

Archaeology International

News

Director's Report, 2019–20

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Director's Report, 2019–20

Sue Hamilton

Welcome to the Director's Report for the UCL Institute of Archaeology (IoA) and to *Archaeology International* for the academic year 2019–20. What a year it has been, from hosting the hugely successful Forty-First Annual Theoretical Archaeology Group (TAG) Conference in December (see below), with around 620 delegates, to the closure of the UCL campus in March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. I have been extremely proud of (but not surprised by) the immense dedication of Institute staff and students working collectively to develop and undertake innovative forms of virtual teaching, learning and research. Alongside this we have been continuing to deliver other activities, albeit in different ways to originally planned, and I would like to highlight the efforts of the Institute's Professional Services Staff who have worked tirelessly from home to keep 'the show on the road'. Shutting down our Gordon Square building, laboratories and collections was a major undertaking led by Facilities Manager Sandra Bond, working with our laboratory teams. Now, as I write, we are opening up our building again with social distancing measures in place. We are getting ready for the 2020–21 academic year with a 'digital-first' approach, combined with some face-to-face as well as lab- and practice-based teaching and research. Archaeology South-East (ASE) (our commercial Field Unit led by Dominic Perring) has had an equally challenging time, with many

of its staff being temporally ‘furloughed’ until the building industry emerged from its initial lockdown. In an unprecedented global turn of events, we may all have been working remotely but we are definitely not distant.

Last year we changed the organisational structure of *Archaeology International* to oversee its production, content and format better. This was achieved with the creation of an Editorial Board that included the Co-Heads of each of our three Sections (Archaeological Sciences, Heritage Studies and World Archaeology) as members. Alice Stevenson (Editor) produced this volume, which this year is published by UCL Press, supported by Barney Harris (currently a Leverhulme Trust-funded researcher) as features and copy-editor.

While the Institute has had a very challenging year, it continues to be impressively productive. Below, I present the highlights that affirm our breadth in teaching, research and dissemination of our work in the wider world.

This year all our [undergraduate degrees have been accredited by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists \(Cifa\) and Universities Archaeology UK \(UAUK\)](#). Led by Bill Sillar, the Institute was one of seven universities to be included in the first cohort of archaeology departments to be awarded Cifa accreditation. At its founding in 1937, the Institute was envisaged as ‘a laboratory of archaeological science’ to train students and develop standards for archaeological fieldwork and conservation. We remain committed to training future generations of field archaeologists and undertaking collaborative research that includes students within a wide range of field, laboratory and heritage projects. We seek to support all students in developing their career aspirations whether within or outside archaeology.

Related to this, congratulations to the Institute staff (including ASE staff) who received a [Faculty Education Award 2020 in the Team category](#) as recognition of their outstanding contribution to the learning experience and success of our students. The winning team – Bill Sillar, Mark Roberts, Charlotte Frearson, Andrew Gardner, Judy Medrington,

Andrew Reid, Dorian Fuller, Sandra Bond, Louise Rayner, Mark Lake, Matthew Pope, Alex Allen, Hannah Gibbs and Jon Cogdale – have worked consistently over the last three years to ensure that students gain the skills and transferable skills necessary for careers in archaeology or beyond.

The Institute's Laboratories were awarded a [Gold award from LEAF](#) – the Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework – as part of UCL's sustainability behaviour change programmes. The Archaeology LEAF team, led by Sandra Bond, used the framework as inspiration to change laboratory protocols, thus reducing the impact of lab activities.

Alongside this our laboratories continue to be significantly upgraded, providing state-of-the-art in-house facilities for the examination and analysis of almost all types of archaeological materials, artefacts and finds, both organic and inorganic. In addition to the new analytical equipment highlighted last year, our Biomolecular Archaeology Research Laboratories include facilities for the extraction of carbon and nitrogen for isotopic analysis. We recently acquired a MALDI TOF mass spectrometer to enable us to undertake species analysis from bone collagen, while our staff access radiogenic isotope analysis through collaborations with universities in London and abroad.

Promotions, new academic staff and leavers

The Institute is pleased to announce the success of [Corisande Fenwick and Rhiannon Stevens](#) in UCL's Senior Staff Promotions. Corisande and Rhiannon were both promoted to Associate Professor (effective from 1 October 2020).

We welcomed [Ceri Shipton](#) (Figure 1) over the summer to take up the Lectureship in Palaeolithic Archaeology following Ignacio de la Torre's departure for a research post at CSIC, Madrid. Ceri comes to us from the Australian National University and will play a major role in the teaching and development of our MSc in Palaeoanthropology and Palaeolithic Archaeology.



