



Museum of
**Natural
History**
University of Oxford

Pitt Rivers
MUSEUM
Anthropology and World Archaeology



PRESS RELEASE

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Hopes and Fears: Life, Death, Extinction & Invasion

18 November 2016, 19.00 – 22.00

As part of the national *Being Human Festival*, the Pitt Rivers Museum and the University Museum of Natural History will be lit up at night for visitors to explore the theme of *Hopes and Fears: Life, Death, Extinction & Invasion*.

As you enter, the Museum façade will be dramatically illuminated with images from the collections and archives, as part of a collaboration with artists from *Luxmuralis* and *Fusion Arts*. This spectacular one-off light show will be brought to life with a sound installation accompaniment from the Museums' sound and music archives.

Once inside, experience two very different museums and try to pinpoint what it is that makes us human. Pitt Rivers Museum will be looking at how different cultures manage the hopes and fears surrounding life and death through ritual, social culture and community. There will be DJ sets from the *Young Women's Music Project* and a range of talks covering amulets, death and the ancient Egyptian concept of Maat. Make a lucky origami crane, a classic symbol of good luck happiness in Japan (ideally you need to make 1000!), mull over recently excavated Mesolithic material from *Oxford Archaeology* and handle real objects from the collections. Visit the Purple Chamber and view the Human Optogram Device in artist Derek Ogbourne's 'The Museum of Optography', a pop-up museum exploring the Victorian concept of optography, in which the eye 'records' the last image seen before death.

The University Museum of Natural History will explore hopes and fears through the concept of invasion and extinction in the animal world. Listen to live music whilst debating the reintroduction of bears or the banning of cats! Paint each other's faces or make a mask of an animal you'd like to bring back from extinction or maybe reintroduce to Britain. Meet the poets in residence and help the poetry tree grow, take a guided 'Natural Fears'

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tour and meet the 'Selfie Bears'. Then chill out in the 'Hops and Beers' bar with a researcher and chew over a morsel from the research menu.

Dance under the dinosaurs and party next to the totem pole – come along and help us answer, what is it that makes YOU human.

Tickets cost £3 and are available in advance online at <http://bit.ly/2fnYBQ6>; admission to the Luxmuralis and Fusion Arts light and sound show is free. If not sold out in advance, limited tickets will be available on the door.

Notes to Editors

- Led by the School of Advanced Study, University of London, in partnership with the Arts & Humanities Research Council and the British Academy, **Being Human** is a national forum for public engagement with humanities research. The festival highlights the ways in which the humanities can inspire and enrich our everyday lives, help us to understand ourselves, our relationships with others, and the challenges we face in a changing world. In 2015, the festival featured over 300 events organised by over 70 universities and research organisations in 36 towns and cities across the country. In 2016, it is proud to return between 17-25 November for 8 days of big questions, big debates and engaging activities for all ages. The theme for the 2016 festival is 'Hope & Fear'.
- **Luxmuralis** is a collaborative team combining artists from different backgrounds and artistic disciplines – creating works across multiple media and presentation formats. Luxmuralis work with a variety of different clients from Councils to Corporate alongside developing and generating ad hoc and individual works of art. The primary purpose of Luxmuralis is to take art onto the streets and provide access to visual artwork in public as well as unexpected places.
- **Fusion Arts** is an Oxford-based charity that devises and delivers creative projects in the local and wider community, working in partnership with other creative and non-creative organizations, artists and people from all walks of life.
- The **Young Women's Music Project** (YWMP) is an educational charity that offers twice-monthly free workshops for women aged 14-21, which provide an inclusive and supportive space for young women to make music together, learn new skills, express themselves, and grow in confidence. Using music workshops, YWMP make and record music, plan and hold gigs and events, and discuss relevant issues affecting young people. YWMP is trans inclusive. YWMP also brings cutting-edge projects, gigs, exhibitions and talks to Oxford in high profile institutions such as Modern Art Oxford, the Ashmolean Museum, and the Pitt Rivers Museum, in partnerships with hospitals, schools, and organizations for vulnerable young people such as VIP+ and Readipop. The projects help young people to challenge issues affecting them in a creative and productive way, such as class, race, sexuality, gender, mental health, and consent.
- **Oxford Archaeology** is one of the largest and longest established independent archaeology and heritage practices in Europe, providing heritage services to both public and private clients. As an educational charity, they undertake research for a variety of national and regional bodies, providing opportunities for the public to engage in the field and in post-excavation activities.

