

A blue-toned photograph of two people, likely of Asian descent, examining a large, unrolled scroll. The person on the left is wearing glasses and a dark top, while the person on the right is partially visible. The scroll they are holding appears to be a historical document or map, with some text and a small illustration visible. The background is dark and out of focus.

THE
BRITISH
MUSEUM

illuminating world cultures

Diploma in

Asian Art



Welcome to The British Museum

Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	1-3
<i>Postgraduate Diploma</i>	4-15
<i>General information</i>	16-17
<i>Faculty</i>	18-21

The British Museum Diploma in Asian Art

The British Museum provides a unique opportunity to study and enjoy art from all over Asia in one of the world's greatest Museums, with curators and other leading experts on China, India and South East Asia, Japan and Korea and the Islamic world.

The fundamental aim of this course is to provide students with a broad understanding of Asian art covering all major periods and most media. The teaching will combine object based teaching within a sound academic framework. Aspects of conservation, exhibition organisation (including the opportunity to prepare and display a small exhibition in the museum) and an introduction to decorative techniques and materials will also be examined. Students will learn how to research and document objects, setting them in their cultural context. Above all they will benefit from the guidance of Museum curators and have privileged access to a world class collection of objects. This, combined with theoretical and practical study makes this a unique programme, and the Museum the foremost institution in the world for studies of this kind.

The Postgraduate Diploma offered by The British Museum is accredited by Royal Holloway College, University of London. This provides quality assurance for the programme, course content, teaching staff and student resources. An external examiner will ensure independent assessment and maintain examination standards.



The training provided by the Post Graduate Diploma will prepare students for work in a variety of professions in the art and museum world as well as prepare students for further academic study. A network of leading experts in the field of Asian Art are brought together to provide a challenging and stimulating lecture programme. The Course Director, Curators and Tutors provide students with continuity, academic guidance and close individual personal support. The lecture programme is supported by field trips to other museums, galleries and private collections. Participants will visit and have close links with museums, such as the Percival David Foundation for Chinese Art and the Victoria and Albert Museum together with visits to the Ashmolean in Oxford and optional visits to Paris or other overseas museums. Students will be encouraged to develop research and writing skills and will have access to the British Library. They will also have access to specialist libraries belonging to the British Museum and the School of Oriental and African Studies. The programme will provide practical opportunities and insights, including the selection and mounting of displays. Students are from varied academic and professional backgrounds, ranging from those who wish for a career in the art world, retired collectors, to those with a serious interest in art and culture of a specific region.

Students can choose any number or combination of 3 month modules, on offer annually. Those who successfully complete a single module will be awarded a Postgraduate certificate. Students who successfully complete 3 modules will be awarded the Postgraduate Diploma. The course does, however, encourage serious students to audit the course if they do not wish to take the examination.

The British Museum promises to be a very exciting and privileged place for students.

The British Museum Diploma in Asian Art

Metalwork: Blacas ewer.
Fine example of medieval, inlaid brass.
From Mosul, Northern Iraq, dated AH
629/AD 1223. Ewer is signed by Shuja
Ibn Man'a.



The Postgraduate Diploma offers five independent, three month full-time courses, any number or combination of which can be taken. You may begin the programme in September, January or April. The Postgraduate Diploma is awarded to any student who successfully completes three selected modules within a period of four years.

The syllabus is designed for the student to acquire a broad understanding of the classical, fine and decorative arts of Asia, setting these cultures in their historical and religious contexts. Students will also be trained in visual analysis and the acquisition of certain museum skills. Students are not required to have any knowledge of the arts of Asia, but should have a serious interest in the study of the area.

Issues and themes dealt with in weekly lectures are developed further through frequent visits to museum collections, revision sessions and an exhibition project.

