

# The Friends of the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford Magazine





## IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 Between Friends, Editorial
- 3 From The Director, Museum News
- 4 Wytham Woods Anagama Kilns
- 5 Butoh Dance
- 6 Footprints in the Sand Exhibition
- 7 Yazidi Cultural Preservation
- 8 Marie Kondo organisation method
- 9 Moldavian Masquerade
- 10 Tutankhamun Exhibition
- 11 Rhodes House Friends' Away Day
- 12 Museum Information, Friends' Dates

Cover image: *Living National Treasure of Bizen, Isezaki Jun finishing a chawan for the first firing of the anagama kiln at Oxford University. Copyright: The Oxford Mail for Oxford University Kilns 2015.*

# Between Friends

Ritual of one kind or another often marks significant life events as I found when, lucky fellow that I am, I got married this summer. What a culturally complex event this is with religious, legal and folkloric traditions all combined. So it is that banns are read, vows made, rings exchanged, documents signed, confetti thrown – a bouquet too, favours given and so on. Some of these are shared with other cultures, the PRM catalogue reveals wedding rings from South Africa, Korea and India, and confetti comprising paper horseshoes and swastikas that was thrown at a wedding in India in the early 20th century. Some customs have inevitably changed: rice was once thrown – a delightful PRM object is a “box containing rice grains thrown for luck at a wedding”, from Surrey, 1905. Others are preserved: the bridal dress-code “something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue, and a silver sixpence in her shoe” was described as “ancient” in the Staffordshire Advertiser in 1876; the stipulations combine notions of good luck, warding off the evil eye, overcoming the bad fortune of the LEFT foot (the sixpence goes in the left shoe) depending on where you read. The rhyme remains popular, indeed relatives of mine kindly sent an old silver sixpence to my fiancée. What were once, no doubt, sincerely felt superstitions become charming gifts and keepsakes. At the Kenneth Kirkwood lectures on funerary rites, was an observation that death was “under-ritualised” in this country. This stuck in my mind: the idea that experiences common to all cultures might be more or less ritualised. How would you quantify ritual for such comparisons? I suspect that, however measured, marriage is more generously ritualised than death in the UK. As always though the PRM nurtures curiosity about all cultures and there are many marriage-related objects to see from all over the world.



Photo © Anthony Flemming



Photo: © PRM

Ceremonial Palestinian woman's marriage cap fringed front and back with ancient and modern coins, with side flaps and chain also with coins attached. 1952.5.86

**Anthony Flemming,**

*Member of the PRM Liaison Committee and Friend*

## Editorial



Photo © Dawn Osborne

Congratulations to our Director for winning the prestigious Kenneth Hudson award for Institutional Courage and Professional Integrity (see page 3 for further details). This will be a great shot in the arm for the Museum and its staff demonstrating that although our Museum is traditional in many ways, it is also at the forefront of best museum practice. Thanks also to everyone involved in production of

the Magazine for their work on another great issue!

How delightful it was to meet in person for the Wytham Woods Friends' event in May. We were able to witness the myriad items of pottery coming out of the huge cave-like zoomorphic anagama kilns, including the variety of results, many of which are accidental given the vagaries of the process, but others that were exactly as intended - such

as the beautiful pearlescent elegant tall narrow vase purchased by the former chair of the friends. I myself am considering attending a workshop there to make my own reproduction of an ancient museum item I adore. See the article on Page 4 for more details of the kilns and Page 5 for information on the Japanese Dance event on the same day. The whole day was super-inspiring and thoroughly absorbing from beginning to end. More about the event and the Japanese tea ceremony that took place next issue.

Other friends attended the separate Away Day at Rhodes House and also had a fascinating time by all accounts (see Page 11 for more details).

It was heart-warming to see the Friends mixing in person as a Community after the Pandemic.

If you have any ideas for magazine articles or Friends' events and talks please write to us with your suggestions!

**Dawn Osborne, Editor**

# Museum News



Photo: © PRM

As we enjoy the summer months and return to post-covid normality, our focus is on welcoming increasing numbers of visitors and Friends back through our doors. The year so far has gone well, and it was particularly wonderful to be able to hold two well-attended events for Friends: the KK Day in March and the Japanese-themed away day in Wytham Woods at the end of May. The former was

on the richness of death rituals across the world and the latter included making pottery in rising-dragon (anagama) kilns, Japanese dance and tea ceremony rituals. (See articles on pages 4 and 5 of this issue on the kilns and dance, next issue an article on the tea ceremony is planned.)

The PRM now has two new team members: Catherine Booth is leading our Visitor Services and Hannah Bruce is heading up our Events. Friends and visitors should shortly

be able to find a range of new information and support materials on our welcome 'Platform' to pick a few lovely gifts and guidebooks.

Now that the Friends organisation is being run from within the PRM, we have been spending some time setting up the necessary systems and processes and I have been truly impressed with the commitment and hard work of all who are helping with this. I am delighted to say that we will be launching a new members campaign in September together with a year of wonderful activities for new and existing members to participate in. Do look out for a new annual 'What's on' that will be coming out soon. Existing members will be sent new information packs and membership cards, and we encourage everyone to make use of the direct-debit system which makes things so much easier for us. With the cost of living being a real issue for many of us, membership is not only excellent value but helps support the museum.

We look forward to seeing you all in the coming months.

**Karrine Sanders** PRM Senior Administrator

## From the Director



Photo: © PRM

Slowly but surely, the Museum is coming alive again. During the June half term, visitor numbers were 86% of our pre-pandemic numbers. Although this gives us hope, the reality is that international tourism to Oxfordshire, especially from Asia, Europe and Oceania, has not yet picked up due to the mix of an unprecedented cost-of-living crisis, Brexit, and continuing Covid-related travel disruptions.

