

Museum of the world for
the world: London,
United Kingdom and beyond.
British Museum Review
April 2004-March 2006



A bishop from the Lewis Chessmen, probably made in Norway, about AD 1150-1200
Found on the Isle of Lewis, Outer Hebrides, Scotland around 1831, the famous Lewis Chessmen are made from walrus ivory and whales' teeth. Twenty-four of them have been on tour in the BM exhibition *Across the Board. Around the World in Eighteen Games*, so far seen by over 100,000 people throughout the country.

Throne of Weapons, Mozambique, 2001:
Made out of decommissioned weapons from the civil war in Mozambique by artist Kester, the BM toured the *Throne* to venues throughout the UK in 2005 to highlight issues around conflict and creativity in Africa and worldwide.

Inlaid ivory panel , Phoenician, 9th-8th century B.C.
Found in the palace of Ashurnasirpal II at Nimrud in northern Iraq, this decorative furniture panel, showing a lioness devouring an African boy, is almost identical to one looted from the Iraq Museum in 2003. The BM works closely with Iraqi colleagues on the preservation of Iraq's heritage.

Illustration by Peter Till, 2006.
New media has revolutionised access to the collection, and helped the BM truly become a 'museum of the world'. In 2004-6 the Museum welcomed 16 million visitors via its website.



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Preface

Admission Ticket.

The British Museum opened its doors to visitors for the first time on 15 January 1759. The Trustees decided that the Museum should be open free of charge to the general public but initially issued only a limited number of tickets each day. Groups of five visitors were given a tour by an Under-Librarian of the manuscripts, medals, antiquities and natural history collections.



The British Museum was established in 1753, in the words of its founding Act of Parliament, for the 'advancement and improvement' of 'natural philosophy and other branches of speculative knowledge', on the premise that 'all arts and sciences have a connection with each another.' It was to be a new kind of space, not restricted to the 'learned and curious, but intended to the 'general use and benefit of the public'. The Act looked forward to the relocation of the collection to a 'more convenient repository... and nearer to places of public resort'. And so the Museum opened in Bloomsbury.

The Museum was based on the practical principle that the collection should be put to public use and be freely accessible. It was also grounded in the Enlightenment idea that human cultures can, despite their differences, understand one another through mutual engagement. The Museum was to be a place where this kind of humane cross-cultural investigation could happen. It still is.

The British Museum began in London, then, as now, the world's most international city. Today, through touring exhibitions, loans, collaborative projects, and the Internet, the Museum has a UK and worldwide reach unprecedented in its history. Around one million people saw Museum objects on show across the country over the past two years. Two million people in Japan, Korea, and China visited the Museum's 250th anniversary exhibition *Treasures of the World's Cultures*.

The purpose of the British Museum has always been to put the collection to work for the citizens of the world. The need to do so is now greater than ever. The Museum will continue to seek new ways to meet this need, together with its partners in the UK and worldwide.

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Trustees' Foreword

'Yarla Jukurrpa' ('Bush Potato Dreaming') by Victor Jupurrula Ross, Australia, 1987.

In the 1970s Aboriginal artists combined Western techniques with traditional forms, leading to an outburst of creativity which also asserted the sustained importance of Aboriginal people and cultures in Australia. This painting uses acrylic on canvas to depict a creation story from the Western Desert, of how two old men, Jakamarra and Jupurrula, once sat down in Yamaparnta, a place near where the painting was made. They shook a sacred stone, and from it grew the yarla plant which is believed to be the ancestor of all the plants now found in that place. The concentric circles in the middle of the painting represent the stone, the waving lines the yarla plant growing from it. The two semi-circles are the men.



The past two years have seen continuing movement and achievement at the British Museum. The Trustees are grateful to the Director and his team. They are themselves highly conscious of the role which the Museum should play in our day. They are determined to fulfil energetically their responsibilities towards the worldwide beneficiaries of their stewardship. These two years have seen the 'utility' of the collection extended in ways and places not hitherto envisaged, I would claim to national advantage. The reach of the collection has extended further both throughout the United Kingdom (engaging a wide variety of new audiences) and beyond. The Trustees have been delighted to include new destinations, more than ever before, within their international loans programme. From Korea to Kenya the collection finds new audiences. To see the rapid development of relations with Chinese counterparts and the renewal of the Japan Gallery gives me particular pleasure.

The Trustees themselves have always been a diverse group. Over the period under review this has become increasingly the case, mirroring the diversity of the collection which the Trustees hold on behalf of the world. It is entirely appropriate that Niall FitzGerald, an Irish citizen, should succeed me as Chairman of a Board whose duties are as much global as national.

The Trustees have not ducked the public issues of our day. Two major ones in the period have gone to the heart of the Trustees role as owners of a collection over which they have rights not so much of possession as stewardship. Fundamentally they are responsible to those for whose benefit they own the collection.

The Human Tissue act in 2005 gave national museums the power to transfer human remains out of their collections. The Trustees had long recognised that human remains from the modern period represent a special case, one raising particularly difficult issues. The Museum was fully and positively engaged in the process which lead to the drafting of the relevant clause of the new law.

The Trustees welcomed this new power. It enabled them for the first time to give serious consideration to claims on human remains in the collection. They published a policy on how such claims would be dealt with. In March 2006 they decided to meet a claim made for two cremation ash bundles from the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre with the support of the Australian Government. After taking independent expert advice the Trustees came to the view that the cultural and religious

importance of the cremation ash bundles to the Tasmanian aboriginal community outweighed any public benefit that would have flowed from their retention. They look forward to continuing to work with indigenous Australian communities in furthering the worldwide public understanding of Australian Aboriginal cultures, past and present.

In 2002 the Trustees received a claim from the heirs of Dr Arthur Feldmann of Brno, Czechoslovakia, on four drawings in the collection. These had been wrongfully taken from Dr. Feldmann by the Gestapo in 1939. The Trustees immediately acknowledged the claim, recognising the exceptional circumstances of the Holocaust in Europe between 1933 and 1945 and the unique status of objects stolen from their owners by the Nazi regime in this period. They immediately sought ways to meet the claim in the High Court. Together with the heirs the Museum then approached the Spoliation Advisory Panel in 2005 proposing that the heirs should receive monetary compensation for the drawings, an idea with which the Panel has since concurred. In the autumn of 2006 the Museum will put on a display of the drawings, relating the circumstances of their expropriation by the Nazis and the generous goodwill of the heirs of Dr Feldmann who wanted them to remain in the British Museum.

The Trustees are determined to continue to develop their role as a representative and responsive body, worthy of the confidence placed in them by the world's citizens and true to the Museum's founding purpose as expressed in the British Museum Act of 1753, namely 'that the collection may be preserved and maintained, not merely for inspection and entertainment of the learned and curious but for the general use and benefit of the publick'.

Sir John Boyd
Chairman of Trustees 2002-2006

Director's Foreword

A poster from the 1948 London Olympics showing one of the British Museum's most famous classical antiquities, the Discobolos (Discus-thrower), a Roman marble copy of a fifth-century BC Greek bronze original attributed to the sculptor Myron. Copyright IOC Collections, Musée Olympique.



Broadcasting the Museum

Since it first opened in 1759, the Museum has continually sought to make its collections available to greater and more diverse audiences, first in London, subsequently the UK and worldwide. Over the past forty years, the increasing ease of international travel has meant not merely that more visitors from abroad can come to London to use the collection, but that the collection can more easily travel to them, and be put to public use in new local contexts. In the past two years, the Museum's international exhibition partners, at first limited to Europe, N. America, and Japan, have expanded to encompass China and Africa. In the next two years, they will, we hope, include the Middle East.

Thanks to the steady development of our UK Partnership, the collection has also been travelling more widely than ever within the UK, sometimes as small exhibitions, sometimes as single star items, but nearly always drawing record attendances to the museums involved. The outstanding example of the last two years is the *Throne of Weapons*, whose tour is discussed in greater detail in the body of the report.

The Internet continues to provide a means of disseminating knowledge and ideas generated by the Museum's collection, complementing physical access. In these past two years, the Museum has given its successful exhibition programme a virtual afterlife, enabling world audiences to participate in what can be seen in London. The challenge for the coming years will be to transform the website into a public space for multilateral cross-cultural enquiry, to make it not merely a source of information about the collection and the Museum, but a natural extension of its core purpose to be a laboratory of comparative cultural investigation.

This high purpose needs to be supported by fundamental research, and the last two years have seen many important publications. Having achieved Academic Analogue status, the Museum can now bid directly to the Arts and Humanities Research Council for funding, and is also ideally placed to make a major contribution to the Council's commitment to Knowledge Transfer, by extending the impact of humanities research beyond the academic world to a wider exhibition going public.

The success of the London Olympic bid has confirmed the capital's status as the world's most culturally diverse city. Building towards 2012, the Museum aims to play its full part in realising the Games' cultural ideals: as a resource for the citizens of the UK

and the world to create their own understanding of their own and other cultures. The initial focus will be on China, to coincide with the Beijing Olympics in 2008.

Key to the aim of extending engagement with the Museum is the development of media partnerships to broadcast both to the UK and worldwide. Working with the BBC, the Museum communicated with new audiences across the UK and Africa via radio, television, and the web throughout the *Africa 05* festival as part of a common desire to deepen the world's understandings of Africa and its cultures, and Africa's own sense of its place in the world. The opportunities for replicating and magnifying this success with both British and international partners are significant.

The matchless family of world collections located in London has a unique contribution to make towards the formation of a new sense of world citizenship for a new century. Working with these other collections, the British Museum's ambition is to turn this vital potential into a reality.

Neil MacGregor



“The British Museum played a key role in the success of Africa 05 by focussing on Africa's issues and revealing a more positive view of a vibrant continent of diverse cultures. The Department for Culture, Media & Sport continues to support the British Museum in its partnerships with governments and cultural organisations across Africa, sharing skills and engaging with new audiences in Africa, in the UK, and worldwide.”

David Lammy MP
Minister for Culture

Africa and the British Museum.

In Africa lie the ultimate origins of all human cultures. In 2005, the British Museum celebrated the cultures of contemporary Africa, putting their vitality and richness at the centre of the cultural agenda.

Wooden male and female figures, Tanzania, c. 1940s.

These stylised figures in European dress are carved in the style of the Nyamwezi people of east Africa. The Nyamwezi used to carve figures of their ancestors. In the 20th century they used their art to reflect on, and even parody, changes in culture with the arrival of European influence. These pieces appeared in the 2005 exhibition *Views from Africa* which looked at how African artists have represented Europeans over the past five centuries of contact.

Africa and the British Museum

The British Museum was established in 1753 to promote inquiry and the discovery of new kinds of truth. Above all, it was hoped that the study of different societies, their political economies and religious structures, would generate tolerance and understanding.

The Museum was founded in a period of political turbulence and intellectual excitement. Only eight years before, the country had experienced the trauma of civil war in the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745. Britain sorely needed a new vision of how to tolerate difference within its society.

New discoveries were opening up Europe's understanding of both the natural world and human cultures, past and present. Technological advances like the measurement of longitude were improving communication and travel worldwide. London was already the world's largest city. It was also becoming its

most diverse city, as it still is. The Museum was always intended to be for the benefit of the citizens of the world, not just Britons. Its location in London has always been key to turning this claim into a reality.

The world we now live in was born in the age when the Museum was founded, which is why its ideals continue to animate the Museum's vision and purpose today. The challenge for the twenty-first century is the same as it was in the eighteenth, to share collections as fully and responsibly as possible, in order to enable citizens to understand the world in all its complexity and diversity.

The Museum's deployment of the African collection over the past two years perhaps best demonstrates our increasing and on-going endeavours to meet the challenge of making the collection available to the whole world.

Humanity's ultimate origins lie in Africa. Its cultures

2005 was the year of Africa at The British Museum. Prime Minister Tony Blair, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, launched the Commission for Africa report here in March. In April, BBC1's *Ground Force* built an African garden on the front lawn to mark their final programme. The Eden Project lent plants, contemporary artists, including Sokari Douglas Camp, made work for the garden but, above all the Museum and public made it their own. The British Museum and Camden Council volunteers created and maintained the garden. It became so popular a public space that its existence was extended well into the autumn.



'The Tree of Life' by Kester, Hilario Nhatugueja, Fiel dos Santos and Adelino Serafim Maté, Mozambique, 2004.

This remarkable sculpture is made from some of the thousands of guns decommissioned from the devastating civil war in Mozambique that ended in 1992. Founded in 1995 by Bishop Dinis Singulane, the Transforming Arms into Tools project encourages Mozambicans to trade in their guns for items of more practical use. In 2005 it stood at the heart of the British Museum as a sign of the creativity and life of Africa's cultures.



and peoples continue to shape the events in the world today. The Museum is singularly placed to demonstrate both visually and intellectually their worldwide significance. The Sainsbury Africa Galleries are one of the few locations in the world where it is possible to experience and understand in one place the history and diversity of Africa's cultures across thousands of years up to the present.

In 2003, the Museum received a grant of one million pounds from the Government towards its expanded Africa programme, marking the British Museum's 250th anniversary that year and in preparation for the world's unprecedented focus on Africa in 2005. The *Live 8* concert in Hyde Park marked the twentieth anniversary of Live Aid, while the UK held both the EU and G8 presidencies, culminating with the landmark Gleneagles agreement on Africa and development. The nationwide *Africa 05* festival celebrated the richness and complexity of African

cultures. The British Museum was at its heart, working together with over fifty partner organisations including the Arts Council England, the South Bank Centre and the BBC.

In March 2005, the Prime Minister launched the Commission for Africa Report in the Museum's Great Court in the shadow of *The Tree of Life*, a unique sculpture made from de-commissioned firearms from Mozambique. The Report positioned culture as key to thinking about Africa and its future development. In response to this challenge, the British Museum has devised programmes of exchanges, exhibitions and conferences aimed at using the collection to enrich the ways in which the world views Africa. The Museum's activities have reached out to many African countries with the ambition of creating new sustainable partnerships designed to contribute towards the achievement of the world's vision for Africa formulated in 2005.



In March 2006, just as the Government announced renewed funding for the Museum's Africa programme, a ground-breaking exhibition, *Hazina—Traditions, Trade and Transitions in Eastern Africa*, opened in Nairobi. This project demonstrates well the Museum's evolving relationship with the world through the objects in its collection. The show was entirely conceived and curated by colleagues from the National Museums of Kenya, led by Kiprop Lagat. He spent seven months in London working with the collection, selecting 140 objects. The Museum's collection was able to complement that of the National Museums of Kenya, enabling the curatorial team to tell a story for Kenyan audiences of how their varied cultures have developed in relationship with the rest of East Africa and the Indian Ocean. This was the first time that the Kenyan partners had been involved in an international loan exhibition and they gained valuable experience from the project. The Museum developed

important new insights into how best to address its African audiences, and learned a huge amount about its East African collections.

The Hazina catalogue impeccably illustrates the international and collaborative nature of the project: the four exhibition themes of trade, well-being, leadership and the contemporary were explored through object and text by scholars from Africa, Europe and America. *Hazina*, which means 'treasure' in Swahili, is only the first outcome of an on-going partnership between London and Nairobi.

The British Museum is seeking to use the collection both as a library from which partners worldwide can borrow objects to tell their own stories, and as a cultural junction-box through which we can all learn more about what it means to be human. To make this happen, the Museum needs the help of scholars and colleagues worldwide. The Museum hopes to be able to make its



'The Throne of Weapons', Mozambique, 2001. Made by Mozambican artist Cristovao Canhavato (Kester) from imported weapons collected since the end of the civil war in 1992, the *Throne* is a reflection on how the fighting was fuelled by external powers during the Cold War, and a symbol of Mozambique's post-conflict reconciliation that turned instruments of killing into a work of art. The British Museum toured the *Throne* throughout the UK in 2005-6.

Wooden mask depicting Nambwadigwe, village headman, Makonde people, Mozambique, 1940s. Shown in *Hazina—Traditions, Trade and Transitions in Eastern Africa* (Nairobi, Kenya, March-October 2006).



collections accessible to audiences across Africa through a new network of professional relationships.

In the summer of 2005, Mamitu Yilma, director of the National Museum of Ethiopia, visited the British Museum for an extended period. Mamitu also attended a museum leadership course where met colleagues from across Britain. At the same time, the Museum hosted a group of young curators from Egypt on a specially tailored summer school dealing with a range of museum issues. In Africa itself, Museum staff are currently working with Sudanese colleagues on a major international archaeological rescue project, in advance of the flooding of land in the region of the Fourth Cataract of the Nile and the building of a new dam.

Sudan: Ancient Treasures, which opened in London in September 2004, arose directly from the British Museum's long-standing connections with Sudan, ranging from its involvement with the foundation of the

Khartoum Museum in 1904 and close cooperation ever since, to its current archaeological involvements which meant that objects excavated only months before could be displayed in the exhibition. The terrible events in the Darfur region of Sudan prompted the Museum to waive the exhibition entrance fee in favour of voluntary donations, which raised over fifty thousand pounds for Oxfam and Save the Children. In addition to the 130,000 who saw it in London, as part of the Museum's Africa programme, the exhibition toured to the Bowes Museum in County Durham, where it was seen by almost 90,000 visitors.

