



ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM  
OXFORD

## Creating a resource using Quire



# Labyrinth: Knossos, Myth & Reality

- Ran February-July 2023
- 62k visitors
- 238 objects exhibited, of which 100 from Ashmolean collection (27 of which on permanent display)



# 2023 Exhibition

- Ashmolean has the archive for Sir Arthur Evans's excavations at the site (1900-1931)
- Finds now in Heraklion Museum shown alongside archive
- Evans suggested that he had discovered the mythical Labyrinth





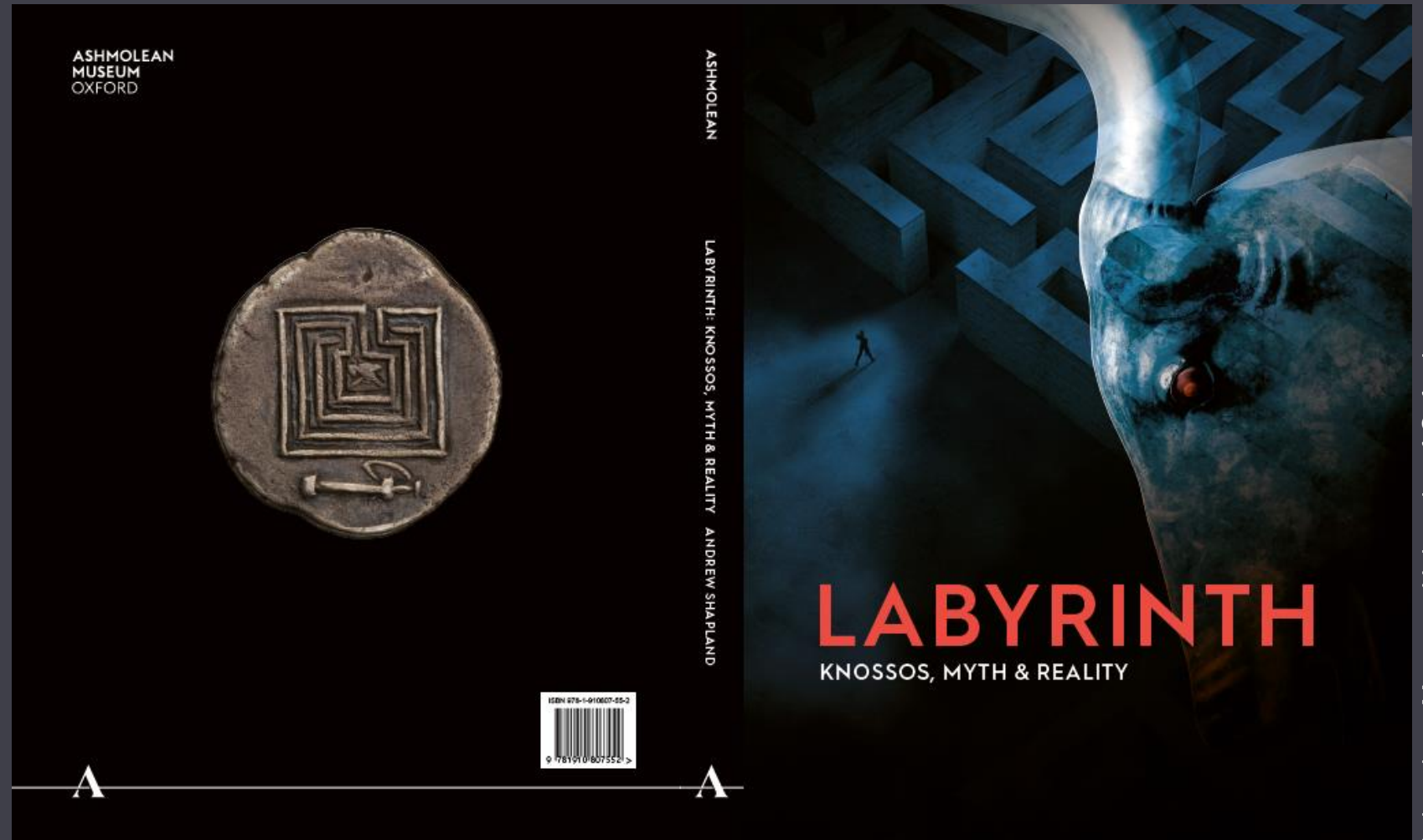
# 2023 Exhibition

- More recent finds in Knossos valley also on display
- Mostly loan objects – less connection with Ashmolean collection



# Recycling content

- The exhibition generated lots of content which can be reused:
- Catalogue



# Recycling content

- The exhibition generated lots of content which can be reused:
- Catalogue
- Exhibition panels/labels

