and the effect on this of the cultural revolution imposed by the Chinese (Chinese photography of Tibet clearly being charged with the mission of perpetuating official agendas). Photographs of protest against Chinese oppression clearly being unpopular with the authorities and imagery tightly controlled, the book ends with a survey of efforts by exiled (or refugee) Tibetans in the field of photography and art to highlight the plight of their country.

Filled with interesting and rare photographs, this is a sensitive and detailed treatment of a fascinating subject.

Dawn Osborne, Editor and Friend

The Musical Instruments Museum in Brussels

THE Musical Instruments Museum in Brussels (MIM) was founded in 1877 and is today regarded as one of the most important of its kind in the world. It is now a federal scientific institution and one of the four departments of Belgium's Royal Museums of Art and History. Its origins lie in two collections, each comprising about 100 instruments. The first was that of the Brussels Royal Conservatory, bought by the state in 1872 and the second was a gift to King Leopold from Rajah Sourindia Togore of Calcutta in 1876. Today the collection contains over 8,000 instruments of extraordinary international diversity, quality and rarity. Most of them are held in storage and about 1,200 are displayed in the museum.



Much of the early expansion of the collection is thanks to the first curator, Victor-Charles Mahillon. Born into a family of musical instrument manufacturers, he had a deep interest and knowledge of music. The initial gathering of an extraordinary array of over 3,000 instruments during the first 30 years of the museum's existence, many of them unconventional and original, was due to his connections with philanthropists and amateurs and his clever use of Belgium's diplomatic connections overseas.

The museum ranges over four floors. All visitors receive an audio guide with recordings of many of the instruments. The basement display is entitled *Musicus Mechanicus* and is devoted to mechanical, electronic and electrical music making. There are clocks and bells, and a 'componium', a 19th century instrument consisting of a complex system

of cylinders that can create an infinite variety of tunes. Another intriguing exhibit is a barrel organ called 'The Dentist' which was played to soothe patients' pain when dentists used to treat them in the street. A modern version of an electrical instrument called the Theremin, invented in Russia in 1818, provides a glimpse of Soviet history. In the early 20th century it created great interest among composers. The inventor, a physicist and musician called Termen was sent to the west to promote the Soviet Union's technological superiority, but was eventually abducted and returned to Russia by the Russian secret service.

The first floor houses traditional instruments from around the world. A whole corridor is dedicated to different kinds of ancient hornpipe, including a 20th century elephant tusk ceremonial transverse horn from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Able to produce only a single tone, the hornpipe's piercing sound makes it an ideal signal instrument for formal occasions. In another corner is an array of stringed instruments, mostly from the Balkans and Eastern Europe. The oldest piece in the MIM collection is exhibited here, a Mesopotamian shoulder harp, discovered in Egypt.

The next floors take the visitor through a chronological exhibition of western classical music, with beautifully preserved instruments of the kind that appear in story and history books: lutes, viols, keyboards and stringed instruments ranging

from a 16th century Flemish virginal to a 1786 Stein grand piano. Mozart was apparently a great admirer of Stein instruments.

The museum building itself is a delight. Originally the premises of the grand Old England department store, designed by the architect Paul Saintenoy in the late 19th century, it is one of the finest Art Nouveau constructions in Brussels. The building was fully restored in the late 1990s and the museum reopened in 2000. The beautiful curling wrought iron and glass façade, elaborate staircases and highly decorated lift provide an enchanting setting for the collection. On the top floor of the building visitors can dine or have a coffee in the vaulted, light-filled café restaurant while gazing over the panorama of the city through huge arched windows.



Dorothy Walker Friend



Top: The Museum of Musical Instruments, Brussels; Far left: The Componium (C19); Left: Congolese transverse horn (C20); Above: Flemish harpsichord (C17)

All images © mim, Brussels

Curiosity carnival

THE Pitt Rivers and other Oxford Museums including the Museum of Natural History and the Ashmolean took part in this European wide event, joining hundreds of cities across the continent to celebrate the value of research. European funding was provided for a night of fun interactive learning. There really was so much going on it was impossible to attend everything!