Course Aims

- To develop a sound visual method for analysing and documenting works of art
- To develop visual skills through the direct examination of objects
- To develop research skills using primary and secondary sources
- To develop writing and communication skills: to formulate and structure an academic viewpoint and to use visual analysis to support and document this argument
- To develop in students an understanding of certain museum skills such as:
 - 1 Knowledge of materials, construction techniques and issues of conservation
 - 2 Accessing archives and storage in museums
 - 3 Exhibition strategy, including the interpretation of material culture in exhibitions
 - 4 Putting material objects in their cultural context

Course Structure

- Lectures given by museum curators, university academics and international experts
- Weekly review sessions with course tutors: involves revision, slide tests and project work
- Lectures (generally from 10.00 to 15.30) four days a week
- Regular access to collections at The British Museum and guided visits to other museums
- Field trips
- Formal and informal tutorials
- Fridays for individual research



Photography: Philip Sayer



Student Assessment

Students are required for each module to:

- Write two essays of 3000 words
- Sit a three hour written examination

Academic Qualifications

Those who successfully complete a single module will be awarded a Postgraduate Certificate. Students who successfully complete three modules will be awarded the Postgraduate Diploma.

Credit points

In addition to the award of the Postgraduate Certificate for success in individual modules, students may receive on request a transcript detailing the period of study on the programme, the modules taken and the overall marks achieved. The transcript may be supplemented by additional information with respect to the length of study and the educational level of the modules, as required. (A charge will be levied by the awarding institution for issuing transcripts).

Course location.

The course is based at The British Museum Education Department, 38 Russell Square, London WC1B 3DG, close to London's major concentration of public and private galleries and within walking distance of the specialist library at SOAS, the Percival David Foundation and the British Library.

Course Syllabus

The Post Graduate Diploma is taught over three twelve-week terms.

The five courses offered are:

- The Classical and Decorative Arts of India (September-December).
- The Classical and Decorative Arts of China **or** the Classical and Decorative Arts of South East Asia. (January - March).
- The Classical and Decorative Arts of the Islamic world **or** the Classical and Decorative Arts of Japan & Korea (April - July).



The Classical and Decorative Arts of the Islamic World

(From Spain to Central Asia)

From the 7th century AD to the present day this course explores the origin and the evolution of the arts produced in the Muslim world: architecture, arts of the book, ceramics and metalwork, jewellery, carved stone and ivory, arms and armour, as well as textiles and carpets. There will be a focus on specific objects produced in geographical regions such as Arabia, Syria, North Africa, Iran, India and Central Asia.

Among the topics covered will be the use of decorative patterns - motifs such as the arabesque and geometric ornament will be traced through different periods and regions. The course will explore what is particular to Islamic art and how artists in the Muslim world borrowed from other cultures, as well as the impact Islamic art has had on the west. The influence of the China trade, the exchange of luxury items along the Silk route, and the contacts with Europe and the Mongols in Central Asia will also be explored.

The course will follow a broadly chronological structure, ensuring clarity and continuity and a coherent framework for study.



The Classical and Decorative Arts of India

(The Indian sub-continent)

From 2500BC to the present day, this course explores the monumental, fine and decorative arts of India and South Asia. The course deals with architecture, sculpture, miniature painting, carved jades, carpets, textiles, furniture, jewellery, arms and armour and the rural arts.

The syllabus is broadly chronological and places the art in its religious and historical context. The course begins with an introduction to the Vedas, Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism focusing on early Jain and Buddhist art and the principles of Hindu iconography, architecture, sculpture and wall painting. It emphasises the relationship between ritual and image in the study of Medieval Hindu sculpture and architecture. Lectures cover Buddhist, Jain and Hindu manuscript painting. Erotic sculpture and painting are also discussed.

The course includes Tibetan and Himalayan sculpture and painting. The latter half of the term will explore Mughal and Rajput court art from the 16th century. It will give particular emphasis to miniature painting and jewellery. Terracottas, textiles and other rural arts will also be covered and there will be lectures on contemporary Indian painting.

The course will consider issues of conservation and will provide the student with an understanding of stone and materials in sculpture and painting.



The Classical and Decorative Arts of China

The arts of China are part of a continuous artistic tradition of some seven thousand years. The course will be broadly structured in a chronological fashion, concentrating particularly on the evolution of the arts in ceramics, painting and calligraphy, metalwork, sculpture, textiles, lacquer and jade carving, from Neolithic times down to the 20th century. Lectures on religion, philosophy and literature will help set the social and political histories of the differing periods into a wider context.