The Tree of Life similarly placed Africa's challenges and creativity at the centre of the British Museum in 2005. This extraordinary sculpture from Mozambique is made from dismantled weapons of mostly European manufacture, exchanged for tools, bicycles, sewing machines and even a tractor, through the Transforming



Statue of a Kushite king, Sudan, c. fourth century BC.
Photograph Rocco Ricci, © Sudan National Museum.
This unique copper-alloy statue from the collection of the Sudan National Museum became the icon of the 2004 British Museum show *Sudan: Ancient Treasures*. The gold plating represents the divine body of the king. The style of the statue and the king's clothing reveal the influence of Egyptian culture on the kingdoms of ancient Sudan.



Hand Axes from Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania, 500,000 BC.

In 2005, the new Asahi Shimbun displays allowed the Museum to focus on a small number of key objects that represent big themes. The first, entitled *Made in Africa*, presented three stone tools from the Olduvai Gorge. The oldest was 1.8 million years old, amongst the earliest man-made objects in the British Museum – and the world. All human creativity and technology have their ultimate origins in Africa.



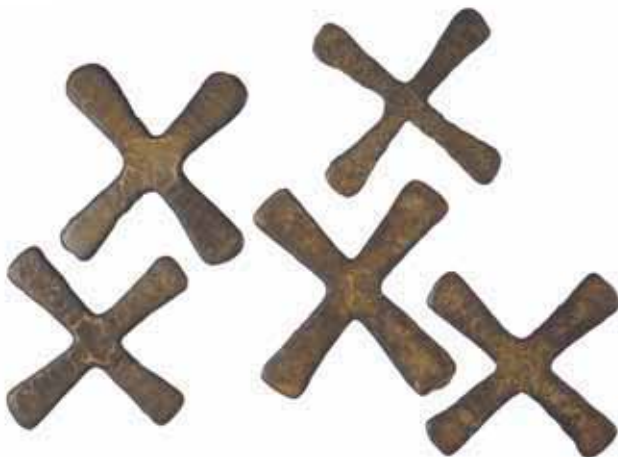
Arms into Tools (TAE) programme, supported by Christian Aid. The project was established in 1995, three years after the end of Mozambique's long civil war when guns were still out in the countryside, hidden in homes or buried in the bush. Over half a million weapons have since been handed in, and the project is now expanding across Mozambique and neighbouring countries. The Museum commissioned *The Tree of Life* from an artists' collective working with TAE to complement the tree of pots already in the Sainsbury Africa Galleries, where the sculpture is currently displayed.

The British Museum also acquired a sculpture by Kester, a member of the collective, entitled *Throne of Weapons* and likewise made from decommissioned weapons. In 2005, the Museum toured the *Throne* to over twenty-five venues across the country, including two cathedrals, a shopping centre, a community centre and a prison, and it was seen by over 100,000 people. The

sculpture continues its tour around secondary schools throughout 2006. The *Throne* fulfilled different functions in each of its new venues, becoming the centrepiece for a conference on gun crime at the Horniman Museum in South London and the focus for Bristol's celebrations of the 30th anniversary of Mozambique's independence – Bristol is twinned with Beira, Mozambique's second city.

On Sunday 26th June 2005 the British Museum hosted *Africa Live*, a day of free activities celebrating African life and culture attended by over 24,000 people and organised in collaboration with the BBC. Via the World Service the BBC broadcast music and interviews live from the Museum across the whole of Africa. Special guests included the African Children's Choir from South Africa. Gordon Brown, Bob Geldof and Charlie Dimmock—who introduced visitors to Ground Force's *Garden for Africa* on the Museum's West Lawn.

Facing passers-by on the railings around the Museum



Gold coin of King Ezana of Aksum, Ethiopia, 4th century AD; copper money-ingot from central Africa, 19th century; cowrie shell, used as money in West Africa until the 20th century.

All these different forms taken by money in African history were shown in *The Wealth of Africa: 4,000 years of money and trade* (January-June 2005). Only the British Museum collection has the range of holdings to examine the rich history of Africa's money ranging from ancient coins to later currencies.

Barber's shop sign, Kenya, 1993.

Painted shop signs are still very much in demand in Africa. This one was produced in Nairobi by Mike Arts, a workshop renowned for its upbeat designs. The different cuts refer to celebrities, particular towns or professions, different countries, or to the barber's own house-style.

was a series of twenty-five cloths decorated with images from over 11,000 postcards made by children at twinned schools in Africa and the UK, which together made up *The Bigger Picture*. As part of the BBC's *World Class* project to promote international school links, each student drew something of importance to them on a postcard and wrote an explanation on the back. After their display at the Museum, the cloths toured Britain and have since been distributed by the British Council for permanent display in Africa, in locations including the Houses of Parliament in Cape Town, South Africa, the Nelson Mandela Museum in Umtata, and schools across the country.

In order to inform its programming for *Africa 05* and to extend its outreach, the British Museum worked with an Advisory Group drawn from African communities in London. During the *Celebrating Africa Day* on 16th July, over 54% of visitors were from black minority ethnic

(BME) groups. Similarly, over 50% of the audience for events with the Museum's writer-in-residence, Diran Adebayo, were both from BME communities and aged under thirty. The range of social backgrounds at *Africa Live* was broad, far more so than the Museum's statistical daily average. Perhaps most significantly, over half the visitors, more than 12,000 people, were so engaged by the event that they stated their intention to return to the Museum to visit the African collections in the future.

The British Museum's African collection has also made a worldwide impact, demonstrating the African origins of all human cultures. Stone handaxes from Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania, examples of the oldest man-made artefacts, were shown at the Museum of the African Diaspora in San Francisco. They also toured to China as part of the Museum's travelling show: *Treasures of the World's Cultures: the British Museum after 250 years*.





Mask in the form of a European, Yoruba people, Nigeria, 19th century.

This mask was created as a caricature of European appearances and costume for use in the Yoruba *geledede* tradition of dance, mask, and poetry. Ridiculing the European outsider affirmed the strength of local values in the face of powerful external influences.



African Children's Choir.

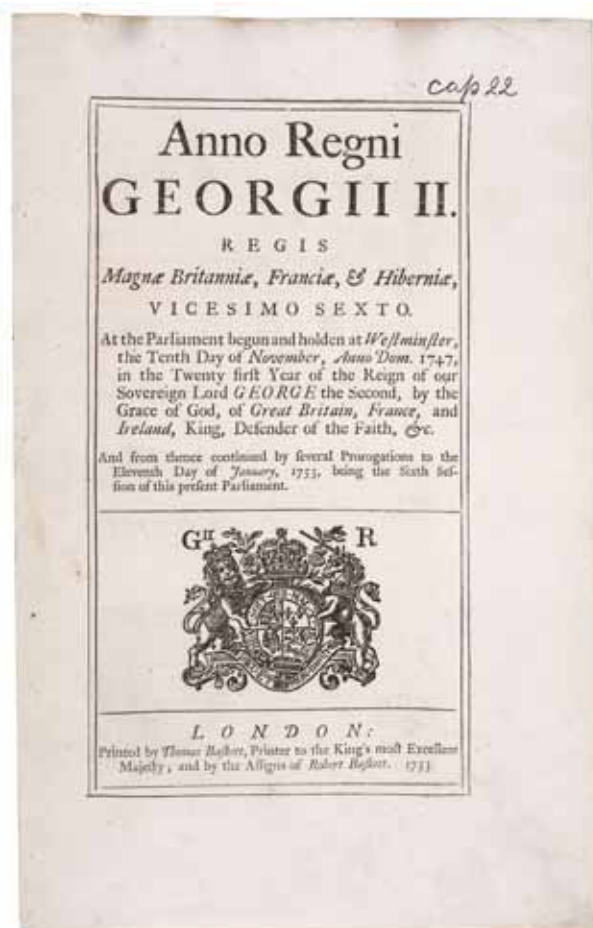
In June 2005, 24,000 visitors to the British Museum enjoyed a celebration of Africa's cultures at the *Africa Live* day, organized in partnership with the BBC. The African Children's Choir topped the bill of performers. Founded in 1984, the Choir is a human relief and development organization, working to bridge cultural gaps and dedicated to the survival, education and well-being of Africa's children.

Cow, by Sudanese artist Mohammed Ahmed Abdalla Abbaro, 2004.

This ceramic sculpture in the form of a cow, with a large body and small head is typical of cattle found in Sudan. The artist began making ceramic animals in the 1980s, influenced by those he had seen as a child in Sudan. "All the ceramic animals I have produced have a direct connection with my childhood experiences. I made them as gentle and friendly as I nostalgically remembered my animal friends then."



The title page of the Act of Parliament of 1753 that founded the British Museum by acquiring the collection of Sir Hans Sloane and vesting it in a board of Trustees. The Act required that the collection be "preserved entire without the least diminution or separation, and be kept for the use and benefit of the public, with free access to peruse the same".



Museum in London.

London is now the world's most international city.

The British Museum's collection of seven million objects representing the rich history of human cultures mirrors the city's global variety. Here as nowhere else can humanity begin to understand its interconnectedness.

Building the Collection: acquisitions, gifts and bequests

The British Museum's original collection, based on that of Sir Hans Sloane, was encyclopaedic in range. The founding Act of Parliament of 1753 described it as encompassing "books, drawings, manuscripts, prints, medals, and coins, ancient and modern antiquities, seals, cameos and intaglios, precious stones, agates, jaspers, vessels of agate and jasper, crystals, mathematical instruments, drawings and pictures".

The British Museum aims to ensure that the collection remains, in the words of the Act, 'modern', and alive, by building on existing strengths and engaging with new areas. As an example, the Museum has for the past 25 years been putting together what is now the best collection of contemporary art from the Middle East in any western museum. It is the natural continuation of the Museum's collections of antiquities and Islamic art from the region. At the time of writing,

the collection is forming the centrepiece of a ground breaking exhibition and a season of events to foster wider public understanding of the modern Middle East.

Although resources can never be adequate to the task, the British Museum has been able to make important acquisitions which offer new insights into the past and present of human cultures. The Museum has been greatly helped in this endeavour by many generous gifts and bequests. We are extremely grateful to our many supporters and friends.

The British Museum's commitment to building the collection for the future is perhaps best viewed through the highlights of its acquisitions, gifts and bequests over the past two years.

Each of the Museum's eight collections departments has been making appropriate, important, and sometimes astonishing acquisitions of 'ancient and modern' objects covering a scope as wide as Hans Sloane's collection.

From ancient goldwork to medieval Christian devotional art to contemporary drawings from Australia, the British Museum continues to add important pieces to its collection from every age of human cultural endeavour.

Fragment of a decorated gold neck-ring, Britain, c. 75 BC. Found in 2005, this was the final missing piece of the Sedgeford torque, the rest of which the British Museum had already acquired in 1968.



Palmerston Chocolate Cup, England, c. 1700.

Anne Houblon, Lady Palmerston, had this, one of a pair of gold cups for drinking chocolate, made by London goldsmith John Chartier out of memorial rings which she inherited. The British Museum acquired the cups in 2005 with the support of the National Heritage Memorial Fund and The Art Fund. They are currently on tour around four UK venues.

With more contemporary items, the British Museum built on its collections across a range of areas, including art medals, African ceramics, Japanese *manga* drawings, Indian and Iranian graphic art, and Russian decorative arts. Particularly significant was the generous donation made in 2004 by Israeli artist Avigdor Arikha of 100 of his most important works on paper. One of the outstanding draughtsmen of his generation, Arikha spontaneously offered the gift to the Museum at the opening of an exhibition to mark the major bequest of modern prints and drawings from the late film-critic, Alexander Walker. Explaining his reasons for making the gift, the artist said, "There is no other institution like that museum. [The British Museum] is still founded on excellence". The Museum now has a collection of over 400 works by prominent Israeli artists.

Among antiquities, the British Museum acquired the recently discovered missing piece of a broken first-

century BC gold neck-ring, or torque, from Norfolk, the main body of which had already been acquired thirty years previously, and a splendid drawing of Mary Hamilton by Sir Thomas Lawrence of 1789 which complements his portrait of Emma, Lady Hamilton, bequeathed to the Museum by Richard Payne Knight in 1824. The National Heritage Memorial Fund and The Art Fund contributed generously to both acquisitions. Their continued support has been critical to the Museum's success in adding to the collections throughout the past two years.

The British Museum also acquired a pair of gold chocolate cups made in 1700 for Anne Houblon, Lady Palmerston. They had once been part of Sir Ernest Cassel's (1852-1921) outstanding collection of historic English gold and silver. Ten pieces from this collection were acquired by a consortium of nine UK museums in 2005. The Palmerston chocolate cups were selected for

Plate, 'Investing in electrical energy is the future of Russia', Russia, 2006.

Given by Integrated Energy Systems, Moscow. The British Museum's display of 1920s Russian Revolutionary plates inspired both the creation of this set in imitation and the gift to the museum.

'Kun' by Nassar Mansour, Jordan/UK, 2006.

This piece of modern Arabic calligraphy, given to the Museum by the artist, represents the Arabic word *kun*, 'Be!', referring to a verse of the Qur'an describing God's creative power: "When He decrees an affair, He only says 'Be!', and it is."

© The artist / British Museum.



acquisition by the British Museum because of their historical importance and their particular relevance to its history: it was Sir Hans Sloane who invented the mixing of chocolate with milk to make it more palatable, the recipe eventually passing to Cadbury's for mass-production.

Likewise, over the past two years, the Museum has been building an important collection of twentieth-century Australian prints, drawings and paintings, building on the extraordinary bequest of 79 works by Australian painter and printmaker Fred Williams (1927-1982) made by his widow, Lyn Williams. The bequest was the subject of an exhibition, *Fred Williams, An Australian Vision* (December 2003-April 2004) which brought this major artist, a household name in Australia, to a new world audience in London.

Baron Edmund de Unger's generous donation of an enamelled plaque of the Crucifixion has restored a tiny

mediaeval masterpiece to its rightful place. In 1895 the Museum had acquired an engraved fourteenth-century Spanish altar-cross lacking its central plaque, which had been removed and sold as a separate collectable item. Now, the Baron's gift of the missing central element allows the Museum to display cross and plaque together again.

Another remarkable 'join' led to a further important addition to the collection. In 2004, the head of Sotheby's print department visited the British Museum to examine the Museum's Gauguin print, *Noa Noa*, in relation to a fragment of the same print coming up for sale. When the two halves were placed together they matched precisely, not only along the division but also tonally. It was clear, as the Museum's conservation department confirmed, that they were in fact two halves of the same sheet. The British Museum purchased the fragment by private treaty and now the pieces can be seen together, probably

Altar cross, Spain, 14th century.

The recent donation by Baron Edmund de Unger of the central crucifixion plaque of this Catalan or Aragonese engraved cross has allowed the two pieces to be seen together again.



'House of Cards' by Andreas Jähnig, Germany, 2003.

Made from cast bronze, this art medal, acquired in 2006, shows the earth in the vice-like grip of a wrench. How long, asks the artist, can the planet survive humanity's demands on its resources?



'Mad Pianist', etching and engraving by Australian artist Fred Williams, 1955-56.

Inspired by his visits to music halls while living in London, this piece comes from a gift to the British Museum of some 70 of Williams's works by his widow, Lyn Williams.

© Estate of Fred Williams.



for the first time since Gauguin himself separated them in the 1890s.

From one of the world's finest collections of Thai art, that of American heiress and collector Doris Duke, came a bequest of forty-five objects, including ceramics, lacquer work, decorative items, sculpture in wood and in bronze, but most importantly, paintings on wood and cloth illustrating scenes from Buddhist moral narratives. The paintings complement the existing group in the British Museum which now forms one of the most important collections of Thai paintings in Europe.

No less gratefully appreciated was the donation by metal-detectorist Tony Pilson of his collection of early modern English lead and pewter tokens. These 2,440 objects from the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries were originally used as substitute money, tickets, chits and passes, tallies and reckoning counters, and bear a bewildering variety of intricate and often individual

designs. This unrivalled collection, with its impeccable archaeological provenance, will offer valuable information to visitors to the Coins and Medals study room for generations to come.

The object is at the heart of the British Museum. These highlights of the past two years—only a fraction of the total—demonstrate the paramount importance, and public value, of building the collection for the present and future.

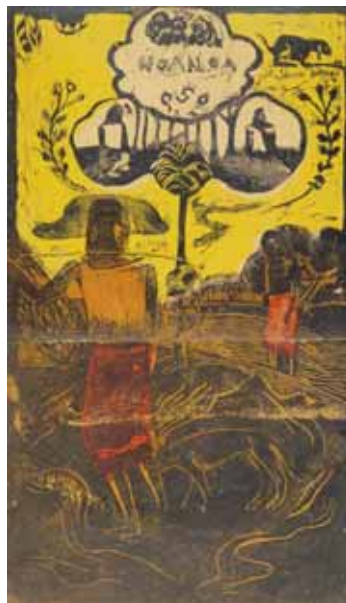
Lead tokens, England, 17th century.