Figure 1 Ceri Shipton, the IoA's new Lecturer in Palaeolithic Archaeology. (Image credit: Ceri Shipton)

In addition to those research staff whose projects and Fellowships had come to an end (Heba Abd El Gawad, Amelia Bargallo, Eleanor Blakelock, Jennifer French, Maja Mise, Faye Minter, Judith Plouviez, Tomos Proffitt, Philip Riris, Isabel Sánchez Ramos and Colin Sterling), we were also sad to say goodbye to teaching staff (Sirio Canos Donnay, Jonathan Gardner and Michelé Wollstonecroft) who have worked tirelessly over their time at the IoA. Jennifer French has a new three-year post as Lecturer in Palaeolithic Archaeology at the University of Liverpool and Colin Sterling will be taking up a permanent lectureship at the University of Amsterdam.

We thank all of them for their service to the Institute and UCL.

Awards and recognition

Institute staff, honorary associates and students continue to be recognised, both individually and for specific projects, through an impressive array of awards and related indicators, including media interest.

The results of the [ArchaeoGLOBE project](#), for which Dorian Fuller was one of the project designers and lead co-authors and which involved

contributions by Mark Altaweel, were published in *Science*. The ArchaeoGLOBE project involved crowd-sourcing expert knowledge from archaeologists globally about the extent of different forms of land use over the past ten thousand years.

Dean Sully was appointed [Scientist in Residence at the UCL Slade School of Art](#) for 2019–20 and gave his Inaugural Lecture in the Slade Gallery.

Institute student Marie Middleton (currently undertaking the MSc in Environmental Archaeology) won a prize from the Council for British Research in the Levant for [Best Undergraduate Dissertation in Levantine Studies for 2019](#). Marie’s dissertation concerned the medieval occupation at the site of Khirbet Sheikh ‘Isa, and the impact on the city of the introduction of the lucrative sugar industry.

The Beaker People: Isotopes, mobility and diet in prehistoric Britain, the 600-page volume edited by Mike Parker Pearson, Alison Sheridan, Mandy Jay, Andrew Chamberlain, Michael Richards and Jane Evans, was [nominated for Book of the Year 2020](#) in the annual Current Archaeology Awards.

Early Stone Age populations living up to 1.8 million years ago made complex decisions in selecting different types of stone to optimise a variety of cutting tools, according to a new study involving British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow [Tomos Proffitt](#).

Another collaborative study involving [Tomos Proffitt](#) and researchers from the University of Oxford; Oxford Brookes University; Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology; Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok; and the National Primate Research Centre of Thailand, and published in *eLife* journal, indicated that stone tool use developed differently within species of Old World monkeys in spite of shared environmental and ecological settings.

Institute alumni Mark Evans and Major Charles Foinette received a Points of Light Award for their exceptional service founding the

charity ‘[Waterloo Uncovered](#)’, which unites rehabilitating veterans with ground-breaking archaeological excavations of the Waterloo battlefield. Students from UCL continue to work with the charity on their public engagement activities while Tim Schadla-Hall is a Waterloo Uncovered Trustee.

Experiments conducted for her PhD research by alumna [Carlotta Gardner](#), working with colleagues at NCSR Demokritos and the British School at Athens, have provided exciting insights into the working practices of Roman metalworkers.

Institute PhD student [Mariana Nabais](#) contributed to a research project in Portugal, published in *Science*, which discovered that Neanderthals systematically exploited shellfish resources. The use of marine resources on such a scale had previously been thought to be a trait of anatomically modern humans.

[Medieval carvings dated to the fourteenth century](#) were discovered by a team from ASE in a cave, following a landslip near Guildford in Surrey.

Institute PhD researcher [Hayley Simon](#) was awarded the prestigious [Ronald Belcher Award](#) from the Royal Society of Chemistry for her innovative PhD research on the conservation of the *Mary Rose* iron cannonballs.

A team of [archaeologists from ASE](#), led by Stephen White, discovered the elusive remains of what is thought to have been the earliest Elizabethan playhouse, the Red Lion. It was built around 1567 at a site in Whitechapel (Figure 2).

Matthew Pope has been part of the ‘[The Viral Archive](#)’, a collaborative project between archaeologists at the University of Warwick and the University College Cork (Ireland), as well as the Institute, to record visual signs in the landscape relating to the Covid-19 pandemic.

A new collaborative analytical study, involving [Ian Freestone](#), solved the mystery of the origin of the large quantities of Roman colourless/clear glass used for drinking vessels.