In the Pitt Rivers there was a noticeable Tibetan theme with poetry reading and dance demonstrations from the department of Tibetan studies. Participants in the poetry class were treated to butter tea (and snacks also made out of it with roasted barley and sugar) and the 13th Dalai Lama's 'Ode to Tibet' with his descriptions of landscape, sky, people, food, spirituality and music being the reasons why he missed Lhasa when exiled to British India in 1910. Additionally we heard love poems of the 6th Dalai Lama who, realising that monastic life was not his calling, lived an aristocratic life with long hair and silver

jewellery, wooing the ladies with the lucky ones' parents painting their houses yellow as a point of pride! The highlight and finale was singing of the poems in the original Tibetan in traditional dress.

However the culture on offer in the Pitt Rivers also extended as far as Ancient Greek music, cabaret, Korean language classes, neuro cocktails (alcoholic with a scientific twist) and objects illustrating how people are remembered when they die including mourning jewellery, carved wooden items, manuscripts and facebook pages!

There was just time to jump next door for scholarly talks from Professor Marcus Du Sautoy on the relationship of sound/music and symmetry and Robin Dunbar on how music has been proven to provide pain relief through social bonding. Given the Pitt Rivers extensive collection of music instruments the whole thing hung together rather nicely!

Dawn Osborne Editor and Friend



© Photo: Dawn Osborne

Above: Tibetan Poetry

Pitt Youth Action Team – a night at the Museum

ON Saturday 14 October 2017 the Pitt Youth Action Team (Pitt YAT) hosted their first Museum Takeover event from 7-9pm. The Pitt YAT is made up of 20 young people aged 14-19. I convene this supported by Andy McLellan (Head of Education), and it meets once a month at the Museum on a Saturday morning. The young people come from all over Oxfordshire. Many have joined independently; some joined because a friend was in the group.

We decided through group discussion that the theme of our first Takeover event would be 'Magical Soirée', based on objects in the collection that interested members in the group and thinking about what would make an appealing event that we could market. We aimed to sell 150 tickets, and decided to price these at £4 per ticket.

We planned that the event would involve specially designed light projections, an object trail that morphed into a tour, object handling, hands-on activities such as biscuit decorating and potion



Above: Projections in the Pitt Rivers Court as part of the Magical Soirée Takeover event organised by the Pitt Youth Action Team on 14 October 2017; Left: Pitt Youth Action Team members lead object handling as part of the Magical Soirée Takeover event

making, as well as face-painting. We divided up event planning roles, taking on different areas of responsibility such as production, marketing, collections research and activity planning. The group thought that Live Music was a key part of an appealing event, and one of group asked the local four-piece band The Land Girls to play.

The month before the event was hectic with everyone working hard to get everything ready. It was a big success. 162 people attended the event, including the Youth Panel from the Natural History Museum

and Ashmolean Museum, as well the National Gallery Young Producers. The event generated an income of £553 which will be used towards the next Pitt YAT Takeover event.

The Pitt YAT is supported by a Young Roots grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund and is run in partnership with OYAP (formerly Oxfordshire Youth Arts Partnership) Trust.

Katherine Rose,

Education Officer, Secondary and Young People

Images: © Pitt Rivers Museum

GLAM: University support for the PRM

Fiona Gourley and Heidi Kurtz are key members of GLAM, the University of Oxford organisation responsible for Gardens, Museums and Libraries that was set up two years ago. I recently spent a fascinating hour with Fiona and Heidi asking about their work with the PRM. Here are some of their answers.

What does GLAM do?

In a word, fundraising! The Ashmolean and Bodleian already had dedicated fundraising teams but the smaller museums and the Botanic Gardens did not – hence GLAM. Fiona, its Head of Development, works mainly with the Museum of Natural History and the Botanic Gardens, while Heidi, the Senior Development Manager, has been focusing on the Pitt Rivers and History of Science Museums. Their main role is to raise funds from major donors, while Catherine House, the development officer, applies for support from trusts and foundations.