The decorative arts, including furniture, architecture and garden design will also be explored as will various themes such as archaism, imperial and local patronage and the relationship between the use of motifs and shapes on objects of the same period but of different media. The importance of export markets and the adoption of foreign artistic styles will also be assessed.

The course as in the other modules will study techniques and issues of conservation and the use of scientific research work in helping both to conserve and validate objects.

Blue and white porcelain jar of *guan* form, with painted decoration of phoenixes, peonies and *qilin*, and a Turkish silver mount on the rim. Large *guan*, with dragon handles, appear to have been widely exported, for comparable pieces exist at the Ardebil Shrine in Iran, in a Thai temple at Lamphun and in the Cummins collection, which was formed in India. *Yuan* dynasty. c. 1350. Ht. 48 cms. OA 1960.7-28.1. Brooke Sewell Bequest.



The Classical and Decorative Arts of Japan & Korea

The larger part of the course is devoted to the arts of Japan, beginning with the Neolithic corded pottery that gives its name to the Jomon period and then tracing artistic and technological developments in a variety of media down to the 20th century. Emphasis will be placed on Buddhist art, particularly of the Asuka, Nara, Heian and Kamakura periods, but discussion of Shintoism will also be included, media such as painting, calligraphy, prints, ceramics, lacquer, textiles and metalwork will be among those examined in detail. Architecture and gardens, the items used in the tea ceremony, arts associated with Noh theatre, carving and export art will all be discussed.

The other part of this course concentrates on the arts of Korea from the Three Kingdoms period, through the Unified Silla and Koryo, into the Choson period. Lectures on the burials of the Three Kingdoms period provide an introduction to Korean tomb architecture, painting and artefacts. Thereafter, the course concentrates on developments in Buddhist sculpture and painting, landscape painting, metalwork and the fine ceramics of the Koryo and Choson periods. Other aspects of the decorative arts, such as textiles and furniture will also be examined.

Links between the arts of Japan and Korea will be identified as will their relationship with Chinese art. Artistic traditions will be viewed against the social and political circumstances as well as the religious and literary movements of the times.



The Classical and Decorative Arts of South East Asia

This module covers the arts of mainland and maritime South East Asia from prehistoric times to the present day. A wide range of material from ethnographic art to the classical arts of Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam will be discussed. Art historical, anthropological and ethnographic interpretations will be offered side by side, and it is expected that this inter-disciplinary approach will greatly enhance students' understanding of the artistic heritage of the region.

The course begins with ethnographic art and covers the arts of Oceania, the outer Indonesian Islands and New Guinea, looking particularly at the importance of fertility, the ancestors and the spirit world. At this early stage there is also an introduction to the Bronze Age and to trade in South East Asia. The next topic is Buddhism and the magnificent Buddhist and Hindu art and architecture of Burma, Thailand, Cambodia and Java. Among the many other subjects covered are textiles, ceramics, painting, lacquer-ware, metalwork, calligraphy, wood-carving and shadow puppets.

General Information



Entry requirements

Students should normally possess a Bachelor's degree or its equivalent. Other qualifications such as published works or appropriate professional experience may also be considered. The minimum age for admission is 20. Applications from mature students are strongly encouraged. (Fluent, written and spoken English, to British Council IELTS Level 7 or TOEFL 550 or equivalent is required). Non-standard applicants are considered on their merits, and may be asked to submit written work for appraisal and/or attend an interview.

Application Procedures

A form is enclosed for application. The following should be included with this application:

- One application form and a 500-word statement of personal interests
- Two academic references in sealed envelopes.
- Mature students are expected to provide at least one professional reference, supplemented with a writing sample.
- Two passport size photographs
- A validated copy of school and/or university transcripts
- Documentation of English language ability, if English is not the applicant's first language

Early application is advisable for all courses. The fee is payable no later than one month before the start of term.

Extra English can be arranged for a student if required.

Advice on visa requirements can also be provided.



