

THE  
BRITISH  
MUSEUM

# AFRICA NOW

Africa at the British Museum

AUGUST –  
OCTOBER  
**2005**


make it  
play it  
writers  
artists  
big draw  
backpacks



In association with the BBC



[bbc.co.uk/africa05](http://bbc.co.uk/africa05)



**'The British Museum stands for the protection of diversity and the preservation of human achievement, knowledge, curiosity and sheer fun. It is one of London's eternal glories...'**

The Evening Standard

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## For further information about Africa 05

[www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/africa05](http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/africa05)

[www.bbc.co.uk/africa05](http://www.bbc.co.uk/africa05)

## Booking for events

Unless otherwise stated, book events through the Box Office 10.00 – 16.45 daily  
Telephone +44 (0)20 7323 8181  
Facsimile +44 (0)20 7323 8616  
Minicom +44 (0)20 7323 8920  
[boxoffice@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk](mailto:boxoffice@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk)  
Book selected events at  
[www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk](http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk)

Cover: based on objects in the *Wear it! Make it! Play it! Hear it!* display, Great Court  
This page: silhouette of the *Tree of Life* (see page 11)

## Made in Africa Views from Africa Africa Now

February's *Made in Africa* exhibition at the British Museum began London-wide celebrations of Africa in 2005 around the 2 million year old hand tools of Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania (now on display in Room 36).

Three months on, the objects in *Views from Africa* inspired hundreds of thousands of people to investigate the dynamic history of African relations with Europe, past and present.

Today, with eyes firmly on the future, the British Museum welcomes you to the final season of its Africa 05 programme: **Africa Now**.

**Dig deep** - uncover connections between the continent's diverse flora and cultures in the *Ground Force* Africa Garden (page 10).

**Be creative** - unleash your imagination with family activities in the Great Court and Sainsbury African Galleries (pages 4-6).

**Speak up** - debate art and literature with Diran Adebayo, Kader Keita and African film directors (pages 7-9).

Beyond London, curator exchanges are assisting plans for the first African-led exhibition of Museum objects in Kenya. The *Throne of Weapons* (page 11) continues its tour from the G8 to Bristol for Black History Month. And expanding online features continue to make the Africa collections available for interpretation across the world.

Find out more. Visit [www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/africa05](http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/africa05)



# Family events

## Wear it! Make it! Play it! Hear it!

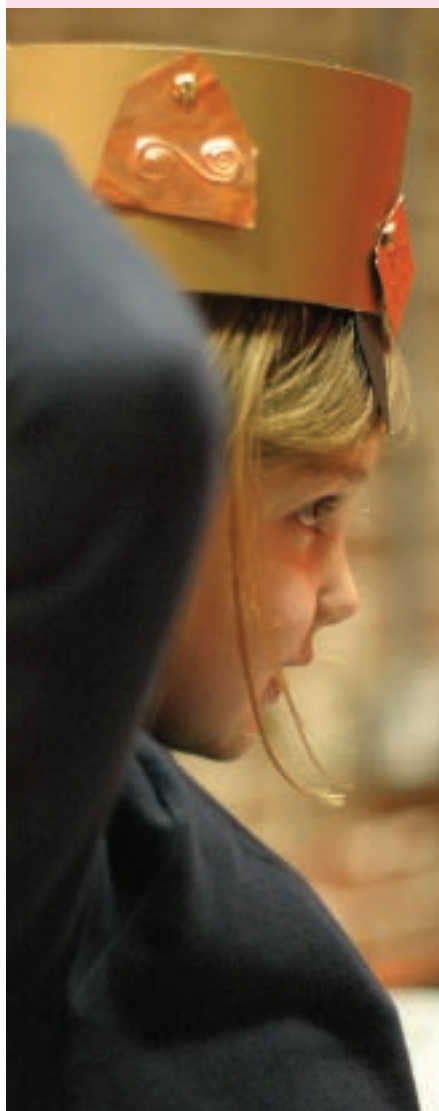
Join us in the Great Court for an entertaining summer programme of activities based around the many cultures of Africa, with objects to handle, clothes to try on, musical instruments to listen to and games to play.