In June we celebrated Pride with the 'Beyond the Binary' exhibition being one of our most successful exhibitions so far. A recent analysis of the almost 3000 feedback post-its, showed its impact and why it was

one of the five Highly Commended projects at the Vice-Chancellor's Diversity Awards.

The Museum has been further honoured: in May, I was one of the four individuals to whom the European Museum Forum gave the prestigious Kenneth Hudson award for Institutional Courage and Professional Integrity. It's a great honour to have received this accolade alongside some of the most inspiring directors in our field. I see the award as a recognition of the great work done by every member of our team and for the commitment and joy each has shown, alongside our generous partners who have shared their lived experience and knowledge with us. The past years have been tough for so many, and on so many fronts we are surrounded by crisis. It's as if this award is a strong ray of sunshine piercing through the skies, urging us on to continue our work with courage, integrity and in radical hope.

Last month, we finalised our new strategy, implementation plan and programming strands for 2022-2027. So, there is much to build on and celebrate, and the enthusiastic reactions to our 'Play!' programming for families, to the newly designed tours for schools and the new exhibition panels fill our hearts with joy and enthusiasm.

**Laura van Broekhoven**, Director



# FPRM visit to Oxford University Kilns - A Taste of Japan



Amulet for safety of cattle and horses, from Mt Aso shrine in Kumamoto Prefecture. A printed strip of paper with printed inscription and two square red stamps. Cat: 1908.82.101

Of General Pitt-Rivers's collection of 18,000 artefacts, only 300 were from Japan. Despite this, the Japanese collection of the Museum is diverse, containing both ordinary and extraordinary artefacts ranging from everyday items such as bamboo and paper fans and carved, button-like toggles called netsuke up to samurai armour and arguably the finest set of Edo Period (1603 - 1867) Noh theatrical masks in Europe.

Since 1884 the Japanese component of the Pitt Rivers collection has continued to grow. One of the most significant collectors on behalf of the Museum was Basil Hall Chamberlain (1850 - 1935), who as Professor of Japanese and Philology in the Imperial University of Tokyo acquired items for the Museum, which included musical instruments, kites and religious artefacts, including the 'charm for the security of cattle' illustrated.

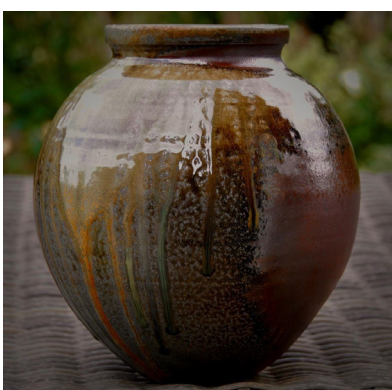
More recently John Lowe, the author of *'Japanese Crafts'* (1983) and a former curator of Japanese ceramics at the V&A donated to the PRM a miscellany of over 750 vernacular and artistic Japanese artefacts, which included 22 chawan tea-bowls for the Japanese chanoyu tea ceremony. If you look carefully on the main floor of the Museum, you might also find two more recently donated unglazed pots (Cat: 2015.30.1 and Cat: 2015.30.2) that appear to be shot through with seams of gold. These are tea utensils or chadōgu created by Oxford University Kilns and repaired with gold by Muneaki Shimode of Kyoto using the kintsugi technique.

On the 29th of May the Friends of the Pitt Rivers Museum visited the Oxford University Japanese anagama ceramics kilns at Wytham Woods to experience a wood-firing which was in progress at the time. While in the woods, the group also enjoyed Japanese tea ceremony (chanoyu), butoh dancing accompanied by a koto player and a sushi lunch. An introduction to the event was given by Prof Laura van Broekhoven, followed by informal lectures given on Japanese wood-fired ceramics by myself, and on the history of chanoyu by Dr Louella Matsunaga, reader in Japanese anthropology at Oxford Brookes.

Kintsugi means 'to join with gold'. Adorning broken ceramics with a lacquer mixed with powdered gold to highlight rather than hide the mend is part of a more than



Tea cup made by Kazuya Ishida as part of the Oxford Anagama Project and repaired with gold by Muneaki Shimode using the Kintsugi technique. Cat: 2015.30.2



Tamadare (tama = ball, dare + running) are multiple lines of running glaze, possibly ending in a glossy ball (biidoro). These are produced by heavy ash-build from the fuel wood such as this piece from 2022 by Iain Shield.

500-year-old Japanese tradition that highlights imperfections rather than hiding them. The pots themselves were originally produced in large wood-fired kilns by a team of more than twenty potters working around the clock for over two weeks to fire the traditional anagama or single-chambered kilns that are known for their ability to produce large volumes of unique auto-glazed ceramic pieces in the style known as wabi sabi. In ceramics, this takes the form of a highly contrived and deceptive appearance of simplicity and naturalness.

The Oxford University Kilns project is an umbrella for a range of Japanese-flavoured ceramics-related activities, run as a public-participation anthropological research project at the University research woodlands at Wytham. At the core of the project are three large, working wood-fired kilns called in Japanese anagama. This just means cave-like and implies that they are single-chambered, and that the fire that provides the heat to bake and recrystallise the clay minerals into stoneware pottery share the same space. In fact when the kilns reach 1300°C, the flame blasts through the stack of pots like a jet fire producing flame painting on the clay and leaving a deposit of molten ash from the wood-fuel on the pots.

Each of the Oxford kilns represents a particular stage in the development of the Japanese aesthetic of wabi sabi ceramics that emerged from kiln technologies that date back to at least the 12th-Century. Because they are challenging and engaging to fire, and because these kilns produce ceramics that can't be made in any other way, the kilns attract potters and researchers from all over the world and act not only as a centre for material culture research popular with art institutions, museums, anthropology departments and archaeology departments, but also with craft potters, schools and local art groups. Participants and visitors are always welcome.

In a world of mass production and quick disposal that so often prizes newness, perfection and acquisition, the kintsugi technique and the philosophy of wabi sabi that sit behind the Oxford Kilns are reminders to accept and celebrate life histories of our things with all their scars and imperfections.