Figure 2 Archaeologists from ASE excavating the timber of the Elizabethan playhouse at Whitechapel. (Image credit: Archaeology South-East)

Institute PhD researcher [Pauline Harding](#) was selected for the talent scheme TV PhD by the Edinburgh International Television Festival, the charity arm of the UK's most prestigious TV industry event.

Student news

Several of our Undergraduate and Masters students were awarded [Faculty and Departmental prizes for the 2018–19 academic session](#) and feature on the Dean's List of Excellence.

The Institute was delighted to offer a [new scholarship for International Masters Students for 2020–21](#) thanks to a generous individual donation. The scholarship will enable will enable one international fee-paying student to undertake a year of study on one of the advertised MA or MSc degrees in Archaeology or Archaeological Sciences. The scholarship is awarded on the basis of academic excellence and promise and a demonstrated commitment to either world archaeology (in any region or period) or the application of scientific analysis to archaeological materials.



Figure 3 IoA student Neehaarika Jayanth Veena on placement with Archaeology South-East. (Image credit: Archaeology South-East)



Figure 4 IoA student Iva Popova on placement with Archaeology South-East. (Image credit: Archaeology South-East)

The Institute also funded a [Heritage and Museums Opportunity Scholarship](#) for candidates from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, as these groups are currently under-represented within the heritage sector.

For the first time the [Institute's Instagram account](#) (@uclarchaeology) was taken over by one of our students, third-year undergraduate BA Archaeology and Anthropology student Coco Shi on Friday 8 May. Coco shared information about her degree, her time at the Institute, what she was up to over lockdown in London and her current research.

The Institute Instagram account was then taken over by a group of our undergraduate students for #fieldworkfriday on Friday 26 June. The [first #fieldworkfriday Instagram takeover](#) was led by five current undergraduate students. It explored the exciting range of digital field-work opportunities which are available to students this summer due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Institute students undertaking the recently established **BA in Archaeology with a Placement Year** have been documenting their time at Archaeology South-East:

- [IoA ASE Placement 2019–20](#): Neehaarika Jayanth Veena (Figure 3)
- [IoA ASE Placement 2018–19](#): Iva Popova (Figure 4)

Funding awards for new research

Several of our staff have had their outstanding international research activities recognised by external funding and institutional awards, of which a small selection is mentioned here.

The [Arts and Humanities Research Council \(AHRC\) Heritage Priority Area team](#), based at the Institute and led by Heritage Leadership Fellow Rodney Harrison, secured AHRC Follow-On-Funding from January to September 2020 for *Opening New Pathways to Impact across Heritage Research, Policy and Practice*.

Andrew Bevan and Patrick Quinn are contributing to a successful Marie Skłodowska-Curie Innovative Training Networks (H2020-MSCA-ITN) application, the consortium being led by Thilo Rehren, Cyprus Institute and part time at the IoA, for PLACE: Training the next generation of archaeological scientists: Interdisciplinary studies of pre-modern Plasters and Ceramics from the eastern Mediterranean. This is due to run from 2021 to 2024.

Andrew Bevan will also be the supervisor for a successful Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship candidate, Miguel Carrero, who will be joining us to undertake his research on *MegaScapes: Comparative models of megalithic landscapes in Neolithic Atlantic Europe*.

Corisande Fenwick has been awarded AHRC-funding for two collaborative research projects: ISLAMAFR: Conquest, ecology and economy in Islamic North Africa: The example of the Central Medjerda Valley (with the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut) and OasCiv: The making of oasis civilisation in the Moroccan Sahara (led by the University of Leicester).

Alongside the above, Corisande Fenwick has also been awarded a five-year ERC Starting Grant for her research on EVERYDAYISLAM: Becoming Muslim: Cultural change, everyday life and state formation in early Islamic North Africa (600–1000).

Landscape Futures and the Challenge of Change: Towards integrated cultural/natural heritage decision making is a newly funded research project based at the Institute. It is a result of gaining follow-on funding from the AHRC-funded Heritage Futures project (2015–19) and is also led by [Rodney Harrison](#).

Kevin MacDonald is involved in the successful application (led by Cambridge University) to the Arcadia Foundation for the project Mapping Africa's Endangered Archaeological Sites and Monuments. Kevin will be working with Ibrahima Thiaw (Dakar, Senegal) and Malian colleagues on the West African portion of the project.

Matthew Pope received [British Academy/Leverhulme Small Research Grant](#) funding to lead an ambitious survey of a former Ice Age landscape, which sits in the English Channel seabed off the coast of Jersey (Figure 5). The project is also supported by Jersey Heritage and the Société Jersiaise.



