2010
2011
Review
The British Museum
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*I know yesterday.*
*I know tomorrow.*
*As for yesterday,*
*that is Osiris.*
*As for tomorrow,*
*that is the sun god.*

*Spell 17,*
*Book of the Dead*
The best radio programme I've ever heard," wrote one admirer — and she'd been listening for 65 years. A History of the World in 100 Objects drew praise from across the globe. The innovative collaboration between the BM and BBC Radio 4 produced an immense popular response, not least in attracting visitors to the Museum itself to see the objects that had so entranced them on the radio.

In 2010, 5.9 million people visited the BM in London, making it for the fourth year running the UK's top visitor attraction. They could explore the afterlife with rare Egyptian papyri, visit a South Africa Landscape in the Forecourt, or enjoy Renaissance feasts or Nigerian films. Fascinating objects from Afghanistan were displayed in an exhibition that included ivories looted from the National Museum of Afghanistan between 1992 and 1994, dramatically found and generously purchased by a donor for return to Kabul.

The World Conservation and Exhibitions Centre has received outstandingly generous support. The major building project at the BM will improve facilities and extend the BM's national and international presence, increasing the number of loans the BM will be able to make and supporting joint projects in conservation, research and training. In September 2010, the Sainsbury family through the Linbury Trust, chaired by Lord Sainsbury of Preston Candover, and the Monument Partnership galleries such as this year's new Roman gallery at the Yorkshire Museum have been a particular success. Such galleries draw on the BM collection to support and extend regional collections and produce a richer visitor experience than would otherwise have been possible for the public across Britain.

The BM seeks to be a museum for the nation not by building outposts, but by collaborating with regional partners, expert as they already are in their own collections and audiences. Partnership galleries such as this year’s new Roman gallery at the Yorkshire Museum have been a particular success. Such galleries have drawn support from the BM collection to extend regional collections and produce a richer visitor experience than would otherwise have been possible for the public across Britain.

Financial support of all its donors and supporters. Most recent among them has been Citi's generous sponsorship of the new presentation of the Money Gallery, which draws on the BM’s rare collection of more than one million coins, from the 7th century bc to the present day. When funds are short, it is often difficult to make great acquisitions, so we should like particularly to thank the Friends of the British Museum, who gave £725,000 toward the purchase of the Nimrud ivories, possibly the most important addition to the Museum’s collection in the year under review. The BM's increasing presence nationally and internationally has also drawn support from a wide range of individuals and bodies across the globe, and we are pleased to see those wider endeavours so honoured. This year we lost the remarkable contribution of three Trustees. Both Stephen Green and James Sassoon answered the greater challenge to serve in Government, and Lord Powell came to the end of his second term. My grateful thanks to both on behalf of the BM.

For their hard work and dedication, the Trustees would like to thank all BM staff and volunteers. Without them, the collection could not achieve its distinctive scholarship, care, public presence and affection in the hearts of visitors worldwide.

Niall FitzGerald KBE
Chairman of the Trustees
At the museum

Donations to the collection included this wooden sculpture by Tanzanian artist George Lilanga (1934–2005). It combines modern Makonde carving with the bright colours of the Tingatinga School. (65 x 20 x 19 cm)
The collection

The BM collection is a vast public resource. It is subject to constant change and reinterpretation as we ask new questions of the past. The enormous success in 2010 of the BM/BBC Radio 4 series *A History of the World in 100 Objects*, which drew several million listeners across the UK and the globe each week, showed just how inspiring the collection and its stories could be. How the BM works with the collection will be transformed by the new World Conservation and Exhibitions Centre, with improved collection stores, better facilities to transform BM loans and a consolidated research environment. Building work on the site began in April 2010 and construction is due to be complete in late 2013.

From Nimrud to the modern Middle East

The Nimrud palace ivories date from the 9th to 7th century BC. A few were carved in the Assyrian capital of Nimrud in northern Iraq, but most were produced in Phoenicia (modern Lebanon), Syria and perhaps Egypt. Excavated in Iraq between 1949 and 1963, and objects of great beauty, they are a major source of information about this period of ancient history.

Significant funding from the British Museum Friends (raised in part by an appeal that saw over 1800 individual BM Members donate), along with contributions from The Art Fund, National Heritage Memorial Fund and the Headley Trust, has enabled the BM to acquire over 6000 of these outstanding artefacts and fragments. The ivories are an important addition to the BM’s Middle East collection and form its largest acquisition since the Second World War. With the Assyrian reliefs and other artefacts from Nimrud, the acquisition of the ivories ensures that a great range of Nimrud materials can now be seen and studied together.