**Robin Wilson, Director OUAP**

For further information about Oxford University Kilns: robin.wilson@admin.ox.ac.uk and on Instagram @Oxforduniversitykilns The kilns can be found at University of Oxford, Wytham Woods OX2 8QQ, which is open daily throughout the year. [www.wythamwoods.ox.ac.uk](http://www.wythamwoods.ox.ac.uk)

An exhibition of pots from the Oxford Kilns is currently on display at Harris-Manchester College in conjunction with the Embassy of Japan in the UK.

Photo: © Robin Wilson

Photo: © Robin Wilson

# Butoh - Earth and Body



Photo: © Stu Allsopp

Rehearsal of *Fired Earth* by Café Reason, with dancers Juliet Henderson and Bob Lyness (the Void), Fabrizia Verrecchia, Nathalie Descamps, Karen Goonewardene, Helen Edwards (free atoms).

For their Japan-themed party in Wytham Woods, the Friends invited Oxford-based Café Reason Butoh Dance Theatre to perform in the outdoor amphitheatre. For the occasion, the company devised a new piece, 'Fired Earth', which took as its theme the Five Elements or 'Godai' of Japanese philosophy: 'Chi' – earth; 'Sui' – water; 'Ka' – fire; 'Fu' – wind/air; and 'Ku' – void/emptiness. There are many qualities and attributes associated with each element, but nothing consists solely of one element or another. Everything is a result of their combination and interaction. The pottery vessel ('fired earth') represents the coming together of all the elements: water and earth in the clay; air and fire in the kiln; and also contains the void. Dance can be understood this way, too: body (earth), movement (wind), energy (fire), time (water), and space (void).

Butoh is a radical dance form that originated in a shaken post-war, post-atom-bomb Japan. Its originators, Kazuo Ohno and Tatsumi Hijikata, rejected not only the rigidly codified traditional forms such as Noh and Kabuki, but also Japanese modern dance, which they thought owed too much to western styles. Amid the general artistic dynamism of the 1950s and 1960s, they sought an authentic new approach, one that emerged from the Japanese body, landscape, and rural way of life – not the airy *relevé*, *arabesque*, and *jeté* of the ballet dancer, but the hunched posture of the worker toiling in the rice fields. Nonetheless, butoh was fed by European influences, from the corporeal mime of Etienne Decroux and the German Expressionist 'Neue Tanz' (new dance) to 1960s 'happenings', as well as being inspired by writers such as surrealist Antonin Artaud and subversive Jean Genet. Originally named 'ankoku buyoh' (later 'ankoku butoh'), meaning 'dance of utter darkness', this new approach was committed to expressing 'the hidden darkness of the body' and the shadowy, marginal, and conflicted aspects of human consciousness and experience. Ohno and

Hijikata approached this from opposite directions: "Find the form and the spirit will come" (Hijikata); "Follow the spirit and the form will come" (Ohno). By accessing the hidden levels of the body and studying its transformations, they sought a dance of presence, of 'being', rather than mere appearance.

Sixty years on from its rebellious and avant-garde inception, butoh has become international and influential, taught and performed by people with different personal ethnographies, aesthetics, approaches, and intentions. The originating impulses are a touchstone, but the form has evolved. No longer 'exotic'; it addresses complexities, contradictions, and challenges of both performance and being that are universal; many practitioners seek a deep connection with nature, but not a Japanese rural past.

Butoh has no defined style or set steps. Although there are recognizable – though not defining – 'butoh' characteristics, such as hypnotically slow movement, white makeup, or grotesque imagery, butoh continues to resist fixity. Butoh dancers inhabit the liminal space between inner and outer worlds, between conscious control and intuition. They allow themselves to be moved, 'making the invisible visible' through their bodies. Acutely aware of their form and their environment, they tap into memories, myths, imagination, and the unconscious, finding forms of expression that transcend everyday experience and conventional ideals. Butoh performances rarely have a narrative, unfolding more in the way of dreams: mutating, bizarre, incongruous, irrational, and yet suffused with meaning – 'the familiar made strange' in order to discover a new reality.

*"Something is hiding in our subconscious... which will appear in each detail of our expression... We can find butoh in the same way we can touch our hidden reality, something can be born and can appear, living and dying in the moment."* (Tatsumi Hijikata)

**Ayala Kingsley**, Founder member



# Footprints in the Sands of Time: Exhibition explores the Life and Legacy of the Archaeologist O.G.S. Crawford

On 19 January 1952 the archaeologist O.G.S. Crawford (1886–1957) scrambled up the side of a sand dune, leaving behind him a trail of footprints in the sand. Later that day, he mused in his diary: “The sand dunes are very beautiful with their graceful ribbed slopes and sharp converse tops. I took some views... before we began to walk over them... Our footsteps in these sands of time will be obliterated by a few strong winds”. Crawford was quoting from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s *‘A Psalm of Life’* (1838); a poem which exhorts readers to draw inspiration from the lives of ‘great men’ in history and to leave their own tangible mark on the world. As an archaeologist Crawford was adept at seeking out the traces of the past in the present, and he applied this archaeological perspective to the future too—actively curating the traces of his own life which he left behind him. Crawford regularly labelled himself in photographs marking a cross over his head to better aid any future researcher who might be hunting for traces of his life. He was also famously reticent about his private life in his autobiography—choosing instead to focus on his professional achievements—and assiduously managed his written papers to weed out documents which painted him in anything less than a positive light. The cumulative result leaves an impression of Crawford in the written record that is closer to that of a mythological figure from the history of archaeology than a flawed human.