28 July – 30 October, 11.00–16.00

Admission free

### WEAR IT!

What people wear tells us a lot about them – what they believe, how they fit into a group and what conditions are like where they live. Try on different hats and headgear from across Africa and find out more.



### MAKE IT!

Using old things to make new things is an important part of **Africa at the British Museum** – from the *Tree of Life*, made out of recycled weapons, to new ideas inspired by African objects millions of years old. See what you can make using a range of everyday materials, like plastic bottles and carrier bags.



### PLAY IT!

Try your hand at mancala, one of Africa's most popular games, or roll the dice in Tutankhamun's favourite, Senet, and see if you come out on top. Whether you're 5 or 105, these timeless games, beautifully carved and decorated, will keep you busy for hours.

### HEAR IT!

Listen to musicians from across the continent playing traditional and contemporary musical instruments and keep time to the rhythms of Africa. How many different noises can one instrument make? And what occasions might they be used for? Discover the sounds of Africa throughout the summer.





# Family events

## The Big Draw

Saturday 15 October, 10.30–16.00  
Free  
Materials free

For Turner Prize winners and absolute beginners, the annual Big Draw offers workshops, drop-in events and gallery talks for all ages, levels and backgrounds. Get creative and be inspired by the largest collection of African objects outside the continent. Featuring Sokari Douglas Camp, Nigeria, whose work can be seen in the Africa Garden and Galleries.

## Autumn half-term

**Secrets of the Sahara**  
24 – 28 October, 11.00–16.00

From shifting sands to scuttling scorpions, discover the fascinating life of the world's largest desert through a host of free activities for families – including stories and music from the Tuareg people.

Further details available from the Reading Room or  
[www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/education/families](http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/education/families)

## Backpacks, trails and materials Free 7 days a week Just ask in the Reading Room

- 3-5 *Chasing Rainbows with Mama Wata*: pick up colours and shapes as you follow Wata's trail through the different countries of Africa – then get creative at home.
- 5-11 *The African Adventure Backpack* provides a 90 minute activity based tour of the Sainsbury African Galleries. Make a mask, spot animal antics and recognise African pots with a blindfold on.
- All ages Crayons, coloured pencils and drawing pads are free to borrow from the Reading Room. Find your favourite piece of African art in Room 25 and give it your own interpretation.



# Africa's Women

A series of films about African women  
in partnership with the Royal Anthropological Institute.



Stevenson Lecture Theatre  
Admission free

*'The father of African cinema, Ousmane Sembene, once said that 'Africa is a woman' ...for it is the women of Africa who embody the continent's metaphors, its deepest realities. The answer to the questions of the present, she is the key to the future.'*

Bonnie Greer, writer, critic and British Museum trustee

## A Wife Among Wives – including Director Q&A

Friday 16 September, 18.30

Australian film-makers Judith and David MacDougall are searching for an elusive wedding in northern Kenya. Along the way they stay with friends and find out about the lives of the local Turkana women.

DIRECTORS: JUDITH AND DAVID MACDOUGALL  
1981, 72 MINS

## Hidden Faces – including Director Q&A

Friday 23 September, 18.30

Living abroad, Safaa Fathy returns to Egypt to interview the internationally renowned feminist writer, Nawal El Saadawi. Through her efforts she becomes disillusioned, demonstrating the conflict between modernity and tradition in a Muslim environment.

DIRECTOR: KIM LONGINOTTO  
2005, 52 MINS



*Hidden Faces*, 2005

## A Love Apart

Friday 14 October, 13.00

Rhaissa, a young nomadic girl from the Niger mountains, is preparing for her arranged marriage. *A Love Apart* follows the long, calm days of 'Takaraket' which require that she neither speaks nor leaves her mother's tent. A tender and poetic documentary.

DIRECTOR: BETTINA HAASEN  
2004, 52 MINS



*Duka's Dilemma*, 2001

## Duka's Dilemma

Friday 28 October, 13.00

Film-maker, Jean Lydall, has been working with the Hamar community of southern Ethiopia since the 1970s. In 2001, she returned to follow the story of Duka whose husband Sago has taken a second wife. These candid interviews reveal the dynamics and tensions among the family.

DIRECTOR: JEAN LYDALL  
2001, 87 MINS

# Meet the Artists

Art is at the centre of **Africa at the British Museum**. Drop in this Autumn and meet practitioners **Kader Keita** and **Magdalene Odundo**.

