



# Matters of Care: Museum Futures in Times of Planetary Precarity

Online Conference Series

8th April - 20th May 2021



Week 1: **Thursday, 8 April 2021 – 9:00 – 10:15 GMT / 10:00 – 11:15 CET**

Matters of Care Opening Session: In Conversation with Wayne Modest

Register: [https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_zOElyUKTSV6Ct4tII39IVQ](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_zOElyUKTSV6Ct4tII39IVQ)

How can ethnographic and world cultures museums use their collections and galleries as spaces which create active discussion around the impact of humans on the planet, while also highlighting what long-term perspectives can tell us about sustainability for developing positive futures? The project TAKING CARE explores the connections between ethnographic collections and questions regarding the climate crisis, the Anthropocene and issues related to the afterlives of colonialism (<https://takingcareproject.eu/>).

In the opening session of our 6-week webinar series, project leader Claudia Augustat will introduce the Taking Care project and museum partners. Our keynote speaker for this session, Wayne Modest, will then share his thoughts on museums as *'Spaces of/for Care'*, followed by a discussion with Laura Van Broekhoven.

## Speakers:



Professor Wayne Modest

*'Spaces of/for Care'*

Wayne Modest is the Director of Content, National Museum of WorldCultures, Wereldmuseum Rotterdam, Head of the Research Center of Material Culture and Professor of Material Culture and Critical Heritage Studies in the faculty of humanities at the Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam (VU). Modest was previously head of the curatorial department at the Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam, Keeper of Anthropology at the Horniman Museum in London, and Director of the Museums of History and Ethnography in Kingston, Jamaica.



Dr. Claudia Augustat

Claudia Augustat is head of the project Taking Care: Ethnographic and World Culture Museums as Spaces of Care, co-funded by the European Union and initiated in October 2019. Claudia has been curating the South America collections at Weltmuseum Wien since 2004. Her research focuses on collections from the Amazon and Tierra del Fuego, material culture and cultural memory, museum and colonialism, collaborative curatorship and decolonising museum practice.



Dr. Laura Van Broekhoven

Laura Van Broekhoven is the Director of the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford. Laura's current research interests include decoloniality, reconciliation and redress, with a focus on the importance of collaboration, inclusivity and reflexive inquiry.

Week 2: Thursday, 15 April 2021 – 9:00 – 10:15 GMT / 10:00 – 11:15 CET

Indigenous Knowledge and Community Environmental Justice

Register: [https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_kCalcvUZQFCDFeLTSCcOHQ](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_kCalcvUZQFCDFeLTSCcOHQ)

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In the second week of the Matters of Care: Museum futures in times of planetary precarity conference series, we will hear from two speakers about environmental justice and community conservation. Through their experiences, they showcase the diverse ways of documenting environmental knowledge and talk about how these ways of learning and gathering should be ethical and sustainable.



Dr. Pauline von Hellermann

*'Reflections from environmental anthropology'*

Pauline is a Senior Lecturer in Anthropology at Goldsmiths, University of London. She is an environmental anthropologist with research interests in mining, youth and patronage politics, science policy processes, infrastructure, multi-sited ethnography, political ecology and environmental justice. She currently holds a Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship (2018-2021) for the project *Red Gold: A Global Environmental Anthropology of Palm Oil*.



Dr. Iokiñe Rodríguez Fernández

*'Becoming (in) visible in environmental justice struggles: using participatory mapping, filming and writing to support the indigenous research agenda'*

Iokiñe is a sociologist and Senior Lecturer in Environment and International Development at the University of East Anglia. Her work on environmental conflict transformation focuses on issues of local history, local knowledge, power, environmental justice, equity and intercultural dialogue. This has led to her building local and institutional capacity to transform environmental conflicts in Venezuela, Guyana, Ecuador, Chile, Bolivia and Colombia.



Dr. Ashley Coutu

Ashley is an archaeologist and Research Fellow at the Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford. Her research on the ivory trade draws on historical ecology as an approach for understanding the relationship between humans and elephants in the past and present.

Week 3: Thursday, 29 April 2021 – 9:00 – 10:15 GMT / 10:00 – 11:15 CET

Matters of Care: Climate Change Activism through Film

Register: [https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_qkTIYhdaRY62A6DBLOFk\\_Q](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_qkTIYhdaRY62A6DBLOFk_Q)

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In the third week of the *Matters of Care: Museum futures in times of planetary precarity* conference series, we are joined by two filmmakers, Itandehui Jansen and Camilla Andersen, who will talk to Lotten Gustaffson Reinius and Christopher Morton about the process of creating thought-provoking films as a form of activism.



Dr. Itandehui Jansen

*'Kii Nche Ndutsa (Time and the Seashell)'*

Itandehui is a filmmaker and Lecturer in Film & TV in the Edinburgh College of Art, University of Edinburgh. Her films have been shown at film festivals such as the Short Film Corner of Cannes, and have won various prizes, including first prize at the Bluestocking Film Series festival in Portland for her film *Alma y Esperanza*. Itandehui is particularly interested in representations of diversity in film. Her practice-based research explores questions of identity, cultural heritage and human connections to and interactions with landscape.