## Minoan Life: Eating and Drinking

Elaborate tableware and colourful frescoes are evidence of the Palace's wealth, at least at its height. It was a place for gatherings and celebrations. Wine, meat and olive oil were produced in the surrounding area and brought to the centre for consumption. Evans and his team imagined a sophisticated, nature-loving people, whose civilisation peaked and then went into decline.


Evans suggested that the finest pottery was used by a royal family, but there is no clear evidence that one existed.

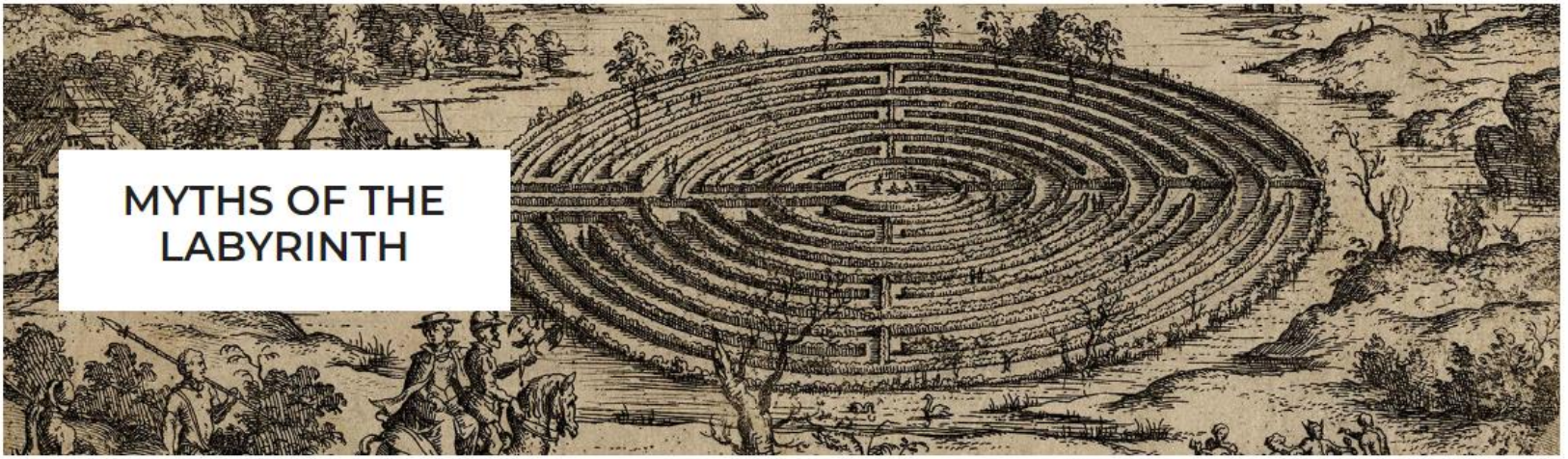




# Recycling content

- The exhibition generated lots of content which can be reused:
- Catalogue
- Exhibition panels/labels
- Website

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## MYTHS OF THE LABYRINTH

### Uncovering the myths of the Labyrinth and the Minotaur


6-minute read  
By [Andrew Shapland](#)  
Sir Arthur Evans Curator of Bronze Age and Classical Greece

Throughout history we have been fascinated by the stories and symbolism of the Cretan Labyrinth and the Minotaur that was said to lurk within.