The huge variety of English tokens assembled in the Pilson Collection reveals the diversity of trade and commerce in 17th-century London. One of these two specimens, both found on the Thames foreshore, names its issuer, John Skinner at the Three Cranes tavern. The other shows a woodcutter at work and was perhaps made by a carpenter or someone involved in London's timber trade.



Gauguin, Noa Noa, 1893-4, woodcut.

Upper half-presented by the Martineau Family Charity through the Friends of Prints and Drawings and the lower half from the Campbell Dodgson Bequest 1949.



Roof tile in the form of a dragon, Thailand, 15th-16th century.

Created to decorate the gable end of a temple, this piece is made of stoneware, with applied cream and brown glaze. It is one of 45 Thai objects donated to the British Museum by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, New York.



Forgotten Empire: the World of Ancient Persia

The circumstances surrounding the opening of *Forgotten Empire: The World of Ancient Persia* (8 September 2005–10 January 2006) vividly display the potential for scholarly relationships to transcend the most difficult of situations. Between the National Museum of Iran's agreement to lend over eighty pieces to the exhibition—many leaving the country for the first time—and their arrival in London, came an unexpected change of government with the election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as president of Iran. There was a real possibility that the loan would be cancelled. Following eleventh-hour negotiations, the exhibition went ahead with the support of the new administration. At the opening ceremony, the then Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, had his first encounter with the new Iranian government, represented by Esfandiyar Rahim Mashayi, Vice-President and Minister of Cultural Heritage and

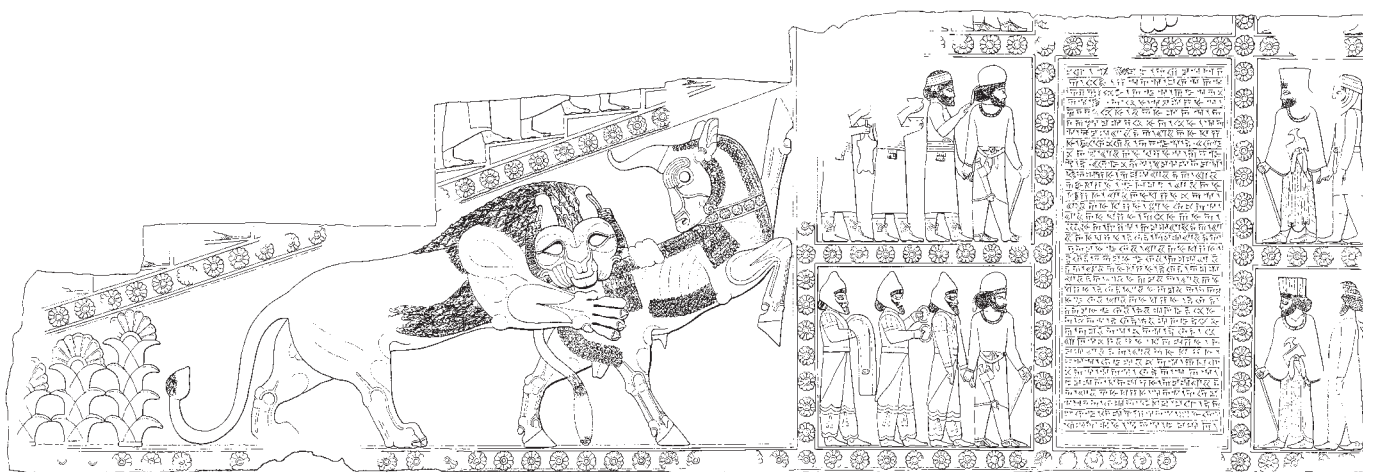
Tourism, who was also its first member to travel outside Iran. The events surrounding *Forgotten Empire* epitomise the potential for cultural exchange to provide a platform for dialogue, official contact and mutual understanding.

Forgotten Empire offered a paradigm for the British Museum's future aims and ambitions. Ancient Persia is important not only because of what the empire achieved and the magnificent works of art which are its legacy, but because it shapes the consciousness of modern Iran and much of the Middle East. The Persians wrote very little about how they ran their affairs. Much of what we know comes from ancient Greek historians writing about the wars between Persians and Greeks. Their often biased picture has been highly influential, and the exhibition set out to challenge it. The Museum aimed to present the Persians as they saw themselves, to explain their imperial achievement, and to reveal its significance for modern Iran's view of its place in the world, as the

Forgotten Empire was sponsored by BP, Iran Heritage Foundation, Sir Joseph E. Hotung, Iran Cultural Heritage and Tourism Organization, Bank Melli Iran, National Petrochemical Company.

Drawing of the stone reliefs from the west staircase of the Palace of Darius at Persepolis, 4th century BC, Iran.

In 1892 the British Museum made casts of this façade from the royal palace at Persepolis showing figures advancing up a processional staircase and others bearing tribute to the King of Persia, together with the powerful image of a lion attacking a bull. The casts now preserve details since lost from the original which still stands *in situ*. They were put on display in *Forgotten Empire*.



natural great power between China and the Mediterranean.

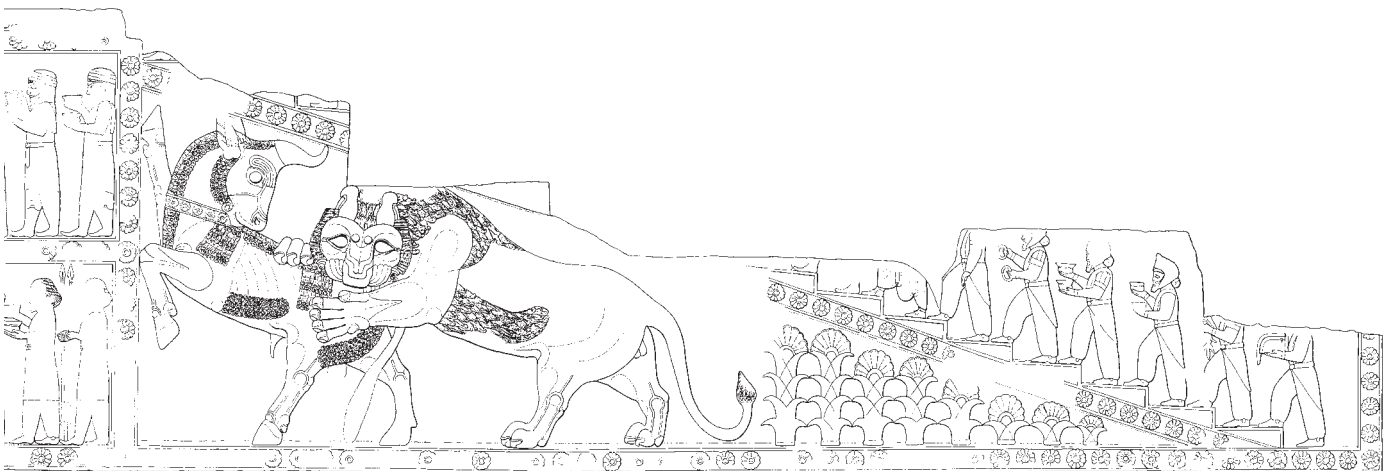
Forgotten Empire reached throughout the Museum to include Persian study days in addition to poetry and musical events attended by over 3,500 adults. More than 1,000 school children visited the exhibition, while the Splendours of Ancient Persia Family Day included a wide array of art and dance workshops for children. The micro-site for *Forgotten Empire*, created with the support of the exhibition's sponsor, BP, continues as a virtual exhibition and has been visited over 75,000 times (www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/forgottenempire).

Audience response to *Forgotten Empire* was overwhelming. It was the Museum's best attended exhibition since Tutankhamen in 1972, while catalogue sales of over 12,000 broke all previous records. Debate regarding the relative merits of Greek and Persian civilisations extended beyond the Museum, hosted, for

example, by the *Guardian* and *London Evening Standard* on their Comment and Letters pages throughout the autumn. In the light of this success, the Museum hopes to develop further its connections across the Middle East, and to build collections and programmes for the future to facilitate new understandings of the cultures of the region.

**New Year greetings card,
Iran, c. 2004.**

The recent acquisition of an Iranian New Year, or *nourouz*, card depicts a ancient Persian soldier from Persepolis holding a bunch of narcissi. The flowers are associated with the Iranian New Year, which is celebrated at the spring equinox. Persepolis, the capital of the ancient Persian empire, is still a potent symbol in Iranian culture.



Research and exhibitions

The British Museum lives on research. New research constantly changes understanding of the collection. New insights provide the substance and stimulus for engagement with the public, directly affecting the way objects and peoples are presented and interpreted. The Museum staff includes specialists from many disciplines, from prehistoric archaeologists to contemporary anthropologists, from conservation scientists to monetary historians. They often work in collaboration with colleagues worldwide, whose contribution to the range of the Museum's activities is increasingly important. On-going research is crucial to the formation of new ideas and the development of innovative exhibitions, as is demonstrated by the scale and scope of these highlights from the last two years.

Matisse to Freud: A Critic's Choice (15 June 2004 to 9 January 2005) displayed one hundred and fifty works

from the late film-critic Alexander Walker's bequest of his astonishing collection of over 200 prints and drawings which he had carefully assembled from the early 1960s up to his death in July 2003. Walker's focus was on American and British artists from the sixties to the present. The collection includes works by Lucian Freud, Bridget Riley, Jim Dine and Chuck Close, as well as Mirò, Matisse and Picasso. Walker made the bequest in appreciation of the British Museum's active stewardship of its collection of prints and drawings through its exhibitions, publications, and access to the study room where he was a frequent visitor. The Walker collection represents the largest and most important bequest of modern works that the museum has received in the last 50 years. It significantly enriches the Museum's expanding modern and contemporary collection.

Sudan: Ancient Treasures (9 September 2004-

Study for "Blaze", print by Bridget Riley, UK, 1962 © Bridget Riley. From the Alexander Walker Bequest of 200 modern prints and drawings, exhibited in the 2004 show *Matisse to Freud: a critic's choice*.



'Strike a light for Wales' badge, Wales, early 1980s.

Shown as part of the 2004 exhibition *Status Symbols: Identity and Belief on modern Badges*, this badge was made at a time when an extreme nationalist group Meibion Glyndwr ('The Sons of Glendower') were conducting an arson campaign against second homes in Wales.



'Cornfield by Moonlight, with the Evening Star' by Samuel Palmer, England, c. 1830.

Samuel Palmer was made possible by supporters including the American Friends of the British Museum, Mr and Mrs James Alexandre, Mr Francis Finlay, the Horace Goldsmith foundation, Mr and Mrs George White and the Basil Samuel Charitable Trust.

9 January 2005) explored the neglected civilisations of the upper Nile, long eclipsed by its better-known neighbour, Egypt. For millennia, Sudan has been the interface between central Africa and the worlds of the Mediterranean and Middle East, with a consequently rich and diverse cultural heritage. The exhibition displayed some of the finest objects produced during all phases of human settlement in Sudan, from 200,000 BC to the nineteenth century. All of the objects in the exhibition were lent by the Sudan National Museum in Khartoum, a long-standing partner of the British Museum. Many of them had never been seen outside the country before, and most were recent discoveries. The aim of the exhibition and the associated public programme was to reveal the culture behind the conflict that often dominates perceptions of Sudan, an idea that certainly caught the public imagination. Over half of the total 128,000 visitors said they had decided to come on

word-of-mouth recommendation.

Ferdinand Columbus: Renaissance Collector (9 February – 5 June 2005) focused on the print collection assembled by Christopher Columbus' illegitimate son, a much overlooked figure of the Renaissance. Though undoubtedly the greatest print collector of his day, none of his collection has survived, and is known only through a detailed inventory. Through patient research the curator was able to partially reconstruct the collection of Ferdinand Columbus based on descriptions of works in the inventory using the British Museum's own extensive print collection. The research project was funded from the Getty Grant Programme, the exhibition was sponsored by the American Friends of the British Museum and also had a successful run at the Spanish foundation 'la Caixa' in Madrid and Seville.



Stencil print by Nagahide showing Kabuki actors Minshi and Rikan in costume, Japan, 1806.

Shown in *Kabuki Heroes*. The exhibition went to Osaka and Tokyo as part of an international tour. It was mounted in association with the School of Oriental and African Studies and sponsored by The Arts and Humanities Research Council, The Japan Foundation, All Nippon Airways, Tōshiba International Foundation, Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation, Great Britain-Sasakawa Foundation, Shōchiku Co. Ltd., Willem Dreesman.

Studies of profiles, eyes, and locks of hair, by Michelangelo and pupils, Italy, c. 1525.

This red and black chalk drawing combines models by the master and copies of varying ability by his students.



Kabuki Heroes on the Osaka Stage 1780-1839 (30 June-11 September 2005) was the first major international exhibition to explore the world of Kabuki superstars on the Osaka stage between 1780 and 1830. The Japan Foundation helped the British Museum to bring the leading Osaka Kabuki actor Nakamura Ganjiro III to perform at the Museum. Ganjiro has been designated a Living National Treasure by the Government of Japan and his artistic descent is traced directly from one of the actors featured in the exhibition. The transformation of the elderly Kabuki artist into a young girl is unlikely to be forgotten by those who witnessed the event.

Samurai to Manga: Japan across the centuries (15 December 2005-5 February 2006) demonstrated the continuity of ancient and modern in Japanese culture through the display of AIBO, an interactive Sony robot dog. Visitors needed no encouragement to stroke it,

to which AIBO responded with obvious pleasure. The Japanese have been making automata toys for over 400 years and regard robots as an extension of the genre. Contemporary *manga* cartoons from the Museum's collection were juxtaposed with work by the great artist Hokusai, who first coined the term *manga* in 1814 to describe his "drawings run riot". The display challenged the visitor by highlighting the unexpectedly antique roots of objects often considered modern, in addition to articulating the British Museum's commitment to collecting contemporary objects from across the world. This small show, one of a new series of temporary displays funded by Asahi Shimbun, was located in a high-profile position at the Museum's entrance, and was seen by one in ten Museum visitors.

Samuel Palmer: Vision and Landscape (21 October 2005-22 January 2006) was the first exhibition of paintings and drawings to be held in the Hotung gallery

Living National Treasure Kabuki actor Nakamura Ganjiro III from Japan performed at the British Museum in September 2005 in conjunction with the exhibition *Kabuki Heroes*.



Skeleton of Nesperennub inside his painted mummy-case, c. 800 BC, Egypt.

The highly successful British Museum exhibition *Mummy: the inside story*, sponsored by BP, has been on a world tour in Europe

and the USA over the past two years, revealing the secrets of Egyptian mummification techniques through CAT scans and computer animation. Over 400,000 saw it in Madrid alone. © The British Museum and SGI.



in the Great Court and was curated by leading Palmer expert William Vaughan. Palmer clearly speaks powerfully to a contemporary audience, for the exhibition had attendance figures of over 50,000, and catalogue sales broke records for an exhibition of this size. The exhibition introduced an important nineteenth-century English Romantic artist to new audiences and went on to an equally successful showing at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Michelangelo: money and medals (12 January-25 June 2006) combined economic history with the study of objects to unveil research with direct contemporary resonance. The exhibition's curators calculated that although Michelangelo was the highest-paid artist of his day, with staggering income and assets, the proportionate cost of his work at the time was only a fraction of the prices recently achieved for work by today's "Young British Artists", such as Tracey Emin.

Michelangelo's Drawings: closer to the master (24 March-25 June 2006) was the first major exhibition of Michelangelo's drawings shown in London since the one put on by the British Museum in 1975. Loans from the Teyler Museum in Haarlem, the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford and the British Library came together for the first time in a generation. The exhibition broke Museum records for advance booking sales and was visited by over 50,000 people within the first month of opening. Sponsored by BP, the exhibition highlighted the artist's extraordinary brilliance as a draughtsman.

Michelangelo's musical context was explored by a BBC Radio 3 series, a Museum concert and other associated events. A wide-ranging programme of educational events also placed Michelangelo within a broader cultural setting, exploring his poetry and religion, his patrons, and his sexuality.

This woodcut by an anonymous Italian is described in the Seville inventory of Ferdinand Columbus's print collection. It depicts The Battle of Zonchio (Navarino), and dates to c.1499. Though

Columbus's original is lost, a rare impression of the print was found in the British Museum's collection.



The World's heritage:

conservation, storage, and buildings

The British Museum's collection is accessible to all – academics, students, anyone who wants to use it to find out more about the story of human cultures. Each curatorial department maintains a study room where objects from the collection can be examined by any interested member of the public. In the galleries themselves, the *Hands On* programme, run by volunteers, offers object-handling opportunities to visitors to deepen their enjoyment and understanding of the collection.

Preserving the things of the past for the benefit of future generations is one of the British Museum's founding principles. The Museum has to meet the needs of conservation and storage while offering access to the objects it holds for the millions who make use of the collection each year in London, at touring exhibitions

around the world, or via the Internet.