To all outward appearances Crawford was successful in his mission to be remembered. In the present, Crawford’s name is most strongly associated with the development of aerial techniques in archaeology during the 1920s and the movement towards the scientific professionalisation of archaeology as a discipline. His first experiences of flight came as an RFC Observer in the First World War, though Crawford would later claim that he first began to ponder the advantages which the aerial view might offer archaeologists while walking in the Hampshire Downs before the war. One of Crawford’s most famous ventures was an aerial survey of prehistoric monuments in the southern English counties—undertaken with the assistance of marmalade magnate Alexander Keiller—and published as *‘Wessex from the Air’* (1928). This volume alone has been venerated by a generation of aerial archaeologists. Yet how closely does this aerial reputation conform to the contours of Crawford’s



OGS\_39\_29: O.G.S. Crawford with his Camera.



OGS\_49\_12 Study of a Rainbow.



OGS\_35\_26 Horizontal Excavators.

actual life?

Outside of his aerial legacy, Crawford’s life and work have received comparatively little scholarly attention. Crawford was a prolific photographer, taking approximately 10,000 photographs between 1931 and 1957. These photographs are currently held by the Institute of Archaeology in Oxford. Despite Crawford’s aerial reputation, in the present only a very tiny percentage of these photographs are taken from the air—rather the vast majority of Crawford’s archive consists of photographs taken from the ground. Though one might expect to find the studies of plough ridges, Roman roads and excavation documentation, mixed in among these archaeological record shots are a far more esoteric range of photographs. There are stunning black and white studies of rainbows and sunsets, a series of prints—made infamous by Crawford’s biographer Kitty Hauser—which document locations associated with Karl Marx, and two whole boxes of material devoted to capturing even the tiniest of details like flowers dotting the ground near Crawford’s house, the texture of the gills on the underside of a mushroom, or the imprints left by a bird’s wings on the snow. Equally revealing are a substantial collection of photographs documenting Crawford’s colleagues at work, often featuring colourful annotations by Crawford commenting on an excavators’ ‘rear-elevation’ or jokingly recording ‘horizontal excavators’ enjoying a mid-

afternoon nap. These prints sit between the categories of the personal and the professional, offering glimpses into a side of Crawford which he deliberately pruned from his written memoirs. It is these otherwise neglected photographs which become the subject of the exhibition *‘Footprints in the Sands of Time’* at the Pitt Rivers Museum which presents a new perspective on Crawford’s legacy.

We all leave traces of our lives behind us like trails of footprints in the sand, but sometimes these traces reveal more than we might expect.

The exhibition *‘Footprints in the Sands of Time’* was curated by PhD researcher Beth Hodgett with case design by Alan Cooke and is on display in the Archive Case on the First Floor of the Pitt Rivers Museum until the 25th September 2022.

**Beth Hodgett, Curator**

# Devices of Memory: Mobilizing Technology to Preserve Êzidi Intangible Heritage



Photographed by Wilfred Patrick Thesiger in 1950 in Kurdistan; Jabel Sinjar. Catalogue: 2004.130.29192.1

Photo: © PRM

“The village of Jaddala in Jabal Sinjar, August to October 1950. A boy and two donkeys in the foreground.”

The explorer Wilfred Thesiger visited Sinjar briefly, leaving over 100 photos - including this one - of the Yazidi population, who call themselves Êzidis, and their mountain Shingal. Thesiger's photos depict a time before Iraq's Arabisation policies (1960s onwards) mandated Arab styles of dress and Arabic-language education for these Kurmanji Kurdish speakers. The Iraqi Army forced village-dwellers away from the mountain into collective settlements called 'mujamma'at', rendering them dependent on State resources. Cidalê (Jaddala) residents were taken to Gir Izêr (Qahtaniyya), the largest 'mujamma' in the area. A dwindling number of Êzidi elders still remember these events.

In the foreground stands a boy, barefoot; behind him a bright, square aperture opening onto the courtyard of a house. Beyond lies a dark doorway, with a woman standing beside it - like the boy, steadfastly facing Thesiger's Western gaze. The aperture becomes a character, a metaphor for the way Thesiger's narratives open onto other, liminal worlds of story. The ethereal overexposure of the image shows Thesiger's twentieth-century technology failing to 'capture' the Êzidis, who had their own technologies for preserving and transmitting their culture, through mind, memory and language.

These indigenous technologies were brutally ruptured in 2014, when the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) targeted the Êzidis of Shingal, killing 1,298 adults and abducting and enslaving 6,500 women and children. Of an estimated 1,000,000 global population, about 400,000 Êzidis were displaced. The genocide caused many traumas, one of which is cultural endangerment. Many keepers of the vast Êzidi oral tradition could not outrun the violence of the genocide. Those who did have experienced mild to severe memory loss. More, forced displacement impacts communal practices of memory, performance, and audience. Before 2014, every family had a storyteller or knowledgeable grandparent and a neighborhood to perform

for. In decades to come, who will recite these stories? Who will listen?

Funded by the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council, a team of Êzidi writers and oral historians are curating and preserving Êzidi intangible heritage with academics from the University of Exeter and the American University of Iraq, Sulaimani. Their project, '*Shingal Lives*', has founded an archive called '*Tew Tew*' ('Bravo! Encore!' in Kurmanji). This will contain performances and oral histories as a repository of indigenous knowledge - stories that remember what the contemporary world doesn't.

Knowing that the next generation will not hold memories in their minds but save them to their devices, '*Shingal Lives*' will harness new technologies. Since Thesiger's time, technology has damaged intangible heritage: first television and then the Internet diverted attention away from traditional practices. More recently, "surveillance capitalism" of big tech companies, especially Facebook, has monetised the attention of minority language speakers, whilst failing to provide content in those minority languages which would protect them from mis- and disinformation. Conspiracy theories, seen as 'news,' move fast and social media have provided platforms for ISIS-sponsored propaganda against Êzidis.