## Kader Keita

A graduate of Mali's art school, Keita's main medium is the traditional textile **bogolan** (mudcloth), a heavy, cotton cloth of rust-coloured geometric designs made with river mud. Once the discipline of secret societies and hunters' associations, it symbolises community well-being and, today, diaspora identity and Afro-chic.

### Bogolan explained

Friday 30 September  
18.30–19.30

Clore Education Centre, Sackler Rooms  
60 places

Admission free, no pre booking

### Bogolan workshop

Saturday 1 October  
11.00–15.00

Clore Education Centre, Studio  
15 places

£12, concessions £8

Suitable for those with some experience of making textiles. Enthusiastic beginners also welcome.

### Family Bogolan demonstration

Sunday 2 October

12.00–13.00 and 14.00–16.00

Clore Education Centre, Studio

Admission free, no pre booking

Try your hand at making your own mudcloth and hear from the artist the stories behind the images on the cloth.



Bogolan, Bamana peoples, mid-20th century  
From Mali, West Africa. Room 25



Magdalene Odundo, ceramic vessel, 2000  
Room 25

## Magdalene Odundo

Saturday 8 October  
13.15

Room 25

Admission free

Magdalene Odundo is an eminent and much-collected ceramic artist. She grew up in Kenya and lives and works in England. Her distinctive hand-built pots show a strong association with African pottery as well as a modernist interest in form, material and technique. She talks about her own work and other ceramics on display in the Sainsbury African Galleries.

# Writer-in-residence

## Diran Adebayo

From June to October the legendary Reading Room in the Great Court welcomes Diran Adebayo as its first writer in residence. As part of **Africa at the British Museum**, Diran will be starting conversations with Africans in London about their experiences of living and working in the UK as well as hosting the following events.

*Made possible by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation*

### Art into words: a writer's tour of the African Galleries

Wednesday 28 September  
13.15–14.15

Room 25

Admission free, no pre booking

Discover the literary power of the largest collection of African objects outside the continent. A personal walk through the gallery with Diran Adebayo.

## Indaba: the word from Africa

Thursday 29 September  
18.30–20.30

Clore Education Centre,  
BP Lecture Theatre  
£5, concessions £3

Acclaimed African writers discuss the evolution of African literary trends and read from their own work. Chaired by Diran Adebayo.

## Children's Book Week

Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 October  
Reading Room

All ages welcome

Creative writing workshops inspired by African objects and themes. Run, with Adebayo, by popular African writers and poets, in collaboration with The Book Trust.

**Diran Adebayo** is author of two award-winning novels, *Some Kind of Black* and *My Once Upon a Time*, as well as a writer for television and a cultural journalist.





# Exhibitions

## Africa Garden

Until 4 September 2005  
Forecourt  
Admission free

Over the years the BBC's *Ground Force* programme has led millions of fans down more than 130 garden paths, creating backyard paradises in just days and teaching viewers along the way about different 'plant practices' from around the world.



PHOTOGRAPH: ROLF MARRIOTT

Snake by Mathé of TAE. See page 11.

The Africa Garden at the British Museum is the team's final creation together. Over the summer, visitors will be able to explore the connections between the plants and the cultures they come from. The Garden includes flora from three African climate zones - desert, tropical and temperate - informed by *Ground Force*'s work in Ethiopia, Morocco and their garden for Nelson Mandela in South Africa. It also features contemporary sculptures by African artists - from Mozambique to Ghana - including work specially commissioned by *Ground Force* and the Museum. You can find more contemporary African art alongside outstanding objects of African heritage in Room 25, including work by the artists represented here.

[www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/africa/garden](http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/africa/garden)

## From Garden to gallery

Friday 26 August, 13.15

Dig deeper with British Museum curator Chris Spring.



