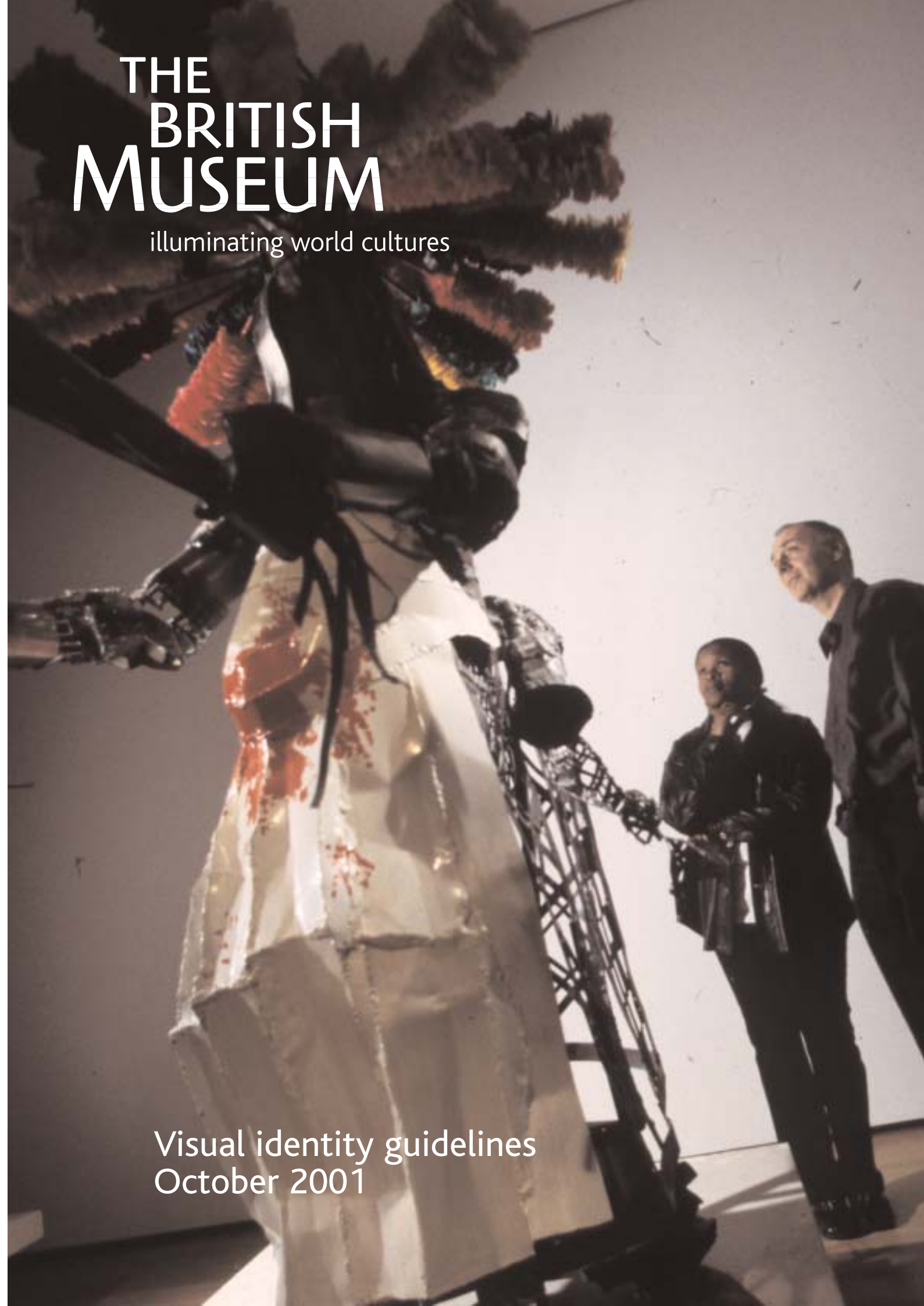


THE BRITISH MUSEUM

illuminating world cultures

Visual identity guidelines
October 2001



illuminating world cultures



The new visual identity of The British Museum has been created by the branding consultants Interbrand Newell and Sorrell. The visual identity is not only the logotype but a system that includes advice on colour, photography and tone of voice.

It is only when all these design elements are applied repeatedly and consistently that the name and reputation of The British Museum can be appropriately projected.

