

Sudan

past and present

In recent months, the eyes of the world have been on Sudan.

It has never been more important to understand the different civilisations and the complex history of this, the largest country in Africa, for millennia the point of contact between central Africa and the Mediterranean world.

The British Museum has had a long engagement in Sudan. A hundred years ago it played a part in the foundation of Sudan’s first museum. More recently it has been working with Sudanese and international teams to plan vital rescue archaeology before the damming of the fourth Nile Cataract and the subsequent flooding in 2008. The Sudanese collection in the galleries of the British Museum is among the most important and comprehensive outside Africa. It is a collection that allows many insights into the country’s diversity of people and culture.

To mark its long-term relationship with Sudan, the British Museum has planned a series of exhibitions, gallery highlights and events that explore Sudan’s past and present. Stunning ancient artefacts, fascinating material culture and the challenging work of contemporary artists all help to reveal the rich cultural and artistic heritage of Sudan.

Sudan: ancient treasures
The ancient sites of Sudan are among the great monuments of Africa, and were home to the most powerful state in the Nile Valley, which briefly overwhelmed the Egypt of the Pharaohs.

Using the fruits of recent archaeological research, this exhibition leads the visitor through the fascinating history of the country from the early Stone Age to the 19th century AD, including the Christian and the Islamic periods. Many great objects have been lent by the National Museum of Khartoum, some never before seen outside Sudan.

The rich and varied cultures of Sudan on display include that of the Kerma kings, accompanied in their graves by 400 sacrificial victims, Kushite kings who built grandiose temples, the little known Christian rulers whose churches were decorated with magnificent wall paintings, and the Muslim peoples whose mosques and tombs stand proud today.

Entry to *Sudan: ancient treasures* is free. The British Museum asks all visitors to make a donation towards the work of Oxfam and Save the Children in Sudan.

9 September 2004 – 9 January 2005
Daily 10.00–17.30, late Thursday & Friday
www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/sudan

Oxfam and Save the Children

Recent extensive media coverage has brought the crisis in Darfur to wide public attention. Oxfam and Save the Children are working in the area now, and have done so for many years.

They work with war-displaced children or pastoralist communities whose daily life is a struggle just to survive. By making a donation you will be helping families to provide their children with enough to eat, to avoid disease, and to provide an education for children who may otherwise go without.

It is essential that we offer immediate help to those whose lives have been devastated by the current crisis, and that we continue to do so in future. To ensure sustainable health and dignity, Oxfam and Save the Children share a commitment to long-term work in Sudan.

Please help. There are many different ways you can donate. Visit www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/sudan

Thank you.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM

Sudan

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Events programme

THE BRITISH MUSEUM
Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DG
Telephone +44 (0)20 7323 8000
information@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk
www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk

The Arabic word *Bismillah*, 'In the name of God' created in the shape of a an ostrich, by Sudanese artist Hassan Musa
Courtesy of Grandir Editions

Free gallery talks

These gallery talks last approximately 50 minutes. Please meet in the room specified.

20 September 13.15
Archaeology in Sudan
D Welsby, Room 5


27 September 13.15
Treasures of Sudan
(Arabic/English)
O El Daly, Room 5

6 October 13.15
The arts of Sudanic Africa
N Badcott, Room 25

11 October 13.15
The Kingdoms of Kush
D Welsby, Room 5

13 October 13.15
Mahdist history in the
African Galleries
C Spring, Room 25

2 November 13.15
Nubia: land of gold
J Taylor, Room 65


 sign interpreted
RR Reading Room
CEC Clore Education Centre
MPE Montague Place entrance

5 November 13.15
Conquest and ritual: New
Kingdom temples in Nubia
N Spencer, Room 65

16 November 13.15
The Meroe Head and the
representation of Augustus
S Moorhead, Room 70

25 November 13.15
Treasures of Sudan
(Arabic/English)
O El Daly, Room 5

30 November 13.15
Darfur, Equatoria and the
Mahdiya: Sudan present
and past
C Spring, RR

8 December 13.15 
Khartoum modernism:
a personal attempt to
bridge a gap
I El Salahi, MPE

9 December 13.15
Egypt and the coming of Kush
V Davies, Room 5

15 December 13.15
Sudanese contemporary art:
Khartoum modernism
E Court, MPE

Free lunchtime lectures

14 September 13.15
Medieval Nubia: Christian
kingdoms along the Middle Nile
J Anderson, CEC

16 September 13.15
Islam and Mahdist culture
in Sudan
C Spring, CEC

23 September 13.15
The Khartoum modern art
movement: a personal attempt
to bridge a gap
I El Salahi, CEC

8 October 13.15
People and cultures of
southern Sudan
J Mack, CEC

Free films

4 November & 13 December
13.00
The Black Pharaohs
BBC 2004, UK, 50 mins
CEC

11 November & 3 December
13.00
Nubia: the forgotten kingdom
Discovery Channel Inc. 2003,
USA, 52 mins
CEC

Family events

The Big Draw
Saturday 16 October 10.30–16.30
A free event for all ages and
abilities. A great opportunity to
draw inspiration from the British
Museum. Come and work along-
side celebrity artists, exploring
the themes of the Ancient
Kingdoms of the Nile, the
Natural World and Archaeology.
Join workshops and have a go
at archaeological illustration,
hieroglyphs, prehistoric painting,
drawing architecture and dance.
All materials provided.
For further details from early
October contact: Education
and Information Department
on +44 (0)20 7323 8511/8854
or education@thebritishmuseum.
ac.uk