Camilla Andersen, photograph by Flora Bartlett

*'Eyes on and from the changing Arctic'*

Camilla Andersen is a documentary photographer and filmmaker from Alta, northern Norway. Her work has political views on both social and anthropological issues related to cultural diversities, climate change, environment, gender and sexuality. She is currently part of an exhibition at Nordiska Museet in Stockholm, where she has filmed and created several short documentaries showing how climate change has affected different communities and people of the Arctic:

<https://www.nordiskamuseet.se/en/exhibitions/arctic-while-the-ice-is-melting>



Professor Lotten Gustafsson Reinius

Lotten is Associate Professor in Ethnology, Stockholm University and holds position as Hallwyl's Visiting Professor of Ethnology at Nordiska Museet in Stockholm. She has led a number of major collaborations involving collective research, teaching, artistic and curatorial activities, including focusing on the colonial heritage of ethnographic museums in Europe and the Arctic in the light of climate change, including leading on the exhibition *Arctic - While the ice is melting* at the Nordiska Museet in Stockholm.



Dr. Christopher Morton

Christopher is Head of Curatorial, Research and Teaching at the Pitt Rivers Museum and Associate Professor of Visual Anthropology at the University of Oxford. His research centres on the overlapping histories of photography, anthropology and museum collections. His latest book is on the fieldwork and photography of British social anthropologist E. E. Evans-Pritchard ([\*The Anthropological Lens: Rethinking E. E. Evans-Pritchard\*](#), Oxford University Press 2019).

Week 4: Thursday, 6 May 2021 – 9:00 – 10:15 GMT / 10:00 – 11:15 CET

Matters of Care: In Conversation with Cissy Serrao

Register: [https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_-K6lcxiZSSe1vvkFrNny8w](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_-K6lcxiZSSe1vvkFrNny8w)

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In the fourth week of the *Matters of Care: Museum futures in times of planetary precarity* conference series, we talk with Cissy Serrao, founder of Poakalani & Company, Hawai'i. Cissy and her family have been creating Hawaiian quilts for many generations. In conversation with Jeremy Uden and Misa Tamura, she shares her thoughts with us on the cultural significance and symbolism of quilting in Hawaiian culture, why the patterns and tradition are so important to keep alive, and how she teaches this exciting and beautiful art.



Cissy Serrao, photographed by Craig Kojima

### *'The Art of Hawaiian Quilting'*

Cissy Serrao is the founder of Poakalani & Company, a quilting guild and school in Honolulu, Hawai'i, established in 1988 by Cissy's parents, Poakalani and John Serrao. Her parent's philosophy in creating this guild was to preserve and appreciate the cultural heritage of Hawai'i.





Jeremy Uden

Jeremy is Head of Conservation at the Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford. He is interested in research into materials and construction techniques using non-destructive scientific techniques. He is also currently conducting research into pesticide residues on museum objects, and whether these residues potentially have an impact on human health.



Misa Tamura

Misa is a Senior Conservator on the *Talking Threads* textile research project at the Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford. She is also Chair of the Institute of Conservation Ethnography working group.

Week 5: **Wednesday 12 May 2021 – 14:00 – 15:15 GMT / 15:00 – 16:15 CET**

Matters of Care: In Conversation with Subhadra Das

Register: [https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_5-WTh31ZRSW0cHRKHOFccw](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_5-WTh31ZRSW0cHRKHOFccw)

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In the fifth week of the *Matters of Care: Museum futures in times of planetary precarity* conference series, keynote speaker Subhadra Das asks us the fundamental question: What is a Museum For? In conversation with Marenka Thompson-Odlum, Subhadra asks us to question our museums, collections, and stories that we tell.



Subhadra Das

*'Taking Care of Business: What is a Museum For?'*

Subhadra Das is a writer, historian, broadcaster, comedian and museum curator. Her main area of research is the history and philosophy of science and medicine in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, particularly in the science of race and eugenics. She uses museum objects to tell decolonial stories in engaging and affirming ways.



Marenka Thompson-Odlum

Marenka is a Research Associate at the Pitt Rivers Museum and a doctoral candidate at the University of Glasgow. Her doctoral research explores Glasgow's role in the trans-Atlantic slave trade through the material culture housed at Glasgow Museums. At the Pitt Rivers Museum, she is the researcher on the Labelling Matters project, which investigates the problematic use of language within the Pitt Rivers Museum's displays and thinking through ways of decolonisation through re-imagining the definition of a label.

**Week 6: Thursday, 20 May 2021 – 9:00 – 10:15 GMT / 10:00 – 11:15 CET**

**Matters of Care: In Conversation with Naman Ahuja**

**Register: [https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_3GhjQT-VQjmrSDZmXqiYqA](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_3GhjQT-VQjmrSDZmXqiYqA)**

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In the final week of the *Matters of Care: Museum futures in times of planetary precarity* conference series, keynote speaker Naman Ahuja will share thoughts on the decolonisation of museums, the globalisation of art history and issues around the showcasing of difference and the inability to translate one culture into the language of another. He will discuss the complexities of taking ideas of a universal museum and global art history to a non-western audience in conversation with Clare Harris.



Professor Naman Ahuja

*'From India IN the World to India AND the World'*

Naman Ahuja is an art historian, curator, and Professor of Indian Art and Architecture at the Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi, India. His research and teaching focus on Indian iconography and sculpture, temple architecture and Sultanate-period painting. He has curated a number of exhibitions in museums across the globe, including the critically acclaimed exhibition on *The Body in Indian Art and Thought*, which was shown at the Palais des Beaux Arts in Brussels and the National Museum in Delhi in 2013-14. He is also the editor of *Marg*, India's leading magazine and journal on the arts.



Professor Clare Harris

Clare Harris is Curator for Asia Collections at the Pitt Rivers Museum and Professor of Visual Anthropology at the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Oxford. Her pioneering work on Tibetan art, visual culture, material culture, photography and museums has received global recognition. Clare's work on Tibet and its diaspora has been informed by her wider interests in contemporary art and aesthetics, the politics of collecting and, and a critical approach to the impact and aftermath of British imperialism in India and Tibet.