'*Shingal Lives*' disrupts these negative influences. The '*Tew Tew*' archive will be online and on open access later this year. Its contents will be shared with Êzidis on social media, providing an intimate space without physical restrictions for experiencing performance and for further sharing. Also, by valorising Êzidi elders through recording their oral histories, we aim to give them hope for the future, to reassure them that many young people remain devoted to continuing the work of remembering Êzidi history.

To see more of our work, please follow @tewtewarchive on Instagram or Twitter.

**Zêdan Xelef, Emad Bashar, Alana Marie Levinson-LaBrosse, Christine Robins**  
Directors, '*Shingal Lives*'



# Does it Spark Joy?

“What does ‘spark joy’ mean to you?”

“I guess it’s... giving your soul a lift? It’s like where you look at something and it makes you smile momentarily- almost involuntarily- because you’re like ‘I’m glad I have that thing in my life’. It’s all those little moments, they’re meant to be quite powerful. I have this mug here (She holds up a mug to the screen) and my friend gave it to me, and I just think of her everytime I look at it. And it’s kind of like tons of tiny reminders and they’re positive. If you find the joy in your possessions it makes you kind of buoyant through the rest of the day, and kind of maybe for the rest of your life.”

This was how Hattie, a research informant, explained her understanding of ‘spark joy’- a phrase/feeling that Japanese tidying up expert Marie Kondo centres her decluttering and organisation method around. During the 2020-2021 academic year, I conducted my Masters by Research thesis in Anthropology on middle class women’s experience of following the KonMari method in the UK.

Kondo’s method first attracted attention in Western media in 2014 when her first book was translated into English. She subsequently rose to fame again in 2019 with the release of her Netflix series. Kondo’s self-designed method works with clients to declutter and organise their home by systematically sorting through each item in one’s home, and asking the question ‘Does this spark joy?’. Objects that do, are kept, and objects that do not are disposed of, after they have been verbally thanked by the owner.

Due to covid19 restrictions, I interviewed my informants about their decluttering experiences, and what ‘spark joy’ means to them, over Zoom. Each woman had sought out the help of Kondo’s method for different reasons: moving house/downsizing, preparation to welcome a baby, divorce, the death of a loved one. There are many situations that require our cluttered homes to be sorted and reorganised, and not all are purely practical.

The KonMari method stands out from other decluttering and minimalist practices, as it is designed around emotion rather than practicality. Instead of instructing ‘keep only what you need’, Kondo invites followers of her method to discover and identify the owner’s emotional response to their possessions before deciding upon their fate. ‘Spark joy’ aims to coax out an inner physical response to the hundreds of daily objects that form the backdrop to our lives. As the capitalist message of consumerism continues to buffet our daily choices here in Western culture, ‘spark joy’ works to reconnect us with our possessions.

Many informants like Hattie reported that completing the KonMari method caused them to view their possessions very differently. Kondo speaks of objects in her books as if they were people with feelings- hence her recommendation to thank objects before discarding them. At no point does Kondo clearly state she does indeed believe objects to be sentient, she however walks along a blurred boundary of the seen and unseen. Our possessions are material objects yes, however they hold within them memories, sentiments, stories, social obligations. This unseen power of objects affects our judgement when we embark upon spring-cleaning escapades of our home environments.

Amongst many findings, my research highlighted the needed education and tools Kondo provides in her method to navigate the (perhaps surprising) emotional impact our possessions have over us. Learning to connect with the material world around us through ‘spark joy’ offers a positive-focused campaign to combat mindless consumption, and prevent our lives becoming over-filled with unnecessary amounts of ‘stuff’.

**Alexandra Chesters, MRes Thesis.**

*“A joy-filled home is like your own personal museum”*

*“You could say that tidying orders the mind while cleaning purifies it”*

*“Discarding is not the point; what matters is keeping those things that bring you joy. If you discard everything until you have nothing left but an empty house, I don’t think you’ll be happy living there. Our goal in tidying should be to create a living environment filled with the things we love.”*

Marie Kondo’s first book ‘The Life Changing Magic of Tidying Up’.

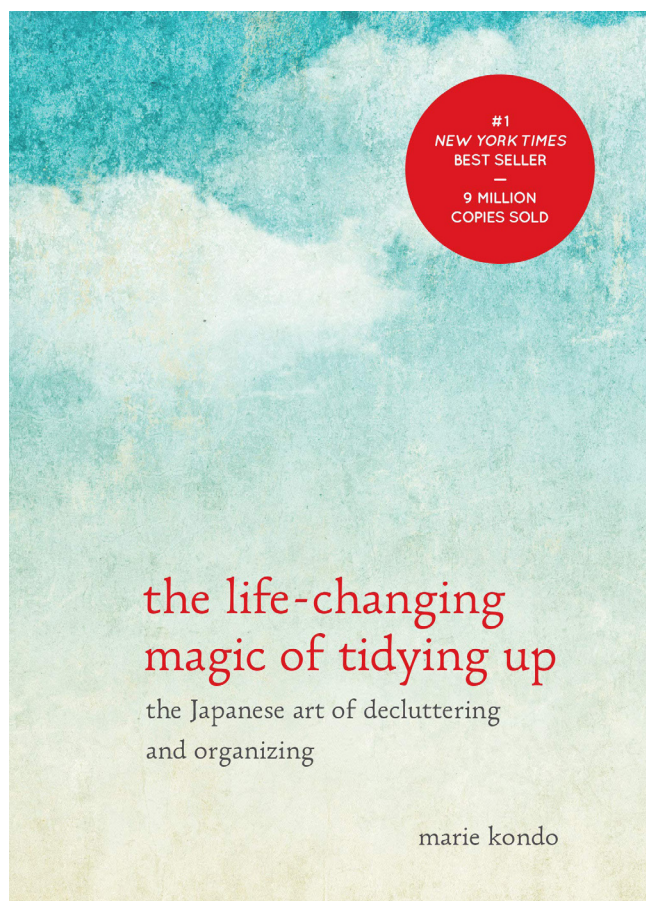


Image: Marie Kondo’s first book ‘The Life Changing Magic of Tidying Up’.  
Reference: Berry, S. (2017) Marie Kondo’s first book.



