‘The valiant Moor’
The exhibition Shakespeare: Staging the World set out the global influences on his plays. The Moroccan ambassador Abd el-Ouahed ben Messaoud, painted during his visit to London in 1600, probably influenced Shakespeare’s depiction of Othello. Displays included a Spanish sword of 1590 – the very type Othello draws to slay himself after he has murdered Desdemona. (Painting 115 x 79 cm; sword 111 cm)
For 260 years the British Museum has been one of Britain’s great ‘invisible exports’, both in terms of our work internationally and the enormous contribution we make to the UK economy. The BM has been the leading visitor attraction in the UK for the past six years and one in four tourists who visit London comes to the BM. For those who live in London, it is an incomparable resource for exploring and understanding the world.

The BM has always been a museum of the world. We are unique in being a place where global citizens can come to find their identity. This is true of the galleries in Bloomsbury but also more broadly in relation to the BM’s work across the UK and the world. Exhibitions such as *Pharaoh: King of Egypt*, supported by the Dorset Foundation, have a huge impact when they tour the country, both at larger venues in Leeds or Glasgow, and smaller ones such as Dorset County Museum, where hosting such an exhibition enabled the museum to move in a direction it couldn’t otherwise have done.

Internationally, the BM’s most longstanding corporate partner BP teamed up with Indian company Reliance in 2012 to take *Mummy: The Inside Story* in a display of the 100 prints that make up his Vollard Suite (a complete set given to the BM by Mr Hamish Parker); venture back to Elizabethan England to discover how Shakespeare made art about the newly globalised world around him; or – if you were really brave – journey as far back as the frozen Europe of 40,000 years ago to contemplate the birth of the modern mind in Ice Age sculpture.

It was a great year for BM exhibitions. *Life and Death in Pompeii and Herculaneum*, sponsored by Goldman Sachs, sold 70,000 tickets before opening. This is just the latest in a decade of ‘scholarly’ exhibitions at the BM that reached a mass public – from China’s terracotta warriors to shows on Hadrian and Shakespeare. The support of long-term partners such as BP has been essential, allowing us to shape our programme for maximum public benefit. The BM’s capacity to attract and work with such partners depends, of course, on one critical factor: the commitment of the Government to provide a secure basis of longterm funding, which alone can guarantee the care and research of the collection. It is this basis that enables us to present and share the collection in so many different ways with the UK and the world (see maps pp. 52 & 60).

As always this activity depends on the care, conservation and study of the BM’s own collection. When the newest corner of the BM opens next year on Montague Place, the World Conservation and Exhibitions Centre will be a transformative addition to all this work: facilitating loans across the UK and abroad so as many people as possible can see this shared global inheritance; ensuring every object’s longevity, with the best conservation studios and conditioned storage; and welcoming visitors in London to a new large-scale, super-flexible gallery for special exhibitions. The first exhibition in 2014 is the BP exhibition *Vikings* and will feature a 37 metre long Viking ship.

As Chairman of this extraordinary institution – which operates on a local, national and international level simultaneously – I am consistently amazed by the effectiveness of the organisation and the commitment, professionalism and energy of the staff in making all this possible. For me, as for many, the people and objects of this amazing collection make the BM the most compelling institution in the world.

Niall FitzGerald KBE
Chairman of the Trustees
World Conservation and Exhibitions Centre

A new centre for conservation, exhibitions, collections and loans is nearing completion at the BM. Advanced studios will ensure that BM conservators and scientists can develop the most up-to-date techniques to preserve world heritage. Projects will build on recent successes in conservation, such as the meticulous unfolding of an ancient Egyptian shroud from Norwich Castle Museum. The 3500-year-old cloth was covered in hieroglyphic spells to assist the deceased in the afterlife.
Iron fragments found on the Isle of Wight in 2004 turned out to be a rare 6th-century helmet. A unique find in the UK, the bandhelm is one of only five more or less complete helmets (such as the example on the right) known from the Anglo-Saxon period, and is probably the earliest. Using X-rays and 3D scanning, BM conservators were able to reconstruct the helmet’s riveted crossbands and plates from over 400 fragments.
One of the UK’s largest hoards of Roman coins was discovered in Bath in 2007. The heavy soil block was lifted out and the contents of eight leather bags of coins eventually separated, cleaned and conserved in controlled conditions at the BM. The Beau Street Hoard contained over 16,000 silver coins – the earliest issued by Mark Antony in 32 BC. They were probably buried around AD 274, in a stone-lined box set into the floor of a Roman building.
Conservators reassembled a Roman statue of Hermes – possibly part of a collection belonging to Charles I – for display at the BM during the Olympics. Belonging to the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, the ruined statue had lain in fragments for decades. Scientific analysis was able to determine the varieties of marble, distinguishing the statue’s original components from restorations it had undergone in the past.
Exciting conservation projects are just one feature of the new 18,000 sq.m. building. A tailored exhibitions suite will permit the BM to present large-scale exhibitions. The first, on the Vikings, will display the largest-known Viking ship, more than 37 metres long. Stores of material from across London – from archaeological fragments to vulnerable organic material – will be brought back on site, making them easier to conserve, study and lend. Designed by Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners, the £135 million building (shown here at its ‘topping out’ ceremony) will open in 2014.
Conservation and research

Elizabethan Map Reveals Lost Colony

‘I would say every generation in the last 400 years has taken this search on,’ said a spokesman for the First Colony Foundation. The American research group held a press conference in May 2012 to report an exciting discovery on an Elizabethan map in the BM collection.

From 1584, John White made five voyages to the east coast of North America. His remarkable watercolours of plants, animals, birds and people were recently displayed in a BM special exhibition and on tour in the USA. But it was one of White’s maps that prompted scientific investigation in 2012. Using X-ray fluorescence and other non-invasive techniques, BM scientists were able to reveal what lay beneath two small patches covering part of the map’s surface. They discovered a number of changes to the original drawing, including what appears to be a fort.

No one knows what happened to the first English colony at Roanoke, which vanished between 1587 and 1590. Does this hidden fort show where the colonists may have resettled? Did the explorer Walter Raleigh cover the spot to keep it secret and protect its location? It is too early to be sure, but as the Telegraph reported, this ‘tantalising clue’ is certain to generate new archaeological investigations.

Radioactive Shamans

The department of Conservation and Scientific Research maintains the entirety of the BM collection – from the earliest stone tool to the diverse plastics, metal and glass that might make up a modern sculpture. The work combines the scientific study of objects and their conditions with conservation and repair. Experiments and analyses in 2012/13 ranged from studies of Chinese ‘ant-nose’ money to the robes of St Cuthbert to wax discs used by the Elizabethan magus, John Dee.

Among the many artefacts the BM has recently conserved is a 19th-century shamanic apron from Siberia. Made of reindeer hide and heavily adorned with moving amulets, metal rings and colourful glass beads, the garment is designed to assert a Dolgan shaman’s power. Its power also became evident when a Geiger counter revealed during conservation work that it was radioactive. The yellow beads contained uranium. It was the first time uranium glass had been discovered in an object such as this at the BM, and early diagnosis has ensured that the correct protocols are now in place for its continuing display.
BM curators, conservators and scientists take their work far beyond the museum walls, publishing their findings and speaking around the world. A collection of articles drawn from a conference held at the BM explored the varied uses of scanning electron microscopy (SEM). BM staff and other experts analysed items as varied as European oil paintings, Chinese jades, Iron Age jewellery and mimosa wood found in Brazilian kilns.

Popular events encourage public interest in the BM’s scientific research. A talk on ‘Science and Money’ traced the technology of coin production through the ages. During a Conservation in Focus event in June, conservators charted to BM visitors about work on objects relating to the Olympics and ancient Greece, showing them black-figure vases with sporting motifs.

As part of its international commitment, the BM offered training to a number of professional visitors, including a textile conservator from the Iraq Museum, an archaeologist and curator from Ghana, a ceramics expert from Japan and an archaeological conservator from Hong Kong. BM staff travelled worldwide to destinations including Albania, India and Palestine, where conservator Monika Harter taught a UNESCO-sponsored course on cultural management.

Joining up Expertise
Museums are increasingly focused on the rewards – and difficulties – of bringing together very different collections and the research that goes on around them. The BM is a key player in a Europe-wide project called CHARISMA, which aims to point the way forward for a new multidisciplinary approach to conservation and restoration. Events held at the BM in 2012 included a study session on life-cast silver; comparing methods of fluorescence imaging with visiting researchers from Greece; and a two-day technical symposium at the BM on the Renaissance Workshop. This meeting explored materials and manufacturing in workshops that produced bronzes, gemstones, altarpieces, drawings and other works of art in the 14th–16th centuries. Speakers came from the Netherlands, France, Portugal, Spain, Italy, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Romania, Australia and USA to share ideas and practices with colleagues in the UK.