PHOTOGRAPH: ROLF MARRIOTT

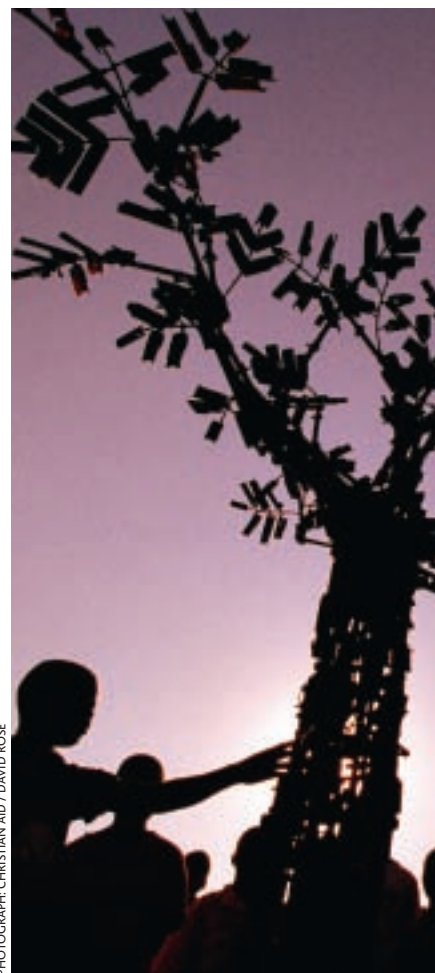
Charlie Dimmock makes finishing touches to the Africa Garden

## Tree of Life

Until 30 October 2005  
Great Court  
Admission free

Made with decommissioned weapons from Mozambique's civil war, the *Tree of Life* sculpture is one of the centrepieces of *Africa at the British Museum*.

Through the *Transforming Arms into Tools* (TAE) project, funded by Christian Aid, people in Mozambique hand in guns in exchange for sewing machines, bicycles, even tractors. The weapons are dismantled and the artists of the Nucleo de Arte make sculptures out of them. Created by Christóvão Canhavato (Kester), Hilário Nhatugueja, Fiel dos Santos and Adelino Serafim Maté, a collective whose work also features in the *Ground Force* Africa Garden, this is a remarkable symbol of Mozambique's hopes for peace.



PHOTOGRAPH: CHRISTIAN AID / DAVID ROSE

## Tree of Guns

Thursday 25 August, 13.00  
Stevenson Lecture Theatre  
Admission free, no pre-booking

Documentary following the artists as they create the Tree of Life.

ROOFTOP PRODUCTIONS AND CHRISTIAN AID FOR BBC4, 2001, 87 MINS



PHOTOGRAPH: CHRISTIAN AID / DAVID ROSE

## Mummy: the inside story The BP special exhibition

Supported by BP 

Joseph Hotung Great Court Gallery,  
Room 35  
Until 14 August 2005

This extraordinary virtual reality film, using the latest CT-scan technology, takes you back in time, under the wrappings and inside the body of the Mummy.

Admission £6, concessions £3  
Children aged 5-16 £3, under 5s free  
Family ticket £15

## HALF PRICE TICKET OFFER

Thursday and Friday Lates (from 18.00)

'completely mind blowing' BBC Radio 4

**DW** The  
Brightest  
Light  
in Design  
**AWARDS**  
2005  
**WINNER**



# Don't miss...

## Throne of Weapons UK tour

As part of its commitment to Africa and to sharing its collections across the UK, the Museum is on tour with the *Throne of Weapons* (Kester, Mozambique 2001). The sculpture comes out of the *Transforming Arms into Tools* project which also produced the *Tree of Life*.

Supported by the UK National Commission for UNESCO



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In addition to the venues listed below (some information may be subject to change), there will be excursions within several cities to schools, community, arts and shopping centres, and in September to a government department and prison in London.

9 July – 29 August  
Perth Museum & Art Gallery  
01738 632488  
[www.pkc.gov.uk](http://www.pkc.gov.uk)

1 – 30 October (Black History Month)  
Bristol City Museum & Art Gallery  
0117 922 3571  
[www.bristol-city.gov.uk](http://www.bristol-city.gov.uk)

1 – 27 November  
Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry  
024 7683 2565  
[www.coventrymuseum.org.uk](http://www.coventrymuseum.org.uk)

# Courses

## African art now

12 Thursday evenings from  
Thursday 29 September  
18.30-20.30  
Clore Education Centre, Sackler Rooms  
£90, concessions £45



Did you know that there have been African photographers since the 1860s? Or that Nigeria is one of the world's largest producers of videos? This module looks at African art today, starting with photography and video and moving into painting, sculpture and installation art. Discover work from Ethiopia, Ghana,

South Africa and Tanzania, as well as that of African artists living and working in Europe and the USA. Run in partnership with Birkbeck, this course can be followed for general interest or can contribute to the Certificate in World Arts and Artefacts.