The British Museum has a collection of 1,400 Chinese paintings, one of the finest in Europe. Yet Chinese paintings on silk or paper are extremely delicate and difficult to display because of the problems caused by unrolling them and exposing them to light. The Museum's most important Chinese painting is an early copy of a hand scroll by the seminal figure-painter Gu Kaizhi (c.AD 344-c.406), called *Admonitions of the Instructress to Court Ladies*, a parody on court life in the form of advice on correct behaviour for ladies of the imperial harem. The scroll has recently been re-sited so that scholars can view it on a permanent basis. It is also placed on public display for three months a year: an attempt to allow the greatest possible access to an exceptionally important and fragile work of art.

The Museum has recently restored and digitized the Aurel Stein collection of over 300 important Central

The British Museum drew on the expertise of specialist Chinese conservators to work on the precious fragments of Dunhuang paintings from central Asia.



Over the past two years the Museum has transformed its storage for the Asian collections. The British Museum collection has a vital role to play in meeting growing interest in the cultures of east and south Asia.

The study room of the Department of Prints and Drawings offers free public access to the British Museum's collection of 50,000 drawings and 2 million prints from the European tradition.

Asian paintings on silk dating from the eighth to the tenth century. Now the Dunhuang paintings are presented on a Mellon Foundation-funded micro-site, www.thebritishmuseum.net/thesilkroad/ created in collaboration with institutions in China, India, Pakistan and the United States. The paintings were conserved and mounted in the specialist Hirayama Asian pictorial art conservation studio, the only one of its kind in a European museum, by a Chinese paintings conservator who trained and worked in the Shanghai Museum for over fifteen years. The studio uses traditional Chinese and Japanese materials and methods of mounting and conserving paintings, including the manufacture of Japanese paste-glue which is mixed and then stored until ready for use, ten years later.

The Museum combines the use of authentic conservation techniques wherever possible with the application of up-to-date technical developments. The

Chinese paintings collection is housed in a climate controlled area, each work individually wrapped to maintain constant conditions. Chinese ceramics are stored in updated shelving systems, which are bolted to the floor and ceiling to ensure stability. Each one of over 8,000 vessels is individually placed on a thin layer of non-slip foam for protection. They are carefully organised by type and by period. Lacquer is likewise stored in a separate air-conditioned store with lighting, temperature and humidity regularly monitored by conservators, who frequently collaborate on techniques with colleagues at the Victoria & Albert Museum.

The attention given to the storage and preservation of the British Museum's Asian collection is being replicated in an on-going programme of improvements across the collection. Over seventy on-site conservators and laboratory technicians are involved with research projects to evaluate how elements in the environment



react with objects to cause deterioration. The results determine the British Museum's daily working practice and the ways in which the collection is stored.

In 2005 the Museum acquired a new laser cleaning system donated by Ed Teppo, for safe use on stone which, it is hoped, will enable the discovery of new conservation techniques for other potentially difficult-to-clean materials. The Museum also acquired a new X-ray fluorescence (XRF) machine, which examines the elements at the surface of objects and analyses their content, invaluable in the study and identification of coins, for example, and other precious materials.

The British Museum's goal is to retain the character of its original buildings and holdings, to modernise and upgrade its spaces in order to meet modern standards and needs, while ensuring a sympathetic and stimulating environment for objects and visitors. The Museum now intends to refresh each of the ninety

galleries on a continuing basis at least once every ten years. In 2004, the recently restored King's Library, now known as the Enlightenment Gallery, won the Crown Estate Conservation Award from the Royal Institute of British Architects, the judges saying, "The restoration of the room, and its conversion to an exhibition about the history of the Enlightenment and of the early collections of the museum itself, have revealed it in its full glory as one of the finest rooms in London."





Hirayama studio.

The British Museum's Hirayama Studio, opened in 1994 with generous support from Professor Ikuo Hirayama, is the leading centre for the conservation of Asian painting in Europe, and a unique resource. Its expert staff, one of whom originally trained in the Shanghai Museum, regularly spend periods of time in China and Japan to improve their knowledge of the theory and techniques required for the conservation of art from East Asia, and to maintain contacts with makers and suppliers of specialist tools and materials. The studio's work is essential to the Museum's continuing public exhibition programme in the area of Asian art.



Ancient Near East Study Room.

All eight of the British Museum's collections departments have a dedicated study room where members of the public can make an appointment to examine objects in the collection in more detail. The study room of the Department of the Ancient Near East, seen here, provides access to the Museum's unique collection of 250,000 cuneiform tablets, pieces of baked clay bearing texts which provide vital historical evidence, and archaeological objects from the region. Few collections of its kind are made so readily accessible. This resource has become one of the main international centres for the study of the Ancient Near East.

Civic space: learning and public debate

The British Museum provides spaces – in London, on tour worldwide and on the Internet – where visitors can come face to face with the cultural achievements of people remote in time and space, and go on journeys of discovery through the history of humanity, from contemporary Africa to classical Greece, from ancient Iraq to Native North America.

Every year at least 180,000 schoolchildren visit the British Museum, where they work with the Museum's specialist educational staff and make use of the Museum's on-line and printed resources. These enable teachers to tie their students' visits effectively into the national curriculum in a variety of areas, including art and design, history, science, and citizenship. Museum Explorer packs provide material for a lively and challenging visit to the Museum in core curriculum subjects for Key Stage 2, including Ancient Egypt,

Greece, Roman Britain, and the Anglo-Saxons. The Museum also organises INSET courses for teachers looking for new ways to use the collection as a source of inspiration and information in the classroom.

Many more children use the collection on the Internet, where there is a special children's version of the Museum's object database COMPASS sponsored by Ford Motor Company, or visit the Museum with their families. Learning trails for children, funded by the Helen Hamlyn Foundation, originate from the Reading Room, taking very young learners on voyages of discovery down the Nile, in search of fabulous animals, or into Britain's past. Ford-sponsored backpacks provide games and puzzles for family visitors to introduce children to the diversity of the collections, including those from Africa, Asia, and the Ancient Near East. The Museum has continued to add new websites to its Ancient Civilisations series focusing on Greece, India

For the 2006 exhibition *Michelangelo's Drawings: closer to the master* the Museum produced copies of drawings in the exhibition with raised features to provide improved access for the visually impaired.



and China.

The British Museum runs adult learning courses in association with leading institutions in the field of life-long learning. In collaboration with the Open University, the museum has developed a programme of study days based around the collections on the Enlightenment, the Classical world, Renaissance Art and World Religions. The Certificate and Diploma Programme in World Art and Artefacts, organized together with Birkbeck College, University of London, combines accessibility with high standards. There are no entry requirements but all modules are taught to university standard, and cover a wide range of approaches - practical, creative and historical - from Arabic calligraphy or Chinese brush painting to the arts of ancient Mexico.

A new feature is the development of special tours for adult ESOL students (English for Speakers of Other Languages), funded by the Abbey Charitable Trust. The

objectives are to stimulate students' curiosity about the collection, and at the same time build their mastery of historical and everyday English vocabulary. The growing programme of creative workshops on drawing, sculpture and dance also uses reflection on the objects as an inspiration and stimulus for learning.

The British Museum's wide-ranging access provision, funded by grants from the Government and the Wolfson Museums & Galleries Improvement Fund, includes sensory disability access across the Museum with Braille and large-print guides, sign-talks, handling sessions and audio-descriptions on exhibition micro-sites.

The Museum continues to seek new ways to expand its reach in the areas of academic and life-long learning, in order to fulfil its purpose of making the collection, and what it represents about the interconnectedness of human cultures, accessible world-wide.

If culture is at the heart of the British Museum then

Illustration by
Peter Till, 2006.

New media have revolutionised access to the collection, and helped the British Museum truly become a 'museum of the world'. In 2004-6 the Museum welcomed 16 million visitors via its website.



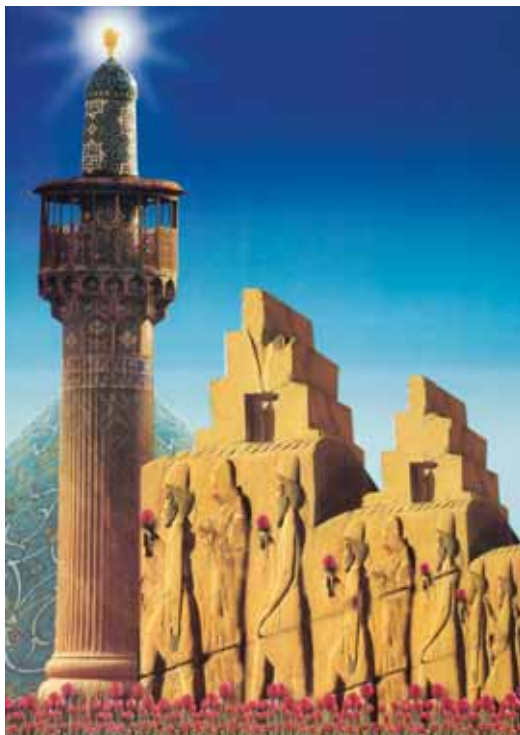
the Museum has placed culture at the heart of some of the world's most challenging issues in a series of public debates, held in association with the *Guardian*, asking how history can help us understand contemporary concerns. Panellists include commentators representing the area under discussion, world specialists, and other informed observers. In the case of *Beyond Darfur, Sudanese identity and the roots of conflict*, held at the museum on 10 November 2004, speakers included former Governor of Darfur Ahmed Ibrahim Diraige, and author Abdelwahab El-Affendi, alongside Museum director Neil MacGregor. An image of a nineteenth-century Sudanese lyre from the Museum's collection, decorated with both Islamic and Western ornament, was used by Neil MacGregor as a key symbol of a country where diverse cultural identities once lived peaceably together, in order to prompt reflection on the possibility for realising that vision in Sudan today.

Museum specialists are part of the audience for each debate and join the discussions, chaired by writer and broadcaster Jon Snow. The scope of the series has been wide reaching, regularly over-subscribed, broadcast on *The Guardian* website, and even provoking questions in Parliament. *The Guardian* debate series has stimulated a new understanding of how the Museum can be used: as a civic space where often difficult questions about the present can be addressed through the prism of culture and history, in order to inform our views of the world and its future.

Poster, Iran, 1980s.

This poster, produced to rally the nation after the invasion by Iraq, proclaimed the Islamic Republic as the heir of the great Persian empire of antiquity. It depicts a procession of figures bearing gifts up the steps of the ancient palace at Persepolis, interspersed with

martyrs from the Iran-Iraq War. The red tulips are a symbol of martyrdom. This resonant image linking past and present formed the starting point for discussion at the British Museum *Guardian* debate, "The Unbroken Arc: what ancient Persia tells us about modern Iran".



The Cyrus Cylinder, Persia, c. 530 BC.

This inscribed clay document records the defeat and capture of Babylon by Cyrus the Great, king of Persia, and describes how Cyrus restored captive gods and peoples to their homelands. It has been celebrated in Iran as the first 'charter of human rights'. The Cylinder's meaning in modern Iranian culture was discussed at the *Guardian* debate on Iran.

The British Museum's *Guardian* debates 2004-05:

"**Babylon to Baghdad: can the past help build a future for Iraq?**" 15 June 2004

"**Beyond Darfur, Sudanese identity and the roots of conflict**", 10 November 2004

"**Currencies of Trust God and Mammon: has religion succeeded where the nation state has failed?**" 15 June 2005

"**The Unbroken Arc: what ancient Persia tells us about Modern Iran**" 18 October 2005



Taj Hamad – secretary general of the World Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (Africa debate)



Ebenezer Obadare - award-winning journalist and academic (Africa debate)



Jon Snow - Chair of debates - writer and broadcaster



Ghaith Abdul-Ahad – Award winning writer and journalist (Iraq debate)



Nima El-Baghir – Reuters correspondent (Sudan debate)



Peter Galbraith - Former Ambassador U.N Envoy and Iraq expert (Iraq debate)



Neil MacGregor – Director, British Museum



Kanan Makiya Iraqi dissident, author, academic, founder of The Iraqi Memory Foundation (Iraq debate)

Lyre, Sudan, late 19th century.

This highly decorated lyre, or *kissar*, is hung with coins, cowrie shells, bells and beads from a diversity of sources, running from Britain to Indonesia symbolising the rich cultural mix characteristic of Sudanese identity, which was examined in a British Museum *Guardian* debate on Sudan.



Billboard showing Saddam Hussein astride a replica of the Ishtar Gate from ancient Babylon, Iraq, 1990s.

Former Iraqi president, Saddam Hussein, liked to compare himself to the kings of ancient Mesopotamia. The importance of Iraq's history for the future of the country was the subject of a British Museum *Guardian* debate in 2004.



Behind the scenes

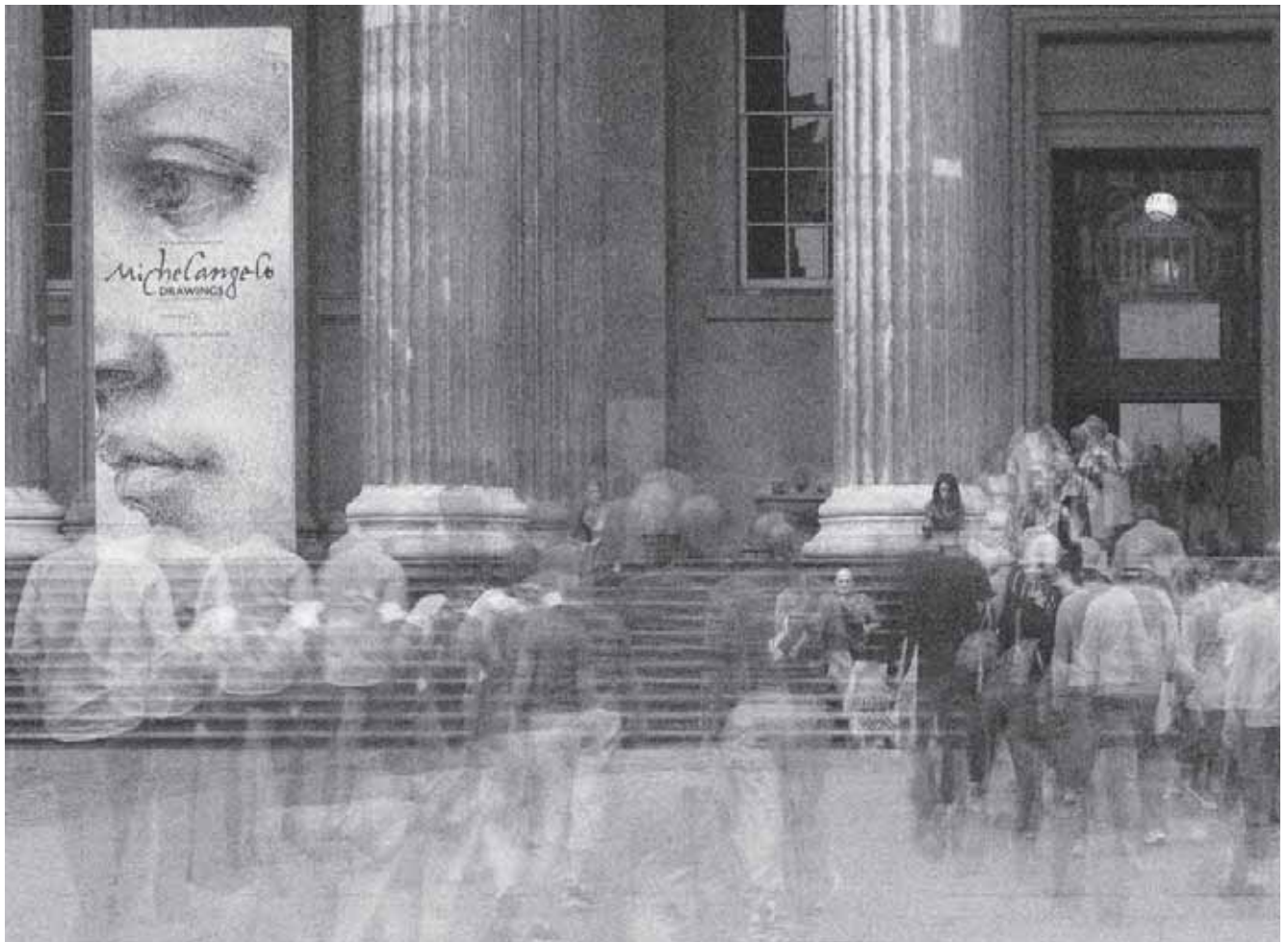
The British Museum and the National Gallery are among the four most visited heritage attractions in Europe, along with the Vatican and the Louvre. Over nine million people visited the Museum within the two-year period covered by this Review. This high level of visitor numbers is very welcome, but it brings challenges with it, in the shape of constant wear and tear on the fabric of the building, and the need to renew infrastructure.

Maintenance of the Museum premises behind the scenes is an unceasing task. The building contains over 3,500 doors and occupies 75,000 square metres, an area equivalent to nine football pitches or four times the arena of the Coliseum in Rome. Preserving the Museum and its facilities is an unsung but essential task if visitors are to feel cared for and able to concentrate on the collection.