Collaborating enables the BM to set its collection in a much wider context. For a project centred at Carleton University in Canada, the BM studied a group of 18th- and 19th-century moccasins, wampum belts and other objects from the Great Lakes. Dogbane and cotton fibres, moose, lison, otter and other animal hairs were identified. The BM also proposed an improved scientific technique, using variable pressure SEM, for working on and identifying this highly fragile material.

Research across the Museum
Research is a central part of the BM’s function, written into all curators’ and scientists’ job descriptions. Research on the objects in the collection, and the cultures that made or used them, is a key activity in its own right. It enables the collection to be better used by the public to understand human history and culture.

The BM’s standing as a research centre is among the highest in Britain. In 2012/13 it attracted nearly £3.5million in external funding from UK and international research bodies. Up to 30 PhD students were affiliated with the BM, and staff published more than 200 books and articles. All staff contribute to both academic networks and wider public access – from gallery talks and conference papers at home and abroad to television appearances on programmes such as BBC4’s Treasures of Ancient Rome. (Host Alastair Sooke returned the favour by appearing at the BM to discuss how we interpret Rome.)

The BM is extremely grateful to the Leverhulme Trust, Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC), Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and all others who generously support the BM’s research.

Putting Hans Sloane Together Again
Cross-institutional work is at the heart of Reconstructing Sloane, an exciting new project based in London. From the time of his voyage to Jamaica in the 1680s, Hans Sloane began to gather together one of the most comprehensive collections of ‘natural and artificial rarities’ ever formed. On his death in 1753, Sloane’s collection was acquired for the nation by an Act of Parliament that created the British Museum.

Reconstructing Sloane is a digital and intellectual ‘reconstruction’ of this founding collection, originally part of the BM but now shared with the Natural History Museum and British Library. With initial support from the AHRC in the form of a Collaborative Doctoral Award and a Science in Culture Exploratory Award, curators, conservators and academics are undertaking the first steps of a project which will use Sloane’s

Knowledge in the Public Domain
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original hand-written catalogues and the artefacts he amassed to address questions about the boundaries of collecting, how we distinguish natural science from the humanities, and how intellectual frameworks in the 18th century differ from our own. The project is in the process of applying for further funding to continue this work and to create a new database that will integrate all three collections: a tool for both academic research and public enjoyment that reconnects the sciences and the humanities as Sloane himself might have understood them.

**The Origins of Urban Life**

‘One minute you are brushing the soil from skeletons, the next labelling tiny beads and the next washing pottery.’ Alexandra Fletcher’s blog on the BM website described the busy life of a field archaeologist while she was excavating in southern Turkey. The BM has spent five years exploring the Late Neolithic settlement at Domuztepe (6500–5500 BC) working in collaboration with the University of Manchester with support from the British Institute at Ankara.

Discoveries at Domuztepe have added an important new chapter to our understanding of the transition between village and urban societies. Domuztepe lay on the edge of a large marsh with relatively easy access to a variety of wet- and dry-land habitats. This diversity may have helped to feed and support its population as different resources could be used throughout the year.

The settlement was not densely packed with housing but maintained open areas for burial of the dead and large-scale earthwork boundaries to define different functional spaces. In addition to the range of pottery, stone and bone tools needed for daily survival, a wide selection of objects were also made to display identity, power or status. Most significant are some of the earliest pieces of worked silver discovered anywhere in the world by around 1500 years.

**Early Humans in Britain**

The Ancient Human Occupation of Britain project has just completed its third phase. Funded by the Leverhulme Trust, this collaboration with the Natural History Museum and several UK universities looks at the earliest prehistory of Britain – from the first human colonisers (nearly a million years ago) to the end of the Last Ice Age, some 10,000 years ago. During this period the landscape of Britain varied from polar desert and tundra with reindeer, bison and mammoths to dense deciduous forest with elephant, hippos and rhinos.

The project’s discoveries, reported in *Nature* and elsewhere, have redrawn the map of ancient Britain: how early humans were here, what technologies they used, what animals they hunted, what habitats they favoured. The third phase looked at the dispersal of early humans, as they adapted to new frontiers.

Ongoing research includes an exploration of Palaeolithic archaeology along the North Sea Basin and Channel, funded by the Calleva Foundation, and monitoring on- and off-shore sites along the Cromer Forest Bed, funded by English Heritage.

**New Research Projects**

Empires of Faith is one of several major BM research programmes that began in 2012. The five-year project, funded by the Leverhulme Trust, investigates how images and objects were used to construct political and religious authority. The scale is ambitious: covering South Asia, the Middle East and Mediterranean from ad 200 to 800, it takes in Christianity in the Roman Empire, Zoroastrians in Iran, Buddhism and Hindu cults in northern India and the early Islamic caliphate.

Ming: Courts and Contacts is a joint project with the University of Oxford, funded by the AHRC. The imperial court of the early Ming Dynasty enjoyed an unprecedented range of contacts – with Japan and Korea; Bengal and Sri Lanka; Iran, Africa and the heart of the Islamic world in Mecca. Looking at cultural, military and religious activities, this project, which includes a major exhibition at the BM in autumn 2014, sets in a wide historical context the story of China from 1400–50.
Citi Money Gallery Reopens

‘A refurbishment of the gallery,’ reported the Financial Times, ‘has inspired a rethink on how to present one of the world’s biggest numismatic collections – and how to use money to tell the story of the world’s civilisations.’

Supported by Citi, the popular new Citi Money Gallery opened in June 2012. It seeks, as the Economist noted, ‘to challenge the way we think about money . . . It starts with cowrie shells, stone axes and jade . . . and culminates with the switch to payment cards and mobile money. . . But interwoven with this chronological display are countless examples of the unexpected cultural, political and religious uses of money.’

Covering 4500 years of money-making and economic exchange, the Citi Money Gallery has an imaginative range of exhibits that includes recent archaeological finds and the latest digital payment systems. The new gallery was, the magazine concluded, ‘a treasure trove of fascinating stories’. A digital resource available online and in the gallery, Impressions of Nations, includes a single coin from each United Nations member state from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe. Citi has also generously funded a project curator and education manager to create a five-year programme of gallery-based learning and ensure the display remains up-to-date.

New Gallery on Ancient Cyprus

‘The visitor cannot help but stand in awe,’ said one reviewer, dazzled by a group of ‘wonderfully detailed votive statues excavated at ancient Idalion, dating from 700 to 100 BC . . . and exhibited for the first time in a hundred years.’

The A.G. Leventis Gallery of Ancient Cyprus – newly refurbished with support from the A.G. Leventis Foundation and the Leventis family – opened in December 2012. It tells the story of Cyprus from 10,000 BC to AD 400. The legendary home of Aphrodite attracted settlers, traders and major political powers who fought for control over this strategic island in the eastern Mediterranean. This long history of contact created a distinctively Cypriot culture, as major exhibits such as the Colossus of Dali, with its Greek and Persian elements, reveal.

A central timeline anchors the island’s main history. Adjacent displays elaborate specific topics such as trade, war and religion, with large-scale contextual photographs to convey the region’s archaeology and landscape. Feature exhibits include a 12th-century BC ivory game box and the beautiful bronze head of the ‘Chatsworth’ Apollo of 460 BC. Associated exhibitions in Princeton and Brussels coincided with the opening of the new gallery to celebrate Cyprus’ first presidency of the Council of the European Union.
Birth of modern Japan
These details from a Japanese handscroll acquired in 2013 record the visit of US Commodore Matthew Perry (left) in 1854, marking the end of two centuries of Japanese isolation. (Full length 15.3 m)
The British Museum Review 2012/13

Revived and Revised

BM galleries are constantly being upgraded – as new objects are acquired or conserved, and new research emerges. While the early medieval gallery is under construction, material from Sutton Hoo was kept on public display in Room 2 in 2012/13. The new Sir Paul and Lady Ruddock Gallery of Early Medieval Art will tell the story of Europe AD 300–1100. It is scheduled to open in December 2013.

As part of a collaboration with the Association for Conservation of National Treasures in Japan, funded by the Sumitomo Foundation, experts from Japan and the UK have been conserving Japanese paintings in the BM’s Hirayama Studio. The most recent has seen the transformation of the 15th-century Death of the Buddha, preserving the brilliant colouring and fine detail typical of Yamato-e school painting and remaking the sumptuous brocade hanging scroll. The painting will go on public display in the Japanese galleries in late 2013.

Major Acquisitions

Objects on the cusp of historical change are among the most intriguing in the BM. A rare example of pre-Reformation English devotional jewellery from the early 16th century was one of several significant additions to the collection in 2012/13. The gold pendant – found in Hockley, Essex in 2009 and declared Treasure – was acquired with support from the Art Fund and British Museum Friends. With the names of the three wise men inscribed on the side (probably to ward off fever and epilepsy), the front depicts a female saint, probably the Virgin Mary, holding a cross spattered with blood. The reliquary pendant featured in the ITV series, Britain’s Secret Treasures, as one of the 50 most important archaeological finds made by the British public.