Tutor: Nancy Hynes

Further information and booking through Birkbeck:

Telephone Tim Russell on  
+44 (0)20 7631 6652  
or [t.russell@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:t.russell@bbk.ac.uk)

Pick up the 2005-6 course guide from the Information Desk for full details of British Museum/Birkbeck courses.

# Free gallery talks

Since they opened to the public in 2001 the Sainsbury African Galleries (Room 25) have provided not only a showcase for some of the British Museum's remarkable collection of African art but also a lively forum for debate on the subject of how such work should be displayed. The Galleries form the basis of the Museum's international work with African museums and communities, which in 2006 includes a major exhibition in Kenya examining East African trade, traditions and transitions.

Do you want to know more about African history and contemporary art? Throughout the year free gallery talks introduce you to the permanent collections.

3 August, 13.15, Room 1  
**Africa through the ages**

3 September, 13.15, Room 25  
**The Benin Bronzes**



Brass plaque showing the Oba of Benin with attendants. The Benin Bronzes transformed European perceptions of African civilisation.

27 September, 13.15, Room 25  
**Arts of West Africa**

22 October, 13.15, Room 25  
**African Art Now**



PHOTOGRAPHS: BENEDICT JOHNSON

Discover the art of Africa in the Sainsbury African Galleries

# Africa trail

## Africa around the Museum

### ◀ Look out for this sign in the galleries

Since the start of human history - from Egypt to America - Africa's influence on the cultures of the world has been immense. Follow the Africa trail around the Museum and see for yourself. Detailed gallery plans on page 17.

### What do you think?

As well as labels written by Museum curators, we asked people from London's African heritage communities for their personal responses to the objects here.

What about you? What do these objects make you think about?

1

### Room 1, case 24

Asante diplomatic gifts, West Africa, 19th century (Main floor)



2



### Room 26, case 5

Asante-style drum, Virginia, about 1730 (Main floor)

3

### Room 34, case 6

Contemporary ceramics, Tunisia, 1998 (Main floor)



4



### Room 66

Ethiopian painting, Ethiopia, 19th century (Upper floor)

5

### Room 57, case 12

Ivory from Nimrud, Phoenician 9th – 8th century BC (Upper floor)



*'...religion, art and the human mind can all work as one.'*

6



### Room 70, case 1

Bronze head of Augustus, Meroe, Sudan 27 BC – AD 14 (Upper floor)

7

### Room 70, case 18

Crocodile-skin parade armour, Egypt 3rd – 4th century AD (Upper floor)



8



### Room 70, statue near exit to Room 69

Statue of Septimius Severus, Alexandria, Egypt, about AD 193 – 200 (Upper floor)



*'...at last the African presence in ancient Britain is being acknowledged.'*

9

### Room 68, case 10

Treasure from the Salcombe Cannon Site, Devon, 16th – 17th century (Upper floor)



10



### Room 36, case 1

Chopping tools from Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania, about 1.8 million years old (Upper floor)

11

### Room 47, case 7

Blue glass sugar bowl, English, early 19th century (Upper floor)



12



### Room 42, case 11

Asante ewer, Ghana 1390 – 1400 (Upper floor)

13

### Room 49, case 15

Mauretanian cavalryman, London, 2nd – 3rd century AD (Upper floor)



*'These are amazing pieces. They have great meaning to me personally because this is how it came to be known that human history started in Africa.'*