Promoting public understanding of the Middle East remains an essential aim of the BM. To ensure the changing history of the region is recorded for future generations, a group of individuals has established a fund to purchase works on paper by contemporary Middle Eastern artists. The Modern Middle East Fund enables acquisitions such as *Endless Prayers XIII* (2008) by Iranian artist Y.Z. Kami. A national collection of contemporary Middle Eastern photographs, held jointly with the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), has also been established with the support of The Art Fund. Featuring photographers from Morocco to Lebanon, Palestine to Saudi Arabia, the collection will feature in a major exhibition at the V&A in 2012.

Drolls and other British enthusiasms

In 2010, the BM print collection gained its largest acquisition in the past 100 years. The major purchase of 7250 mezzotints – with support from the National Heritage Memorial Fund, BM Friends, The Art Fund and others – will shed invaluable light on British social history and fill significant gaps in the collection. Mezzotint, or ‘à la manière anglaise’, was the medium that made English prints so widely celebrated on the Continent. The selection ranges widely – 17th-century ‘drolls’ or humorous scenes; an album of satires assembled by the Duchess of Northumberland in the 1770s; 19th-century prints based on fashionable paintings and people of the day.

The prints will be made available worldwide as part of the BM’s highly praised and much accessed online collection of high-resolution prints and drawings, freely available to all to download, examine in detail and enjoy.

Ornaments and beakers in ancient Britain

BM-led fieldwork at a Bronze Age monument in Ringlemere, Kent uncovered many burial goods. Among the year’s donations to the collection were Anglo-Saxon items from this excavation. The BM also purchased Treasure items from the excavation that included silver rings threaded with amber beads, and a complete and unblemished glass claw beaker. After initial conservation, the vessel was put on immediate display to the public, where it plays a key role in the BM galleries of medieval Europe.

Further west, the history of Britain was redrawn off the coast of Salcombe in south Devon, when the first evidence of tin trade in Bronze Age Britain was uncovered by a local archaeology group. The tin ingots were among an important hoard of 320 ornaments and weapons from 1300–800 BC acquired by the BM in 2010, with the support of The Art Fund and others.

Condoms, clothes and clocks

Gifts to the BM remain essential to developing the collection. Contemporary African artworks donated by an anonymous collector included *The Pugilist*, a wooden sculpture by Tanzanian artist George Lilanga, and *Sida*, a painting about HIV and AIDS made of oil and condoms on canvas by Congolese artist Chéri Samba. In January 2011, at the opening of the display *Adornment and Identity: Jewellery and Costume from Oman*, supported by BP, the Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism of Oman announced that the costumes on loan would be given to the BM. Fifty complete...
English long-case clocks and three hoop-and-spike clocks were among a donation by Michael Grange of 164 items that document the history of British clock-making outside London in the 18th century.

Such donations enable the BM to maintain the variety of the collection. They complement a wide range of acquisitions large and small. In 2010/11 these included 34 Afghan war rugs; a fan’s football helmet from the 2010 World Cup in South Africa; an 18th-century drawing by Swiss artist Jean Étienne Liotard showing two western ladies dressed in Turkish costume; a porcelain beaker made in Staffordshire in 1787 showing children at work; and a rare Southern Song dynasty painting from 13th-century China depicting a falconer and a horse.

Improved spaces

For the six million or so annual visitors to the BM, how the permanent collection is presented is central to their experience. The latest scholarship is incorporated, as are new acquisitions. Such a heavily used public space requires constant care and refurbishment. 2010 was the tenth anniversary of the Korea Foundation Gallery, and a year of activities began with the repapering by BM conservators of the gallery’s sarangbang or scholar’s study. Some of the work was carried out in situ, where the public could watch and ask questions about this finely honed and delicate process. Conservators later perched in the narrow space over the study’s roof tiles, in order to clean them on-site, rather than dismantle the display and remove it from public view.

The Sainsbury Africa Gallery was modified to highlight objects relevant to the summer’s South Africa Landscape in the BM Forecourt. A new display was designed for the marble frieze showing Centaurs and Lapiths from the Temple of Apollo at Bassae. Work undertaken in the Sudan, Egypt and Nubia gallery enabled the BM to install recent donations of rock art and rock gongs from the fourth cataract of the Nile, where BM staff have been engaged in a programme of rescue archaeology.