A richly detailed handscroll of 1854–8 documents the moment when more than two centuries of Japanese seclusion ended. The Mission of Commodore Perry to Japan, 1854 was funded with contributions from the Brooke Sewell Bequest, JTI Japanese Acquisition Fund, BM Friends, Noriko and Shigeru Myojin, Dounia and Sherif Nadar, Adeela Qureshi, Richard de Unger and Mitsubishi Corporation. The painted scroll, over 15 metres long, depicts the arrival of US Commodore Matthew Perry at Edo Bay to establish trade relations. It is one of the finest quality works to have survived among the explosion of paintings and popular prints produced in Japan at the time to mark Perry’s world-changing visits.

New acquisitions

Additions to the BM collection ranged from a 16th-century gold reliquary found by a four-year-old boy in Hockley, Essex in 2010 to a mid-20th-century Inuit sculpture of a man with a fish sticking out of his head. (Reliquary 25 x 33 mm; sculpture 19 cm)

Objects from Across the World

New acquisitions ranged from a beautiful white porcelain vase made by Japanese artist Itaya Hazan in the 1920s (acquired with support from the Art Fund and Brooke Sewell Bequest) to an embroidered tunic from Mali and two Iban Dayak hats from Borneo.

Gifts to the collection in 2012/13 included 13 Inuit soapstone figures; a 1942 pen and ink drawing by German Surrealist Hans Bellmer; contemporary Chinese seals by Li Lanqing; objects from Papua New Guinea collected by the celebrated anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski in 1915–18; and 24 medals awarded to Captain Scott (given to mark the centenary of the 1912 British Antarctic expedition). An English delftware election plate – with the words ‘Sir John Pole For Ever 1754’ – was donated to replace a plate previously in the collection, but destroyed during the Second World War.

The Art Fund Collection of Middle Eastern Photography – recently acquired jointly by the BM and V&A – was presented in a major exhibition at the V&A in 2012. The contemporary photographs in Light from the Middle East were ‘full of startling images’ judged the Observer and ‘a refreshing slant on the region’s struggles’, according to the Independent.
The British Museum Review 2012/13

Exhibitions

3. Exhibitions

The Civilising Effect of Horses

‘The British Museum is a most distinguished and well-stocked stable. You walk into its Great Court and at once spot the emperor Hadrian, mounted on his stone steed, legs dangling, just beyond the information desk. And this is before you’ve even set foot in the museum’s tremendous exhibition – its first devoted to the horse.’

The Guardian was admiring The Horse: From Arabia to Royal Ascot, supported by the Board of Trustees of the Saudi Equestrian Fund, Layan Cultural Foundation and Juddmonte Farms. A ‘beautiful, thoughtful exhibition’ said the Telegraph. ‘Delightful’ judged the Financial Times. Reliefs, rock drawings, harness fittings, seals, paintings, manuscripts and much more conveyed the history of man and horse, from the domestication of horses in the Middle East to the modern-day Thoroughbreds descended from three 17th-century Arabian stallions. Included was one of the earliest depictions of a horse and rider: a terracotta mould of 2000–1800 bc found in Mesopotamia.

‘This exhibition,’ noted the Times Higher Education Supplement, ‘is likely to appeal as much to schoolchildren and families as to academics and enthusiasts.’ To get to the heart of so many civilisations, lunchtime talks looked at horses across time and cultures – from the Ice Age to the Middle Ages, from Assyria to Greece to China. The exhibition attracted 220,000 visitors.

Shakespeare: Staging the World

The BP Exhibition, Shakespeare: Staging the World, looked at London in the 16th century. Shakespeare’s plays, and a fascinating array of objects one could associate with them, revealed a new world city in the making, as circumnavigation brought the entire globe a little nearer, and a brand new theatre on the south bank of the Thames took that very name, The Globe, in the spirit of the time.

‘The objects themselves are extraordinary,’ wrote Time Out. ‘They range from a Southwark actor’s toothpick, discovered in the foundations of the Rose Theatre, to portraits of the splendid characters, royal and otherwise, who inspired Shakespeare’s dramas. The Royal Shakespeare Company has contributed fine British acting talent: short films of Paterson Joseph’s Brutus and Harriet Walter’s Cleopatra are a lovely touch, folding the stage performances of today back into a tour of Shakespeare’s London that is so ripe and opulent you suffer culture shock when you leave it.’ Richard Dorment in the Telegraph called it a ‘remarkable exhibition, one of the best I’ve ever seen anywhere.’
To accompany the acclaimed exhibition was a display on Shakespeare’s money, Crowns and Ducats, and a display of objects at the National Theatre about Timon of Athens. Two well-attended Friday Lates brought Elizabethan England to life through performances. Over 105,000 people saw the exhibition, which was part of London 2012’s World Shakespeare Festival.

Defrosting the Modern Mind
Ice Age Art: Arrival of the Modern Mind was supported by Betsy and Jack Ryan, the Patrons and American Friends of the BM and the Henry Moore Foundation. Its interest extended well beyond the art world. Music Matters on BBC Radio 4 featured one of the Ice Age flutes, the oldest known musical instrument, and called the exhibition “absolutely astonishing”. The Express brought to its readers’ attention the many “unambiguously fertile” women, while Andrew Graham-Dixon presented a Culture Show Special on Ice Age art on BBC2. Opening hours were extended to cope with public demand.

The Telegraph was struck by how thought-provoking “this splendid new exhibition” was. Sculptures and engravings of animals, humans and imaginary beings made an astonishing 40,000 to 10,000 years ago were shown alongside contemporary works by Matisse, Picasso and Moore that suggested new ways of seeing the old. The dramatically lit displays reminded visitors that all art is the product of the modern brain and for this reason Ice Age art is much nearer to our own than they might have imagined.

“The most remarkable and profoundly disconcerting exhibition you can see at present is at the British Museum in London”, said Le Monde. Visitors remarked how still they became before the pieces. A journalist for the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung said she found it difficult to take leave of their ancestral presence at the end of the exhibition. “You find yourself face to face with a bison,” wrote the Financial Times. “It has taken her more than 20,000 years to get here. Although she is only 10cm tall and made of mammoth ivory, she is so full of life that she short-circuits our day and hers, eight million days apart, into a single moment. We can’t travel back to the Ice Age, but if we could, this is surely what it would feel like.”

300 Rare Loans for Pompeii and Herculaneum Exhibition
AD 79. A volcano erupts. In just 24 hours, two cities in the Bay of Naples are buried. Life and Death in Pompeii and Herculaneum, sponsored by Goldman Sachs, brought to life two ordinary cities destroyed – and preserved – by an extraordinary event. This collaboration with the
Archaeological Superintendency of Naples and Pompeii brought over 300 loans, many never before seen outside Italy. Finds from recent excavations and well-known artefacts evoked every aspect of daily life in a Roman city: a loaf of bread, colanders and cooking pots, armlets and hairpins, statues, marble reliefs and paintings, such as the vivid portrait of the baker Terentius Neo and his wife. Plaster casts of men and women, a dog, capture the cities in their final moments.

‘We can’t imagine the horror of that day,’ said curator Paul Roberts, ‘but we can see what people did. Some of them were practical, taking a lantern or a lamp to help them stumble through the total darkness of the volcanic blizzard. Other people took gold and silver in the form of coins or jewellery. One little girl took her charm bracelet with pieces from all over the Roman world . . . She had this with her when she died on the beach at Herculaneum with hundreds of others.’

Media coverage was extensive and full of five-star praise: ‘Momentous’, ‘Superb’ ‘Moving’. ‘I have seen countless images,’ wrote the critic of The Times, ‘But none had prepared me for meeting them in reality . . . Stunning.’

Love and War with Picasso and Goya

Nearly 300,000 people flocked to see them. ‘This is truly one of the art events of the year, and offers more inspiration, stimulation and sheer excitement than almost any other art I can think of,’ said the Guardian. The BM’s recently acquired Vollard Suite – a set of 100 etchings by Picasso, presented by Hamish Parker in memory of his father Major Horace Parker – drew record crowds and critical praise. As the Telegraph reported, the etchings of artist and muse, sculptor and model reflected ‘Picasso’s erotic and artistic obsessions, marital vicissitudes, and the darkening political situation in Europe’. By exhibiting the prints alongside what inspired Picasso – Greek and Roman vases, antique marbles, Ingres drawings, Rembrandt and Goya prints – the BM (unlike museums devoted solely to modern art) was able to show visitors how the Spanish artist was ‘immersed, heart and soul, in the history of art’.