Here, Andrew Shapland, curator of the Ashmolean's spring 2023 exhibition, uncovers more.

# Recycling content

- The exhibition generated lots of content which can be reused:
- Catalogue
- Exhibition panels/labels
- Website
- Enriched collection records



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## MYTHS AND LEGENDS OF CRETE

In the second millennium BCE the island of Crete was home to a complex pre-Greek society known as 'the Minoans'. When archaeologist Sir Arthur Evans started to excavate at the site of Knossos on Crete, in 1900, he frequently connected the things he found with ancient Cretan myths. He named the building at Knossos the 'Palace of Minos', after the mythical king of Crete, and connected it to the story of the Labyrinth.

The Labyrinth was an ingenious maze commissioned by King Minos to imprison the ferocious Minotaur, a creature with the head of a bull and the body of a man. In the myth, the Minotaur is killed by Theseus, the famous semi-divine hero. Following Theseus's victory, he returned to Greece, and became king and the founder of Athens.

The Cretan myths originated in stories which the Greek and Roman inhabitants of the city of Knossos would have told long after the Palace had been destroyed.

 Find related objects in the [Greek World](#) and [Aegean World](#) Galleries

 [Download a Floor Plan \(PDF\)](#)

 [Explore the Collections](#)

### COLLECTION HIGHLIGHTS



Attic red-figure calyx-crater...  
circa 425 BCE AN1937.983



Attic red-figure cup depicti...  
circa 500 BCE AN1896-1908.G...



Attic black-figure pottery a...  
550 BCE - 540 BCE AN1911.256



Gold signet ring with desig...  
Middle Minoan III Period - La...



# Collections records

- Content gathered in Collection Management System (MuseumPlus)

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MUSEUM  
OXFORD

Objects

Persons

Literature

Collection Activities

Object Groups

Notifications

Last Module

Search (13 found)


"myths of crete"


Domain Filter


Sorting


Advanced search


History


 AN1896-1908.AE.2400  
Replica bull's head  
rhyton


 AN1896-1908.G.261  
Attic red-figure cup  
depicting Theseus and  
the Minotaur


 AN1911.256  
Attic black-figure  
pottery amphora

 AN1924.63  
Bee-smoker, also  
known as 'Ariadne's'

 AN1937.983  
Attic red-figure calyx-  
crater showing the

 AN1938.1129  
Gold signet ring with  
design of male and

 AN1971.822  
Gilded bronze mirror  
depicting Europa and

 GB/1648/AJE/4/1/11/...

Objects (13 found)

Object Numbers

AN1896-1908.G.261 (accession number)

AN1896-1908.G.261 (accession number (old fo

Object Title

Attic red-figure cup depicting Theseus and the Minotaur - preferred (descriptive)

Date / Period

circa 500 BC (date of creation)

Archaic Period (750 - 480 BC) (date of creation)

Persons

attributed to Apollodoros, artist

Geogr. ref.

find spot: Chiusi

place of creation: Attica

Online Status

yes: bronze

Record Type

ceramic


Object Name

cup type B

ID: 387563 | christopher.monaghan@ashmus.ox.ac.uk 14/12/2023 18:28

Domain

AN Ancient Greece and Rome



URL <https://collections.ashmo...>

DAMS <https://dams.ashmus.ox....>

Basic data

Location

Acquisition

Further Texts

Preservation

Condition

Iconography

References

Current loc.

Ash/New/0F/Aegean World/S101

Normal loc.

Mat. / Tech.