How do you support the Pitt Rivers?

We are helping fund the exciting five-year plan of Dr Laura Van Broekhoven, the PRM Director. Highlights of this include reaching out to non-typical museum attendees (e.g. refugees and forced migrants), welcoming people with dementia and their carers into the Museum; giving more prominence to the fantastic textile collection; setting up residencies so artists can interact with the collections; and enabling indigenous peoples to reconnect with PRM objects from their communities (the ‘Origins and Futures’ project).

A recent success here has been the funding Catherine secured from the Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund to enhance and improve the PRM’s textiles and costume collection, particularly the Balfour Paul textile collections from the Middle East. This will involve refugees from those areas who understand the significance and meaning of the pieces.



What have been your priorities over the last couple of years?

In the past, funding came mainly from government, the University and major foundations, but these sources are diminishing. So the team’s main objective is to help realise the Director’s priorities by



Above: Repairing a Japanese mask. One of the ‘Need, Make, Use’ events; Bottom left: Jali Fily Cissokho and his Kora, a harp made from a calabash gourd at a VERVE day

broadening the PRM’s philanthropic income, particularly from individuals, legacies, businesses and trusts.

Heidi has been identifying and building up a new group of potential philanthropists who are interested in the Pitt Rivers work. They have been meeting Laura and key staff to understand her vision and identify areas of the museum’s work that they would like to support. As part of this, the team have organised some very

successful events, including Laura’s official welcome with Sir David Attenborough as guest of honour, and a private view of the new Christian Thompson artworks.

Two recent projects have been the Pitt Rivers’ direct mail appeal to alumni to support the ‘Origins & Futures’ project and the ‘Visitor Giving’ programme which trains Front of House staff to welcome visitors and to ask them to make donations to the Pitt Rivers. In addition we are aiming to increase our commercial income by revitalising our shop with the help of designer Sophie Conran. As a result of all of these activities, we hope to diversify our income streams and make the Museum more financially resilient in the long term.

How can the Friends of the Pitt Rivers Museum help?

The Director really appreciates the funds that the Friends provide, particularly as seed money that can attract external support for new projects. We would be delighted to help the Friends in any way that we can in raising money, in attracting new members and in discussing legacies. The Friends might also like to discuss with the Director a particular area of the five-year plan to support: people are always more generous if they know what their money will be used for.

Jonathan Bard, Friend



A younger view – Gotama or Buddha

ITHINK that the wooden carved figure of a Gotama or Buddha stood out to me most because it is quite large compared to the other objects and despite it looking large and bland it had a lot of little details which you could easily find. For instance there is writing on the bottom of the sculpture which seems to be in an Asian language, I am unsure of which, which is painted in a bright red paint. This intrigued

me because I imagine that if we completely understood what the writing meant in English we could further our education in old cultures and historical events. I enjoyed drawing the sculpture because the shape is very interesting and I hadn’t drawn with the colours which are on the piece. I hope in the future more people will recognise it for its true beauty.’

Dora Thompson, (Aged 12 years)

Six go to Snowhill

ON 12 September six friends of the PRM visited Snowhill Manor in Gloucestershire, a lovely old house dating from the 16th century. The estate was originally owned by Winchcombe Abbey from 821 AD to the dissolution of the monasteries in 1539. The house was acquired by Charles Paget Wade (1883-1956) in 1919 and given to the National Trust in 1956.

The house is full of an amazing and eclectic collection of artefacts, model ships of the line for the Admiralty, musical instruments which remind one of the Bate Collection, Oriental objects and a darkened room filled with Japanese armour (*Yaroi*) and other related weapons.

In the roof area there are a large collection of old bicycles of various types and other forms of early perambulation. There are 22,000 objects in the collection. You could almost say it is a smaller variant of the PRM, and reminds one of our wonderful museum in Oxford.

Charles Wade wanted all the rooms to be semi-lit so as to give a sense of mystery. It's easy to overlook objects in the gloom, so a torch is helpful. As the collection grew he moved out of the house into an outbuilding known as the old priest's house and said to be haunted. His bedroom includes an amazing assortment of objects, a statue, luggage, pieces of 17th century armour and a steel strong box. I think if he had lived longer he would have had to move again, possibly into the dovecote.