Spain again took centre-stage in Renaissance to Goya: Prints and Drawings from Spain, supported by the AHRC and Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica. ‘All the great themes of Iberian culture are here,’ said Time Out, ‘religious fervour, dramatic passion bordering on violence and, of course, bullfighting’ The exhibition unearthed what the New York Times called ‘a trove of Spanish artwork’: rarely seen prints and drawings by
Velázquez, Murillo, Ribera and others. Brian Sewell called one drawing by Zurbarán ‘one of the nation’s greatest treasures’. Revealing an entire artistic tradition that the fame of Spanish painting had eclipsed, the exhibition attracted over 160,000 visitors. Events included an evening of Spanish music and readings of Lope de Vega and Calderón, held in collaboration with the Spanish Embassy.

**Chinese Paintings, Seals and Bowls of Tea**

‘An ambitious survey of its own outstanding collection of modern ink painting’ said the Huffington Post of the BM exhibition Modern Chinese Ink Paintings. It presented 40 paintings of the last 100 years: monochrome and brightly coloured landscapes and a ‘moonscape’ in paper. Many made as statements of friendship, others as protest against political dissent. In honour of the exhibition, an anonymous donor gave the BM an important collection of modern ink painting by one of the contemporary artists. It presented 40 paintings of the last 100 years: monochrome and brightly coloured landscapes and a ‘moonscape’ in paper. Many made as statements of friendship, others as protest against political dissent. In honour of the exhibition, an anonymous donor gave the BM an important collection of modern ink painting by one of the contemporary artists.

**Ritual and Revelry**

This early 20th-century Indian painting shows Sita and Rama in a grove of toddy palms, one of the exhibits on the art of drinking. (42 x 32 cm)

**Bubbles and Bankruptcy**

The BM’s display on the history of UK financial crises included a satirical print of 1797 by James Gillray, showing the ‘old lady of Threadneedle Street’ being ravished. (26 x 37 cm)

**Objects in Focus**

The Asahi Shimbun Displays included a 5000-year-old ‘crown’ pot from Japan and a Sowei mask from Sierra Leone. (Pot 31 cm; mask 43 cm)

**Grinning Pumpkins and Views of Greece**

North American Landscape: Kew at the BM, supported by the American Express Foundation, was 2012’s regional planting of the BM Forecourt. Presented in conjunction with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, American sweet grass, lupins, coneflowers, wake-robins and tulip trees were related to special exhibits in the galleries showing how Native Americans used plants for survival and making objects. The season climaxed with rows of grinning Pumpkins or Puns for Halloween, a gathering of gourds overlooking the west lawn.

Displays throughout the year included the popular and all too relevant Bubbles and Bankruptcy: Financial Crises in Britain since 1700. Social Fabric: African Textiles Today explored continuing textile traditions in eastern and southern Africa, showing the political and social messages expressed on brightly dyed kangas and other printed cloths. A single historical moment – the birth of Wedgwood ceramics in 1769 – was captured in a special loan from the Wedgwood family. ‘The First Day’s Vase’, thrown by Josiah Wedgwood himself, copies a scene on a Greek vase of 420–400 BC now in the BM collection.

In Search of Classical Greece: Travel Drawings of Edward Dodwell & Simone Pomardi 1805–1806, supported by The Packard Humanities Institute, took visitors on a journey to Greece itself. Seventy watercolours, sketches and panoramas several metres long record monuments from a time when the country was still part of the Ottoman Empire, capturing that moment when Greece was being ‘rediscovered’ by British Classicists.

**Single Out for Display**

Objects in Focus: The Asahi Shimbun Displays shine a light on particular objects. A 17th-century model of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre showed the changing religious and political history of one site in Jerusalem, a place of pilgrimage since the Roman emperor Constantine built the first church there in AD 326. The pistachio and olive wood model has been in the collection since the BM’s founding in 1753. It was probably the one seen by Mozart when he visited the BM in 1765.

Su concessa Discobolo in modern Chinese clothing. Over 110,000 people examined a group of unusual Japanese pots of 3500–2500 BC. Two ‘flame’ and ‘crown’ pots on loan from Nagaoka were set beside the BM’s own prehistoric Jomon pot, one of the objects from the BBC Radio 4 series, A History of the World in 100 Objects.

**Sweet Mask: Spirit of Sierra Leone**

Was a partnership with the Sierra Leone National Museum and London’s Sierra Leonean diaspora community, who provided information relating to the Sande society. A naming ceremony and masquerade performance at the BM highlighted the dynamism of Sierra Leone’s cultural traditions.
Events and activities

Ancient but Still Active Olympians

‘Imagine David Beckham naked within an ankle-length dress of gossamer linen . . . on view in the British Museum there is, for the moment, an Olympian Beckham of more than two millennia ago . . . a sublime sculpture of such . . . grandeur, nobility and even majesty, that I stood in awe of it for minutes.’ Brian Sewell in the Evening Standard was impressed. So was Andrew Graham-Dixon in the Telegraph, who called it ‘the most tantalising marble sculpture in the entire world’.

The Motya (Mozia) Charioteer – never before displayed in the UK, and on special loan from Sicily – was the star attraction of a popular museum trail, ‘Winning at the Ancient Games’, free to all BM visitors throughout the Olympics. Cheats and chariots, Nike and Hercules, mosaics and marbles – by scanning a QR code on their mobile phones or picking up a leaflet, children and adults could see them all, as they followed a journey through the galleries about sport in the ancient world.

Hercules is said to have inaugurated the Olympics – the length of the stadium (192m) was the reputed distance he could run in one breath. Special BM displays included a newly installed life-size Roman mosaic of the hero and a recently restored marble statue of Hermes (see p.13). Media coverage was extensive, including a blog on the Motya Charioteer, a half-hour film on the Discobolus featuring curators and UK discus-thrower Lawrence Okoye, radio and press reports, and a video tour of the trail on the Time magazine website. Related events throughout the summer included lectures, talks and a conference on ancient sport.

A Stage for Public Events

Many visitors approach the BM through its programme of activities. Films, lectures, workshops, performances and debates relating to the Horse and Shakespeare exhibitions attracted 35,000 participants. Some are annual favourites such as the Big Draw, at which visitors in 2012 were invited to make portraits in the Great Court. Others are tied to specific displays. Family events linked to The Horse: From Arabia to Royal Ascot included a history lesson with live horses on the Forecourt lawn, a Jubilee parade and a falconry display.

For Shakespeare: Staging the World, the BM collaborated with the Royal Shakespeare Company, National Theatre and Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts. The two Shakespeare Friday Lates used the BM’s rooms as a series of stages. Excerpts from Shakespeare’s Roman plays could be seen in front of Greek and Roman sculptures; there were readings, dance, swordplay and
talks from actress Janet Suzman and others. Promenading through the galleries, Human Music sang Shakespeare settings specially composed for the evening. Over 4000 people attended.

Other public events included a discussion on Shakespeare and power with politicians and arts leaders, and a BM/Guardian debate with Lord Falconer, Kamila Shamsie and others on The Drama of Nation Building: Did Shakespeare Change the Course of History? In conjunction with the London Review of Books, scholars James Shapiro, Marina Warner and others debated whether Shakespeare remains contemporary. The LRB lecture series welcomed, among others, a much reported Hilary Mantel discussing our obsession with royal bodies.

Schools and Young People
'Twas great to see the children enjoying the exhibition. I hope we weren’t too noisy! They were so excited to see all the things.’ So wrote one participant praising the BM’s wide-ranging collection of prints and drawings to curate with staff help an exhibition on isolation. The display, followed by structured activities in the Clore Education Centre. Downloadable resources were created for primary and secondary schools: a teacher’s pack, PowerPoint slideshow and activity sheets for pupils. For Shakespeare, the BM offered inset days and an evening private view so teachers could familiarise themselves with the exhibition before leading a school visit. Actors taught young people about Shakespeare and the Tudors, interacting with participants and getting them involved. ‘It was wonderful, such an exciting day,’ wrote one teacher. ‘The children were all so responsive and the activities so multi-sensory (unlike other museums where we can only look).’

The programme reaches all ages. Early Years activities are curriculum-based, such as teaching maths in the Sainsbury Africa Gallery. A-level students from local comprehensive Camden School for Girls were given the run of the BM collection of prints and drawings to curate with staff help an exhibition on isolation. The display, held next to the BM’s Picasso exhibition, was reported in the local press.

Reaching Communities
Off-site visits and on-site programmes reach out to a variety of groups. The BM arranges object-handling, multisensory activities and tailored digital sessions for an increasing number of schools that teach children and young people with special needs.

To facilitate access to the BM, there were tours for visually impaired visitors, BSL-interpreted talks for the hearing impaired and art workshops for people with special needs. Participatory theatre events encouraged community groups to share their experiences as Londoners. The supplementary schools programme reached staff and students through weekend events at the BM, training and outreach. Participants in 2012/13 included African, Arabic, Eritrean, Albanian, Somali, Afghan, Chinese, Jewish and Latin American groups from 14 London boroughs. Across London, over 800 learners who use English as a Second Language (ESOL) were given workshops and guided visits related to the Horae and Shakespeare exhibitions.