Figure 5 Seymour Tower, an eighteenth-century fortification near the Violet Bank, Channel Islands. (Image credit: Jersey Heritage)

Andrew Reynolds has been awarded a Leverhulme Trust Research Project Grant for collaborative research (with Durham University) on Monumentality and Landscape: Linear earthworks in Britain.

The [National Lottery grant](#) for the community archaeology project *Rendlesham Revealed: Anglo-Saxon life in South-East Suffolk* has Christopher Scull (Honorary Visiting Professor) as the project's academic lead.

We regularly obtain small external grants and grants-in-kind to support collaborative research, fieldwork and post-excavation analyses. In 2019–20 these included:

- Corisande Fenwick for ongoing research at Volubilis, Morocco
- Sue Hamilton for the Rapa Nui Landscapes of Construction Project Taheta Survey
- Borja Legarra Herrero for a new research project: Human Mobility and long-term social change in the west Mediterranean: The case of the Vera region (Almeria, Spain)
- Mike Parker Pearson for his ongoing Origins of Stonehenge project
- Dean Sully for a project with SOAS entitled Entanglements: West African Heritage and Community Curation in the UK

We have also had several UCL institutional small grant-funding successes this year including:

- Stuart Brookes for The Roads and Routes of the Gough Map GIS Database Capture (UCL SHS Dean's Strategic Fund)
- Gabriel Moshenska for his collaborative project with The Museum of British Colonialism and African Digital Heritage on Displaying the Digital Heritage of the Mau Mau Uprising (UCL Centre for Critical Heritage)
- Miljana Radivojević for research on Developing FUEl (R)Evolution in the Eurasian Landscape: Metal technology and carbon emissions during the inner Eurasian Bronze Age c.3500–1000 BCE (UCL Strategic Initiative: Sustainability, climate change and the Anthropocene) and also for finishing the monograph for the Rise of Metallurgy in Eurasia project (UCL SHS Dean's Strategic Fund)
- Ulrike Sommer and Bruno Vindrola won funding to organise an event on Reframing the Waste Crisis: Environmental, archaeological and anthropological perspectives (UCL IAS & Urban Lab Call for Waste Event Proposals)

Monograph and digital resource publications

We are pleased to announce a new UCL Institute of Archaeology PhD series, published by BAR. The series allows for rapid publication of largely unaltered Institute PhD theses and covers all subject areas, including world archaeology, archaeological science, cultural heritage, conservation and museum studies.

Critical Perspectives on Cultural Memory and Heritage Construction, Transformation and Destruction, edited by Veysel Apaydin, was published by UCL Press earlier this year. The open-access volume contains contributions by a number of Institute staff including Jonathan Gardner, Rachel King and Colin Sterling.

A new digital resource for scholars of early medieval Britain was launched this year by the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) with the Institute. The *Early Medieval Atlas* aims to publish a range of spatial evidence, generated by projects since 2005.

A new volume on *Etruscan Literacy*, edited by [Ruth D. Whitehouse \(Emeritus Professor\)](#), was published this year by the Accordia Research Institute, University of London.

Corisande Fenwick's new book on *Early Islamic North Africa: A new perspective* is part of the Bloomsbury Academic *Debates in Archaeology* series and proposes a new approach to the Arab conquests and the spread of Islam in North Africa.

The volume *Heritage Futures: Comparative approaches to natural and cultural heritage practices*, by Rodney Harrison, Caitlin DeSilvey, Cornelius Holtorf, Sharon Macdonald, Nadia Bartolini, Esther Breithoff, Harald Fredheim, Antony Lyons, Sarah May, Jennie Morgan and Sefryn Penrose, is an outcome of the c.£2 million UK AHRC-funded Heritage Futures research programme and is published by UCL Press. The fully open-access monograph is available for download on the UCL Press website.

A new open-access volume, *Deterritorializing the Future: Heritage in, of and after the Anthropocene*, edited by Rodney Harrison and Colin Sterling, was published in July 2020. The book is available for free download in open access from Open Humanities Press and is published as part of their Critical Climate Change book series.

Other recent volumes published by Institute staff over the past year are noted below in the Special events section (book launches).

Special events

As part of our commitment to provide an outstanding research environment for staff, students and visitors, the Institute hosts and organises numerous events on many different aspects of archaeology and is linked to other heritage institutions, archaeological societies and organisations. A selection of events which took place over the past academic year are highlighted below. Details of all seminar series and other events are available here: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/news-events/events>

October 2019

A book launch event was held to mark the publication of [four single-author monographs by members of the Heritage Studies Section](#).