A great variety of publications are produced within the Museum. It is essential that each item has a common underlying structure so that, whilst single publications are individual in appearance and appropriate for their particular audience, each fits within the overall Museum identity.

The visual identity is managed by the Marketing and Public Affairs Department on behalf of the Museum Management Board and the Trustees.

Carol Homden

Director of Marketing and Public Affairs

What do we mean when we talk about our brand? Our brand is more than our logo. Our brand is what we stand for in the minds of our audiences.

It is the way we talk to government and the way we talk to our visitors; how we encourage people to visit, to join and to fund; how we display, conserve and tell visitors about our collection.

Every encounter people have with The British Museum will influence their view of our brand.

Confidence, clarity and consistency are the keys to building a strong brand.

Confidence is having a clear and inspiring brand essence for the future, the skills to live that brand and the drive to do it.

Clarity is having meaningful ways of expressing your brand, that help to tell the story of the Museum in an accessible and exciting way.

Consistency is the discipline of applying these elements over time to increase brand recognition.

These guidelines will deal with all three in order.

Our Brand Essence

In the heart of London, The British Museum houses the greatest, most diverse record of the cultures of the world through time. Entrusted with the preservation of the past for the future, the Museum provides a unique doorway to understanding.

By sharing its passion for human histories, the Museum enables visitors to make personal discoveries every time they visit, about the lives, behaviour and achievements of all our ancestors.

Instilling feelings of wonder and excitement it will leave visitors inspired to discover more.

We have distilled this essence into a set of values that should always be borne in mind in every piece of communication that we produce.

Core Values

Authoritative – *We have stature, scale, expertise, and integrity: balanced with*

Inspiring – *We are exciting, dynamic, active and thought provoking*

Supporting Values

Open – *We are, wherever it is possible, inclusive and accessible*

Progressive – *We aim to be enterprising and future focussed in an organisational sense*

Entrusted – *We exist by the people for the people.*

We have a duty of care.

The basic elements of the visual identity

Each of the basic elements; the photographic styles, the colour palette, the typefaces and the new logotype – describe parts of the brand essence.

Illuminating the collection

The collection and the work of the curators in preserving the collection is what makes The British Museum unique.

The objects should be treated with reverence. They should be isolated from their surroundings to focus the viewer and *illuminated*, using striking light and shade, to concentrate on the beauty in their detail.



Illuminating the Museum

The Museum is brought to life by the hundreds of employees and thousands of visitors who fill its galleries every day.

Use photography to capture those idiosyncratic moments of humour, interaction with the collection or personal discovery that could only happen in The British Museum.



Illuminating the Museum

Our curators have a unique insight into the history and diversity of world cultures.

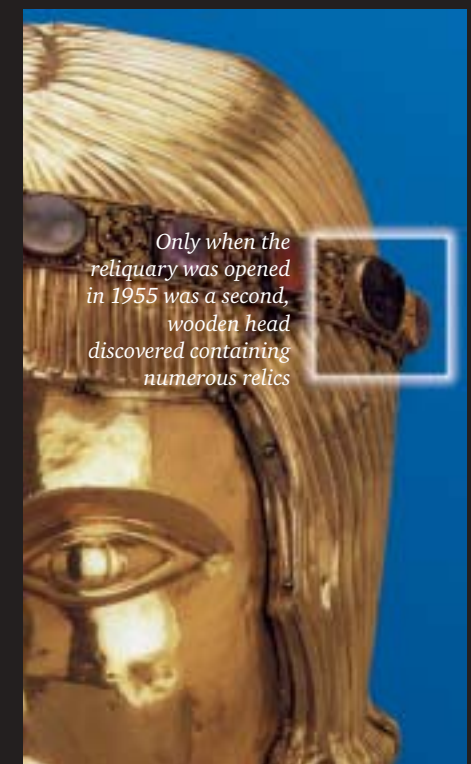
We have developed the *illuminating box* to highlight key areas of interest in a photograph, where there is an opportunity to tell the special history of an object – stories that only The British Museum would be able to tell.