Most popular are the BM’s free community-previews which include introductory talks, meeting the curators and evening exhibition views for people from local charities, neighbourhood centres and community groups.

Schools and Young People
The BM runs a wide range of programmes to attract young people – from school visits to children’s activities.
Members and Volunteers

All BM tours are led by trained volunteers. Around 800 volunteers contribute their time annually, most visibly in the public programme that includes running the BM’s hugely popular Hands On desks, at which thousands of children and adults handle objects from the collection and discuss their history and meanings.

The 48,000 British Museum Friends gave over £1 million to the BM’s work in 2012/13. Their contributions supported exhibitions, acquisitions, research, preservation work on the building and the purchase of a high-performance liquid chromatography system to improve the BM’s research into dye stuffs. Members enjoyed a variety of special events, which included private exhibition and gallery views, lectures, performances and demonstrations. Talks ranged from Princess Michael of Kent’s history of the British thoroughbred to a discussion of research into Ashurbanipal’s library.

A new Members’ Room opened in 2012. Overlooking the Great Court, the bright, modern space provides easy access to both the main galleries and the new Sainsbury Exhibitions Galleries due to open in 2014.

Being part of the BM team

Volunteers from Citi help catalogue coins for the new Citi Money Gallery. The BM Friends enjoy a range of benefits, such as the new Members’ Room overlooking the Great Court.
Shakespeare’s Restless World

(5.

On air, in print, online

Shakespeare’s Restless World

‘Utterly gripping,’ said the Guardian. ‘Every day [Neil] MacGregor tempted me into the 16th century. An exemplary radio documentary.’ The Telegraph found the 20-part radio series on Shakespeare and his audiences ‘superb . . . MacGregor has the rare gift for making the unfamiliar graspable.’ The series, concluded the Spectator, ‘lets the objects speak, tell their stories . . . never pinning on them more than the object can bear . . . MacGregor has the knack of asking questions even before we’ve had time to think them, opening up vistas that we didn’t even know were there.’

Shakespeare’s Restless World brought to life the turbulent times of Elizabethan and Jacobean England, and asked what was in the minds of Shakespeare’s playgoers when they walked into the theatre. The jumping off point was objects – from a medal that showed Drake’s circumnavigation of the globe in 1580 to a pedlar’s trunk with hidden Catholic vestments to hold a secret mass.

This collaboration between the BM and BBC Radio 4, broadcast over four weeks in April/May 2012, attracted an average weekly audience of 10.52 million people. Linked elements included a live online Q&A with Neil MacGregor and series curator Barrie Cook, a designated website – with free downloads of the programmes, video clips and music – and a BM blog containing further scholarship. By March 2013, there were 1.7 million downloads of the programmes. The series was also published as a set of CDs and as a book by Allen Lane/Penguin Books. International rights have been sold for Italian, German and American editions.

Broadcasting on Radio
Radio broadcasts have proved highly effective at introducing the BM collection to a wider public. In 2012/13 BM curators appeared on programmes such as BBC Radio 2’s The Ballads of the Games, on which children from the East End composed songs about ancient Olympic athletes.

Shakespeare’s Restless World followed the enormous continuing success of the 100-part radio series, A History of the World in 100 Objects. Worldwide interest in the series, which told a history of the world through 100 objects in the BM collection, continues, with on average 500,000 programmes being downloaded each month. By March 2013, there were 32.5 million downloads of the series worldwide. The book has now been published in 12 other countries, and in 2012/13 the German translation, Eine Geschichte der Welt in 100 Objekten, was adapted for broadcast on Bayerischer Rundfunk.
BM Reaches Millions Worldwide on Television

With award-winning journalist Michael Buerk and historian Bettany Hughes, and a mix of special guests that included Brian Blessed, Myleene Klass and Michael Portillo, Britain’s Secret Treasures was an entertaining six-part television series broadcast over a single week in July 2012. The ITV programmes took the hundreds of thousands of artefacts reported through the BM’s Portable Antiquities Scheme in the last 15 years, and created a countdown of the top 50 archaeological finds made by the UK public from the much publicised Crosby Garrett Roman helmet found in Cumbria to the Palaeolithic Happisburgh handaxe, the oldest manmade object ever found in Britain. Its success was huge, with just under four million people watching each programme. A second series has been commissioned for 2013.

NHK Japan broadcast four documentaries about the BM in 2012, the programmes reaching an audience of up to 10 million people in Japan and drawing a hugely enthusiastic response via social media. The programmes led to a surge in visits to the BM website and sales via the online BM shop. They coincided with the launch of a BM touring exhibition on ancient Egypt at the Mori Arts Center in Tokyo. In China, CCTV co-produced the two-part documentary China with the BM and V&A to coincide with a major loan exhibition to Beijing. They were broadcast on CCTV1, which reaches audiences of up to 800 million people.

Films and videos produced by the BM can be accessed free on the BM website and YouTube. They can also be seen on television on demand via a new BM channel launched on BT Vision in November 2012. The 50 programmes currently available include popular co-productions with BBC Four such as Masterpieces of the British Museum.

‘Britain’s Coolest Movie Event of the Year’

Around 2000 people attended a summer series of outdoor film screenings in the BM Forecourt. As part of the 2012 Shakespeare season supported by BP, the BM teamed up with the BBC and RSC to show the latest Shakespeare productions outdoors – the RSC’s 2012 production of Julius Caesar and two plays from BBC2’s hugely successful The Hollow Crown. Actor Tom Hiddleston and others also attended a screening of Henry V in the BP Lecture Theatre, where it was premiered prior to broadcast.

The BFI’s 2012 Alfred Hitchcock celebration saw the BM present one of Hitchcock’s early silent films, Blackmail (1929) was screened with a live orchestra on the lawn in front of the BM. The Telegraph predicted it would be ‘Britain’s
coolest movie event of the year’. Nearly 1000 tickets were sold.

Future film and television for 2013 includes programmes for BBC1 and BBC2 on Pompeii and Herculaneum and the BM’s first-ever live streaming event at cinemas across the UK. Broadcasting live from the BM, classicist Mary Beard, chef Giorgio Locatelli, BM director Neil MacGregor, curator Paul Roberts and others will bring to life the exhibition Life and Death in Pompeii and Herculaneum.

World Objects in the Evening Standard
In 2012, the London Evening Standard asked the BM to choose 20 objects that stood out for particular communities in the capital. For London: A World City in 20 Objects the newspaper published 20 articles that took readers across the globe – 15th-century Bengal one day, modern-day Kenya the next.

Twenty wasn’t nearly enough to do justice to the hundreds of London communities, all of whom could find objects in the BM that represented their culture and history. The UK Olympic bid promised that London’s diversity meant that ‘every athlete will have a home crowd’. London: A World City in 20 Objects articulated that diversity through the BM collection, drawing on an object of interest for specific communities and exploring it to bring out its cultural value.

The BM articles reached readers across London. The Evening Standard circulates 700,000 copies of the paper daily in the capital. The series was also available online.

New Publications
BM exhibition catalogues received superb reviews in 2012/13. ‘Gripping’ was how the New York Times judged the catalogue for Renaissance to Goya: Prints and Drawings from Spain. ‘Outstanding’ said the Telegraph of Picasso Prints: The Vollard Suite, which sold 3500 copies in hardback, paperback and a special slip-cased edition. It was the first major reassessment of Picasso’s series of prints since the artist’s death.

Shakespeare: Staging the World was accompanied by a catalogue that was both a popular and critical success, selling over 16,000 copies. The Spectator voted it one of the best books of 2012. ‘The catalogue should be in every school library in the land,’ insisted the Evening Standard. ‘Every student of English literature should have his own copy. . . the book should never go out of print.’

Overseas editions included catalogues to accompany touring exhibitions in India, Australia, Germany and elsewhere. A Russian edition of Medals of Dishonour was published; an Indonesian edition of Hajj: Journey to the Art of Islam, and Chinese editions of four titles in the Art in Detail series. The children’s book, How the Olympics Came to Be, was reprinted twice, selling more than 10,000 copies. In total the British Museum Press published 36 new books in 2012/13: from books on Viking love poetry and medieval cooking to research publications on Anglo-Saxon coins and other topics.

Digital Learning
Virtual Autopsy offered visitors young and old a chance to operate an interactive touchscreen and explore CT scans of a 5500-year-old mummy in the Early Egypt gallery. The images allowed visitors to look inside his body in ways never before possible and discover how Gebelein Man – sometimes known as ‘Ginger’ – died at a young age (18–21 years) and was stabbed in the back. The blow was so forceful it shattered his left shoulder blade and a rib, embedding bone fragments into his muscle tissue. International news coverage of the discovery was extensive, from Fox News to The Times.