Every morning before the British Museum opens its

doors at 10 am, the building is made ready to receive its visitors. Cases are cleaned and dusted, objects moved on or off display by curators for study, conservation, or dispatch around the world on one of the Museum's touring exhibitions. Light-bulbs are changed – almost 7000 every year – floors cleaned, and brass handrails polished. The safety of our visitors and of the collection is maintained 24 hours a day by a team of 320 security and gallery staff who monitor the building and galleries day and night both in person and via a network of CCTV cameras, recently upgraded. In addition to the staff on the Information Desk in the Great Court who are willing to answer any query, the gallery warders provide an invaluable resource for visitors.

The light-filled Great Court at the centre of the British Museum provides spatial orientation for the visitor, lifts the spirits and refreshes mind and body. Around a quarter of all visitors visit the Museum's

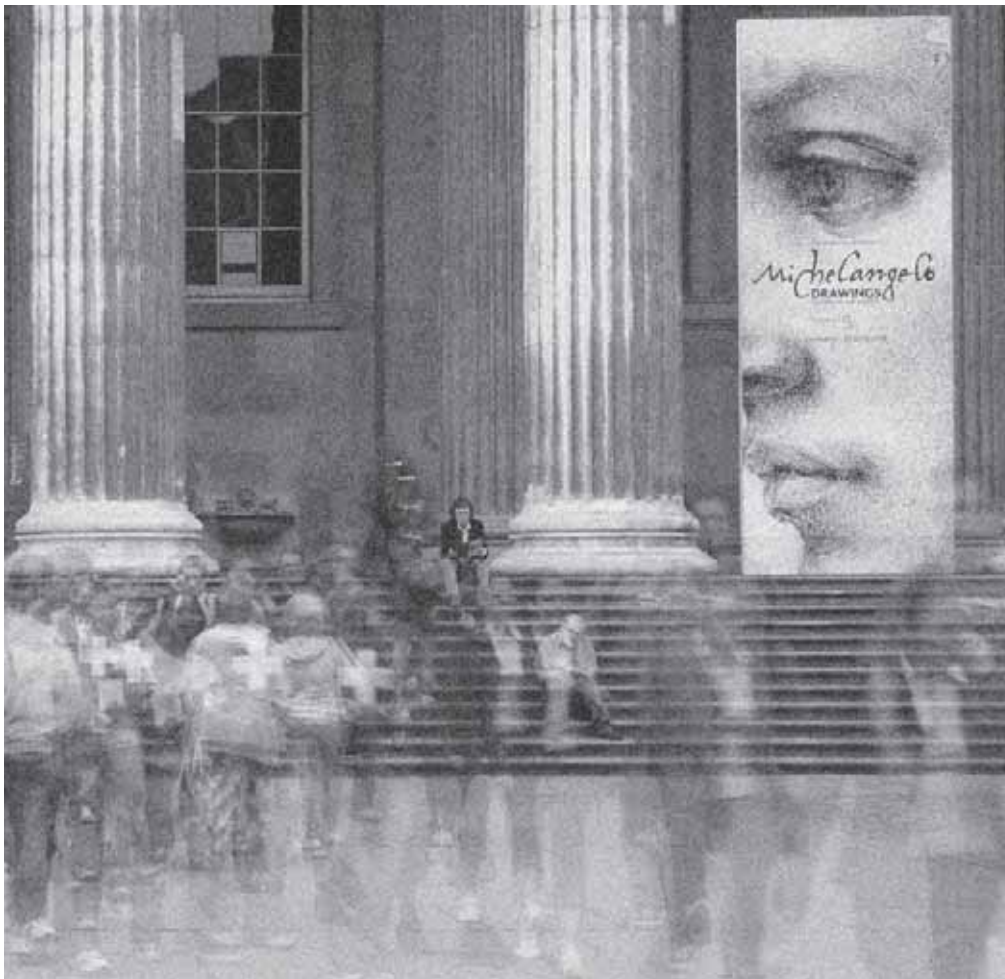


catering facilities. About the same proportion cite interest in the Museum's building as the initial motivation for their visit. Keeping the 3,300 panes of glass clean in Norman Foster's Great Court ceiling is a maintenance task unique to the BM, and is undertaken for weeks at a time every quarter by a team of specifically trained abseilers.

The pigeons which populate the forecourt of the Museum likewise present an unusual health and safety challenge, requiring a unique solution. Among the British Museum's employees is a Harrier falcon named Squirt who visits three or four times a week to drive away the pigeons. Squirt's reputation has spread London-wide. He has also been engaged to chase pigeons away from the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square and the Houses of Parliament.

The British Museum forecourt is designated as an emergency landing spot for the local air ambulance;

approximately twice a year the turmoil caused by the arrival and departure of the helicopter also dislodges a few pigeons until Squirt's next visit.



Squirt the harrier falcon on a recent visit to the British Museum. He is the Museum's smallest employee.

5 million visitors a year from all around the world come to London to use the British Museum collection and create their own understandings of the history of human cultures.



**Gold coin, Anglo-Saxon,
c. AD 800.**

In 2006 the British Museum acquired this new and unique document of British history, with the support of the National Heritage Memorial Fund, The Art Fund, and the Goldsmiths' Company. Rediscovered in 2001, it was originally made in London for King Coenwulf of Mercia (reigned 796-821), the most powerful ruler in Britain at the time.

Museum in the United Kingdom.

As the country's first national museum, the British Museum belongs to all of the UK. The Museum strives to be a national museum for the whole nation, lending objects and sharing expertise across the country, in order that every citizen can view the collection as their own.

Regional partnerships:

the Throne of Weapons and touring exhibitions

The British Museum was founded by Parliament in 1753 to be a resource for the whole country. Today the Museum's collection is used by people and museums across the United Kingdom. Partnership UK, generously supported by the Dorset Foundation, is a strategic network comprising seventeen major museum services that provide a conduit to wider relationships within each region. This is the main vehicle for enabling the Museum's collection to be present across the country far beyond its Bloomsbury base: around one million people outside London saw over 2,600 British Museum objects on show around the UK over the last two years.

In 2004, the Museum sent a recent star acquisition, *The Queen of the Night*, on a nationwide tour, accompanied by the director and curators, where it was seen by almost 190,000 people. The 4,000-year-old

terracotta relief depicts a Babylonian goddess of the underworld from ancient Iraq. Such was the success of the initiative that "Spotlight" tours have now become a regular event. In 2005-6, the British Museum toured *The Throne of Weapons*, an iconic object from its African collection, to a wide variety of venues including the Manchester Museum, Gateshead Metrocentre, Southfields Primary School in Coventry, and Liverpool Cathedral.

The *Throne* reached one of the British Museum's most inaccessible audiences yet, with a visit to Pentonville Prison between 9 and 23 September 2005. The sculpture was displayed in the prison chapel, where it was the focal point for Sunday services. During the visit, specially commissioned artists ran workshops with a group of fourteen prisoners. The workshops were over-subscribed and often took place in the prisoners' leisure time. One inmate described his time on the project as



The 'Queen of the Night' Relief, Babylonian, 1800-1750 BC.

After its acquisition in 2003, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and The Art Fund, as the focus of the British Museum's 250th anniversary celebrations, this terracotta relief of a Babylonian underworld goddess, possibly Ishtar or Lilitu, visited six different venues around the country on a tour supported by the Dorset Foundation, where she provoked discussion about the past of Iraq and the continuing damage to its archaeological sites.

'Throne of Weapons', Mozambique, 2001.

Made by artist Kester (Cristovao Canhavato) out of decommissioned weapons from the civil war in Mozambique, the British Museum toured the *Throne* to venues throughout the UK in 2005. In December, it featured at the UK Youth Parliament which now meets annually at the Museum. The *Throne* continues its tour to Camden secondary schools in 2006. It is a product of the Transforming Arms into Tools (TAE) project - whereby weapons are exchanged for agricultural, domestic and construction tools.

a “life changing experience”. Another said that for the first time since his arrival at Pentonville he felt “like a human being”.

The local and national impact of the *Throne*’s tour is emblematic of how, through encounters with evocative objects, new dialogues and discussions can open up between individuals and communities. Our task for the future is to build the British Museum into a resource which allows each and every citizen of the United Kingdom to use the collection as their own, and make it a truly national museum for the whole nation.

Throne of Weapons

Tour Schedule: 2005-06

9-28 February: **Horniman Museum, London**
 2 March: **Portcullis House, Parliament Square, London**
 5 March-10 April: **Ulster Museum, Belfast**
 13-15 March: **Moat Community College, Leicester**
 16-17 March: **New Walk Museum and Art Gallery, Leicester**
 18 March: **Sir Jonathan North Community College, Leicester**
 20 April-8 May: **ShIPLEY Art Gallery, Gateshead**
 3 May: **Gateshead MetroCentre**
 6 May: **Kingsmeadow School, Gateshead**
 10 May-5 June: **National Museum & Gallery, Cardiff**
 17 May: **Mount Stuart Primary School, Cardiff**
 20 May: **Bryn Deri Primary School, Cardiff**
 1 June: **National Youth Eisteddfod, Millennium Centre, Cardiff**
 7-12 June: **Liverpool Cathedral Museum**
 14 June-7 July: **Manchester Museum**
 9 July-30 August: **Perth Museum and Art Gallery**
 5-9 September: **Department for**

International Development, London

9-23 September: **Pentonville Prison, London**
 1-30 October: **Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery**
 20 October: **Whitefield Fishponds Community School, Bristol**
 27 October: **The Trinity Centre, Bristol**
 1-30 November: **The Herbert, Coventry**
 13-14 November: **Coventry Cathedral**
 1 December: **Southfields Primary School, Coventry**
 10 December: **The CarAf Centre for raising African-Caribbean achievement, London**
 14 December: **UK Youth Parliament, The British Museum, London**
 17 December-25 February 2006: **The Livesey Museum, London**



Touring exhibitions

Each year over 500,000 people see British Museum exhibitions and objects on show outside London. The equivalent of one in twenty people in Norfolk, for example, saw the Museum's *Buried Treasure: Finding our Past* exhibition when it went on display at Norwich Castle Museum in 2005. Over the past two years, the show, sponsored by Tarmac Ltd., has toured to four other major UK museums in Cardiff, Manchester, Newcastle and Norwich. Focussing on how much chance archaeological discoveries have revolutionised the understanding of our past, the exhibition also celebrated the role of the general public in discovering treasures over the centuries, from farmers ploughing fields to metal-detector users.

The Lewis Chessmen, known to millions through the animated replicas that featured in the first of the *Harry Potter* films, and one of the highlights of the British

Museum's collection, have been the star attraction of a captivating project funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Department for Education and Skills under the national/regional museum partnerships programme for education in 2004-07. Twenty-four of the Chessmen, the largest number ever to have been lent, have been on tour as part of *Across the Board. Around the World in Eighteen Games*. The exhibition traces the origins of modern board games such as snakes and ladders and chess back to ancient Egypt and Rome. Partner museums organised family and education events programmes to accompany the show which tied into the national curriculum in such areas as art, history, maths and literacy. By the time of writing, it had already travelled to venues right across England, from Segedunum Roman Fort and Museum in Newcastle to Exeter, from Gosport in Hampshire to New Walk Museum in Leicester, then to Lincoln, with Luton

Bishop from the Lewis Chessmen, probably made in Norway, about AD 1150-1200.

Found on the Isle of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides around 1831, the famous Lewis Chessmen are made from walrus ivory and whales' teeth in the forms of seated kings and queens, mitred bishops, knights on horseback, warders, and pawns in the shape of obelisks. Twenty-four of them have been on tour in the British Museum exhibition *Across the Board. Around the World in Eighteen Games*, so far seen by over 100,000 people throughout the country.



The Mold Gold Cape, Wales, 1900-1600 BC.

The Mold Gold Cape, one of the great treasures of the British Bronze Age, was found in North Wales in 1833. In 2005 it went on exhibition there for the first time in partnership with National Museum Wales and with the support of Wrexham County Borough Council. Its display led to a 245% increase in visitor figures at the Wrexham Museum in September to December 2005 compared to the same period in 2004.

as its next destination. 101,583 people had seen the exhibition by the end of April 2006. At Leicester it beat all previous daily and total exhibition attendance records, with 1,630 people through the door on 16th February 2006 alone, attracting 43,000 visitors in total.

The loan of *Sudan: Ancient Treasures* to the Bowes Museum in County Durham (March-October 2005), created a new link between the Bowes and Sudan, and the Sudanese community in the North-East. Attendance at the museum during this period was in excess of 80,000. More significant still were the relationships which the Bowes Museum formed with centres of Sudanese studies at Durham and Newcastle Universities, with local Sudanese communities, and with institutions in Sudan itself: an official delegation from Sudan came to the exhibition opening, funded by the Bowes Museum Friends organisation.

Another place where a major loan from the British

Museum made a dramatic impact was in Wrexham, North Wales, where the local museum had a 245% increase in its visitor figures during the display of one of Europe's most important Bronze Age artefacts, the Mold Gold Cape, made c.1900-1600 BC. Working in partnership with National Museum Wales and Wrexham County Borough Museum, it was possible to make this unique object available for the first time within the vicinity of the place where it was found in 1833.



Treasure: the Portable Antiquities Scheme

Treasure is one of the most exciting words in the English language. In partnership with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the British Museum is at the heart of the administration of the Treasure process in England and Wales today. The Museum acts as a centre of expertise for the Treasure Act, providing a service for museums and galleries across England: the time currently spent by Museum staff on the conservation, administration, identification and publication of Treasure finds is equivalent to nine full-time posts.

In 2005, for example, the Museum's coin specialists handled sixty-four hoards, or 7,063 coins, deposited for examination and identification under the Treasure system. In spring 2004, as a British Museum curator was investigating a hoard found with a metal-detector on farmland near Oxford, he found an extremely rare third-century coin bearing evidence of a hitherto unrecognised

rebel Roman 'emperor', Domitianus, so little known that some scholars even doubted his existence. The antiquity and authenticity of the coin were beyond doubt: it came from a hoard of over 5,000 other Roman coins fused together in a pot, and painstakingly separated by museum conservators. The British Museum's discovery and publication of the coin, now in the collection of the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, prompted the re-examination of coins in collections around the world, and led to a front-page news story in the London *Times*.

Before 1997, the only legal protection for antiquities found in England and Wales was provided by the common law of Treasure Trove, thought to date back to Norman times, which gave some ownerless gold and silver objects to the Crown. The Treasure Act of 1996, prompted in part by the rapidly increasing use of metal-detectors, expanded the definition of treasure and required it be reported within fourteen days to be dealt with by the local



Coroner. Should the Coroner judge a find to be Treasure and a museum wish to acquire it, then its full market value, as assessed by the DCMS Treasure Valuation Committee, is paid by the museum and shared by the finder and landowner. Otherwise the object is returned to the finder with the permission of the landowner.

The majority of treasure objects are acquired by the regional museum most appropriate to the location of discovery. The British Museum tends to acquire treasure objects in cases of outstanding national importance or only as a last resort in order to keep important material in a public collection. The Portable Antiquities Scheme evolved from this new legislation, to encourage anyone who finds archaeological objects to report them to a network of locally based finds liaison officers, who record them onto a central on-line database, one of the largest in the world with over 200,000 objects. In 2003, with Lottery funding, the Scheme was extended across the

whole of England and Wales in a network of thirty-three partner organisations, most of them museums. Formerly run by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, from spring 2006, the Museum has run the Scheme on their behalf with government funding replacing Lottery support. The recent increase in the number of reported finds indicate the Scheme's success and effectiveness: a 44% increase in objects recorded on the database in the last year alone. A countrywide programme of workshops on looking after and recording finds expands the Scheme's outreach, while the website, with dedicated education and children's areas, is highly used, with over 950,000 visits during the last two-year period.

As a result of the Scheme's initiatives, all key archaeological, metal-detecting, and landowners' organisations have now signed up to a clear code of practice for responsible metal-detecting, with the aim of preventing people digging up treasure unwittingly and



Coin of Domitianus, Roman usurper emperor, c. AD 270.
In 2004, in amongst a hoard consisting of all-too familiar Roman coins, an extremely rare one came to light that confirmed the existence of a shadowy pretender to the imperial purple. Domitianus can only have held power for a brief period – long enough though to have coins made for him. 1700 years later he also made the front page of *The Times*.

Coins from the Hoxne hoard, Roman Britain, c. AD 410.
Discovered in 1992 by a metal-detectorist in Suffolk, the Hoxne hoard of 15,000 late Roman gold and silver coins, items of jewellery and tableware is one of the most spectacular finds of treasure ever made in Britain. It was buried in the early fifth century AD in a large wooden chest at a time of political uncertainty when Britain was slipping out of Roman control.



destroying important archaeological evidence in the process. We believe this is one of the most effective systems anywhere for the recording and protection of archaeological finds.