- Rachel King's *Outlaws, Anxiety, and Disorder in Southern Africa: Material histories of the Maloti-Drakensberg* (Palgrave Macmillan)
- Gabriel Moshenska's *Material Cultures of Childhood in Second World War Britain* (Routledge)
- Colin Sterling's *Heritage, Photography, and the Affective Past* (Routledge)
- Alice Stevenson's *Scattered Finds: Archaeology, Egyptology and museums* (UCL Press)

The [Third Annual UCL Centre for Critical Heritage Studies Public Lecture](#) was given by [Nick Merriman](#) (Chief Executive, The Horniman

Museum). He discussed how critical museology has been dominated by a human-centred mode of enquiry since it emerged 35 years ago. Until recently little attention has been focused on what is now being termed the climate and ecological emergency. Nick highlighted ways in which critical approaches to this phenomenon can both illuminate museology as a subject and influence practice in museums.

[University Archaeology Day 2019](#): UCL archaeologists worked with 24 other universities to create the UK's first University Archaeology Day in 2017, aimed at inspiring a much-needed next generation of archaeologists. The event now takes place annually with this year's University Archaeology Day held at the British Museum on 12 October (led for the Institute by Andrew Gardner, Charlotte Frearson and Jennifer French). This free annual event is designed for prospective students, teachers and parents to learn about the many degree programmes on offer across the UK and to discover the huge range of career opportunities that an archaeology degree can lead to.

A welcome event was held to mark the revival of the [Forum for Island Research and Experience \(FIRE\) research network](#) by Institute PhD researchers Sarah Forgesson and José Garay-Vázquez.

Gareth Williams (British Museum) presented the [Sir David Wilson Lecture in Medieval Studies 2019](#) entitled 'From Ashdown to the Burghal Hidage: Alfred's rise to "greatness" reconsidered'. This marked the first event in the 2019–20 UCL Institute of Archaeology/British Museum Medieval Seminar Series. A reception was held after the lecture to launch 13 volumes recently published by members of the seminar group.

The Institute's Women's Forum and Equality & Diversity Forum jointly hosted a guest lecture by Anne Teather (Independent Researcher) and Rachel Pope (University of Liverpool) on '[#MeToo and You: A change of culture in Archaeology](#)'.

The International Centre for Chinese Heritage and Archaeology (ICCHA; a joint association between the School for Archaeology and Museology

of Peking University and the Institute) organised a [joint research workshop between the National Museum of China and the Institute](#) on ‘Understanding Late-Neolithic Societies of China: Subsistence, Craft Production and Social Complexity’.

Corinna Riva and Andrew Gardner organised a series of dialogues exploring how European museums of archaeology interact with diverse communities (hosted by the [Italian Cultural Institute in London](#)): [Archaeology Talks 2.0: Who Are Archaeology Museums For?](#)

November 2019

Tom Gregory (Senior Technician in Scanning Electron Microscopy and X-Ray Microanalysis) was co-organiser of the first [UCL Heritage Imaging workshop](#), with colleagues from the UCL Institute for Sustainable Heritage and Centre for Digital Humanities. This brought together all aspects of imaging involving heritage, conservation and/or artefacts to assess existing infrastructure and equipment, computational structure, personnel expertise, research interests and future imaging needs at UCL.

TrowelBlazers joined forces with the Institute and Wikimedia UK to ‘Write Women back into Science’ in the first [TrowelBlazers Wikipedia Edit-A-Thon](#).

The [2019 African Archaeology Research Day \(AARD\)](#) was hosted by the Institute in November. AARD is an informal annual meeting of Africanist archaeologists to encourage undergraduate and postgraduate students, post-doctoral researchers and more established scholars to present recent/ongoing research and fieldwork.

Shadreck Chirikure (University of Cape Town/University of Oxford) gave the [IAMS Beno Rothenberg Memorial Lecture 2019](#) entitled ‘Africa and Early Globalisation: A decolonial and archaeomaterials intervention’.

The Autumn Term South American Archaeology Seminar was a joint meeting with the Latin American Music Seminar. It took place over two days at Senate House, focusing on [Music Archaeology of Latin America](#).

Elizabeth Baquedano organised the [Fifth London Nahuatl Study Day & Workshops in Ancient Mexico](#) at the Institute with a Keynote lecture by Patrick Johansson, UNAM Institute of Historical Research, entitled '8 November 1519: Moctezuma's last battle'.