Visitors with mobile phones could follow an Olympic trail or one for A History of the World, quickly accessing video and audio information about the objects they were seeing. On the website, new materials ranged from academic research to resources for nursery teachers, providing an overview of galleries and facilities and ideas for before, during and after a visit. For the Shakespeare exhibition, online resources were developed for ESOL (English as a Second Language) Learners.

The collections database of over two million objects remains a vast public resource, making up 28% of overall traffic to the BM’s website. Social media are a key entry point, with 150,000 people following the BM on Twitter.
6.

National

Pharaohs across the UK
The BM’s largest UK touring exhibition on Ancient Egypt has proved immensely popular. In 2012/13, Pharaoh: King of Egypt travelled to Leeds, Birmingham, Glasgow and Bristol.

Spotlight Loans and Tours
Winning the Art Fund Prize has enabled the BM to make special loans across the UK. They included a 1st-century AD bronze statue of Herakles, displayed at the De La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill on Sea.

Touring Exhibitions
‘It is so unbelievably exciting to have the exhibition here in Leeds,’ said Katherine Baxter, curator of archaeology at Leeds City Museum. ‘Usually people have to travel to London to see this quality of Egyptian artefacts.’

Over 285,000 visitors so far have come to see the BM travelling exhibition, Pharaoh: King of Egypt – the largest UK loan of Egyptian sculpture, jewellery and papyri ever undertaken by the BM. Leeds City Museum saw a 42% increase in visitor numbers, and hosting the exhibition enabled building developments that have given the museum an upgraded space for new installations and further touring shows. The exhibition continued to Birmingham, Glasgow and Bristol.

Tours are accompanied by community outreach. Warriors of the Plains: 200 Years of Native North American Ritual and Honour uses regalia, weapons and artefacts to explore the ongoing legacy of the warrior figure among contemporary Native North Americans. At the Royal Albert Memorial Museum in Exeter, men and women from the armed forces, some with post-traumatic stress disorder, were invited to use the displays to examine what it means to have been at war. The participants made moving connections between their experiences and those among the Plains Indians, and shared them with the public. ‘It has given me a massive lift,’ said one, ‘raising both my self-esteem and my self-worth.’

BM national tours and other national initiatives are made possible with support from the John Ellerman Foundation, Dorset Foundation, Vivmar Foundation, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and public funding from Arts Council England.

Spotlight Loans and Tours
When the BM was given the 2011 Art Fund Prize, it decided to use the award to take more of the collection on the road. ‘Spotlight Loans and Tours’ offer significant objects from the collection for display in regional museums across the UK. When the loans were announced in June 2012, regional museums were, as the Independent reported, ‘delighted with this initiative’.

In 2012/13, you could see a bronze Herakles in Bexhill; the Mildenhall Great Dish in Ipswich; or the Gayer-Anderson cat in Shetland. The loans are a boon to local museums. They increase visitor numbers, raise the profile of local collections and attract a range of benefits, from wider media coverage to improved fundraising prospects for regional museums – particularly important at a time when local authorities are restricting their funding.
an Ice Age sculpture of swimming reindeer was loaned, the director of the Creswell Heritage Trust said, ‘We value the opportunity to work collaboratively with the BM once again, to create an exciting display to attract new audiences.’ Future loans include a Sikh Fortress Turban touring to six UK venues. Overall the BM loaned 1896 objects nationally. They included coins showing panoramic cityscapes, loaned to Birmingham, and the homoerotic Warren Cup, shown in Plymouth in an exhibition called *Pride in our Past.*

**Partnership Galleries**

At the Royal Cornwall Museum in Truro, *Unravelling the Past* is a new permanent gallery about ancient civilisations. It opened with pyramid-building, readings from Socrates and mummy-making in June 2012. More than 1200 adults and children visited on the opening day.

In Truro BM staff collaborated on developing a new public programme, fundraising advice and gallery interpretation. The gallery also supplements the existing collection with key loans from the BM – an Egyptian sculpture of Sekhmet; a marble bust of Dionysus. ‘We are working closely with the BM,’ reported Museum director Hilary Bracegirdle, ‘to reinterpret the collection closely with the BM.’

**Training and Sharing Knowledge**

Future Curators is a work-based training initiative, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Trainees spend six months at the BM, and one year at a museum in Bristol, Birmingham, Manchester, Newcastle or Glasgow. The range of opportunities is wide. One participant worked at the BM, collaborated with colleagues in Newcastle on an exhibition on ancient Egypt, and dealt with media and public-facing aspects of the project. With such a strong set of skills, she was afterwards hired by National Museums Scotland to curate an important Egyptian collection.

The BM’s newest programme is Fresh Leads. It targets talented people working in museums and galleries across the UK, who wish to turn a great idea into a tangible project. The 12 selected in 2012/13 will be given support to realise their plans. Fresh Leads aims to ensure that partnership work is always forward-looking, innovative and responds to current sector needs. Other national programmes include staff secondments between the BM and five partner museums, a Sharing Expertise Group, and knowledge networks that promote wider use of cross-museum resources, such as the Money and Medals in Museums Network.

**Communities across the UK**

Community-based work builds ties between the BM and hard-to-reach audiences. In 2012 the BM hosted a national cross-sector conference on Art, Heritage and Justice to propose collaborations between prisons and museums. With colleagues in Northern Ireland, Scotland and England, the BM ran Age Collective, a series of seminars that looked at how museums can work more effectively with older people.

Talking Objects, supported by John Lyon’s Charity, is a highly successful programme whose innovative approach to reaching young people uses objects – most recently the Lewis Chessmen – to spark discussion and activities such as film-making. Its success in London has now been rolled out nationally, supported by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. In addition to connecting with young people from Further Education Colleges and NEET organisations in Camden and elsewhere, the BM is advising on setting up similar programmes in museums across the UK.

**Portable Antiquities Scheme**

‘It never ceases to amaze me that such incredibly important objects have survived in the ground for many hundreds of years, waiting to be found by everyday people,’ said Minister for Culture Ed Vaizey. ‘Not only are these objects extremely exciting discoveries, but once reported Treasure or recorded with the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) they have great potential to rewrite the history of this country.’

PAS ensures that knowledge of reported finds in England and Wales remains well-documented and publicly accessible. In 2012, 73,903 finds were reported, with 990 cases of Treasure. Over half a million people visited the PAS website, with its extensive database of finds. Young people are also encouraged to get involved, and in September 2012, the online area for children, *PAS Explorers,* was redesigned with new games, activities and information on archaeology. PAS reached an astonishingly wide audience in 2012, most prominently on ITV’s *Britain’s Secret Treasures* (see p.44) and on *Mad Men* (History Channel) where Johnny Vaughan and Steve Brooker showed their foreshore finds to a PAS expert. PAS awards included a major grant from the AHRC in January 2013 to examine, in collaboration with the University of Leicester, what coin hoards tell us about Roman Britain. Major finds in 2012 included an Iron Age helmet (found in Kent), 159 Roman gold coins (Hertfordshire), a Viking Age hoard of gold and silver metalwork (Yorkshire) and a medieval mount similar to the boar badges worn by supporters of Richard III (London).
BM across the UK
loans to regional
museums in 2012/13

Abertywyth
Aylesbury
Bath
Belfast
Bexhill-on-Sea
Birmingham
Bishop's Stortford
Bristol
Buxton
Cambridge
Cardiff
Carlisle
Chelmsford
Chester
Chichester
Cirencester
Colchester
Compton Verney
Coventry
Croydon
Devonshire
Douglas
Downpatrick
Driffield
Durham
Eastbourne
Edinburgh
Exeter
Falmouth
Glasgow
Hertford
Hereford
Ipswich
Kingston-upon-Hull
Leeds
Lincoln
Littlehampton
Liverpool
Llanfairpwll
London
Luton
Lymington
Manchester
Moray
Newcastle
Newmarket
Norwich
Oxford
Penzance
Peterborough
Plymouth
Preston
Reading
Rochford
Saffron Walden
Sheffield
Shetland
Stratford-on-Avon
Stroud
Sunderland
Swansea
Wakefield
Wellingborough
Wells
Whitworth
Woodbridge
Worcester
Workop
York

BM collection displayed
around the UK
The BM loaned nearly
2000 objects to museums
and galleries across the
country. They included this
one-metre-high bronze
statue of Herakles made
in the 1st century AD. The
mythological hero holds
three apples, a serpent
guarding the tree of the
Hesperides behind him.
International

Leadership Training in India

The BM is collaborating with colleagues in India to deliver a Leadership Training Programme. The programme will be run again in 2013.

As India flourishes economically, its museums are more important than ever in sharing and explaining the region’s rich cultural heritage. Supported by the Indian Government, the BM’s innovative Leadership Training Programme aims to develop a strong foundation for Indian museums in the 21st century.

Participants came from across India to attend training sessions in New Delhi, London and Mumbai. With BM staff, they explored key areas of museum practice, with a special focus on how collections can be used to engage visitors.