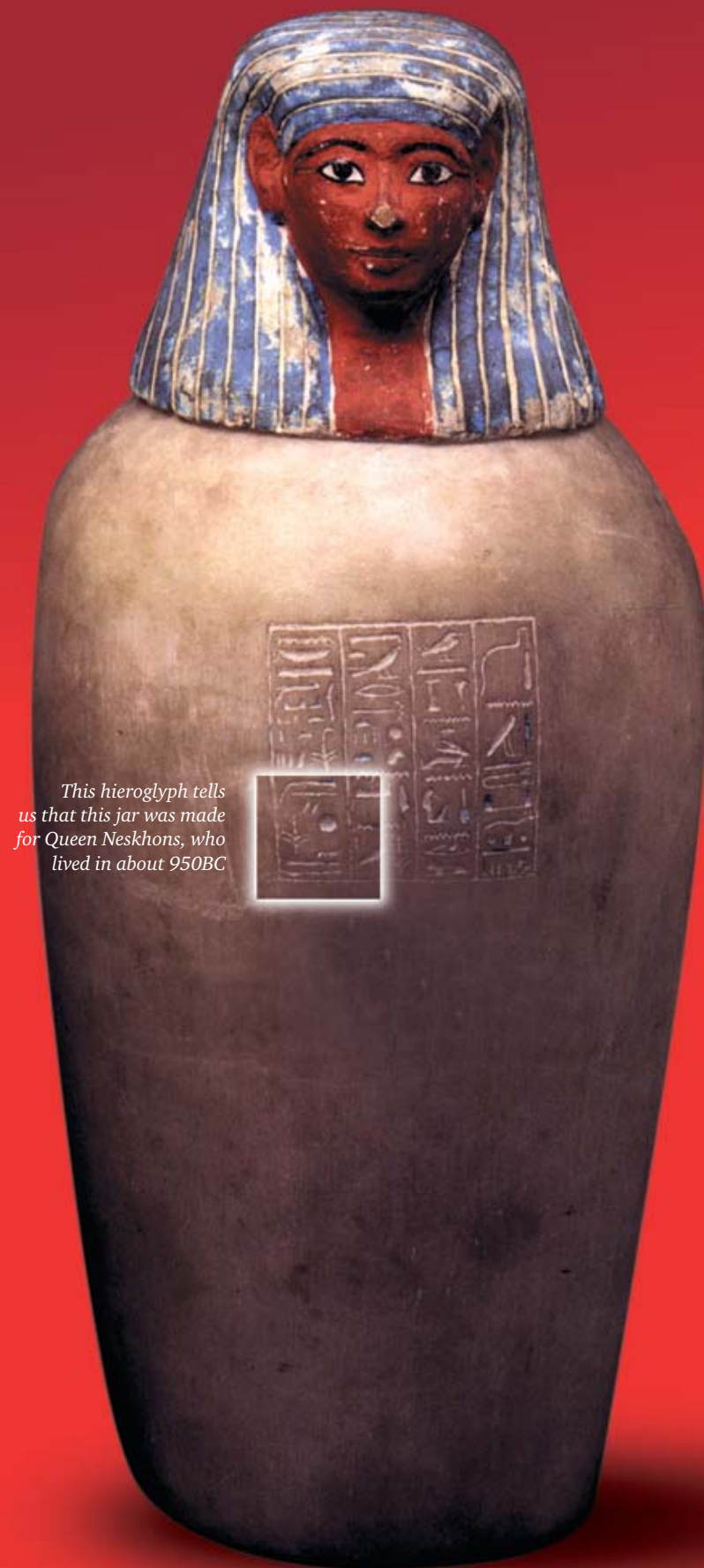
On the public interaction

Illuminating the Museum

photographs we can use the box to tell unique stories about the building and the workings of the Museum.

The illuminating box – and the ability it gives us to talk about the unique knowledge of the Museum – is at the heart of our identity, and should be used at every opportunity to “unlock a secret”.





This hieroglyph tells us that this jar was made for Queen Neskheh, who lived in about 950BC

Colour from world cultures

Our colour palette is derived from the beautiful spectrum of colours found in the objects in the collection.

We have limited this range to twenty colours, plus the two corporate Museum colours. However, we envisage that the palette could be extended to incorporate colours that have specific relevance to objects that are to form the focus of special exhibitions.

ie. a new bright green may be appropriate for an exhibition about jade. The colour would be used only for that exhibition, and removed from the colour palette at the close of the exhibition.