Display: pottery, with painted decoration

Material: pottery

Technique: painted

Ware: red-figure

State

Inscriptions and marks

No. of objects

1

Dimensions

h 8.1 cm

dia: rim 20 cm

w 26.7 cm

rim thickness 0.3 cm

Edition Size

Credit line

Purchased, 1890s.

Object Links

Style

Greek

Culture

Content war...

Add child record

Validation Stat.

bronze

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# MuseumPlus

- Sets of objects generated for use in different contexts

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MUSEUM  
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Objects

Persons

Literature

Collection Activities

Object Groups

Notifications

Last Module

Object Groups (29 found)

ID: 128034 | andrew.shapland@ashmus.ox.ac.uk 24/11/2023 16:19

Name

myths of crete

Description

Domain

Object Groups

Expiration Da...

dd/MM/yyyy

Lock

☐

Sync with RS

☐

Objects

Sorting	Object Number	Person	Title	Date / Period	Category
	AN1896-1908.AE.2400		Replica bull's head rhyton	date of creation: early 20th century (1901 - 19	cast
	AN1896-1908.G.261	Apollodoros	Attic red-figure cup depicting Theseus and th	date of creation: circa 500 BC; date of creati	ceramic
	AN1911.256	The Rycroft Painter	Attic black-figure pottery amphora depicting I	date of creation: 550 BC - 540 BC; date of cre	ceramic
	AN1924.63		Bee-smoker, also known as 'Ariadne's Clew-B	date of creation: Middle Minoan IIIB Period (c	ceramic
	AN1937.983	the Dinos Painter	Attic red-figure calyx-crater showing the deed	date of creation: circa 425 BC; date of creati	ceramic
	AN1938.1129		Gold signet ring with design of male and fem	date of creation: Middle Minoan III Period - La	general
	AN1971.822		Gilded bronze mirror depicting Europa and th	date of creation: 1st - 2nd century AD (AD 1 -	general
	GB/1648/AJE/4/1/15/1/7	Émile Gilliéron (1850 - 1924)	Painting of the Taureador Fresco from the Pa	date of creation: 1st half of the 20th century;	archives
	GB/1648/AJE/4/1/18/1/1		Drawing of the Labyrinth Fresco from the Eas	date of creation: 1st half of the 20th century	archives
	HCR4579		Ancient Greek silver coin	date of creation: 300 BC - 201 BC	coin and similar
	WA1863.7692	Hieronymus Cock (1518 - 1570), Hieronymus	The Cretan Labyrinth	date of creation: 1558	print
	WA2009.18	Monogrammist HG (1540 - 1570), Hans Jamni	Daedalus and Icarus	date of creation: circa 1560	general

Nbr of objects: 12

# MuseumPlus

- Content includes detailed descriptions for various purposes

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Search (13 found)

myths of crete

Domain Filter

Sorting

Advanced search

History

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Gold signet ring with  
design of male and  
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depicting Europa and  
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GB/1648/AJE/4/1/11/...

Objects (13 found)

Object Numbers

Object Title

Date / Period

Persons

Geogr. ref.

Basic data

Further texts

AN1896-1908.G.261 (accession number)

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Location

Acquisition

Further texts

Sort

Date

5

20/07/201

10

11/12/2023

15

09/11/198

99

105

17/01/202

Further texts

Type

Reason

Status

Date

Author

Literature

Exhibition

Title / Ref. No.

Text

Source

Notes


OK

Cancel

ID: 387563 | christopher.monaghan@ashmus.ox.ac.uk 14/12/2023 18:28

Domain

AN Ancient Greece and Rome



URL

https://collections.ashmo...

DAMS

https://dams.ashmus.ox...

Status

02 Final draft

05 Published

02 Final draft

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# Aegean World Gallery

- This content is most relevant to the permanent Aegean World gallery which contains a large number of objects from/related to Knossos



Attic red-figure cup depicting Theseus and the Minotaur , c. 500 BC.  
Ashmolean AN1896-1908.G.261



# Aegean World Gallery

- Largest collection of Minoan objects outside Greece, largely as a result of Sir Arthur Evans's work at Knossos





# Educational Resources

- Existing learning resources for teachers show there is interest in object-focussed teaching in gallery.