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Interviews

Applicants will be invited to attend an interview with the Course Director, who will assess the candidate's commitment and aptitude. The interviews can be arranged throughout the year. Applicants will normally be tested during this interview with relevant images and will be expected to talk about them. It gives the opportunity of the interviewer to assess the applicant's visual awareness although the applicant will not be expected at this stage to give an accurate assessment of style or provenance. No special preparation for this interview is necessary. Enthusiasm and motivation are essential. (Telephone interviews can be arranged if required).

Terms of Enrolment

Those responsible for the Programme reserve the right to amend the content and timing of the courses. Where possible, notice will be given but this cannot be guaranteed. They also reserve the right to discontinue any whole or part of any programme described in this prospectus. The information in this prospectus is as far as possible accurate at the date of publication.

Accommodation

Students are responsible for their own accommodation. Help and advice on finding accommodation is available through the office. Students are strongly advised to allow ample time to make suitable arrangements before their course begins.

Fees

£3650 per twelve week module, payment in advance. A limited number of scholarships are available through the British Museum, and the Arts and Humanities Research Board, and the Gordon Darling Foundation. Please contact the office for further details.

References

The course faculty are always prepared to give confidential references to prospective employers to assist students in finding appropriate work. Advice on career opportunities is also provided

Notes on course teachers

Dr Heather Elgood: Course Director; Convenor of the 'Classical and Decorative Arts of India': Formerly Deputy Director of SOAS/Sotheby's Asian arts programme and Academic Director of the SOAS and Christie's 'Arts of Asia and Africa Programme'. Specialist in Persian, Jain, Sultanate and Mughal manuscript painting; Hindu sculpture and the ritual arts of India. Author of *Hinduism and the Religious Arts*, London 1999.

Robert Knox: Keeper of the Department of Oriental Antiquities; Chair of Academic Committee for the British Museum Diploma: Specialising in the ancient archaeology of South Asia, the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan in particular. Author of the *Catalogue of the Amaravati Sculptures in The British Museum* and *Akra, the first Capital of Bannu*.

John Reeve: Chair of Academic committee for the British Museum Diploma; Head of Education at The British Museum since 1983. Has worked with the British Council and other partners on museum training, exhibitions and IT projects in Japan, India, Taiwan, Qatar, Egypt, USA and South America. Author of *Living Arts of Japan* and co-editor of *Behind the Scenes of the British Museum*. Visiting fellow, Institute of Education, London University.

Carol Michaelson: Assistant Keeper of Chinese art in the Department of Oriental Antiquities at The British Museum; Convenor of the 'Classical and Decorative Arts of China'. She specialises in Ancient China, particularly the Qin and Han dynasties, and Jade. She has worked on the Hotung Gallery for Chinese antiquities and was a co-curator of jade, snuff bottles and archaeological exhibitions in 1995 and 1996. In 1999 she was sole curator of the exhibition *Gilded Dragons* and author of the catalogue. She has taught on Chinese art at SOAS (University of London) for many years and lectured extensively in the UK and abroad.



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Dr Sheila Canby: Assistant Keeper of Islamic Collections; Convenor of the 'Classical and Decorative Arts of the Islamic world'. British Museum curator of the special exhibition on jewellery in the Age of the Mughals from the Al Sabah collection, 2001. She is author of *Persian Painting* (1991); *Princes, Poets and Paladins* (1998); *The Golden Age of Persian Art* (1999). She is a specialist in the Arts of Iran and Central Asia.

Dr Venetia Porter: Assistant Keeper, Islamic collections in the Department of Oriental Antiquities: Responsible for material from the Arab world, Turkey and the contemporary Middle East, she researches and publishes on Islamic tiles and pottery, coins, seals, inscriptions and the medieval history of the Yemen.

Jessica Harrison-Hall: Assistant Keeper of Chinese Ceramics and Vietnamese Art in the Department of Oriental Antiquities: She has written extensively on Chinese ceramics. She has recently published *Ming Ceramics* - a catalogue of the British Museum's late Yuan and Ming ceramics and is the co-author (with Regina Krahl) of *Ancient Chinese Trade Ceramics: Ming to Qing porcelains in the British Museum* and a contributor to *Pottery in the Making: World Ceramic Traditions* and *A.W. Franks: Nineteenth-century Collecting and The British Museum*.