Joint acquisitions

The British Museum is committed to sharing its collection and acquisitions with as wide an audience as possible. In August 2005, the Museum acquired a rare enamelled Roman dish in a tri-partite arrangement with two regional partners: the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery in Stoke-on-Trent and the Tullie House Museum and Gallery in Carlisle. Acquired with the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Romano-British *Staffordshire Moorlands Pan* will be jointly owned and displayed in turn by the three partners. Unearthed by metal detectorists and reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme, the pan dates to the second or third century AD. It is of both national and international significance, and was probably

made both as a functional vessel and as a souvenir of Hadrian's Wall. Its on-going display at Carlisle, at Stoke-on-Trent near to where it was found, as well as at the British Museum, is therefore entirely appropriate.

The British Museum made a similar arrangement with the Victoria & Albert Museum in order to secure a major work of Indian art for the nation. The *Standing Figure of the Buddha Shakyamuni*, cast in copper alloy in late sixth- or early seventh-century eastern India, is one of the most important South Asian acquisitions made by either institution in the last fifty years. The piece was acquired in the summer of 2004 with grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund, The Art Fund, and others. Before starting its time-share between the two London institutions, the Buddha toured four regional venues, accompanied by a selection of Buddhist sculptures from both museums: an example of how collections can be shared between museums nationwide.



Bronze figure of the Buddha Shakyamuni, eastern India, 6th-7th century AD.

This beautiful little bronze statue of the Buddha Shakyamuni was created at a Buddhist monastery workshop in eastern India. The downward cast of the eyes indicates that it was designed to be installed in an elevated position on an altar or to be carried in processions. This manner of depicting the Buddha went on to influence styles in the rest of the Buddhist world in east and south-east Asia. It is now an icon of the Asian collections of both the British Museum and the V&A.



**The Staffordshire Moorlands Pan,
Roman Britain, 2nd century AD.**

The pan is made of copper alloy and inlaid with enamel in a traditional British style of ornament. Around the rim are inscribed the names of four forts on Hadrian's Wall, a reference to the wall itself, and the name of the owner, Draco. He may have been a soldier who had the pan made as a souvenir of his time serving on the frontier of the Roman Empire.





**The Royal Game of Ur, Iraq,
2600-2400 BC.**

Beautifully made of shell, red limestone and lapis lazuli around a wooden frame, this board game from ancient Iraq is a fine example of the 'Game of Twenty Squares', which was played from Egypt to India as early as 3000 BC.

Museum of the World.

The British Museum's collection is worldwide in origin and is intended for use by the citizens of the world. The Museum collaborates on exhibitions, skills-sharing, and research with many international partners. These partnerships bring new insights into the collection, and help create new understandings of our changing world.

Museum of the World

For 250 years the British Museum has played a major role in the international community of researchers, museums, and academic institutions. The insights of scholars worldwide working together with the Museum's experts have profoundly expanded our understanding of the world's cultures represented in the collection.

In 1802, the Museum's acquisition of the Rosetta Stone transformed international efforts to uncover the secrets of ancient Egypt's hieroglyphic script. Its eventual decipherment – a pan-European achievement culminating in Champollion's breakthrough in 1822 – has since enabled scholars worldwide to understand the culture and beliefs of ancient Egyptians written in their own words. Research into that culture is still energetically pursued by the British Museum in conjunction with scholars from all over the world, and especially from Egypt.

The British Museum has always been a laboratory for comparative cultural investigation, and a place where conventional views about our own and others' cultures can be challenged and changed. When it opened in 1759, the Museum's first visitors were able to see religious objects from many different cultures on display next to one another – Egyptian, Roman, Native American, Islamic, and Japanese. The first guidebook to the Museum, published in 1761, mentions similarities between Egyptian and American 'idols' in support of the idea that the New World had been peopled from the Old in deep antiquity. Ideas like this, generated from the collection, raised new and disturbing questions about the view of human history given in the Bible.

Between 1905 and 1909, encouraged by the British Museum, the Hungarian ethnographer Emil Torday undertook detailed research on the peoples, material cultures, and music of the Congo, then virtually



Rosetta Stone, Egypt, 196 BC.

Discovered in 1799, this trilingual royal decree unlocked the world of ancient Egyptian civilization, enabling the decipherment of two of the languages – hieroglyphic and demotic Egyptian – by means of the third, legible Greek version of the inscription. It has been on constant display at the British Museum ever since 1802 and has been a focus of public fascination for over 200 years.

unknown in the rest of the world. Using innovative techniques including questionnaires, the phonograph, and a camera, he put together an extraordinarily well documented collection of material which was displayed as a discrete group in order to convey the unique richness of Congolese cultures, rather than shown together with objects of the same kind from elsewhere, as was the fashion at the time. The resulting display was a conscious challenge to the popular fantasies of the time about Africa generated by fiction such as Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines*. Ever since, this unique collection has informed the world about the sophisticated cultures of Central Africa. The British Museum's displays today – on Africa and throughout the collection – aim to present cultures in their authentic complexity.

The British Museum's scholarly expertise is a valuable asset which it seeks to share as widely as

possible. The Museum also benefits hugely from the experience and knowledge of colleagues worldwide through international professional exchanges and collaborative research projects with key partners in such countries as Iraq, Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia and China.

Research networks around the world generate exhibitions and increased possibilities for sharing objects and knowledge about them. The map overleaf gives highlights of the BM's links with colleagues in London, UK, and the world over past two-year period. Research and international collaboration remain central to the Museum's aims for the future.



Map showing selected highlights of the British Museum's international collaborations

1. USA: North West Alaska

Iñupiaq Pictography. Over forty hunting records engraved on walrus ivory (c. 1780-1880) have been drawn, catalogued and scanned for web and CD-Rom access in collaboration with Native Alaskan communities.

2. Canada: Alert Bay

The long-term loan of a Transformation Mask made in around 1920 to the U'mista Cultural Society Museum as part of the Museum's programme to strengthen links with source communities worldwide, and build relationships with the Namgis First Nation.

3. USA: Pennsylvania

Ur on-line. A joint project of the Iraq Museum in Baghdad, the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, and the British Museum, which together excavated the city of Ur in the 1920s and early 30s. The project aims to digitise the excavation archives and provide as much information about the finds from one of the most famous sites of ancient Iraq.

4. Ecuador: Agua Blanca

An interdisciplinary study of the environmental history, social and political organisation of the Pre-Hispanic Manteño (AD 800-1530) polities of coastal Ecuador. The project has fostered the creation of a community site museum that has proved to be instrumental in ensuring protection of the regions rich natural and cultural heritage.

5. Chile: Patagonia

A research project addressing human adaptation at the southern tip of South America focusing on the archaeology of Elizabeth Island in the Magellan Straits, in partnership with the Universidad de Magallanes, Punta Arenas, Chile and the Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina.

6. UK: London

The Ramesseum Papyri. A major new research programme into the unique papyrus archive of a priest-magician from a plundered 13th Dynasty tomb (c. 1700 B.C.) found at the site of the mortuary temple of Ramesses II (the Ramesseum) in Western Thebes. Most of the papyri are in the Museum's collection. The BM's role is coordinating the necessary research in collaboration with specialists in Leipzig, Cambridge, Manchester, Oxford, and Paris.

7. Egypt: Kom Firin

The Nile Delta region is threatened by the expansion of land for agricultural use and by illegal excavations. This project uses magnetometry survey to identify subsurface archaeological features on an endangered site.

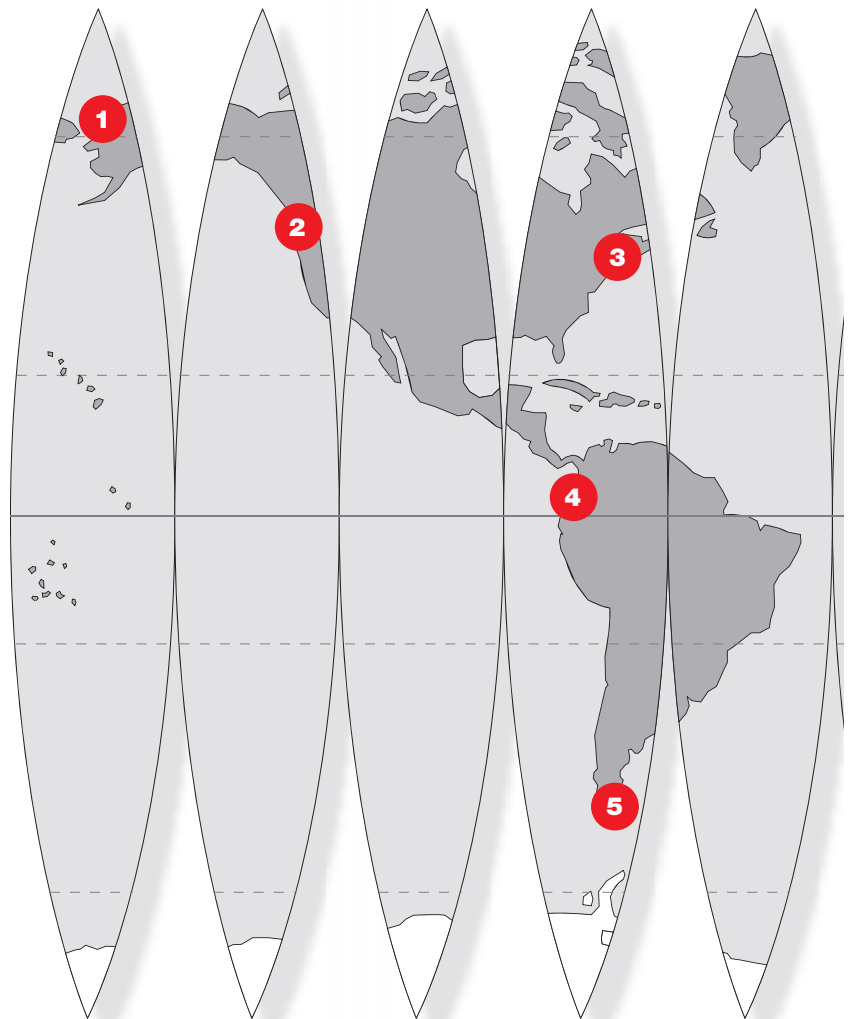
8. Sudan: Fourth Cataract

The British Museum is involved in co-ordinating with Sudanese colleagues an international rescue excavation before the imminent flooding of land around the Fourth Cataract of the Nile in advance of the construction of a new dam.

9. Kenya: Nairobi

A ground-breaking exhibition undertaken by the National Museums using BM objects together with items from their own collections, revealing the East African and Indian Ocean context of Kenya's cultures. Accompanied

1. USA: North West Alaska
2. Canada: Alert Bay
3. USA: Pennsylvania
4. Ecuador: Agua Blanca
5. Chile: Patagonia
6. UK: London
7. Egypt: Kom Firin
8. Sudan: Fourth Cataract
9. Kenya: Nairobi
10. Lebanon: Sidon
11. Iraq: Mosul
12. India: Arunachal Pradesh
13. Malaysia: Kuala Lumpur
14. China, Korea and Japan
15. Pacific: Vanuatu



by a catalogue written by Kenyan and international scholars.

10. Lebanon: Sidon

Sidon was one of the most famous cities of the ancient Mediterranean. This archaeological project, undertaken in collaboration with the Lebanese Directorate General of Antiquities, is revealing important new information about the history of the town and its people from the late third millennium to the fifth century BC.

11. Iraq, Mosul

The Ashurbanipal Library Project is a collaboration between the University of Mosul in northern Iraq and the British Museum. The Museum has undertaken to supply the University with selected casts of the 25,000 cuneiform tablets in the Museum's collection from the Library of Ashurbanipal, the

world's first great library. The project will systematically re-evaluate the collection in the light of modern scholarship. Eventually the University intends to establish a centre for the study of Ashurbanipal's Library in Mosul. The Museum will be closely involved in this project.

12. India: Arunachal Pradesh

The cultures of this geographically isolated state in north-east India have undergone enormous change in recent decades. Undertaken in collaboration with colleagues in Indian and British institutions, the project documents changes in textiles, painting, woodblock-printing, architecture and pilgrimage, providing contextual information for existing BM collections and new material. The project, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, generated an exhibition which

toured to three venues in India in collaboration with the British Council.

13. Malaysia: Kuala Lumpur

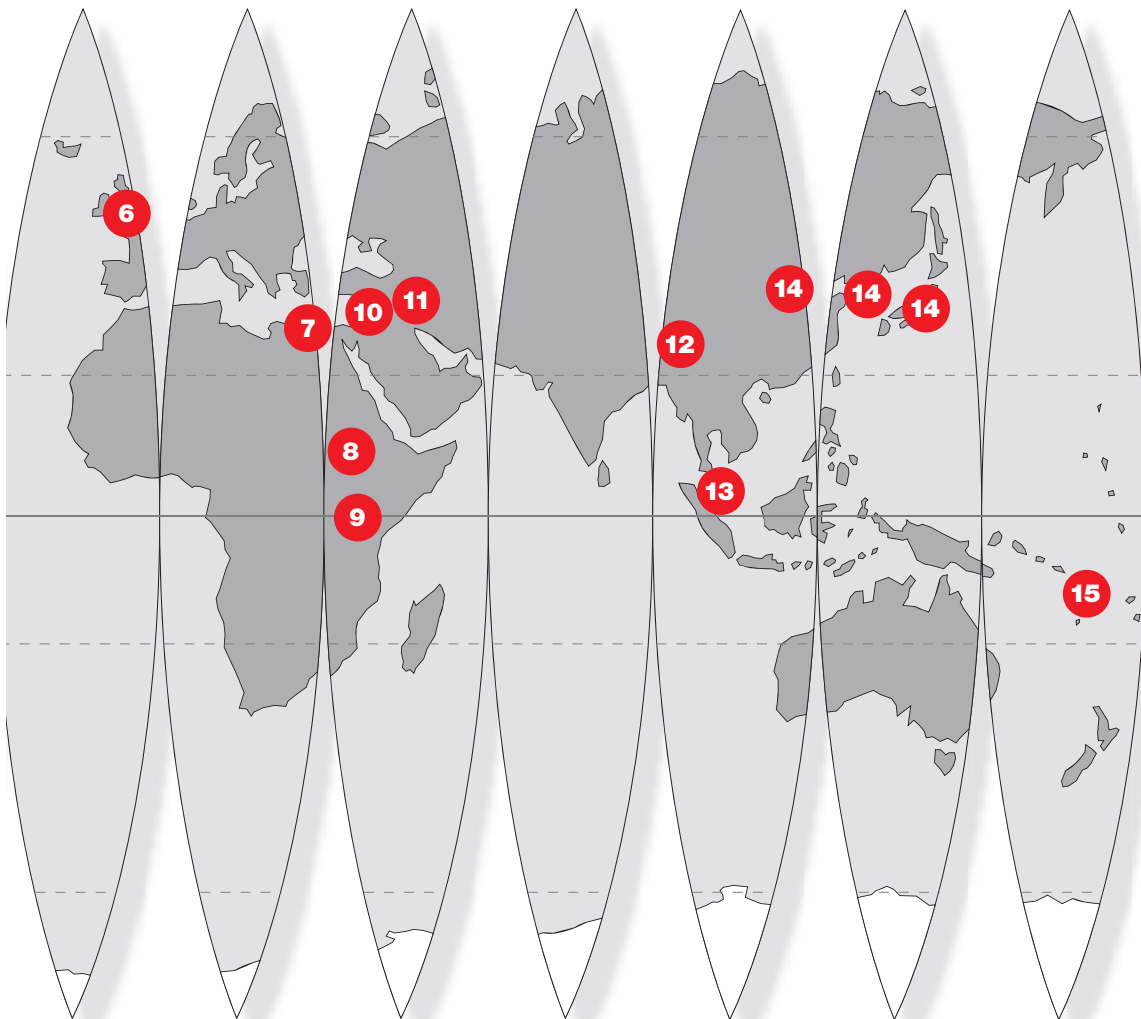
Mightier than the Sword at the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia (April-July 2004) was the expanded successor to the British Museum's Writing Arabic exhibition of 2001. The exhibition included over 100 objects from the host museum's collection and around 100 from the British Museum. Museum curators ran training sessions on display. In June 2005, the Museum's Principal Designer was invited to organise a three-day workshop for curators at the National Museum of Malaysia: he subsequently advised on opportunities for re-planning the galleries and upgrading displays.

14. China, Korea and Japan

In the period 2004-6, 2 million people saw the BM exhibition Treasures of the World's Cultures in eight venues across three countries.

15. Pacific: Vanuatu

A series of workshops co-funded by the Australian government and undertaken in collaboration with the Vanuatu Cultural Centre aims to work with ni-Vanuatu women concerned to record, and to sustain, women's knowledge and practice. The Museum is also working with ni-Vanuatu colleagues on a research project into changing indigenous textile traditions.



Memoranda of Understanding

Over the past two years the British Museum has initiated a series of reciprocal relationships with cultural organizations and governments worldwide, concentrating on research, mutual loans, and professional exchanges. These relationships have in many cases been formalised in Memoranda of Understanding (MOU), signed documents which express the desire of both parties to work together in particular areas for worldwide public benefit.