14



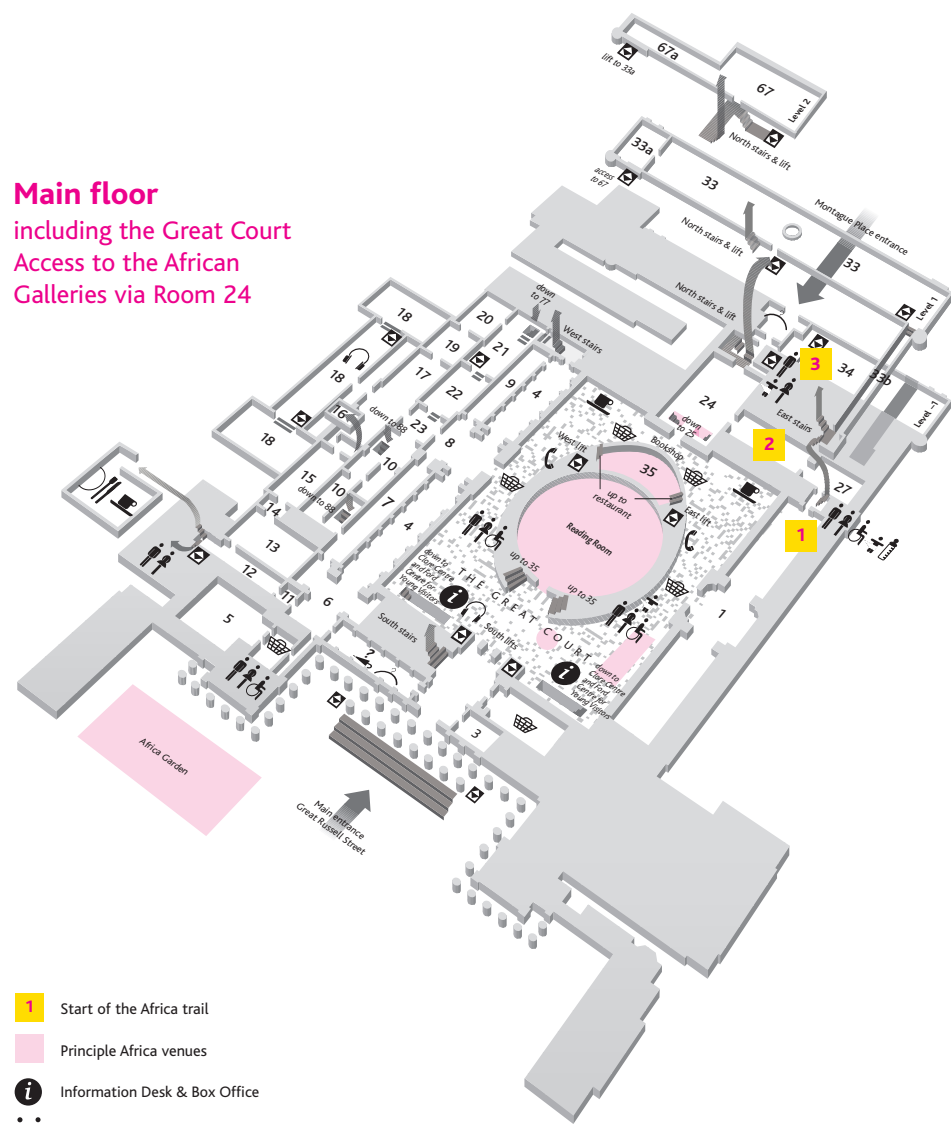
### Room 65, case 10

Sphinx of Taharqo, from Kawa, Sudan, 690 – 664 BC (Upper floor)