# Moldavian Masquerade

One day in the summer of 2003 I saw a band of fantastically costumed figures as I was getting out of the metro in Bucharest. Instantly captivated, I followed them onto the crowded streets as though they were the Pied Piper of Hamlyn, until I lost them in the crowds.

I am a painter and had come to live in Bucharest with my family for three years, so how could

I forget such a troupe! I wanted to find out more. I discovered old ethnographic books with photos of characters wearing darned and patched old rugs with masks of animals and grotesque old men and women. I found a Moldavian taxi driver who explained that what I had seen was part of an ancient New Year festival which took place each year in many Moldavian villages and towns. I persuaded my family they needed a Moldavian New Year holiday, soon after we arrived in Piatra Neamt we saw revelry in full swing. But it was not like the pictures in the old books. Men were wearing skirts made of strips of plastic rather than fabric, with some having lots of loudly clanking empty drink cans hanging from their costumes. The Town Centre overflowed with their clanking and dancing, shouting, chanting, whistles and music.

The roots of this festival go back to pre-Christian times, and involved driving evil spirits out of the village at the turn of the year - there are many similar rituals throughout Europe. Only young men and boys took part in the Moldavian masquerades and the celebrations differed in each village, giving identity to each place. The British anthropologist, Sarah Posey, who studied these masquerades considered them to be festivals of inversion - where behaviour was celebrated that would be completely unacceptable within the somewhat austere village communities the rest of the year. There was bawdy talk,



Watercolour: Gaining entry to a house

lewd dancing, cross dressing with men wearing comically stuffed boobs and lifting long skirts to show off fancy knickers. It was a time when young men could climb over fences and gates into the courtyards and homes of girls they fancied - something that they could not do the rest of the year. In the homes of young women, families prepared food and drink,

which after a pretence of not admitting the unruly mob in, they merrily shared with the intruders.

This tradition lived on through communism, and survived post-1989. It was however significantly affected by the communist regime. The state encouraged folk traditions to show how communism was in the hearts of all of Romania's communities. It organised official folk festivals where vast numbers of people travelled to perform. Teachers were contracted to teach folk cultures, but they made the cultures less anarchic, more feminine, with new dances which were less wild, and did away with bawdiness. What had been subversive, became sweet, with young girls involved and people given prizes for the quality of their performances. By the 1980s masks were either banned, or participants had to register with the police and wear an identifying number. The state took control of what previously had been anarchic village festivities.

Post-1989, masks were once more permitted, and the old communist mass gatherings ceased. But some of the previous "taming" persisted. On Youtube you can see tourist industries, with government support, promoting masquerades as part of the tourist trade. But in other videos, often made with mobile phones, (and there are millions of viewings of these videos) masquerades live on, as ingenious, wild and anarchic as ever.

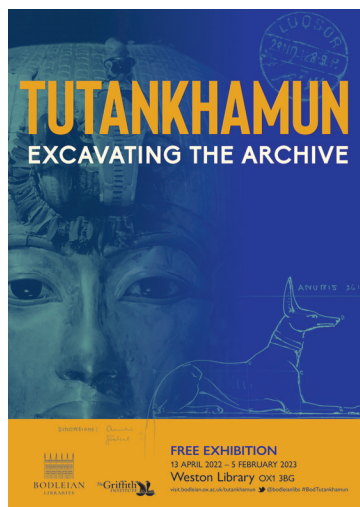
**Celia Ward, Artist**



Watercolour: Cross dressing character



# Tutankhamun: Excavating the Archive



Exhibition poster

Archaeology and politics are always interwoven: in 1922, as Egypt became an independent nation, the tomb of Tutankhamun was discovered at Luxor, the first known intact royal burial from ancient Egypt. The excavation of the small but crowded tomb by Howard Carter and his team generated enormous media interest and was famously photographed by Harry Burton (1879–1940) from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. These photographs became part of an archive created by the excavators, along with letters, plans, drawings and diaries. The excavation was initially funded by Lord Carnarvon; Carter kept the excavator's archive, as was standard practice at the time. When Carter died in 1939, he bequeathed most of his estate, including these archaeological records, to his niece Phyllis Walker (1897–1977), who, on the advice of the Egyptologists Alan H. Gardiner (1879–1963) and Percy E. Newberry (1869–1949), presented the documentation with associated copyright to the Griffith Institute, University of Oxford, in 1945.

The Tutankhamun archive in Oxford comprises 48 maps and plans, over 3,500 object cards, around 1,200 original glass negatives, over 600 lantern slides, a set of ten large albums of Burton's photographs, Carter's personal diaries and journals, notes and drawings for his planned full publication, conservation logbooks and notes. It is inevitably a partial archive, and a very British one, written in English with no records of the Egyptian team-members' voices, although they feature in many photographs. Although the physical archive remains in Oxford as part of the processes that created it, it has been accessible online ([griffith.ox.ac.uk/discoveringTut](http://griffith.ox.ac.uk/discoveringTut)) since the early 1990s, allowing scholars from across the world to continually reassess the burial and its discovery.

