The majority of art students experience a range of emotional and sensory responses to the collections. They find that objects have the power to trigger a chain of associations and feelings. Sketchbooks can function as a repository in which these fleeting feelings are caught and reflected upon. This section shows some of the ways in which sketchbooks can be used as a creative diary, not only recording object data but also thoughts and ideas generated from discussion with friends.
annotating your sketchbook

Annotation may consist of:

Observations
This is the factual, contextual information about the object you have drawn.
Make notes about the object around your sketch. Try to include:
• Where it comes from
• What it’s made from
• Who used it or made it
• What it was used for
• Its size

Experience and ideas
This is where you record your personal response to the object. How does it make you feel? What does it remind you of? What were you thinking as you made your drawing?

You can record your response to the object in lots of different ways:

observation + images
• Collect images from the internet or magazines and stick them in your sketchbook

observation + conversation
• Have a conversation with other people in your group. How do they feel about the object you have chosen?

observation + object analysis
• Brainstorm ideas (spider diagrams, mind maps)

observation + imagination
• Use your imagination. Try using your senses (touch, smell, taste, sight, hearing) to imagine what it would be like to use the object, or imagine what it was like in the place where it was used.
I feel the lighting and the mood is theatrical, with the roof and the environment up here. I don’t like it… they’re very violent these weapons… vicious and cruel.

Looks like it was used to hit someone over the head – I’d hate that (to do that or have it done to me). It’s a throwing knife from Africa.

Difficult to draw, the light keeps changing on it. The engraving isn’t that clear, I had to look closely.

I prefer the pencil: it has a sharp, cruel, pointed look. If I drew it again I’d make it exaggerated to look more pointed, more vicious.

I can’t imagine who would carry it. I see it as part of a violent culture, where life is cheap.

It reminds me of an agricultural tool, something you’d use to cut wheat or chop your chives! I’m not sure I’d choose it as a weapon, it seems silly. It gives me a comic book image. I can imagine making this with tin foil and cardboard.

It doesn’t feel like an object that was designed to be used – The edges seem thin. It isn’t as scary as some of the other weapons around here.

We had a conversation about the knife, it went like this:

**Adrian says:**

I feel the lighting and the mood is theatrical, with the roof and the environment up here. I don’t like it… they’re very violent these weapons… vicious and cruel.

**Andy says:**

It reminds me of an agricultural tool, something you’d use to cut wheat or chop your chives! I’m not sure I’d choose it as a weapon, it seems silly. It gives me a comic book image. I can imagine making this with tin foil and cardboard.

**Melody says:**

It doesn’t feel like an object that was designed to be used – The edges seem thin. It isn’t as scary as some of the other weapons around here. It doesn’t feel like an object that was designed to be used. The edges seem thin. It isn’t as scary as some of the other weapons around here.
I felt very cozy sitting here, it feels warm, the textures... safe, comfortable. It's difficult to see the detail. At first I thought it would be easy - shapes, colours, geometric - but there are lots of diagonal lines that connect, so I had to think about the whole thing. It's hard to get my head round it. By looking I can see it's painted over the top, not woven.

By looking I can see it's painted over the top, not woven. Who made it? By themselves? Did they lay it out and do the whole thing in one go? What about the bits you can't see? Does it change?

I like the black and white best - it's striking, intricate, distinctive. The one in the middle, with the curl, made me think of ferns in New Zealand, even though it's from Nicaragua (does that shape mean something to people there too?)

Thinking about the material of the object. Is it ceremonial, daily wear, or matting or decoration in a domestic setting? It couldn't be very comfortable to wear clothes made out of this (too itchy and rigid), so I guess it wouldn't be used for everyday clothes.

This place is the cozy corner of the Museum. The cloths remind me of Joseph Beuys, a German artist whose plane went down in Russia and he was found by local tribes and wrapped up in felt and lard. Now his work hangs with things covered in felt. I think of a room that would have a lot of this hanging up - very homely. The cloths are preferable to more ornate, stiff textiles - they're straightforward and honest. It feels cocooned and safe.

I like the way they're layered in the case... you see a little bit of one, then a little bit of another.

Adrian says:

The cloths are
- for wall decorations
- bedding
- clothing
- making masks

Fabric isn't displayed like this in a shop, but I wish that it was. It makes it easier to compare the way they've been made and look at the decoration, the similarities and the differences.

Andy says:

Fabric isn't displayed like this in a shop, but I wish that it was. It makes it easier to compare the way they've been made and look at the decoration, the similarities and the differences.

Here is a conversation we had about the barkcloth:
Papua New Guinea

Worn with a costume

Construction
Made of barkcloth. What is it?

Design
Who chose the design?

Use
No eye holes - do you look through the mouth?

Artists
Reminds me of Picasso and Matisse

Performance art?

Who are the Artists?

Artists are shown?

Worn by special people. Is this like Joseph Beuys?

Observation + Object analysis

It might be an ancestor, or a supernatural being

Used once, then thrown away

you can see a frame at the back

who chose the design?
These vases come from:
The Aegean (Island of Lesbos)
Nagaland (India)

They were used for

Observation + Imagination

Sight

All of these pots
would have been used
in someone's house - it's hard
to imagine when people lived in
the museum case like this.

Taste

Would you want
to drink from them
now?

Wine
Bread
Olives

Feel

One of the pots is so
smooth - I think the
person who made it must
have gone over it again
and again, smoothing away
all the bumps.

Sound

Glug, glug, glug

I can imagine the Aegean pot, full
of wine, at a big family lunch...

Smell

Smell of food,
lemons, pine-trees
in the wind...

Hearing

Sounds of cutting, chanting, glasses
dinking, children, clapping, music

Smell

Do they smell
daily or
smelly - old wine?
acknowledgements

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All images and photos in this book are copyright Pitt Rivers Museum unless otherwise stated. Museum photos by Suzy Prior and Malcolm Osman, artwork by Adrian Brooks, Andrew McLellan and Melody Vaughan.

Page 12: Two masks from the museum’s teaching collection.
Page 15: Clockwise from top left: black capped kingfisher (copyright Oxford University Museum of Natural History), Asian fairy bird (copyright Oxford University Museum of Natural History), woman dancing by qinn.anya, photo available from www.flickr.com under a creative commons attribution and share-alike licence, black gold white brown by dryfish, photo available from www.flickr.com under a creative commons attribution licence, Hoopoe (copyright Oxford University Museum of Natural History), male peacock with feathers full strut by respres, photo available from www.flickr.com under a creative commons attribution licence, rainbow lory (copyright Oxford University Museum of Natural History), pearled puple eyeshadow with feather lashes by dreamglow, photo available from www.flickr.com under a creative commons attribution licence.
Page 21: Mask. Papua New Guinea (1906.74.1). Andaman islands and Australia (1884.33.52, 1884.60.20-21, 1898.75.60-61).