## Focus on The Palace at Knossos and Crete

### Notes for teachers

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#### Objects from Knossos and Crete at the Ashmolean

- Most of the objects linked to Crete and The Palace at Knossos are on display in Gallery 20: Aegean World.
- Displays cover finds from the excavations of Arthur Evans from the early 1900s of the Palace at Knossos, and also explore his interpretation of the site.
- Other displays include Mycenaean objects and ancient objects from the Cyclades, including carved Cycladic figures from cist graves.
- The gallery can also be used to explore objects related to Crete's most famous myth: Theseus and the Minotaur

#### Other galleries containing ancient Greek objects:

Gallery 16: The Greek World  
 Gallery 18: Ancient Cyprus  
 Gallery 14: Cast Gallery  
 Gallery 7: Money  
 Gallery 21: Greek and Roman Sculpture

#### Gallery 20: Aegean World

- Attic red-figure pottery cup, attributed to the Apollodoros Painter, Chiusi, Italy c500 BC



The illustration shows Crete's most famous myth. Confined by King Minos in the labyrinth, the Minotaur, half-man, half-bull, survived by devouring youths and maidens sent as tribute from Athens until it was finally slain by Theseus. AN1896.1908.G.261

#### Gallery 20: Aegean World

- Octopus jar, 1450-1400 BC



This partially restored jar is from the Palace at Knossos, Crete. It is decorated with a six tentacled octopus, using purple red dye from murex shells, a popular colourant for murals across the east Mediterranean. The design reflects a society with a close relationship to the sea. AN1911.608

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#### Lines of enquiry: Classics

- Palaces, with special emphasis on the Palace at Knossos: their function and use
- Tombs and burial practices
- Materials and technology: frescoes, pottery, jewellery, metalwork
- Building and engineering: waterworks, palaces, building materials
- Minoan culture and its significance for trade
- Economy and society: Linear B tablets, content, discovery, interpretation and significance
- Early Cretan hieroglyph and Linear A
- The myth of Theseus and the Minotaur
- Excavation and archaeological methods: compare and contrast with approaches today
- Explore the styles of pottery from different palace 'phases' from the Palace at Knossos. Learn about how they were used to date excavations.

#### Working with objects: key questions

- Who made it?
- Where and when was it made?
- What materials is it made from?
- How was it made?
- What was it used for? How was it used?
- Who used / owned it?
- How might it be interpreted by different people? at different times?



Chest shaped Larnax (coffin) cemetery at Knossos, 1375-1300BC AN1896.1908 AESB3

#### Lines of enquiry: Art & Design

- Explore different design motifs from ancient Cretan pottery and create new designs to reflect Minoan culture.
- Research how myth and legend have been represented in art across different times and cultures through objects and artworks.

#### Further resources

Further information about Arthur Evans and the Palace at Knossos is available at:

[www.odl.ox.ac.uk/collections/evansknoossos.htm](http://www.odl.ox.ac.uk/collections/evansknoossos.htm)

[sirarthurevans.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/collection/](http://sirarthurevans.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/collection/)

#### Cross curricular links

- History: rise and expansion of the Minoan culture and its influence in the Mediterranean
- English: explore myths and legends
- Maths: currency and coinage in the ancient world