December 2019

The Institute was delighted to host the [Forty-First Annual Theoretical Archaeology Group \(TAG\) Conference on 16–18 December 2019](#). The theme of this year's conference was 'Power, Knowledge and the Past', which emphasised both current debates about ontologies and ideologies in past societies and the role of knowledge about the past in contemporary political narratives, particularly those to do with different aspects of identity, and including such issues as decolonisation. The *Antiquity*-sponsored plenary session was entitled 'What is the Past Good for in the World of 2020?' and took place on 16 December 2019.

This year's [UCL Institute of Archaeology Gordon Childe Lecture](#) was held in association with TAG 2019 and took place immediately prior to the conference. Matthew Johnson (Northwestern University) gave the lecture entitled 'On Writing the Past Backwards'.

January 2020

Katerina Harvati (Senckenberg Center for Human Evolution and Palaeoenvironment and the DFG Center for Advanced Studies 'Words, Bones, Genes, Tools: Tracking linguistic, cultural and biological trajectories of the human past', Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen) gave the [Sixth Annual UCL Lecture on Climate and Human History](#), jointly organised by UCL Geography and the Institute.

February 2020

The Institute hosted the [Sixth Annual Islamic Archaeology Day](#), co-organised by Corisande Fenwick, Rahil Alipour and Tim Williams, with colleagues from SOAS. Topics explored included the origins of the earliest mosques to urbanism, food taboos and pigment production across a huge geographic expanse stretching out from the Levant, Iraq and the Arabian Gulf to the furthest corners of the Islamic world, such as al-Andalus and Turkmenistan.

To mark [LGBTQ+ History Month 2020](#) the Institute organised a series of events throughout February, the culmination of which was a keynote lecture given by Institute Alumnus John J. Johnston entitled 'Beyond Isis and Osiris: Alternative sexualities in ancient Egypt'.

The [Central Asian Archaeological Landscapes \(CAAL\) project](#), based at the Institute, is concerned with the digitisation of archaeological heritage across a vast region from the Caspian Sea to western China. The team presented a UCL Digital Humanities seminar on digital geo-spatial inventories along the Silk Roads of Central Asia.

The [Seventh Annual Workshop on Maya Myths and Glyphs: Maya on the Thames 2019](#) was held at the Institute. This year's theme was 'Rivers of Blood: Wars along the Usumacinta'.

A special lecture organised by Rachel Sparks entitled 'From the Past to the Future: The Many Legacies of Jericho' was held to celebrate the publication of the book: [Digging Up Jericho: Past, present and future \(Archaeopress\)](#). *Digging Up Jericho* represents the results of a two-day conference held at UCL in 2015, with contributions by 22 internationally renowned scholars, including the Institute's Beverley Butler and Stuart Laidlaw (d.2019). Edited by Rachael Sparks, Bill Finlayson, Bart Wagemakers and Josef Briffa, it is the first volume to offer a holistic perspective on the research and public value of the site of Jericho, with its long and impressive history stretching from the Epipalaeolithic to the present day.

March 2020

The [Fourth Annual Central Asia Seminar Group](#) took place at the Institute in early March. The day of presentations covered archaeological and heritage topics related to working in, and researching subjects relevant to, Central Asia.

With lockdown in March 2020, the temporary closure of UCL and cancellation of in-person events, Institute staff and students (both current and former) took part in a series of informal interviews, [organised by Charlotte Frearson and turned into a podcast playlist #Remote not Distant: 'Parkaeology: Physically Distanced'](#) sharing short chats about education, life and what they could not be without in their homes.

The AHRC Heritage Priority Area team (led by AHRC Heritage Priority Area Leadership Fellow Rodney Harrison) organised multiple events this year including:

- January 2020: A conference on ['Engaging with Independent Research Organisations: Exploring research, policy and practice interfaces'](#).
- February 2020: A one-day workshop on ['Heritage and Policy Engagement: How to influence decision-making'](#).
- July 2020: A half-day virtual event on ['Global Challenges, Sustainability and the Politics of Heritage'](#).
- July 2020: A half-day virtual event on ['Pathways and Barriers to Climate Action through Heritage Research'](#).

Finally, from one large conference at the beginning of the academic session to one at the end! [The Fifth Biennial Conference of the Association of Critical Heritage Studies \(ACHS\)](#) was organised by the Institute (again by Rodney Harrison and the AHRC Heritage Priority Area Team) and held as a fully virtual event on 26–30 August. The conference's theme – Futures – seeks to engage seriously and critically with the often stated aims of heritage to address the concerns of future generations, while also asking participants to think expansively and creatively about the future of critical heritage studies as an emergent field of focus across a range of academic disciplines. The conference

had over 1,100 international delegates registered for the conference and almost 200 parallel sessions, along with a number of plenary events, talks, discussions and various fringe events curated by the Local Organising Committee members. This is a major achievement and an important milestone for the Institute and ACHS; it was the largest conference since the Association started in 2012 and its first virtual conference (Figure 6).