Richard Blurton: Assistant Keeper in the Department of Oriental Antiquities with special responsibility for the South Indian and Southeast Asian collections; Convenor of the 'Classical and Decorative Arts of South East Asia'. He has curated a variety of exhibitions at the Museum including, 'Deities and Devotion: the arts of Hinduism'; 'Like a Stream of Gold': painting and sculpture from South India; Image and Narrative: Indian Folk Bronzes from the Polsky Gift; and Visions from the Golden Land: Burma and the art of lacquer. He is the author of *Hindu Art* (BM Press 1992), and co-author of the catalogue, which accompanied the Burma exhibition. He has travelled widely in South and Southeast Asia, especially in connection with the Museum's policy of collecting contemporary graphics.

Notes on course teachers

Victor Harris: Keeper of Japanese Antiquities in the British Museum; Convenor of the 'Classical and Decorative Arts of Japan & Korea': Has special interest in Japanese Swords with curatorial responsibility for the archaeological collection, ceramics, lacquer, sculpture, and metalwork. Author of: *A Book of Five Rings* (Translation of the work of the Japanese 'Sword Saint', Miyamoto Musashi, d. 1645) 1974; *Masterpieces of Japanese Swords of The Samurai*, (co-author Ogasawara), BMP 1990; *Japanese Imperial Craftsmen*, BMP 1994 and *Japanese Decorative Arts* (co-author Smith) BMP 1982.

Jane Portal Assistant Keeper responsible for the Chinese later decorative arts, Korean Collections and the Stein Collection: she has just opened the permanent Korean gallery and published *Korean Art and Archaeology*. She studied Chinese at Cambridge, Chinese archaeology at Beijing University and Korean at SOAS, (University of London) and Yonsei University, Seoul.

Dr Michael Willis: Assistant Keeper of the North Indian and Himalayan Collections in the Department of Oriental Antiquities at the British Museum: He has lectured on Asian arts at SOAS (University of London) and has held posts at universities in the USA and Canada. Author of, *Buddhist Reliquaries from Ancient India*, and other books on sacred architecture, inscriptions and sculpture of Asia.

Tim Clark: (Japanese Antiquities). He is a leading authority on Ukiyo-e art. He is author of *Ukiyo-e Paintings in The British Museum*; *Demon of Painting*; *The Art of Kawanabe Kyosai* and co-author of *Rimpa Art*; and curated the exhibition '100 views of Fuji' in 2001 as part of *Japan 2001*.



Joe Cribb: Assistant Keeper of South Asian coins, Curator of the of HSBC Money Gallery, Department of Coins and Medals (curator in department since 1970). Published extensively on Ancient Indian, Central Asian, South East Asian and Chinese coins. Author of *Crossroads of Asia* (with Elizabeth Errington, 1992); *Magic Coins of Java, Bali and the Malay Peninsula* (1999); *A Catalogue of Sycee in the British Museum* (1992); *Eyewitness Guides: Money* (1999 revised edition). Medallist of the Royal Numismatic Society 1999, Hirayama Award, 1996.



Photography: Philip Sayer

Lectures are also given by visiting lecturers from the following museums and academic institutions: Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. Courtauld Institute, University of London. De Montfort, Durham, Edinburgh. Hull, Leeds, Leiden Universities. London Institute. Musée Guimet, Paris. Percival David Foundation for Chinese Art, London. Rietberg Museum, Zurich. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Royal Holloway, University of London. School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Victoria and Albert Museum.