A series of strategic partnerships with countries across Africa found expression in MoUs signed with partners in Kenya, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Mali. The agreement with the National Museums of Kenya led to the collaborative exhibition *Hazina* on East African cultures which opened in Nairobi in March 2006. The MoU with Mali represents an important new development, as it is the first agreement signed with a

country in Francophone Africa where the Museum has not had strong links in the past.

A key agreement on museum development and training was also signed with the West African Museums Programme. Based in Senegal, the programme operates in seventeen countries across West Africa to develop museums in the region by strengthening their capacity and supporting a network of museum professionals.

Memoranda of Understanding.

Over the past two years the British Museum has been fortunate in finding partners worldwide who want to collaborate on exhibitions, skills sharing and research for mutual benefit. The Museum gains hugely through these relationships, making new friends and learning more about what the collection means – from a multitude of different world perspectives.

Neil MacGregor



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China

In September 2005 the British Museum signed the first ever cultural agreement between a British institution and the National Museum of China. The Memorandum was signed in the presence of Prime Minister Tony Blair and Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.

The agreement facilitated future collaborative projects including a major loan of Chinese antiquities to London, and in return, the loan by the British Museum of exhibitions of world cultures unrepresented in Chinese collections.

Following on from the MoU signed with the National Palace Museum in September 2004, British Museum clock specialists visited Beijing to examine the Palace Museum's extraordinary collection of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European clocks, given to Chinese emperors as diplomatic presents. Among them

are rare British automaton-clocks designed by famous British clock-makers such as James Cox, made specifically for the Chinese market.

To further its aim of bringing its outstanding collection of Chinese painting to a wider audience, the Museum launched a five-year series of temporary exhibitions on Chinese painting with *Mountains and Water* (9 February-28 August 2005). The *Admonitions scroll* (c. A.D. 344-c.406), among the most important objects in the Museum collection, is likewise now on display for three months of the year in order that visitors can experience this great Chinese painting at as close and immediate a range as possible.

In March 2006, the first British Museum exhibition in Beijing, *Treasures of the World's Cultures—the British Museum after 250 years*, opened at the recently built Capital Museum where it was also the first temporary exhibition in the new museum's programme.



Left
Landscape by Dong Qichang, China, 1555-1636.
This hanging scroll was displayed as part of *Mountains and Water*, the first in a regular series of exhibitions on Chinese painting. The evocative text, from poet and painter Wang Wei (699-759) reads, 'The voice of the torrent gulps over jagged stones. Sunlight hardly warms the bluish pines.'



Right
Parts of the Admonitions scroll, China, 6th-8th century AD.
A copy of a 4th-century AD work by legendary painter Gu Kaizhi illustrating a 3rd-century political parody on court life, this is one of the most important objects in the British Museum's Chinese collection. It is now on regular display as part of the Museum's current focus on Chinese culture.



Babylon, Iraq and the Middle East

The British Museum holds the greatest collection of Mesopotamian antiquities outside Iraq. It has long collaborated with colleagues in Baghdad and therefore has a particular responsibility in supporting the vital work of preserving the cultural heritage of Mesopotamia. Within days of the news of the looting of the Iraq Museum in April 2003, John Curtis, keeper of the Museum's Department of the Ancient Near East, travelled at the invitation of the Iraqi Department of Antiquities to the Iraqi capital to determine what the British Museum could do to assist. Dr Donny George, now Chairman of the Iraqi State Board of Antiquities and Heritage, came to London to report on the situation to an international audience from all the major world centres of expertise in Mesopotamian antiques.

John Curtis returned to Iraq in December 2004 at the invitation of the Iraqi colleagues to survey the

impact of the war on the site of Babylon. His report listed dozens of examples of significant deterioration, including ten separate areas of damage to the Ishtar Gate, one of the most famous monuments of antiquity. Featuring on *Channel Four News* and on the *Guardian's* front page, it described the situation as, "tantamount to establishing a military camp around the Great Pyramid in Egypt or around Stonehenge in Britain". The report found that the 2,000 US and Polish soldiers stationed at Babylon, fifty miles south of Baghdad, had caused "substantial damage" to the site; parts of the Babylon site had been severely damaged and contaminated; the 2,600-year-old brick surface of the great processional route had been crushed by military vehicles; and acres of the site had been contaminated with imported gravel, sprayed with chemicals which were seeping into unexcavated deposits.

Alongside his report on the damage, John Curtis



Inlaid ivory panel, Phoenician, 9th-8th century BC.

Found in the palace of Ashurnasirpal II at Nimrud in northern Iraq, this decorative furniture panel shows a lioness devouring an African boy. The style of the carving shows that it was made in Phoenicia (modern Lebanon). It came to Iraq perhaps as tribute or booty. This piece is almost identical to one looted from the Iraq Museum in 2003, and still missing. The museum has worked closely with Iraqi colleagues on the preservation of Iraq's heritage.

Illicit trade

For over thirty-five years the British Museum has been first port of call for H.M. Customs and Excise's investigations into illegally imported antiquities. A considerable number of stolen antiquities have been returned to their country of origin with the Museum's assistance. Identification can be extremely challenging with material removed from the ground and deprived of its context, but the Museum has had some startling recent results.

Over the past two years, the British Museum ran a series of seminars for customs officers, who are responsible for detecting smuggled antiquities entering the UK by air and sea. Officers brought photographs of unidentified objects from two major consignments to the attention of Museum curators. They were able to identify a group of elaborately carved soft-stone vessels as originating from a cemetery in Jiroft, a town in

Kerman Province, Iran, and dating from the third century B.C. The objects were returned to Iran and displayed in a special exhibition at the National Museum in Tehran, with fulsome acknowledgement from the Iranian authorities of the British Museum's role.

The Museum has also identified illegally exported goods as they surfaced on the art market. The sale of Yemeni tombstones was halted when a Museum curator saw them illustrated but wrongly identified in an auction house catalogue. The Museum investigations determined that the tombstones came from a cemetery in Sa'da in the north of Yemen. They were returned and are now in the National Museum in Sana'a. A twelfth-century tombstone offered for sale on the art market was identified by BM curators as stolen in 2001 from the Jami Mosque of Abrand-Abad in the province of Yazd in Iran. The piece was withdrawn from sale and returned to the Iran Cultural Heritage Organisation with the help



Material from Afghanistan seized by HM customs and being held at the British Museum.

The Museum works directly with the police, overseas authorities and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on the return of smuggled material. For the last five years, the Museum has been involved in identifying and valuing significant quantities of objects smuggled from Afghanistan, working alongside the Afghan authorities, UNESCO and the International Council of Museums.

Bronze Age axe hoard, Britain, 1000-800 BC.

Found by a metal-detectorist who sold it on eBay to a buyer in the Netherlands, this hoard should have been reported in the UK as a potential case of treasure under the Treasure Act 1996. British Museum staff spotted it and notified the buyer, who generously donated it to Buckinghamshire County Museum.

of the Iranian Embassy in London.

The British Museum advises the government on heritage policy and legislation in connection with stolen and illegally removed antiquities both nationally and internationally. It was closely involved in drafting the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act of 2003. The Museum is also a partner in ArtBeat, a Scotland Yard Art and Antiques Unit initiative to tackle specialist art crime: a Museum staff member was among the first Special Constable recruits to enrol at a national museum.

The British Museum is increasingly involved in monitoring trade in illicitly removed antiquities from and within the UK. The on-line auction site, eBay, which is almost totally unregulated, is currently the largest single outlet for the sale of antiquities. In accordance with its statutory responsibilities under the Treasure Act, the Museum has finalised a Memorandum of Understanding with eBay.

It has agreed to remove objects from sale when notified by the British Museum, via the police, that they are likely to be Treasure. Many unreported Treasure items had previously been sold on eBay, including a hoard of Bronze Age antiquities from Buckinghamshire. The objects were bought by a Dutch collector who, when notified of its Treasure status by the BM, generously donated his purchase to Buckinghamshire County Museum.



Touring exhibitions and loans

The British Museum's trustees hold the collection in trust for the citizens of the world. They seek to make the collection as far as possible accessible worldwide through an intensive programme of loans to an increasing number of partner institutions abroad.

In the last two-year period, the Museum lent over 2,200 objects to 178 venues within the UK, including some of the most important pieces in the collection. The Museum's collection is increasingly being used as a library of human cultural achievement from which partner museums worldwide are able to borrow to complement their own collections, and tell new stories for their audiences.

The Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur has several pieces of Islamic art on loan from the Museum. The IAMM worked with the Museum to communicate a message about the global diversity of

Islamic art and they selected objects for borrowing specifically for that purpose.

In 2004 the Museum was delighted to take part in Greece's celebration of the Olympics. The Museum agreed to a major loan of Old Master drawings and Greek antiquities to exhibitions organised by the Hellenic Ministry of Culture as part of the cultural Olympiad in Athens.

Treasures of the World's Cultures: the British Museum after 250 years, has been touring the world since October 2003. In total, two million people have so far seen this exhibition on its East Asian tour.

In Japan, where it was organised in partnership with The Asahi Shimbun, the show attracted over 1.3 million visitors to four different venues. The exhibition is essentially a survey of human civilizations, featuring objects from across the world and from all ages, including Egyptian mummies, Islamic astrolabes and



Statue of Dionysus, Roman Libya, 2nd century AD.

This statue, a Roman marble copy of a Greek original, represents Dionysus, the god of wine and ecstatic experience. He looks youthfully androgynous, wears an ivy-wreath, and carries a bunch of grapes, his two characteristic attributes. This piece has been an icon of the *Treasures of the World's Cultures* show throughout east Asia.



mosque lamps, prehistoric stone tools from Tanzania, a Maori war flute from New Zealand, and drawings by Leonardo and Raphael.

Treasures of the World's Cultures was the first British Museum exhibition to visit Korea: visitor figures to the three venues exceeded 600,000. Likewise, when *Treasures* opened at the Capital Museum in Beijing, supported by Standard Chartered and ICBC, a quarter of a million people saw it in just three months.

Lending the collection around the globe is essential if the Museum is to fulfil its purpose, but it is clearly demanding of resources. Curators need to select and catalogue the exhibits. Conservators need to ensure they are fit to travel. Photographers provide catalogue and record imagery. Museum assistants pack, accompany and install the objects. Each of the three hundred objects in an exhibition like *Treasures* presents its own travel and installation challenges.

The project which perhaps best exemplifies the Museum's ambitions for expanding its reach was the exhibition *Hazina: Traditions, Trade and Transitions in eastern Africa*. The show was entirely curated by Kenyan colleagues, who selected the material for lending to the National Museums of Kenya in Nairobi. It was the first loan made by the British Museum to a museum in Sub-Saharan Africa. In the words of Dr Farah Idle, Director General of the National Museums of Kenya, *Hazina* helped to "build a sustainable museum sector in Africa, and include African museums in the international circuit of museum exhibitions." We hope it is the first of many such ventures.



Astrolabe, Egypt, 13th century.
Astrolabes were invented by the Greeks and developed in the Islamic world, whence they were passed on to medieval Europe. They were to measure altitudes, determine the time, solve astronomical problems, compile horoscopes and, within the Islamic world, establish the direction of Mecca. This example, which is incised with markings for the latitudes of Cairo and Alexandria, has been on tour worldwide as part of *Treasures of the World's Cultures*.



Maori flute (nguru), New Zealand, 18th century.
Played either with the mouth or the nose, flute music and chanting were used by the Maori at important social gatherings, to address ancestors, and to promote healing. In Maori culture, breath is regarded as the essence of life. This piece was collected on Captain Cook's first Pacific voyage in 1769-70. In the past two years, it has been seen in Japan, Korea and China by 2 million visitors to the *Treasures of the World's Cultures* exhibition.

Fieldwork and research



Egypt: Nebamun.

Extensive conservation work is revealing new information about the wall paintings from the tomb chapel of Nebamun (1350 B.C.), some of the finest from Ancient Egypt, and providing a rare opportunity to conduct an in-depth study of the materials and methods of their construction. The research will contribute directly to the visitor's experience of the Museum: the work will culminate in their re-display in a new permanent gallery, currently scheduled for 2008. The conservation work has allowed many of the fragments to be re-joined, so the new gallery will be able to evoke the original experience of visiting the tomb chapel.



Peru: Nasca iconography.

Research often demonstrates the important relationship between museum objects and the landscape. This research aims to document and contextualise the Museum's outstanding collection of 300 Nasca pottery vessels and correlate them with the iconography of the Nasca lines. The drawings database will incorporate previously unpublished material from museums throughout Britain and Europe, with the addition of collections from Latin and North America.





Egypt: Kom Firin.

This ambitious research project uses new technology to extraordinary effect. The entire Delta region is threatened by the expansion of land for agricultural use and illegal excavations, and this project uses magnetic survey to identify subsurface archaeological features on an endangered site. The data collected thus far has produced high-resolution images of unsuspected features such as a temple of Ramses II, set within a massive fortified enclosure. Such fortifications provide rare archaeological evidence for the Egyptian response to the Libyan military threat in the late 2nd millennium BC.
<http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/aes/excavations/firin1.html>

Turkey: Knidos Excavations.

In partnership with the University of Konya in Turkey, the Museum is re-examining the original context of finds from its nineteenth-century excavations in the ruins of Knidos, an ancient Greek city situated on the Aegean coast of Turkey. Research is currently focused in the so-called Gymnasium, connected by an inscription with Artemidoros, a Knidian who is famous for having warned Julius Caesar against entering the Senate on the day of his assassination in 44 BC. This colossal sculpture of a lion, discovered in the nineteenth century, comes from a tomb monument from Knidos and now stands in the Museum's Great Court.
<http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/gr/grreexc.html>



Management and finance.

The British Museum actively deploys its financial and management resources for the benefit of people in London, the United Kingdom and the world.



1000 franc note

Equatorial Africa, 1963.

The strong images and glorious colours of this note reflect various cultural influences. The vivid pastel shades are a legacy from the time when most of the Equatorial African States (Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic, Congo and Gabon today) were French territories. These colours were a distinctive feature of banknotes issued in France and her dominions, particularly from the 1920s to the 1960s.

On loan from the Chartered Institute of Bankers.

Looking back

In 2001/02 the British Museum put in train a number of actions to reduce its annual operating costs by £6m, as a pre-emptive measure to ensure balanced future operating budgets and to lay down the organisational structure and reserves for the future. These actions, which included reducing staffing levels, consolidating curatorial activities back onto the Bloomsbury site and disposing of surplus properties, were completed successfully by early 2004/05.

Current position

Over the last two years the Museum has delivered small surpluses from its underlying operations while making moderate use of reserves to fund future developments. In 2004-05 there was an operating surplus of £1.3m. In 2005-06 the Museum decided to invest more substantially than before in organisational development and buildings and so showed an overall deficit of £2.2 million. This investment is especially valuable as we prepare the Museum for the challenges of the next five years. Exhibition income was particularly strong in 2005/06 due to the success of Samuel Palmer: Vision and Landscape and Forgotten Empire: The World of Ancient Persia while expenditure in 2005/06 was inflated by a sharp increase in pension contributions, the costs of mounting the exhibitions and higher energy prices. Savings from improved facilities management arrangements more than compensated for the energy price increases.

Over the course of these two years the Museum acquired new items for the collection valued at £3.5m, of which £1.3m were generously donated or bequeathed.

Looking forwards

The Museum has consolidated its financial position with the help of income generation, cost control, investment gains and other solid achievements. The focus has now shifted towards reinvesting to modernise and develop the buildings and other facilities on the Bloomsbury site and organisational development, to improve the Museum's efficiency and effectiveness for its core purposes of collections management, exhibiting to the public, education and research. This will involve a 10-year development plan, to which the Board has already designated £50m of reserves. The development plan provides for major collection storage facilities, a collection management centre, a special exhibitions centre, new permanent galleries and major infrastructure improvements. The collection storage and collection management centre will provide much needed central facilities for processing loans, carrying out conservation and appropriate care of the collection. The Study Centre was originally planned to provide such facilities off site, so it is appropriate that the proceeds of sale of that building, whose original purchase was largely funded from the Museum's trust funds, are designated for the development plan.

Capital expenditure, excluding acquisitions for the collection, came to £7.2m in 2005/06 and £3.7m in 2004/05. The increase marks the first phase of the longer term development programme necessary to improve the Museum's main buildings and facilities. It is reflected in permanent galleries completing after the year end: the Manuscripts Saloon, the Japanese and Prints and Drawings galleries, galleries 49 – 53 and the East stairs. It is also reflected in an improved retail outlet for temporary exhibitions, modernisation of the main Asia collection store, disabled access improvements, improved roof access safety, fire safety, security and visitor facilities. Many of these developments have already been generously funded by donors.

This summary of the Museum's finances is an extract from the Museum's full accounts for the year ended 31 March 2006, which were laid before Parliament on 20 July 2006. The full report and accounts may be found on our website www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk and copies may be obtained by writing to the Director of Finance, The British Museum, Great Russell Street, London, WC1B 3DG.