One object I saw and thought very notable was a very good German field armour circa 1540 made in Nuremberg and having the Armour Guild's mark.

I would like to thank the friends who organised the visit and the staff at Snowhill for their helpful and welcoming manner. These few words cannot do justice to this important and varied collection.

Colin Langton, Friend



Above: Three full Japanese Armours (Yaroi) and two others partially obscured and four swords (Nihon To) and other related items, Tabi (sandals), stirrups etc; Left: Charles Wade's bedroom in the old priest's house, with the various artefacts and his bed in the left hand corner



Photos by Colin Langton

Memories of Sally

I WELL remember first meeting Sally Owen when she was asked to become Secretary of the Steering Committee before the Friends was formed. Neither of us was entirely certain about what would happen and it was a relief to share the questions and problems with someone sympathetic and ready to do whatever was needed. There is a wonderful comment in the early minutes that 'Sally made her usual tea' which rather tells you how it was initially: we made tea, served wine and did all the dogsbodying, while the men did the talking!

Sally proved to be a wonderful first Secretary, because she wanted people



to enjoy being part of the Friends, the organisation that was eventually formed. She was also a delightful travelling companion. We went on two Museum Ethnographers Group trips together, most notably to Cyprus. Sally had an enthusiasm for life and considerable courage in her understated, English way. She was full of fun and interested in everything and everyone – always wanting to know what you were doing rather than talk about herself. Sally was one of those quiet people who you suddenly realise will leave a huge gap. She will be much missed.

Julia Cousins,

Friend, former Administrator

New Friends

Cath Scales of Ashford, Kent and Samuel Swire, London. And from Oxford: Dan Cooper, Nina Kruglikova. To learn more about the benefits of becoming a Friend, or if your details change, please contact Membership Secretary **Rosemary King** at:

rhking17@gmail.com or **01367 242433**

Obituaries

Sarah Hayward, exact date of death and age not known, Oxford; Sally Owen, 28 August 2017, founder secretary of the Friends, aged 90, Oxford; Dennis Shaw, past Friends' Treasurer, 20 July 2017, aged 93, Oxford.

INFORMATION SHEET

The Friends' Magazine is published three times a year

BaFM
First Prize
Newsletter
Awards
2016

INFORMATION

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prm.ox.ac.uk/friends

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Annual Subscription: £22 (Joint: £30);
Family (two adults and all their children
under 18 living at the same address): £30;
Over 60: £15 (Joint: £22); Student: (18-25): £10
Life Membership: (for 65+): £125.
Subscription year from 1 May.
First subscription paid after 1 January valid
to 30 April of following year.

President of Friends of Pitt Rivers:

Professor Chris Gosden

Patrons of Friends of Pitt Rivers:

Alexander Armstrong, Sir David
Attenborough, Danby Bloch, Professor Sir
Barry Cunliffe, Dame Penelope Lively,
Michael Palin CBE, Philip Pullman CBE.

Museum

**Pitt Rivers Museum, South Parks Road,
Oxford OX1 3PP prm.ox.ac.uk
01865 270927**

Email: www.prm@prm.ox.ac.uk
Open: Tuesday-Sunday 10.00-16.30
Monday 12.00-16.30
Admission FREE.

Highlights tours

Wednesdays 14.30 and 15.15

Volunteer-led introduction to the Museum.
Approximately 20 minutes.
No booking required.

Saturday Spotlight

Third Saturday of the month 14.30

A programme of general interest events,
FREE.

After Hours

Occasional themed evening events.

Family events: see www.prm.ox.ac.uk/family-friendly-events-activities-and-workshops

Magazine

Editor: Dawn Osborne
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Design: Alan Hughes

Printed: Oxuniprint

Unit 10, Oxonian Park,
Kidlington OX5 1FP
www.oxuniprint.co.uk

The views expressed are not necessarily
those of the Museum. All contributors to the
Magazine are Friends unless otherwise stated.