The Course is Accredited by Royal Holloway College: a multi-faculty college of the University of London, enjoys an international reputation for the highest quality teaching and research across the sciences, arts and humanities (ranked 9th in the UK for research by the Financial Times December 2001 and 9th in the UK for teaching by The Guardian May 2001). Research is enhanced by strong relationships with industry and commerce in the regional, national and international arenas. Royal Holloway is home for a vibrant community of 5,500 undergraduate and postgraduate students of all ages and backgrounds and from more than 90 countries. It is famous for its Founder's Building, one of the most spectacular university buildings in the world.
www.rhul.ac.uk

Personal Details

Surname

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Title

Nationality

Permanent home address

Telephone

Facsimile

Email

First name

Date of Birth

Present address for correspondence

Valid until

Telephone

Facsimile

Email

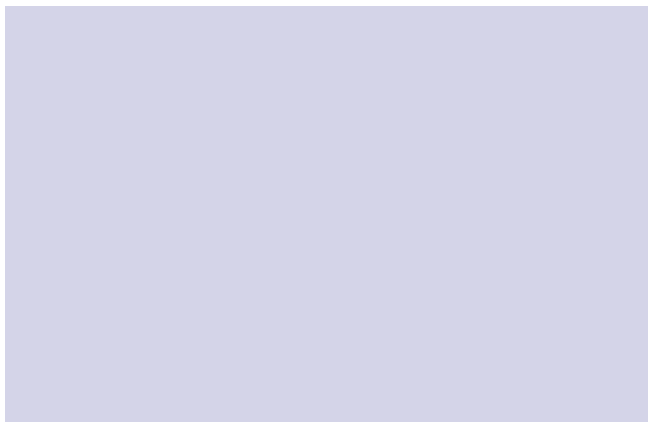
Education and Qualifications

Please list schools attended and any university, further or professional education, giving years of attendance in each case.

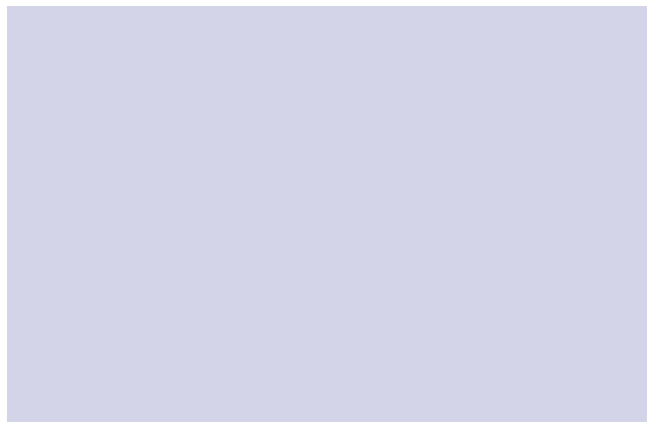
Please list examinations taken and results, with details of any scholarships, awards or professional qualifications gained.

Employment

Please list positions held, with employer's name and address, and years of employment.



Please give brief details of your current employment.



Languages

Please give your proficiency level in speaking, reading and writing languages other than English. Indicate whether you would describe yourself as Fluent (F), Competent (C), or Basic (B).



Applicants should have a sound knowledge of written and spoken English. For the Postgraduate Diploma we require IELTS score 7, TOEFL 550 or its equivalent. Please give details of English language test taken, date taken and the score.



Referees

Please ask your two referees to write a confidential reference and place it in a sealed envelope, which must be returned with this application. Please give the names and addresses of your two referees below.

1.	2.
Name	Name
Address	Address
Position	Position

Proposed Studies

I wish my application to be considered for the following course(s)

The British Museum Diploma in Asian Art (Please indicate below which course(s))	Please tick	Year
The Classical and Decorative Arts of India (September-Dec)		
The Classical and Decorative Arts of China (January-March)		
or The Classical and Decorative Arts of South East Asia (January-March)		
The Classical and Decorative Arts of the Islamic World (April-July)		
or The Classical and Decorative Arts of Japan & Korea (April-July)		

Statement of Personal Interests

Please describe below, or on a separate sheet of paper, in around 500 words, your reasons for wishing to study on the course as well as areas of particular interest and activities connected with the arts.

Signed _____

Date _____

The completed Application Forms should be returned to:

The British Museum
Diploma in Asian Art
Education Department
The British Museum
Great Russell Street
London WC1B 3DG
Telephone: +44 (0)20 7323 8144
Email: helgood@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk

Have you remembered to include:

- 1. Two passport-size photographs _____
- 2. Copies of school or university transcripts _____
- 3. Documentation of English language ability _____
- 4. Two references (in sealed envelopes) _____

THE BRITISH MUSEUM

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