Income 2004/05	£m
Grant from the Government	37.9
Commercial trading	14.7
Fees from exhibitions, courses and loans	2.9
Donations and legacies	3.1
Investment income and rent	2.4
Less: income allocated to capital expenditure	(3.2)
Total	57.8

Expenditure 2004/05	£m
Care, research and conservation	28.4
Public access and education	18.3
Fundraising and publicity	0.6
Commercial Trading Operations	14.3
Charitable Activities	2.0
Governance Costs	0.3
Less: depreciation included, allocated to capital funds	(7.4)
Total	56.5

Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	1.3
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Income 2005/06	£m
Grant from the Government	39.8
Commercial trading	14.2
Fees from exhibitions, courses and loans	4.6
Donations and legacies	2.8
Investment income and rent	2.6
Less: income allocated to capital expenditure	(5.9)
Total	58.1

Expenditure 2005/06	£m
Care, research and conservation	29.7
Public access and education	20.0
Fundraising and publicity	0.7
Commercial Trading Operations	14.5
Charitable Activities	3.1
Governance Costs	0.3
Less: depreciation included, allocated to capital funds	(8.0)
Total	60.3

Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	(2.2)
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The Museum's progress towards its five aims of Openness, Learning and Engagement, Research and Understanding, Public Recognition and Effectiveness are well reflected in its progress against each of these measures.

Key Performance Measures	01-02	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06
Number of visitors to the Museum	4.8m	4.6m	4.6m	4.8m	4.5m
Number of website visits	4.5m	6.9m	7.8m	7.6m	8.8m
Visitor satisfaction	97%	96%	98%	98%	98%
Number of on-site learners	212k	248k	252k	298k	253k
Number of outreach learners	3.2m	4.7m	5.5m	5.0m	6.2m
Number of visitors to special exhibitions	324k	160k	36k	246k	439k
Number of visitors to the Museum's international exhibitions	563k	611k	1289k	1277k	1196k
Grant-in-aid per actual and virtual visitor	£3.60	£2.99	£2.72	£2.69	£2.69

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The Trustees and Director would like to thank the following for their generous support of the British Museum during the period 1 April 2004 – 31 March 2006

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Mary Bygrave, head housemaid, 1884.

Mary Bygrave is among the British Museum's longest-ever serving members of staff: she worked at the Museum for over sixty years. Mary's aunt, who introduced her to the Museum, had worked for Sir Hans Sloane whose encyclopaedic collection was established as the British Museum by Parliament in 1753.



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D D Allen	L Baylis	I R Burch	P F Clifford	E Dewachter	J J Ferris	A V Griffiths	Z Horsted
S Allen	D G Baylis	S J Burdett	R Clucas	V Diaz Vilas	M Finch	G Griffiths	B Houlton
H Allen	L Beard	A M Burnett	D Cobham	P J Dillon	I L Finkel	N K Grimmer	C House
V Allen	A E Beck	S Burslem	M Cock	P Di-Meglio	M Firth	F Grisdale	C Howitt
J Allendorf	L Bee	B W Burt	P A Cockram	D Dinnage	J L Fitton	R P Gritton	D J Hubbard
A G Alleyne	F Begum	C Burton	D Cohen	N G Dival	A Fitzpatrick	P N Guzie	J Huddleston
J W N Allison	L A Belcher	C L Burton	D Cole	P Do Nascimento	M Flannelly	V K Hales	Z E P Hudson
D Allsop	E S Bell	E Bushell	S M Collins	S Dodd	A Fletcher	S Halil	J Hudson
M V Allum	A Bell	D P Butler	P Collins	R J Dominey	P J Fletcher	S Hall	M Hudson
P Almaraz	M Bellamy	J Butler	C S Collinson	D M Donnelly	A D Flinn	J C Hamill	A J Hughes
A Amarteifio	R Bellu	J W Butterworth	D P Collon	H M Donovan	R Folkes	A E Hamilton	L J Hughes
J C Ambers	C Benjamin	M Buttery	J L Conceicao	P Donovan	B Forde	J Hammil	J W Humphreys
A Amor	J Bennett	P Byrne	J Conlon	I A Doubleday	K C Forrest	S Hammond	D Hurn
L Amuge	G Bennett	M P Cacho Casal	G Constantinou	P M Dove	H Forster	Z J Hancock	J S Hurst
J R Anderson	R Bennion	J C Caira	L H Conway	S L Dove	K Foster	Z J C Hancock	S Hussein
S Andreanoff	M A Bergamini	D S Calland	J M Conway	T Dowling	A Foti	M Hanley	K Hussey
C Angelo	E Berko	A G Calton	M Conway	S E Drew	M R Fountain	D Haque	T Hutchinson
G R Anokye	C R Berridge	A Cameron	J Conway	M Duan	V Fox	L Harbord	P Hyacienth
R Apperley	J Bescoby	J Camillieri	B J Cook	P Dufaur	W J Francis	P E Hardcastle	C J Hymas
A Archer	A Bill	G Campbell	M Cook	C L Dungey	D C Frank	G Harfoot	C L Hyypia
C Ardouin	G I Binns	S R Canby	L Cooper	N Dunn	S Franklin	F L T Harris	M Ibrahim
C Arno	L L Birkett	B Canepa	G C Cooper	H Dunn	C Frearson	D R Harris	C M Ingham
C S J Arnold	K U Birkhoelzer	E Caner	M Cooper	M Durning	I C Freestone	E C Harris	J Inglis
Y P M Ashcroft	M A Birlson	J Cantos	S L Coppel	B Durrans	D Fuller	S Harrison	A Ioannou
N M Ashton	P J Blackburn	M Careem	S A Copus	W T Dutfield	A Fuller	N Harrison	R M Isaie
I K P Asmara	R F Bland	F A Carey	K Corey	C Eagleton	J Futter	J P Harrison	D C Jackson
I Assaly	J R Bloomfield	P W Carley	S R V Corri	C Early	S Gallagher	A Harrison	B C Jackson
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P T Backett	K A Botwe	P Cata	P Cross	C J S Entwistle	A Ghanchi	Y C W Heavey	M S Javed
N D Badcott	H L A Boulton	I C Causse	S E Crouch	V Erekpaine	V Gialias	P Hegely	C Jeavons
B Badejo	C Bouwer	J Cawkwell	P Cruickshank	M Erhuero	P W Gibbs	S Hemming	M P Jeffreys
A Baffour	D Bowen	M D Caygill	S P Crummy	P J Ernest	J M Gilbey	J Henderson	J Jegede
G Baily	S Bowman	M P Celine	L Currall	E Erol	D A Giles	M Hercules	M L Jenkins

I D Jenkins	N J Lee	S M Mather	N Newman	T J Pears	C Robinson	S J H Simpson	K Thomas
O M Jenkins	I C Lee	A G Matthewman	J C Newson	S J Peckham	J P Robinson	A P Sinclair	A K Thomas
A M Jenkins	C Leela	D Matuszcayk	G J Nicholls	M Pena	D Robinson	J Sivell	C Thomas
D Jennings	K A A Leighton- Boyce	X Mazda	H Noakes	R T E Perfitt	C Robinson	B Skelton	R Thomas
N Jeyasingam		E Mcallister	D J Noden	J A Perkins	M Rocha	L Slack	H Thomas
D Jillings	I Leins	J Mccreath	E R Noel	N Perry	A M Roche	A Slade	V J Thompson
O Jobson- Lewis	D C Leopold	M Mcdonald	C D Nolan	H Persaud	N Rode	D Slatford	D R Thompson
D A Johnson	C Lepetoukha	C Mcewan	P Nolan	S S Persaud	C Rofe	K M T Sloan	J H Thompson
P A Johnson	A Leppard	C Mcgowan	E Norgrove	J Peters	K A Rogers	J Slough	S C Thomson
E A Johnson	M J Levy	E McLaughlin	J Norman	D E J Pett	M F Rogers	N E Smart	G Thorn
S Johnston	D Levy	G D Mcleod	J F Norman	A Petts	A B Rogers	J Smart	C Y Thorne
R Johnstone	R Lewandowski	A E Mcleod	E Norton	S Pewsey	T M Rosenbloom	D R Smith	D F Thornton
E Jones	T T Lewin	E J Mcnamara	H E Norville-Day	R Phillips	P A Ross	J O Smith	K Thusing
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D J Kavanagh	S Louden-Smith	C J Michaelson	W O'Connor	M E Pitt	S T Ruscoe	S Sorrondegui	A S Truscott
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M A Keating	R K Loverance	A P Middleton	S O'Flaherty	R Plumridge	H F G Ryan	A J Spencer	J R R Tullett
K Kelland	K N Lowe	P Miles	J Okorefe	S Poggiani	B Ryan	S Spencer	L Turati
R Kelleher	A Lukoszek	C A Millbank	D Okoro	D R Pole	D Ryan	N A Spencer	J Turquet
E Kelly	D Lumbis	E G Miller	U Okwoli	J V Portal	A Sale	A Spong	B J Twining
K J Kelly	A C Lumley	J Miller	T Oladele	V A Porter	B Salter	C J Spring	D B Tydings
F W Kelly	L E Lunn	F W Mills	D Oldman	M Portilla-Carus	H I Samson	T J Springett	L Tzang
D A Kelly	M Lydia	C G Milton	E O'Leary	S Posey	J F Samuels	R J Stacey	J Umpleby
E Kelly	C J Lyons	A J Milton	E Oledzka	J E Potter	L Sanchez	P Stacy	J E Umukoro
N V Kendall	J Macdonald	A S Mohamed	B Olofson	C Power	A San-Miguel	R Stallard	R K Uprichard
W Kenealy	R N Macgregor	T Mohammed	V Olusoga	M Power	G Sarge	E Standaert	V Urmosy
C Kennedy	B J Mack	S J Monck	B Oneill	S Prentice	D Sargeant	K T Stannard	A Urquhart
A Kenny	R Mackenzie	I Moore	D P O'Neill	D Price	N E Saunders	F Stansfield	S H Vacarey
F Kerr	S Mackie	B Moore	R Onile-Ere	A G Price	D Saunders	R G A Stevens	S Vahed
I J Kerslake	M J Mackle	M G Moore	P Onoherhie	A Price	G O Saunt	S D Stinson	J Vainovska
P Kevin	P Maddocks	S Moorey	T Oppen	R H Priestley	J D Savage	C M I Stokes	M Van Belleghem
R Khatun	P S Madeira- Barbosa	T S N Moorhead	J Orme	N Proudfoot	D K M Scates	U Stone	L Van Puyvelde
K Khemiri		H Moreira	N Ormondroyd	M A Pullan	D M Schnable	R Storie	G L Varn dell
A Kikuchi	J Maggs	E Morgan	J Orna-Ornstein	J X Qiu	L E Schooledge	U Strachan	J M Vasconcelos
N Kilden	S Maher	M Morgan	C Ory	M T Quevedo	A M S Schultz	D Streeter	J F Verbit
J C H King	S Maher	R B Morris	J R Osborn	E Quistorff	M Schutzer- Weissmann	J Strickland	A C Villing
G King	P Main	J C Morris	J Osborne	A Rae		S Strong	A R R Vitry
E C King	M Majarally	S H Morris	E Osegi	T Rahman	A Scollan	N C Strudwick	L J Voden-Decker
M Kirby	C C Mak	K Morton	G Ososanya	A Ramanoop	R E Scott	S Sullivan	R L Wade
D Kirinde	J Mallinson	E Moss	I M Otite	J Ramkalawon	D Scott	J Swaddling	B Wadhia
A Kleidon	N Mamoon	V Moutou	J M Ould	A Rampton	M F Seabra	T E Sweek	S F Waithe
N Klug	M Mancuso	D Mubiru	K Overend	A Rampton	J J Seaman	R Swindells	A Wakefield
D Knibbs	S Mann	Y A Muhamud- Boqor	R Owen	A Rawlings	C A Searight	C K Sylvestre	E Wakefield
J R Knox	A Manolopoulou		D Owen	J F Rayar	R Seddon	T A Szrajber	R K Wakeman
C F Korenberg	P B Manwaring	R Mujaddadi	C Oyiadjo	D Raymond	A Sedgwick	A Szulc-Biedrawa	C B F Walker
J Kosek	V Marabini	M Muller	C Page	J C Rayner	L J Selby	L Taleb	S J Walker
U Kuhlemann	R Marchesin	T Munden	F Pagliuso	P F Rea	D R Sewell	N C Tallis	D R Walkling
U Kuhlemann	M Maree	R S Murdoch	M Pagliuso	J A Reading	S Sewraj	P Tansey	P Wallace
R Kwok	C Mari	N K Murray- Smith	G B Pain	L M Rees	B D Shackle	B Taplin	D C Waller
S C La Niece	A S Marsden	B Murrell	J Parker	M Registe	K A Sharman	V A Tatton-Brown	R J Wallis
N Lacey	C Marsden-Smith	L Navascues	R B Parkinson	R J D Reid	H E Sharp	J H Taylor	J Walton
I Laing	J Marsh	S M Neale	G Parks	A Reid	I Sharpe	R E Taylor	I C Walton
H J Lancaster	A W Marshall	S P Needham	D Parrish	D Rhodes	A E Shaw	I B Taylor	H K Wang
J Larkin	S J Marshall	M Neilson	H Partridge	R Richards	F N Shearman	R Taylor	Q Wang
A Laurie	P G Marshall	B S Nenck	E Passmore	A Ripley	M Sheerin	E Taylor	D J Ward
B G Law	D Martin	N R Newbery	L Patrick	G E Roach	P A Shotton	J Taylor	C E Ward
A A Lawal	S L Martin	J Newby	H Patrick	G Roach	D K Shrestha	J Teer	I Warren
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C Lazenby	E Martins	B C Newing	B Pauksztat	P Roberts	J Silver	C Terrey	R D Waters
L Le Cheminant	S Marzinzik	A Newman	W Payne	E Roberts	J Simon	C Thatcher	T C Watkins
B J Leach	P M Maskell	P R Newman	H Payne	W C Robertson	L K Simon	M C Theobald	P R Watling
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E R Wood		G Chetwynd	J Grosvenor	G Marks	D Rootes	E Woodthorpe
W H Wood		Y-MCho	S Gullen	L Maroudas	M Rousmaniere	S Youngs
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E York		A Dallapiccola	B Herzmark	P Mellor	D Smith	
R Youle		Davies	R Hickson	R Milne	N Smith	
P Young		C Daws	J Hindess	J Mitchell	S Smith	
C Young		Rde Beaumont	L Hocking	T Mitchell	S Smith	
		Jde Castella	S Hogan	K Miyabe	A Snowdon	
		B-Mde Chassiron	A Hooson	L Montague	J Solomons	
		Ade Cheyne	H Hopper	E Morhange	D Soon	
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1st April 2004 -
31st March 2006

**Between 1
March 2004
and 30 April
2006,
British
Museum
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Amsterdam	Essex	Ottawa
Anchorage	Exeter	Oxford
Anglesey	Ferrara	Paris
Antwerp	Florence	Paris
Apeldoorn	Fort Worth	Parma
Athens	Fukuoka	Perth
Augsburg	Gateshead	Pesaro
Aylesbury	Gela	Peterborough
Bangor	Girona	Philadelphia
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Bath	Grasmere	Preston
Bedford	Guildford	Quebec
Beijing	Haarlem	Reading
Belfast	Halifax	Richmond
Berlin	Halle	Rochdale
Birmingham	Hamburg	Rome
Bishop's Stortford	Hamm	Rotherham
Blackburn	Hampshire	Rotterdam
Bolton	Hartlepool	Rovereto
Bonn	Hereford	Salford
Boston	Hertfordshire	San Francisco
Boulogne-sur- Mer	Hong Kong	San Marino
Bradford	Houston	Santa Ana
Braunschweig	Hull	Scarborough
Bristol	Humblebæk	Seoul
Brussels	Indianapolis	Sheffield
Budapest	Jerusalem	Southampton
Bury St Edmunds	Karlsruhe	Stoke-on-Trent
Busan	Kendal	Stroud
Caltanissetta	King's Lynn	Stuttgart
Cambridge	Kuala Lumpur	Sunderland
Canberra	Kyoto	Surrey
Cardiff	Lancaster	Swansea
Cherokee	Leeds	Sydney
Chester	Leicester	Taegu
Chichester	Leipzig	Tokyo
Cincinnati	Liege	Toronto
Città di Castello	Lille	Tring
Coburg	Lincoln	Turin
Colchester	Lisbon	Valencia
Cologne	Littlehampton	Valenciennes
Compton Verney	Liverpool	Venice
Cork	Llanfairpwll	Victoria
Corning	Lochgilphead	Vienna
Coventry	London	Walsall
Dallas	Los Angeles	Waltham
Daoulas	Lyon	Wrexham
Deruta	Maastricht	Abbey
Dijon	Madrid	Warrington
Dover	Malibu	Washington DC
Downpatrick	Manchester	Whitby
Dudley	Manderen	Winchester
Durham	Mannheim	Woodbridge
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	Mobile	
	Modena	
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