The closing ceremony for the course took place in Mumbai, with BM director Neil MacGregor and Indian Minister of Culture Kumari Selja.

So successful has the collaboration proved that further programmes are being run in 2013.

India’s first-ever exhibition on ancient Egypt also proved a popular cultural attraction. ‘Mummy drops by in Mumbai’ was the headline in The Times of India. With support from BP and Reliance Foundation, Mummy was opened by director Neil MacGregor in November 2012. The exhibition received extensive media coverage in India, and was visited by UK Prime Minister David Cameron. The BM display also prompted a community-based programme of wide-ranging talks, tours and workshops. A final event in Mumbai bid Nesperennub farewell on his afterlife journey to other lands, proclaiming: ‘He came. He stayed. He conquered the hearts of Mumbai.’

BM in Africa

The hands-on approach is central to the BM’s museum training in Africa. The workshop, wrote Jatho Peace, a participating conservator from the Uganda Museum, ‘brought much needed collection care skills back home and used the very objects participants handle on a day-to-day basis.’ Supported by the Getty Foundation, the Getty East Africa Programme delivered a series of workshops in Mombasa and Kisumu to 80 participants from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.

The Ford Foundation awarded the BM a further three-year grant in 2012 for its work in West Africa. A collaboration between the BM, Royal Academy (RA) and Nigeria’s National Commission for Museums and Monuments saw Nigerian colleagues come to London to study mount-making, conservation and documentation. The work was linked to the RA’s Bronze exhibition, and participants visited a variety of UK museums. After seeing the BM’s ethnography store, and the freezing and quarantine process for new objects coming into the BM, Ghanaian curator Gideon Agyare wrote: ‘It was an amazing experience for me to...’
see how the Museum cares for its collections.’ The BM also received a major grant from the Arcadia Fund for a five-year project to catalogue 25,000 rock art images from Africa.

**International Training Programme**

‘Your care for education and learning at the Museum has completely changed my ideas about how museums can be living spaces,’ wrote Saleh Mahmoud of Libya.

He was participating in the International Training Programme that the BM holds every summer. In 2012, 26 participants were invited from China, Egypt, India, Iraq, Kenya, Lebanon, Libya, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Sudan, Tanzania and Turkey. Sessions at the BM were complemented by visits to UK partner museums in Wales, Scotland and England. The programme fosters specialist skills, a sense of shared cultural purpose and encourages good museum practice across the globe.

**Fieldwork in Egypt, Sudan and the Middle East**

Archaeological fieldwork in Egypt and Sudan has never been so closely followed by the public, with updates on Twitter and Facebook. BM teams examined decorated tombs at Hagr Edfu in Upper Egypt, and in Sudan recorded rock carvings at Kurgus, Merotic tombs at Kawa and the processional way of a temple at Dangeil, where fragments of ram statues were unearthed. Daily blog posts from Amara West, an excavation in Sudan funded by the Leverhulme Trust, provided insights into the ancient town and its cemetery, including scientific analyses and 3D visualisations.

Collaborations in Iraq included digitising clay tablets from the 7th century BC from the library of the Assyrian king Ashurbanipal. The high-resolution scans have been praised by colleagues internationally for facilitating their research and will include any new finds from present excavations at Nineveh. New excavations were undertaken at ancient Sidon in Lebanon and at Ras al-Hadd in Oman, where settlements extend as far back as the 3rd millennium BC.

**Museums in the UAE, Afghanistan and Iraq**

Five years of planning and activity have brought the Zayed National Museum in Abu Dhabi to a busy phase of building and design. The new UAE national museum will tell the history of the region in a dramatic new building by Foster + Partners. The BM is supporting the Zayed National Museum on every aspect of setting up a new museum, from governance to gallery content. Research teams visit the BM from Abu Dhabi and extended placements are offered to colleagues to observe how BM departments such as Conservation and Scientific Research function.

Before the Museum opens in 2016, the BM is supporting a series of exhibitions in Abu Dhabi. In 2012, a specially created version of *Treasures of the World’s Cultures* showed artefacts covering two million years of human history at the Manarat al Saadiyat gallery.

Working closely with colleagues in Afghanistan, the BM continues to help with the identification and return of materials stolen from the National Museum or seized by the UK Border Agency. In August 2012 the British Army transported back to Kabul nearly 850 such objects – including ivories, a statue of the Buddha, Bronze Age cosmetic flasks, Kushan coins and Islamic pottery. The BM is also extensively involved with the development of a new museum in Basrah, Iraq.

**Ancient Egypt on tour**

BM touring exhibitions use the collection to introduce cultures to audiences across the globe who might otherwise have little opportunity to see them. In Japan, 375,000 visitors saw rare papyri and other artefacts in *The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead: Journey through the Afterlife*. In Brisbane, *Mummy: The Inside Story* – the BM’s hugely successful display combining artefacts and a 3D film journey inside a mummy – was the most popular exhibition ever displayed at the Queensland Museum. BM curator John Taylor drew international press coverage when he discovered hundreds of fragments of papyri in the Australian museum’s own collection – the missing parts of a Book of the Dead in the BM collection.

**BM and China**

To mark its centenary, the National Museum of China in Beijing hosted a joint exhibition of ceramics from the BM and V&A. *Passion for Porcelain* took 150 masterpieces of the 16th–19th centuries to show how designs, technologies and ideas flowed alongside trade between China and Europe. Over 300,000 people attended.

Half a million visitors flocked to the new China Art Museum, Shanghai in its first three months, where a BM display was part of the inaugural celebrations. BM exhibitions also included *The Wonders of Ancient Mesopotamia*, which toured to Hong Kong and Melbourne.

Links with China in 2012 included staff exchanges, a collaboration to develop web
resources for teaching Chinese history using the BM collection, a symposium on seals co-organised with the Chinese National Art Museum, and the publication of the Chinese-language version of A History of the World in 100 Objects.

Human Bodies and Human Rights
In Europe and America, BM exhibitions on China, ancient Greece and Byzantium attracted large crowds. With support from the American Friends of the BM, The Printed Image in China was seen at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, while in Portland, Oregon, The Body Beautiful in Ancient Greece displayed classical sculptures and other objects. The Art Institute of Chicago hosted Late Roman and Early Byzantine Treasures from the BM. The Cyrus Cylinder, most prominent of the year’s loans, went to the USA, where over 150,000 people saw it in Washington DC. It then toured to Houston, New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles. When it was shown at the National Museum of Iran in 2010/11, visitors flocked to see the ancient cuneiform ‘bill of rights’, issued by Cyrus the Great of Persia after conquering Babylon in 539 BC. The cylinder is a symbol of respect for different peoples and different faiths. One US-based Iranian newspaper, reporting the display in Washington, wrote: ‘Credit the British Museum for unleashing the Cyrus Cylinder as a “weapon of mass diplomacy,” a catalyst to considering common principles between nations too often thought to embody “clashing civilizations.”’

BM touring exhibitions to Europe included Medals of Dishonour at the Hermitage in St Petersburg; Treasures of the World’s Cultures in Bonn; and Renaissance to Goya: Prints and Drawings from Spain at the Prado in Madrid. Among the 2328 objects loaned internationally in 2012/13 were 16th-century manuscripts (Zagreb), Turkish photographs (Istanbul), an Etruscan shell carved with a human head (Montreal); Islamic art (Indianapolis; Doha); ancient glass (Kyoto); and works by Van Dyck (Madrid) and Toulouse-Lautrec (Canberra).
The British Museum Review 2012/13

BM across the globe
a selection of activities in 2012/13

1. USA
The cuneiform Cyrus Cylinder of 539-530 bc, excavated in Babylon in 1879, records rights for people of different nations. Lent to Iran two years ago, Cyrus the Great’s declaration is being shown in five cities in the USA in 2013.

2. Bolivia
For BBC4’s The Lost Kingdoms of South America, curator Jago Cooper investigated ancient civilisations in Colombia, Peru and Bolivia, where the Tiwanaku people made this small boat over 1000 years ago. One million viewers watched each episode.

3. Northern Ireland
From Amsterdam to Zagreb, the BM’s collection was seen across Europe. In the UK, the BM loaned 1896 objects, including a Late Bronze Age sword on long-term display at Down County Museum.

4. Germany
Bull-fish are a common feature of the Nile. This ancient Egyptian glass version was sent to Berlin for an exhibition on Nefertiti and Tell al-Amarna. It was one of 2328 international loans in 2012/13.

5. Nigeria
With longstanding ties in West Africa, the BM facilitated loans from Nigeria for the Royal Academy’s Royce exhibition. Colleagues from Nigeria spent time training at the BM, preparing exhibits which included this Nigerian hunter.

6. Uganda
In East Africa, 80 participants from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda attended BM workshops in collections care. The training in Mombasa and Kisumu was followed by on-site visits and advice.