MUSEUM DIARY DATES

Exhibitions and case displays

Lower Gallery, Bow-fronted case (L8A)

**Made in Imagination
Ends March 2018**

Display created from imagination by
artist Anne Griffiths, based on historical
descriptions of real artefacts found on the
PRM database where no photographs exist.

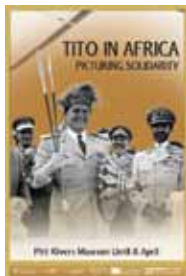


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Lower Gallery, Puppet case

**Pigeon Whistles: An Orchestra in Flight
Ends 4 March 2018**

Display co-curated by Nathaniel Mann,
former PRM artist-in-residence. Carried on tail
feathers of pigeons and traditionally used to
deter predators or create a tactical diversion
in warfare, they also produce a beautiful,
haunting sound.



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University of Oxford

Long Gallery

**Tito in Africa: Picturing
Solidarity
Ends 8 April 2018**

Selection of
photographs showing
Marshal Josip Broz Tito
taken during official
visits to various African
countries post-war.
Recording a perspective
on the Cold War little
known or acknowledged in the West, they
highlight Tito's meetings with African
leaders and his interaction with their people
and cultures.

Free Family Friendly Events

All children must be accompanied by a
responsible adult. prm.ox.ac.uk/events

**World Stories: Touch, Think, Make
12-14 February, 13.00-16.00**

Animate your own story inspired by ones
from around the world. Drop-in event.

**World Stories: Sensing Cultures
Wednesday 14 February, 10.00-12.15**

Tactile story-making for families with children
who are blind or partially sighted.

**Touch, Feel, Wonder: World Stories
15-16 February, 13.00-16.00**

Handle objects from around the world and
be inspired to write, draw and share your own
stories. Drop-in session.

For further information see:
prm.ox.ac.uk/whatson

FRIENDS' DIARY DATES

Captives of the Spirits

Wednesday 17 January, 18.30

Ina Zharkevich, Research Fellow at the
Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology,
discusses shamans, the limits of human
volition and the power of the 'invisible' realm
among the Kham Magars of Nepal.

Show and Tell: Textiles and Embroidery

Wednesday 24 January, 18.30

Come and hear Friends describe the stories,
and the making, of textile items significant
to them. Free with shared supper. If you
have an interesting item to share, or to book,
contact: gillian.morriss-kay@dpag.ox.ac.uk

The Caliphate: Past and Perhaps Future

Wednesday 21 February, 18.30

Hugh Kennedy, Professor of Arabic at SOAS,
chronicles the rich history of the caliphate,
from the death of Muhammad to the present,
drawing on his recently published book.



**Kenneth Kirkwood
Memorial Lecture Day
'Communication'
Saturday 10 March,
10.00-16.30**

Four speakers will

cover its varied aspects, from the geography
of Internet groups via Brazilian ethno-
musicology and the concept of *tong* in
Chinese political culture to wayfinding in
the Pacific. Online and postal booking from
3 January 2018. See enclosed KK flyer and
www.prm.ox.ac.uk/whatson.html
Contact: shahinbekhradnia@hotmail.com



Photo: Paul Bolding

**The Towers of
Kaiping**

**Wednesday 21
March, 18.30**

Kirsty Norman,
Centre of
Applied
Archaeology,
UCL, takes a look

at the history, variety and current approaches
to management of the fortified houses and
towers of the 'Diaoliu' villages in Guangdong,
China, now a UNESCO World Heritage site.

The anagama kilns of Japan and Britain

Wednesday 23 May, 18.30

Jim Keeling, co-founder of Whichford Pottery,
Warwickshire.

Summer Away Day

Tuesday 6 June

Brightwell Vineyard, Wallingford

Includes guided tour, nature walk,
tutored tasting of five vineyard wines and
presentation on winemaking techniques.
Optional ploughman's lunch. Booking details
available Spring 2018.

See prm.ox.ac.uk/friendsevents for more
information about these Friends' events.