The Miracle of the Nile
25–31 October 11.00–16.30 daily
Join us every day for a half-term
programme of activities based on
the civilisations of the River Nile:
build a pyramid, make a crown
for a Nubian king, listen to
stories, learn to play *senet*
and sail the Nile with our new
Hamlyn family trails. On 30
and 31 October come and meet
some ancient Egyptians including
the Pharaoh himself! Pick up a
programme in the Reading Room
during October.
All events free

Special evenings

Sudan across the ages:
readings, images, music
Wednesday 29 September 18.30
Reading Room, 100 places
An evening inspired by *Sudan:
ancient treasures*, in the unique
surroundings of the British
Museum’s Reading Room.
Readings from the annals of
ancient kings and the evocative
words of modern day explorers
will be accompanied by stunning
visual images and indigenous
music to capture the diversity
and allure of Sudan.
£5, concessions £3
Tickets from the Box Office on
+44 (0)20 7323 8181 or online
www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk

Crocodiles and Kings: the
making of the BBC’s Nile series
Thursday 9 December 18.30
BP Lecture Theatre
Award-winning producer
Dr Martha Holmes of the BBC
Natural History Unit reveals
the fascinating story behind
the making of the *Nile* series.
Impressive film footage of the
African landscape from Egypt to
Sudan to Uganda will illustrate
her dramatic presentation of
the complexities involved in the
producing of this major series.
£5, concessions £3
Tickets from the Box Office on
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www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk

Study days

People of the Red Sea
*In association with the Society
for Arabian Studies*
Thursday 30 September 18.30
Saturday 30 October
10.00–17.00
BP Lecture Theatre
In a series of talks by
international speakers, the Red
Sea study day will explore the
archaeology and history of the
people of the region. Papers will
focus on Roman and Troglodyte
interaction, Aksumite and post-
Aksumite Ethiopia, Islam and
Christianity, Crusaders in the
late 12th century AD, al-Qusayr
and the French expedition to
Egypt, magical practices, and
travellers on the Red Sea.
£28, BM Friends and
Society for Arabian Studies £25,
concessions £18
Tickets from the Box Office on
+44 (0)20 7323 8181 or online
www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk

Public Forum

British Museum and Guardian
Public Forum on Sudan
Wednesday 10 November
CEC
Booking and admission details
available from October online
www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk

Lectures

The Pyramids of Sudan
Derek Welsby
Thursday 30 September 18.30
Although the pyramid is the
archetypal funerary monument
of Egypt, there are many more
in Sudan: almost 300 are
known and new discoveries are
common. The earliest pyramids
date to the New Kingdom
occupation of the northern
part of the country. In the 8th
century BC the use of pyramids
was revived by the Kushites and
continued for over 1000 years.
The Kushite pyramids are some
of the most impressive ancient
monuments in the Nile Valley.
Derek Welsby is a curator in the
Department of Ancient Egypt
and Sudan, the British Museum.
BP Lecture Theatre
£5, concessions £3
Tickets from the Box Office on
+44 (0)20 7323 8181 or online
www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk

The Arabs of Sudan and
the Forty Days Road
Michael Asher
Thursday 28 October 18.30
Distinguished writer and explorer
Michael Asher became fascinated
with the Kababish nomads living
on the fringe of the Libyan
Desert while working in Sudan
in the 1980s. He travelled
thousands of miles by camel
with them, learning their
customs and language on the
way. These experiences formed
the basis for his books *In Search
of the Forty Days Road* and *A
Desert Dies*, which he brings to
life for this event, following the
course of the *Darb al-Arba’in*
route and revealing the changing
lives of the desert Arabs of
Sudan.
BP Lecture Theatre
£5, concessions £3
Tickets from the Box Office on
+44 (0)20 7323 8181 or online
www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk

The Mahdi and Gordon
in myth and reality
Fergus Nicoll
Thursday 2 December 18.30
On 26 January 1885, a Sudanese
Islamic revolutionary army led by
Muhammad Ahmad, the Mahdi,
entered Khartoum. In the events
that ensued General Gordon
was killed. Fergus Nicoll will
explore the Mahdi’s role as
the charismatic leader of a
movement seeking to free Sudan
from foreign control. Fergus
Nicoll has been a current affairs
journalist for the BBC since
1988. His book *The Sword of the
Prophet* was published in May
this year.
BP Lecture Theatre
£5, concessions £3
Tickets from the Box Office on
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