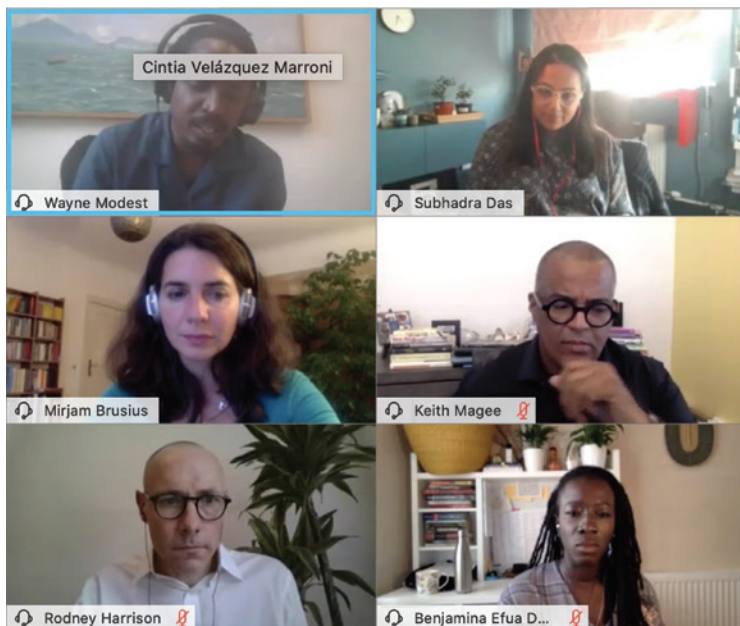


Figure 6 Screenshot of the online opening plenary panel of the Fifth Biennial Conference of the Association of Critical Heritage Studies (ACHS). (Image credit: Hana Morel)

Recognition of teaching and support

Institute staff continue to be recognised for their outstanding contributions to the learning experience and success of UCL students. The [Education Awards 2020](#), including the Student Choice Awards, were a virtual celebration of excellence at UCL with this year's awards,

highlighting all the great work that our students and staff do to make education at UCL even better, taking place online in June. I have already mentioned the Faculty Education Team award above. In addition, 24 Institute staff nominations were received across the various Student Choice Awards categories. Among these, I am especially pleased to congratulate Beverley Butler for being shortlisted and runner-up in the Diverse & Inclusive Education category and IoA alumna Stacy Hackner and Clare Lewis (current PhD student) for winning Provost Education Awards.

Outreach and public engagement

Theano Moussouri (Executive Director of the UCL Centre for Critical Heritage Studies) [was invited to participate in a podcast](#) discussing food, heritage and sustainability in January. The talk was part of the Praxis Heritage Podcast Episodes.

A [photo exhibition, produced by Enora Gandon](#) (Marie Skłodowska-Curie Research Fellow) and exploring traditional potters' wheel-throwing skills, was on display in the UCL South Cloisters from 3 March. Enora's EC-funded Marie Curie Fellowship project aims to better understand the cultural transmission of craft skills. The photographs were taken on field-work in Nepal, Thailand and the Palestinian territories (Hebron).

[Tim Williams](#) was invited to participate in an afternoon of fascinating talks and conversation on the history, culture, material culture and politics of the areas along the Silk Road in a special online event in April.

[Mike Parker Pearson](#) was invited to comment in the media on the need for the Stonehenge road tunnel plans to be scrapped in the light of the significant discovery nearby of the largest prehistoric structure ever found in Britain.

[Mike](#) was also invited to be a celebrity judge on the 'Build your Own Monument' challenge organised by the Archaeological Institute of America during the period of lockdown.

The Institute's new student exhibition – a virtual exhibition entitled *Let's Play: Games as connection* – was launched in May 2020. The exhibition showcases a variety of games from across the globe, illustrating the universal nature of games no matter the cultural background.

Institute alumna Sarah Dhanjal has written a series of blogs this year for the UCL Public Engagement Unit about museum work that happens outside the public eye.

- [Handling History 1](#)
- [Handling History 2](#)
- [Handling History 3](#)
- [Handling History 4](#)

Archaeology South-East's new podcast *Digging Deeper* was launched in July, taking listeners to the heart of development-led archaeology in the UK. In each episode, host Dr Emily Johnson (ASE) welcomes members of the ASE archaeological team to discuss a new archaeological discovery, talk about their day-to-day roles, demystify the archaeological process or tackle issues affecting the sector.