To celebrate the anniversary of the discovery of the tomb in November 1922, the Griffith Institute and the Bodleian Libraries have staged an exhibition in the 'Treasury' gallery in the Weston Library (13 April 2022 – 05 February 2023). This includes 150 of these historic images and records,

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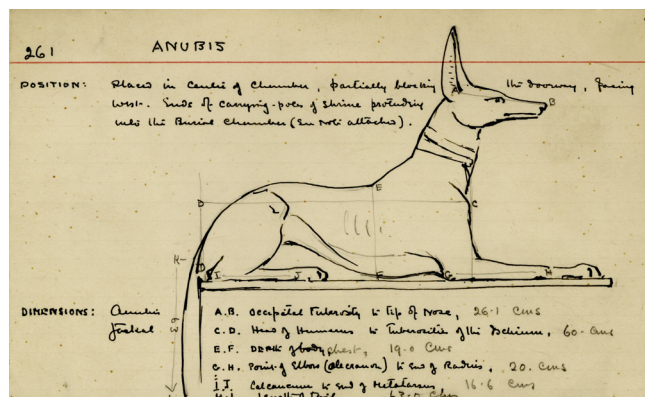
Burton (1879–



Arthur Mace (standing) and Alfred Lucas (sitting) working on one of the 'guardian statues' in the 'conservation studio', the tomb of Sety II (KV 15). Burton P0493



An Egyptian boy wearing one of Tutankhamun's pectorals. Burton P1189



One of Carter's record cards showing his drawing of the jackal god Anubis. TAA Archive i.1.261.1

presenting a vivid first-hand account of the excavation, of the spectacular variety of the king's burial goods and of the remarkable work that went into documenting and conserving the more than 5000 objects over a period of ten years. The items are complemented by an audio-guide (in English and Arabic), and an accompanying book. This project has involved new research on the archival holdings, but also draws on the work of scholars such as Marianne Eaton-Krauss, Christian Riggs, Eleanor Dobson and Elliott Colla.

We spotlight the often overlooked Egyptian team members, who were so central to the discovery. Although their role was downplayed in official accounts, their crucial presence and contribution is visible in the archive's photographs, perhaps most movingly in the images of an Egyptian boy wearing one of the king's jewelled pectorals which is a focal point for the Weston gallery. While it evokes the meeting of ancient and modern cultures, it is also a troubling image, as no one bothered to record the boy's name. This historic archive enables a nuanced and inclusive view of the complexities of both the ancient burial and the modern excavation. All too often, the discovery of the tomb is uncritically narrated as a heroic event in a supposedly 'golden age' of archaeology, and is often described in terms of colonialist nostalgia. In contrast, the archive can reveal the complexity of the story, giving the visitor an opportunity to contextualize, celebrate, interrogate, and criticize the famous events that it commemorates.

**Daniela Rosenow and Richard Bruce Parkinson, The Griffith Institute**

The exhibition will be accompanied by a program of collaborative and standalone events, including lectures by specialists on the period, and a visit will be funded by TORCH as part of the Humanities Cultural Programme, with the counter-tenor Anthony Roth Costanzo, who will be starring as Tutankhamun's father in Philip Glass' *Akhmat* at the Metropolitan Opera New York.



# Rhodes House Visit - Friends' Away Day

Although we are not members of the Friends of the Pitt Rivers Museum, my wife and I were very fortunate to be included in their tour of Rhodes House, Oxford, on 30th March 2022.

Not only were we curious about what was going on underneath all the cranes and scaffolding, but the architect nearly 100 years ago was my grandfather Sir Herbert Baker.

Cecil Rhodes, a controversial figure in these days of contested heritage, died in 1902 and left



*The Planned garden Pavilion*

overnight accommodation has already been completed to a very high standard, some rooms having full accessibility. It was very noticeable how the original features have been incorporated or enhanced. Even some original Dutch tiles in a small lobby are being conserved. The mythical Zimbabwe bird, favoured by Cecil Rhodes in his African home, adorns not only the domed roof but on many

Photo: © Rhodes House



*Progress on the Convening Hall*

much of his legacy to the Rhodes Trust to pay for scholars from the Empire, as it then was, and from the USA to attend Oxford University, to benefit as he himself had done. Rhodes Scholarships have been awarded annually since 1903 and are now open to applicants worldwide.

Twenty years later the Trust found the need for its own building, both to house its extensive library and as a place for the scholars to meet and interact. Wadham College, thought to be short of cash at the time, was persuaded to sell two acres of its garden adjoining South Parks Road.

My grandfather was

features within the building.

Descending to the extensive cellar we listened in awe to the technology of removing entire pillars to allow for the construction of the huge and impressive convening hall. This will extend under the terrace on the south side between the two wings of the building. It will seat up to 300 people and make use of the latest communications technology for delegates in the room and around the world. The hall will be reached by an elegant new stone spiral staircase created in the middle of the entrance rotunda. Delegates will descend by these stairs or a lift into the new foyer spaces, which will be naturally lit through glazed lightwells.

The gardens to the east now contain a large hole in the ground which will be a courtyard area providing further accommodation. On the west side there will be a new garden pavilion, mostly glazed, as well as underground staff offices making maximum use of natural light.

Due to finish in 2023, the new Rhodes House claims to be not only the largest dedicated convening space in Oxford, but also be the only venue providing a significant number of bedrooms in a college-like setting in Oxford that is available 52 weeks each year.

I believe that my grandfather deserves some credit that his work has lasted nearly 100 years without major change, and would also have been delighted that the whole site is being updated to suit the modern world while still incorporating so many of his design features.

Those present were very grateful to Mat Davies for such a fascinating and instructive tour.

**Charles Baker, Grandson of Sir Herbert Baker, architect of Rhodes House**



*New Accommodation Courtyard*

Photo: © Charles Baker

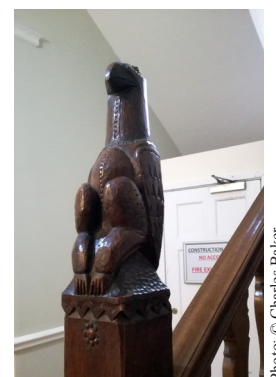


*Dutch tiles in a Pantry*

appointed architect, and Rhodes House was completed in 1928. Rhodes Scholars are members of Oxford colleges, but Rhodes House is where they meet regularly to share knowledge and form lasting relationships, as Rhodes intended.

