

Making, Using and Enjoying

As part of the Making, Using and Enjoying: The Museum of the Intangible project, we have invited makers, writers and practitioners to produce a range of creative responses to the MERL's collections as a way of exploring some of the intangible cultural heritage (ICH) connected with them.

[Georgina Barney](#) and [Kate Genever](#) : The Museum of Contemporary Farming

The Museum of Contemporary Farming is a mass, participatory conversation and artwork on Twitter, which culminated in two events (one on Kate's family farm and one at The MERL), an exhibition, and an ongoing Twitter presence. Georgina acted as the museum's curator, inviting the public to suggest content for a Museum of Contemporary Farming using the hashtag #MuseumContemporaryFarming – be they objects, images, concepts, attitudes etc. The most interesting ideas were selected for an [exhibition in the MERL's open stores](#), alongside a series of 'scratch drawings' made by Kate and inspired by the improvised use of sticks on her farm.

Visit the [Museum of Contemporary Farming website](#)

Follow the project on Twitter: [@MofCFarming](#) / #MuseumContemporaryFarming

[Chip Colquhoun](#): Life of the People

Chip created a series of vodcasts based on traditional folk tales which celebrate craftspeople and their practices, such as farriery, blacksmithing and charcoal burning. These were inspired by Dorothy Hartley, an artist and author who travelled around the country in the 1930s and 1940s, documenting the rural people and practices she encountered along her way. Two of the episodes involve an apprentice learning some basic skills from a master to explore more deeply some of the rural practices discussed in the folk tales. These episodes feature some of that footage and also include live interactive interviews, where viewers had the chance to ask their own questions.

Watch on the [Life of the People Youtube channel](#) and follow on twitter [@MERLLife](#)

[Felicity Ford](#): Knit a song of shepherds

Felicity ran a series of knitting workshops at The MERL, designed to share the creative processes of knitting and listening, and to contemplate some of The MERL's objects associated with the history of yarn production. In each session, participants knitted a small project using a specially selected yarn while listening to a related set of sound recordings. Each knitted object and podcast combination was developed in response to a specific objects in The MERL – shepherd smocks, a pair of gloves knitted in

Shetland, a book about UK silk production, and sheep bells. Short recordings were made at the end of each session to document the participants' discussions, which will be woven into a final, celebratory sound piece.

[Visit the Museum of the Intangible page on Felicity's website.](#)

[Alexandra Harris](#): After Michaelmas

Alex is best known for longer writings and broadcast work. She wrote a short story set in eighteenth-century Sussex, telling the story of a woman's life through the items listed in her will. It was inspired by historic probate inventories and items in the MERL collections which were similar to those found in such inventories.

[Melissa Harrison](#): Bone Bobbins, Thatching Tools and The Bodger's Boy

Melissa is best known for her novels, but was keen to try her hand at poetry and has written three debut poems. Each poem was inspired by a set of objects looked at during the workshop: bone bobbins for lace making; thatching tools; and an extract from the book *Made in England*, written and illustrated by Dorothy Hartley. The poems will form part of an edited volume to be produced by the MERL's Poet-in-Residence Jack Thacker.

[Teresa Murjas](#): i, sheep

Teresa is working with Jack Thacker, MERL [Poet-in-Residence](#), and partnering with his family farm in Herefordshire to develop an animal-led film project. *i-Sheep* will capture life from the sheep's-eye perspective, using a Go-Pro to record the sheep's experience. Through this, Teresa will explore how we imagine and claim to understand what an animal is experiencing, how that might inform our relationship with that animal, and what medium of expression can be used to represent that relationship. *i-Sheep* will culminate an installation work which will include film, poetry and poetic response.

[Hannah James](#) and Geraint Parfitt

Geraint, one of only a handful of clog-makers in the UK, has made a pair of dancing clogs for Hannah, who has developed a new work, 'Muscle Memory' based on some of the intangible heritage around clog-making, clog-wearing and clog-dancing. Hannah premiered the new work with a performance that formed the basis of [The MERL Annual Lecture](#) on 6th November, 2018. Hannah has also created a short 'how-to' clog dancing tutorial film which will be used as an interactive in the museum. After their use in the real world by Hannah, the clogs will subsequently be accessioned into the museum.

Watch a Hannah's film of her meeting with Geraint, the performance of 'Muscle Memory' and the clog-dancing tutorial on [our Youtube channel](#).

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