Institute news regularly featured on the UCL news site, including the article headlines quoted below:

October 2019

'[Macaques](#)' stone tool use varies despite same environment: Stone tool use develops differently within species of Old World monkeys in spite of shared environmental and ecological settings, according to a new study involving UCL.'

November 2019

'3,000-year-old Egyptian wheat genome sequenced for first time: The genome of an ancient [Egyptian variety of wheat has been sequenced for the first time](#) by a UCL-led team, revealing historical patterns of crop movement and domestication.'

January 2020

[‘Exploring hidden Ice Age landscape in the English Channel:](#) An ambitious survey of a former Ice Age landscape, which sits off the coast of Jersey in the English Channel seabed, is to be carried out on foot by a team of archaeologists led by UCL’s Institute of Archaeology.’

[‘Iron Age “warrior” burial uncovered in West Sussex:](#) A richly furnished grave belonging to an Iron Age “warrior” buried 2,000 years ago has been uncovered in West Sussex by UCL archaeologists.’

June 2020

[‘Archaeologists may have discovered London’s earliest playhouse:](#) The earliest playhouse in London may have been discovered at a site in Whitechapel by a team of archaeologists from UCL.’

July 2020

[‘New research reveals origin of Stonehenge’s great sarsen stones:](#) The giant sarsen stones that form the primary architecture of Stonehenge originate from West Woods on the edge of Wiltshire’s Marlborough Downs, according to new research involving UCL.’

August 2020

[‘Eating out was a very social matter for early humans, according to new archaeology from Boxgrove.](#) The findings of a meticulous study led by UCL Institute of Archaeology are detailed in a ground-breaking new book, *The Horse Butchery Site* (Matt Pope, Simon Parfitt and Mark Roberts), published by UCL Archaeology South-East’s “Spoilheap Publications”. The study pieces together the activities and movements of a group of early humans as they made tools, including the oldest bone tools documented in Europe, and extensively butchered a large horse 480,000 years ago.’

[‘UCL Institute of Archaeology researchers are involved in collaborative research which has discovered what is believed to be the earliest art in](#)

the British Isles; artistic designs on rock from as long ago as the late Ice Age.’

‘UCL Institute of Archaeology staff are contributing to the newly established [UCL Anthropocene initiative](#), leading research and teaching on topics that critically address our changing environment.’

Alumni and former staff

Another year also brings with it great sadness. Institute staff, students, friends and colleagues were saddened to hear of the deaths of several Institute alumni and friends. Short pieces to commemorate these individuals are included in the *Obituaries* section of this issue.

In particular, we were immensely saddened by the death of our esteemed colleague [Stuart Laidlaw](#) who at the time of his death (November 2019) had been the ‘Institute’s Photographer’ for 40 years. As Lecturer in Archaeological Photography, he was an exemplary teacher and taught many cohorts of undergraduate and graduate students in archaeological photography, latterly including digital imaging techniques. Stuart was actively working on the redesign and upgrade of our photography and digital imaging facilities at the time of his death. In February 2020 we reopened the refurbished laboratory and held a memorial occasion in his honour.

[Theresa O’Mahony](#), a recent MA and BA graduate, passed away in September 2019. Theresa was a passionate advocate and tireless activist for disability rights in archaeology. Her dissertations and subsequent research focused on discrimination against people with disabilities in all areas of archaeology. She also pioneered radical and practical approaches to making archaeological excavations inclusive and accessible.

Inequality, diversity and difference

In recent times, anger about racism and its associated inequalities and injuries has been finding a new voice. While it is the time for all institutions

to listen, statements of well-meaning intentions are not enough. At the Institute we are reviewing our existing equality, diversity and inclusivity plans. We are actively decolonising our teaching curricula as befits an institution that undertakes global archaeology in a global university and city. We are consulting across the board on possible actions to isolate and address structural inequalities and increase our disciplinary, social, economic and racial inclusivity for students and staff. Our students have initiated a questionnaire and are preparing a document based on responses, and the Sections are holding working group discussions. We will be joining these initiatives together to establish priorities for Institute research and education, in order best to achieve our wish to become a radically more diverse and inclusive community.

Concluding remarks: Into the future

There are demanding times to come. In spite of our size, I see the Institute as a highly humane community that puts the student experience and people first. At the same time we are an intellectually stretching and exciting place to be a part of, with our research and teaching being at the forefront of so many new ways of thinking.

As Director, I am committed to finding a steady way through the current pandemic challenges: one that is as workable as possible for the lives of all of my colleagues and that provides the best possible student experience next year. The ongoing resilience and good humour of all at the Institute is amazing.