

Winter 2013

For more information, visit britishmuseum.org/wcec



In this issue

- Inside the building
- Site and design update
- Meet the team
- Who to contact

Summary

Throughout the autumn all areas of the project have been progressing at pace as we near building completion. Over the coming months, preparations for staff moving into the building will begin, ahead of the moves in the early part of next year. The building will be fully occupied by the end of spring 2014.

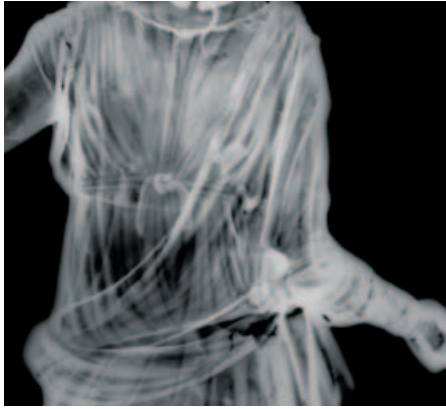
The picture above shows the completed Sainsbury Exhibitions Gallery. The gallery was handed over to the Museum in October for preparation of the space in readiness for the first exhibition in March next year.



The Museum acknowledges the generous support of the Heritage Lottery Fund, who have confirmed a £10 million grant for the WCEC. The HLF's support will provide resources to enable the Museum to expand its innovative outreach and public engagement, and maintain the highest standards of collections care.

X-ray of bronze votive statue.

Bronze votive statue of a young woman, perhaps a priestess or goddess. Said to be from the Sanctuary of Diana, Nemi, Italy. Etrusco-Latin, 2nd century BC.



Inside the building

The WCEC will provide state-of-the-art laboratories, studios and research facilities for the Department of Conservation and Scientific Research. One major advance will be the new radiography facility currently being installed in the lowest basement. Although the current Museum X-ray facilities are good, the room itself is small and access is restricted, with small doors and tight turns limiting what can be examined. X-ray film is also still used in the Museum which is getting increasingly difficult to obtain and requires the use of large quantities of processor chemicals. As part of the WCEC, a new radiography suite is being constructed which will allow us to X-ray much larger objects than is currently the case. At the centre of this facility is a large double-height enclosure room where the X-ray exposures will take place. To provide sufficient shielding for the powerful X-ray beams required to examine large sculptures, the room has walls almost one metre thick which were cast in special high-density

concrete in one carefully controlled concrete pour. The enclosure has a two-metre-wide door, so that large objects can be brought in on a pallet lift. The new system will be fully digital and its use will enable the Museum to record both normal 'still' X-rays and moving X-ray images (real-time radiography). It will also for the first time give the British Museum the ability to view the internal structure of objects. This facility will be unique in a European museum and it will revolutionise the Museum's approach to the examination of the collection.

Meet the team



Ann Dalzell,
Project Manager
for Arup.

Ann Dalzell, Arup

My role as mechanical engineer and Project Manager for Arup has been to assist and lead a team of Arup colleagues in the design and co-ordination of services for the building, and to ensure that these are in alignment with the building architecture and structure. Services include heating, ventilation, drainage, electrics, lighting, security, lifts and acoustics as well as fire strategy. Energy efficiency and conservation measures were also important design considerations. This building is unusual in having so many diverse elements including workshops conservation studios, science laboratories and an exhibitions gallery,

an internal vehicle road and office spaces, each having very different service requirements. The resulting building is the most complex in which I have been involved.

Working on the WCEC has been a challenge and a pleasure. We have worked closely with the future users of the building and a great team of architects, engineers and construction managers to help design a building that will best fit the needs of the Museum for years to come. The excellent site team are now completing the process and it is looking very exciting. I hope the Museum and the visiting public will enjoy using the building for a very long time.

Site and design update

In October the Sainsbury Exhibitions Gallery was successfully handed over to the Museum. This is the first space in the new Centre that the Museum has taken possession of, enabling the Exhibitions team to begin preparations for the first major show, the BP exhibition *Vikings: life and legend*, opening on 6 March 2014.

Elsewhere on site, the final floor finish has been applied to basement areas and more levels are being prepared for handover before the installation of roller racking in December 2013 for the storage of objects. The truck and passenger lifts continue to progress at pace with the truck lift now operational and in the process of being tested. The first of the building's passenger lifts is also now in use.

On the building's external façade, the installation of Portland stone continues to advance along with the installation of the cast glass across all external elevations. Work to connect the existing Museum buildings to the WCEC continues to progress with a number of spaces already handed over to the Museum.

Final selection of furniture for the building is progressing in preparation for the moves into the building early next year. Furniture installation will commence in November.

Who to contact

If you have any questions or would like more information about the project, please contact Louise Fenner on 020 7323 8858 or wcec@britishmuseum.org

If you have any questions regarding the activities on site you can also contact Willie Shaw at Mace on 020 8256 9527 or willie.shaw@macegroup.com