

16 December 2022

## **Museums in Oxford display props and costumes from the BBC adaptation of Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials***

**Pitt Rivers Museum, the History of Science Museum and The Story Museum collaborate to recreate 'Lyra's World' across the city that inspired the trilogy**

**The displays run to April 2023**

To coincide with the BBC's third and final instalment of *His Dark Materials*, fans will be able to trace Lyra's steps around the city that inspired its author, Philip Pullman, to see props and costumes from the show on display at the Pitt Rivers Museum, the History of Science Museum and The Story Museum.

*His Dark Materials* comprises three critically acclaimed novels – Northern Lights, The Subtle Knife, and The Amber Spyglass – which have since been adapted for television. The trilogy follows Lyra Belacqua, an orphan brought up in Oxford, who lives in a parallel universe in which science, theology and magic are entwined.

A golden compass-like alethiometer, an amber spyglass and a subtle knife are all objects critical to Lyra's journey. They, and many other props and costumes, will be on display on loan from production company, Bad Wolf.

The History of Science Museum on Broad Street has recreated Lyra's study in Jordan College and is displaying iconic costumes worn by the Master of Jordan College as well as Lyra, Will Parry, Mrs Coulter, Lord Asriel, Billy Costa, Roger Parslow, and Dr Mary Malone. Visitors can see Lyra's alethiometer on display alongside astrolabes, astronomical compendia and sundials from the museum's collection, all of which were a source of inspiration for Pullman.

Pitt Rivers Museum (entry via the Museum of Natural History on Parks Road) features in the book, *The Subtle Knife*, and was a location for the TV series. An amber spyglass, seed pods from the Mulefa World and Mary Malone's I Ching Sticks will be on display in various cases around the museum, integrated with the original historic displays that influenced the author, including objects from the Arctic Circle. Lyra's coat, hat and gloves, and Ruta Skadi's dress, armour and throwing nails and Mrs Coulter's locket also feature.

At The Story Museum on Pembroke Street, visitors can discover the iconic subtle knife, the dress worn by witch Serafina Pekkala, and the green writing case and airmail letters written by John Parry to his wife. These objects will appear alongside existing Story Museum exhibits including Pullman's very own alethiometer, which he had specially commissioned in 2005. There will also be an immersive experience for those who want to relive the scene in which Will Parry is first presented with the knife in the Torre degli Angeli.

The displays run through to April 2023.

Dr Silke Ackermann, Director of the History of Science Museum, said: "It is such a delight to be collaborating with the Pitt Rivers Museum and The Story Museum to showcase the wonderful props and costumes from the popular and widely acclaimed BBC adaptation of 'His Dark Materials'. Personally I have been wanting to juxtapose Lyra's Alethiometer with the stunning instruments in our collection that inspired Philip Pullman for many years, so for me this is a dream come true."

**For further information please contact Sarah Holland, Press Assistant, Oxford University Gardens, Libraries and Museums. [sarah.holland@glam.ox.ac.uk](mailto:sarah.holland@glam.ox.ac.uk) Tel: 07714 435 868**

#HisDarkMaterials

Instagram: [@darkmaterialsofficial](https://www.instagram.com/darkmaterialsofficial)

Twitter: [@darkmaterials](https://twitter.com/darkmaterials)

Facebook: His Dark Materials TV Series

TikTok: [@hisdarkmaterialsofficial](https://www.tiktok.com/@hisdarkmaterialsofficial)

### [Press Images](#)

#### **About the History of Science Museum (FREE ADMISSION)**

The History of Science Museum is home to an unrivalled collection of historic scientific instruments in the world's oldest surviving purpose-built museum building, the Old Ashmolean on Broad Street, Oxford. The collection and the building together occupy a special position, both in the study of the history of science and in the development of Museum culture and collecting. As a department of the University of Oxford, the Museum has a role both in historical research, and sharing the stories and histories the collections can tell with visitors. The Museum offers a programme of exhibitions, events, tours and school sessions, revealing the fascinating history, and future, of science. [www.hsm.ox.ac.uk](http://www.hsm.ox.ac.uk)

#### **About the Pitt Rivers Museum (FREE ADMISSION)**

The Pitt Rivers Museum is one of the leading museums of anthropology, ethnography and archaeology in the world. Established in 1884 it now has over 700,000 in its collections and is in the top 100 most visited museums in the UK, welcoming over 480,000 visitors in 2019. The Museum was shortlisted for the Art Fund Museum of the Year 2019 for its creative programmes of reinvention and reinterpretation, which show a much-loved Victorian space challenging perceptions and demonstrating the vital role museums can play in contemporary society. [www.prm.ox.ac.uk](http://www.prm.ox.ac.uk)

#### **About the Story Museum (TICKETED)**

The Story Museum is a most unusual museum in the heart of Oxford.

The Museum aims to enrich lives, especially young lives, through story. The Museum was established to ensure that everyone can enjoy and benefit from engaging with great stories and create stories of their own in a place full of wit and wonder.

Highlights include a Whispering Wood, an Enchanted Library and Small Worlds, a dedicated space for younger children as well as a 100-seat theatre, a learning studio and a temporary exhibition space. In addition to welcoming public visitors and school groups to its Galleries, the Museum also delivers an extensive public programme, including skills courses, workshops, drop-in activities and access visits for those wanting to enjoy the Museum in a more relaxed way, alongside a programme of funded community and school participation projects with targeted groups. The Museum attracts up to 100,000 visitors a year. Please visit our website for more information and details of museum/shop/café opening hours.

[www.storymuseum.org.uk](http://www.storymuseum.org.uk)

### **About His Dark Materials**

Philip Pullman's award-winning trilogy of the same name is considered a modern masterpiece of imaginative fiction and has sold over 18 million copies worldwide. *The Amber Spyglass* is the first children's novel to win the prestigious Whitbread Book of the Year (in 2001) and the first children's novel to be long-listed for the Man Booker Prize.

All episodes will be on BBC iPlayer on **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December**.

The first episode will go out that same day on BBC One, with episodes airing weekly (except Christmas Day).