

Fabricated Natures

Stories from the Bio-Material Archive

Organized by Lisa Onaga & Isabela Dornelas

October 17 – 18, 2024

Harnack House
Innstraße 16–20
14195 Berlin

This workshop delves into the concepts and practices of fabrication. Rooted in the Latin *fabricationem*, meaning skilled craftsmanship, fabrication involves the intentional creation of objects from disparate parts. Acts of fabrication span various cultural and creative domains, from art and literature to manufacturing and biomedicine, reflecting human ingenuity across history and sources such as objects, texts, and oral traditions. This interdisciplinary workshop invites participants to explore fabrication as a method for studying the history of bio-material technologies, starting with textiles. Through discussions of pre-circulated manuscripts, we aim to critically analyze and reinterpret the long-term epistemic significance of human efforts to produce bio-based or bio-inspired materials.

The double aim of this workshop is an edited volume or special issue and to build a network of scholars interested in methodologically reflexive scholarship in fabrication studies that bridges the humanities, arts, and sciences.

Each session will consist of a brief presentation by the author (not to exceed 15 minutes), with the remaining time devoted to group discussion of the pre-circulated paper.

Limited spaces for observers are available via pre-registration: event_dept3@mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de.

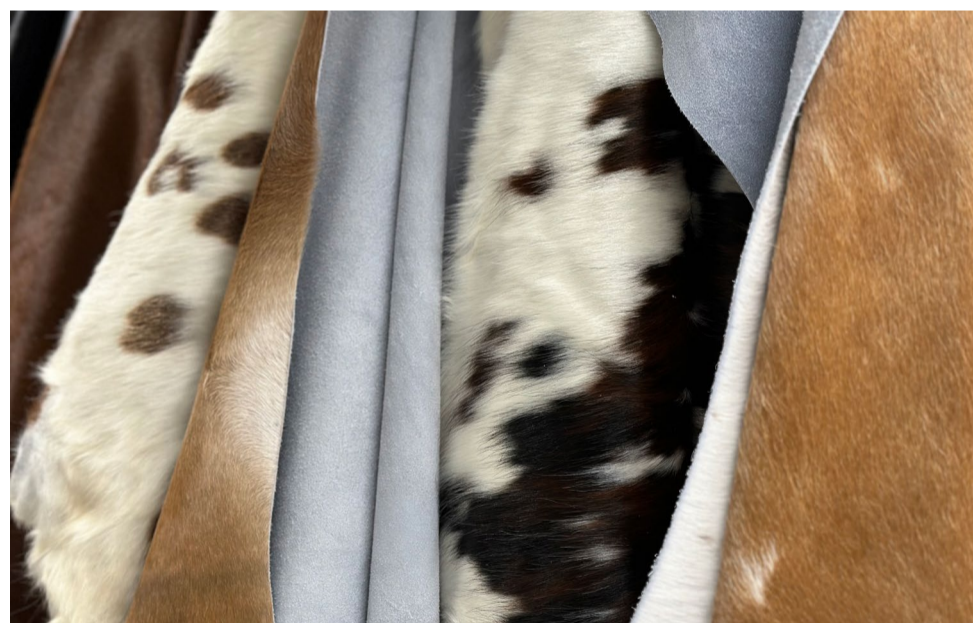
OCTOBER 17

- 9:15–9:30** Participation Registration
- 9:30–9:45** Welcome
- 9:45–10:45** Introductions — Flash Talks
- 10:45–11:45** “New Materials for the Alpine Nature”
Irina Podgorny | MPIWG/CONICET
- 11:45–12:00** BREAK
- 12:00–13:00** “Jamaican Lace-Bark as a Natural Lace for Ornamental Embroidery & Afro-Creole Material Culture”
Sarah Brokenborough | Tulane University
- 13:00–14:00** LUNCH
- 14:00–15:00** “Fusion of Shades: Remaking Natural and Synthetic Dyes in Early Twentieth-Century China and Germany”
Lejie Zeng | IMPRS-MPIWG
- 15:00–15:30** BREAK
- 15:30–17:30** KEYNOTE LECTURE
Room 265, Boltzmannstr. 22 (MPIWG Main Building)
“On Saving the Planet with Proteins: The Historical Significance of Shifting Biological Engineering into Post-Translational Space-Time”
Hannah Landecker | UCLA
- 17:30–18:30** DINNER
- 18:30–19:30** Group Discussion

OCTOBER 18

- 10:00–11:00** “The Future of Carmine”
Deirdre Moore | European University Institute
- 11:00–11:15** BREAK
- 11:15–12:15** “From Chemurgy to Climate Change: Narratives of Bioplastic Promise”
Ellan F. Spero | MIT
- 12:15–13:15** LUNCH
- 13:15–14:15** “Phytomechatronics”
Jennifer L. Karson | University of Vermont
- 14:15–14:45** Wrap-up Session

Discussant at large: Sarah Teasley | RMIT



Photographs of imitation cattle hides courtesy Lisa Onaga (2024).