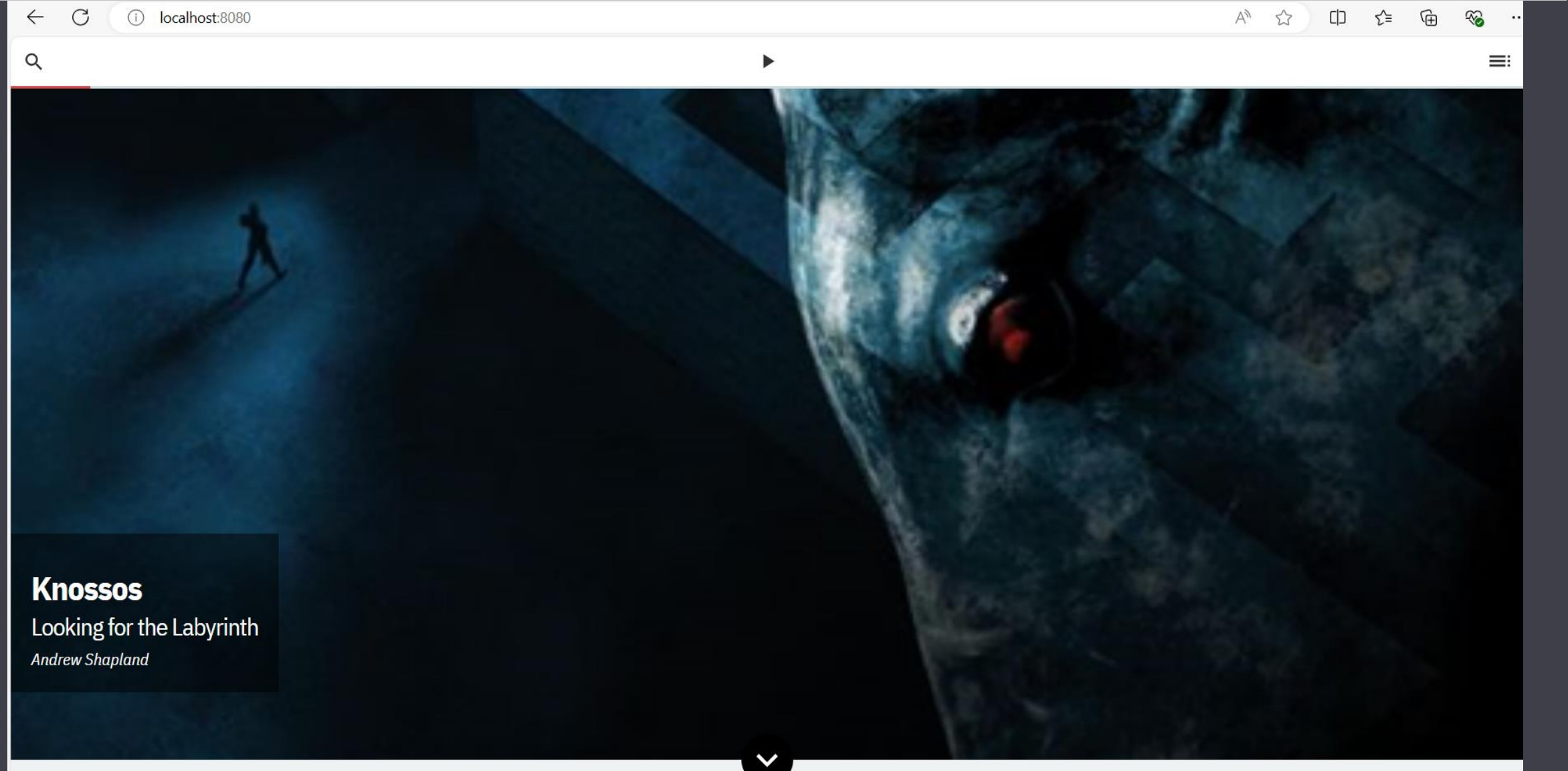
#### Education Department

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[www.ashmolean.org/learn](http://www.ashmolean.org/learn)



# Quire resource



# Quire

- Don't have to be a coder to use – YAML is intuitive
- Quire website has helpful user guides but I preferred to play with (and sometimes break) the demo version by replacing content
- Templates produce impressive results
- Output is intended to be a publication (web or PDF) about objects