7. Lebanon
Inhabited for thousands of years, Sidon was an important coastal town in ancient Phoenicia. The BM is assisting the Department of Antiquities of Lebanon to excavate the site. Discoveries in 2012 included this Bronze Age jar.

8. United Arab Emirates
A gold pectoral from Colombia was one of the Treasures of the World’s Cultures, which travelled to Bonn, Shanghai and the UAE. Time Out Abu Dhabi praised the exhibition’s many ‘stories which broaden our view of human history’.

9. India
Collaborations ranged from training in cultural leadership to lending Mummy: The Inside Story, India’s first-ever exhibition on ancient Egypt, which Prime Minister David Cameron was shown during an official visit to Mumbai.

10. Russia
Medals of Dishonour, a BM exhibition of satirical medals first seen in London in 2009, was displayed at the Hermitage in St Petersburg. The BM’s first exhibition in Russia included this French medallion of 1858 mocking Napoleon.

11. China
Ties with China include staff exchanges and a major new research project, Ab Gure and Costelo. The BM took four exhibitions to China, and toured Chinese prints (including Clothing Over Top by Wu Jide) in the USA.

12. Australia
Mummies went to Brisbane, Mesopotamia to Melbourne and Toulouse-Lautrec to Canberra as BM loans. A four-year research project with the National Museum of Australia will lead to a major exhibition in 2015 on indigenous Australian art.
Support for the BM

As the museum of the world for the world, the BM is a charity in its own right and securing support for its work involves everybody in the Museum. This year, however, two people deserve a special mention and thanks. Francis Finlay has served both as a member of the Board of Trustees and as Chairman of the American Friends of the British Museum. Under Francis’ leadership the American Friends of the BM have attracted record numbers of financial and in-kind gifts to the Museum from US supporters. Despite leaving the UK Board of Trustees, Francis will continue to work with his fellow directors to steer the American Friends. He also remains an active member of the Vollard Patrons Group.

Kate de Rothschild has been Chair of the British Museum Patrons for seven years. In addition to the Patrons’ vital support for acquisitions and the International Training Programme, Kate also pioneered Patron involvement in the Museum’s public programme, most recently their transformative support for the Ice Age exhibition.

The BM’s programme of major exhibitions and activities is international in scope and has attracted significant funding from organisations with whom the Museum is working for the first time. Life and Death in Pompeii and Herculaneum was the Museum’s first sponsorship from Goldman Sachs. 2013 has also seen the first major exhibition collaboration with The Packard Humanities Institute, which lent drawings from its collection and funded the exhibition, In Search of Classical Greece: Travel Drawings of Edward Dodwell and Simone Pomardi 1805–1806.

Sponsored curatorships also support the BM’s research and public programme. In the John Addis Gallery, Line and Spirituality: Modern Calligraphy by Moshkin Qalam and Muhammad-Ali was curated by Ladan Akbarnia, the Farjam curator, and included a group of over 30 works given as an anonymous donation.

The BM received welcome support for its work to promote access to its collection and its scholarship. In 2012 the Museum acquired a digital copy of the Trust for African Rock Art (TARA) photographic archive to ensure that this important collection is preserved and made widely available, thanks to generous support from the Arcadia Fund. As well as cataloguing photographs of rock art sites from across Africa, the BM will now be able to digitise its own African pictorial collection. In 2012 the Pilgrim Trust and the Mercers’ Company supported the digital cataloguing of the Museum’s collection of British portrait prints. The BM *Technical Research Bulletin* was supported by the MacRobert Trust and the Idlewild Trust.

Last year the Museum designated a Fund for the Future to ensure that income from bequests will have a lasting impact. This year a number of bequests have been received and are noted in full in the list of supporters in the Appendix (pp.66–9). Theresia Buch’s legacy to the Museum will support Japanese acquisitions, in keeping with her interest when she was a regular visitor. Margaret Bliss’s legacy will enable the BM to continue the International Training Programme, which offers opportunities for curators and scholars from around the world and would not happen without generous donors.

In a year that saw the opening of a new Members’ Room at the heart of the Museum, the BM is most grateful for the continued generosity and involvement of its many supporters.

Gifts and acquisitions

This print of c.1790, in which Leopold II of Austria meets Ferdinand of Naples and Sicily, is one of several gifts made in honour of retired Keeper Antony Griffiths. The detail shows how its owner decorated it with fabrics. Such types of decoration rarely survive. This example, donated by Christopher Mendez, is the only one of its kind in the BM. (29 x 30 cm)
Exhibitions

LONDON

Hajj: Journey to the Heart of Islam
26 January to 15 April 2012
Supported by HSBC Amanah

The Horse: From Arabia to Royal Ascot
24 May to 30 September 2012
Supported by the Board of Trustees of the Saudi Equestrian Fund, the Layan Cultural Foundation and Juddmonte Farms

Shakespeare: Staging the World
19 July to 25 November 2012
Part of the World Shakespeare Festival and London 2012 Festival

Ice Age Art: Arrival of the Modern Mind
7 February to 28 April 2013
Supported by The Packard Institute of Humanities

Life and Death in Pompeii and Herculaneum
28 March to 29 September 2013
Supported by Goldman Sachs

The Cost of Living in Roman and Modern Britain
11 August 2011 to 15 April 2012

Mine to Medals: The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games: Medals
19 September 2011 to 9 September 2012
Supported by Rio Tinto

Ritual and Revelry: The Art of Drinking in Asia
Exhibitions: London and Touring

AUSTRALIA

Mummy: The Inside Story
Queensland Museum, Brisbane
21 April to 21 October 2012

The Wonders of Ancient Mesopotamia
Melbourne Museum
4 May to 7 October 2012

CHINA

Fantastic Creatures
Hong Kong Museum of Art
20 January to 11 April 2012

Passion for Porcelain: Masterpieces of Ceramics from the British Museum and the V&A
National Museum of China, Beijing
22 June 2012 to 6 January 2013

Treasures of the World’s Cultures: In Human Form
China Art Museum, Shanghai
1 October to 31 December 2012

INDIA

The Wonders of Ancient Mesopotamia
Hong Kong Museum of History
29 January to 15 May 2013

GERMANY

Treasures of the World’s Cultures
Bundes Kunsthalle Bonn
30 November 2012 to 7 April 2013

Showcasing the British Museum in the Asia-Pacific

Exhibitions

LONDON

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Ritual and Revelry: The Art of Drinking in Asia

Exhibitions: London and Touring

Appendices

8. Appendices

65 Exhibitions: London and Touring

66 Supporters

69 Community Groups

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<td>Wanstead Parklands Community Project</td>
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<td>Warburg Institute</td>
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<td>West Hampstead</td>
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<td>Waltham Forest Chinese Association</td>
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The Trustees and the Director would like to thank all staff and volunteers for their invaluable contribution to the BM.
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A. Wookhart-Nazir  C. Weng
C. Weng  D. Wood
D. Wood  V. Wood
V. Wood  S. Woodford
S. Woodford  E. Woodthorpe
E. Woodthorpe  H. Wright
H. Wright  C. Wu
C. Wu  Y. Xie
Y. Xie  C. Yankson
C. Yankson  Y. Yasumura
Y. Yasumura  S. Yekinni
S. Yekinni  J. Zelen
J. Zelen  K. Zealey
K. Zealey  J. Zelen
J. Zelen  Y. Zhang
Y. Zhang  Z. Zhang
Z. Zhang  X. Zheng
X. Zheng  F. Zotta
F. Zotta

In 2012/13 BM objects
were seen in the UK
and across the world

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Aylesbury
Bath
Bellfort
Bexhill-on-Sea
Birmingham
Bishop’s Stortford
Bristol
Buxton
Cambridge
Cardiff
Carlisle
Chelmsford
Cheltenham
Chichester
Colchester
Compton Verney
Coventry
Croydon
Devonshire
Downpatrick
Duffield
Durham
Eastbourne
Edinburgh
Exeter
Edinburgh
Glasgow
Hertford
Hemel Hempstead
Kingdom-upon-Hull
Leeds
Lincoln
Littlehampton
Liverpool
Llanfairfair
London
Lymington
Manchester
Moray
Newcastle
Newmarket
Norwich
Penzance
Pittsworth
Plymouth
Preston
Reading
Romford
Saffron Walden
Sheffield
Sherland
Stratford-upon-Avon
Stirling
Swaffham
Swansea
Wakefield
Wellingborough
Werbeg
Whitborn
Woodbridge
Worcester
Workop
York
Cardiff
New Haven
and across the world

Aachen
Abu Dhabi
Ahart Bay
Amsterdam
Angers
Karlsruhe
Jerusalem
Istanbul
Indianapolis
Houston
Hong Kong
Helsinki
Ghent
Genk
Geneva
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Dordrecht
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Bruges
Boulogne-sur-Mer
Bonn
Boulogne-sur-Mer
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