Rhodes House is now undergoing a £37m Transformation Project which will both restore the existing parts of the building as well as constructing a very impressive modern conference centre in the basement. In addition, there will be a new glass pavilion on the lawns, new staff offices and additional accommodation for delegates, scholars and other visitors. The funding is all through philanthropy, from partners and donors.

As we donned hi-vis vests and hard hats we were welcomed by Mat Davies, Director of Estates, and the manager of the project. He gave us a detailed introduction to the history of the building and the current building project. We started with a tour of the of the east wing where the



*Zimbabwe Bird on a newel post*

Photo: © Charles Baker

# INFORMATION SHEET

The Friends' Magazine is published three times a year

## INFORMATION

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**Annual Subscription:** £36 (Joint: £50);  
Student: £20 (18-25, in full time education).  
Life £500 (Joint £750) Benefits: Priority  
booking for Museum events and courses,  
Private views, Behind the scenes visits.  
Members-only: Shop 10% discounts,  
Friends Members' Magazine posted to you  
three times a year, Friends' lecture series.

### President of Friends of Pitt Rivers:

Professor Chris Gosden

### Patrons of Friends of Pitt Rivers:

Alexander Armstrong, Danby Bloch,  
Professor Sir Barry Cunliffe, Dame Penelope  
Lively, Layla Moran MP, Sir Michael Palin, Sir  
Philip Pullman.

### Museum

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**01865 270927**

[www.prm.ox.ac.uk](http://www.prm.ox.ac.uk)

Email: [ea@prm.ox.ac.uk](mailto:ea@prm.ox.ac.uk)

Open: Tuesday-Sunday 10.00 - 17.00

Monday 12.00- 17.00

Admission FREE.

**Refreshments.** The Horsebox Coffee  
Company on the lawn is open from 9.00 -  
17.00 daily, serving hot and cold drinks and  
homemade cakes.

### After Hours

Occasional themed evening events.

**All museum events:** see [www.prm.web.ox.ac.uk/events](http://www.prm.web.ox.ac.uk/events)

### Magazine

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

For further information see:

[www.prm.web.ox.ac.uk/events](http://www.prm.web.ox.ac.uk/events)

### Deaths

Roy Sumner, age 98. Founder member of  
the Friends.

## MUSEUM DIARY DATES

The Museum is open and pre-booking  
is no longer required. Visitors are  
strongly encouraged to wear face  
coverings when in the Museum and  
there are hand sanitiser points around  
the galleries for the use of visitors and  
staff.

We look forward to welcoming you.

### Exhibitions and case displays

#### Installation

**24 September 2022 - 2 April 2023**

#### Marina Abramović

The doyenne of  
performance art,  
presents a site-specific  
installation featuring  
video and drawings  
following a research  
residency at the PRM in  
2021.



Witches ladder

Photo: © Tim Hand

#### Display case C.22.A (Court)

**2 September 2022 - 3 September 2023**

#### Wandering in Other Worlds

#### Evenki Cosmology and Shamanic Traditions

Through this display  
and virtual reality (VR  
headset) one is invited  
to wander in another  
world, an Evenki world  
and listen to stories  
of cosmology and  
shamanic tradition.



Map representing Evenki  
world view and cosmology.  
Ink on reindeer hide.

Photo: © Artist Anya Gleizer

#### Didcot case lower gallery

**Until 5 March 2023**

#### Mo'olelo: An Entomological Journey into Hawaiian culture

'Mo'olelo Archetypes',  
A series of paintings  
by Hawaiian artist  
Solomon Enos, brings  
to life a scene from the  
epic Hawaiian myth  
Hi'iakaikapoliopole.



The Paddler, Insect and  
Arachnid People of  
Subterranean Hawaii

Photo: © PRM

#### PRM Website

#### Small Blessings

Curious objects from  
Adrien de Mortillet's  
amulet collection  
and the intriguing  
stories behind them.



Sacred Heart Ex- Voto,  
France. 1985.52.33

Photo: © PRM

## FRIENDS' DIARY DATES

Future talks will be held in person and  
on Zoom. Information on accessing  
these talks is provided to Friends via  
electronic communication from the  
Pitt Rivers Museum. An easy way to  
watch and enjoy the speakers from the  
comfort of your home!

### 2022

#### Talk: 'Undreamed Shores'

**Wednesday 21**

**September 2022,  
18.00**

Fran Larson speaks  
about her book and  
the lives of the five  
inspiring women in  
it who collected for  
the PRM, against the  
hostility of a male  
dominated world.

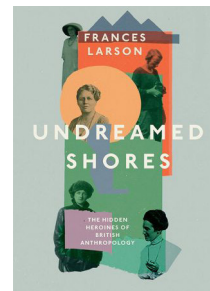


Image: 'Undreamed Shores:  
The Hidden Heroines of  
British Anthropology' by  
Frances Larson. Reference:  
Granta Books (2022)

#### Talk: A Creative Practice, Exploration of Unidentified Dead

**Wednesday 19**

**October 2022,  
18.00**

Katie Taylor is an  
artist and PhD  
researcher at Oxford  
Brookes University  
whose work explores  
how we consider  
the lives lived by  
unidentified human remains through a  
consideration of the belongings found  
with them.



Bound up Material 2021 -  
Glove

Photo: © Katie Taylor

#### Talk: 'The History of Magic'

**Wednesday 16  
November 2022,  
18.00**

Professor Chris  
Gosden gives  
a brief overview of  
how the history of  
magic has unfolded,  
looking at specific  
instances of magical  
practices including  
examples connected  
with the Museum.

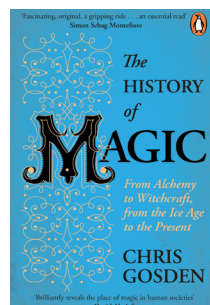


Image: 'The History of Magic:  
From Alchemy to Witchcraft  
from Ice Age to the Present'  
by Chris Gosden. Reference:  
Penguin (2021)

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