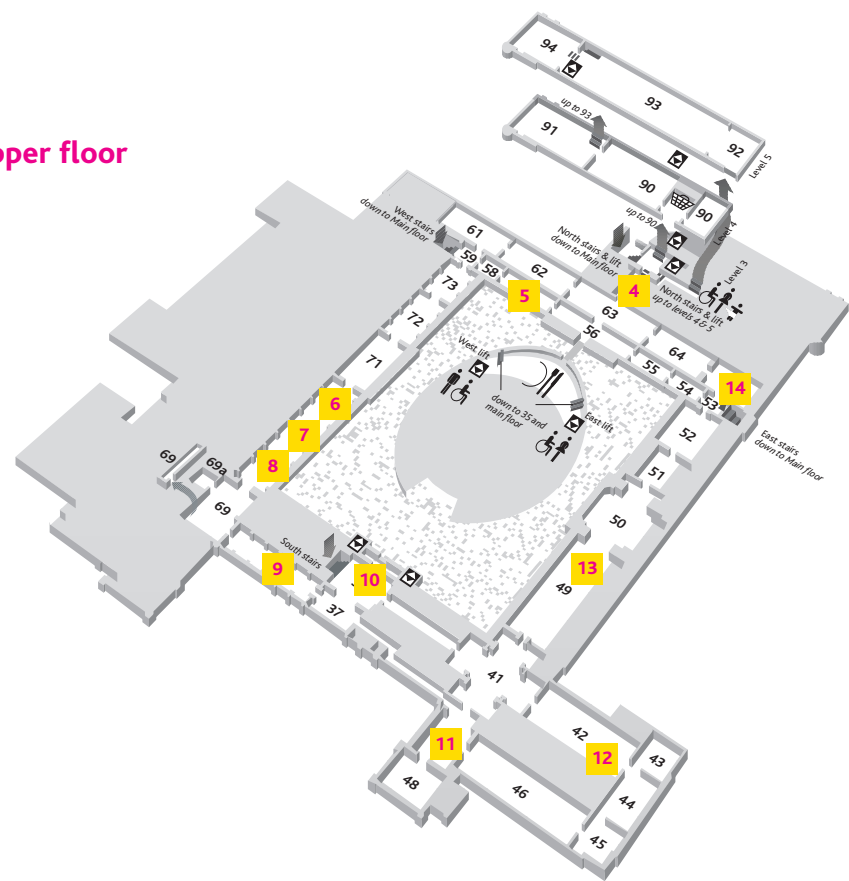
# Floor plans

**Main floor**  
including the Great Court  
Access to the African  
Galleries via Room 24

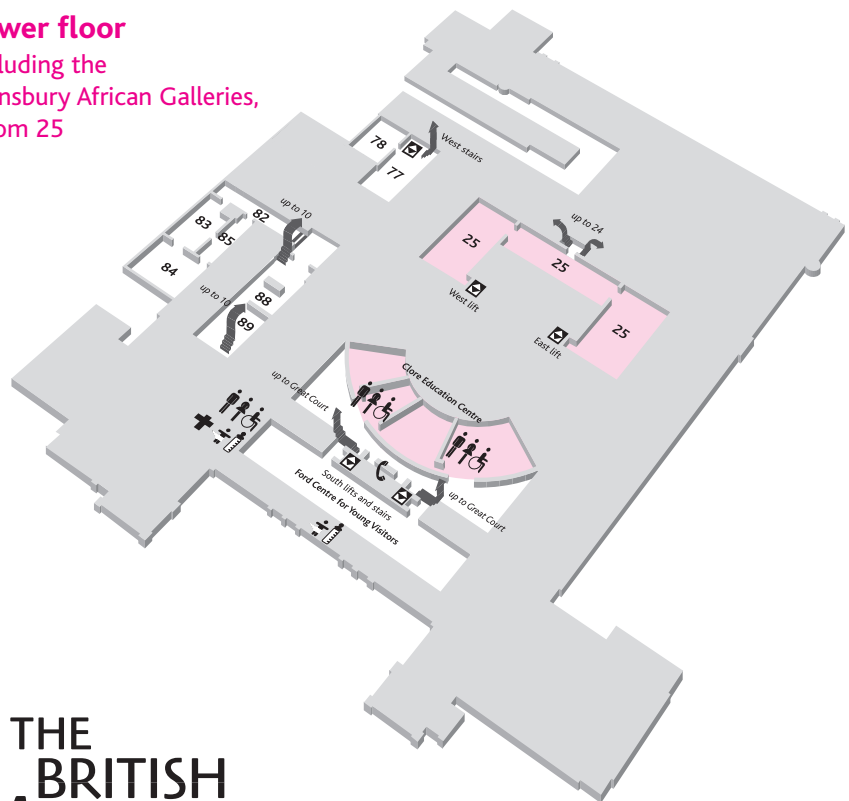


- 1 Start of the Africa trail
- Principle Africa venues
- Information Desk & Box Office
- Toilets
- Accessible toilets
- Babycare
- Cloakroom
- Lost property
- Restaurant
- Café
- Shop
- Audio tour
- Telephone
- Lift

**Upper floor**



**Lower floor**  
including the  
Sainsbury African Galleries,  
Room 25



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