Despair, 2003

The Art Fund Collection of Middle Eastern Photography, acquired jointly with the V&A, included Sukran Moral’s exploration of estrangement and migration in modern Turkey. (66.5 x 100 cm)

Child’s bonnet, 2010

Omani costumes donated to the collection by the government of Oman included this embroidered hat from Nizwa. (Height 18 cm)
Exhibitions

Exhibitions at the BM have grown in recent years. Record numbers of visitors have attended ‘The First Emperor, Hadrian and other major exhibitions. The Reading Room has been a dramatic platform for Chinese tomb warriors and Aztec masks, but its function as a display space is limited by its size and restricted access. In the new World Conservation and Exhibitions Centre, a tailor-made exhibitions suite will permit larger, more flexibly designed international exhibitions. The building, designed by architects Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners, will hold over 1000 sq.m. of exhibition space.

Italian Renaissance drawings

‘The first thing you’ll notice’, wrote Richard Dorment in the Telegraph of the BP Special Exhibition Fra Angelico to Leonardo: Italian Renaissance Drawings, ‘is the intensity with which visitors are looking, engaging with their mind as well as with their eyes.’ This major exhibition held in collaboration with the Uffizi Gallery in Florence drew over 116,000 people to the Reading Room. The 100 drawings selected from the BM and the Uffizi featured masterpieces by some of the greatest artists of the Italian Renaissance, including Botticelli, Mantegna, Raphael, Michelangelo and Titian. These exquisite works were contextualised by the inclusion of related paintings, classical sculpture and specially commissioned films showing relevant sites in Venice and Florence.

Time Out noted that ‘after taking us to China, Iraq, Iran, India, Mexico and Nigeria, the British Museum’s latest show looks no further afield than cinquecento Italy – but this too is a journey of discovery.’ It was a ‘magnificent exhibition’ said the Wall Street Journal. Rachel Campbell-Johnston called it ‘the finest show of its kind’, taking the absorbed visitor on a trip through time as if ‘you are back in the workshop, looking over the shoulder of the master absorbed in his thoughts’.

Award-winning landscapes

The BM’s annual collaboration with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, to plant a world landscape in the BM Forecourt has proved an immense success. The previous year’s Indian Summer programme sponsored by HSBC included an India Landscape, and won two Hollis Sponsorship Awards in March 2010 and two Arts & Business Awards in November 2010 for both brand awareness and international reach. Judges praised the BM and HSBC for having ‘used culture to engage global audiences’.

In 2010, the South Africa Landscape, sponsored by Barclays, brought into bloom African lilies, bright orange treasure flowers and shocking pink fig marigolds amid a range of flora from the Eastern and Western Capes. Related displays from continental Africa inside the BM included the major exhibition Kingdom of Ife: Sculptures from West Africa, sponsored by Santander with additional support provided by the A.G. Leventis Foundation, and Impressions of Africa, a display of money, medals and stamps from South Africa, Ghana, Nigeria, Zimbabwe and other African states. Both proved popular, with Kingdom of Ife garnering a string of superlative reviews. ‘Nobody –’ wrote Waldemar Januszczak in the Sunday Times, ‘and I mean nobody – in Britain should miss it. Why? Because it changes our understanding of civilisation. Because it rewrites the story of art. Because it is a once-in-a-lifetime revolutionary event.’

The 2011 Australian Season, supported by Rio Tinto, features an Australia Landscape: Kew at the British Museum and runs from April to October 2011. It is accompanied by a variety of events and two exhibitions, Out of Australia: Prints and Drawings from Sidney Nolan to Rover Thomas and Baskets and Belongings: Indigenous Australian Histories.

Reading the Book of the Dead

That death could be the subject of so much vitality startled most reviewers of the BP Special Exhibition Journey through the Afterlife: Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead. The ancient book is a varying compilation of spells to guide the dead safely through the afterlife, and exists in many forms. The drama of the deceased, the spells to ward off perils, the attendants and
Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead
Visitors admire the full 37-metre run of the fragile Greenfield Papyrus, specially mounted for display in the exhibition Journey through the Afterlife. (Height 46–49.5 cm)
judges, were set out in hieroglyphics and drawings on fragile papyri, sarcophagi, stone blocks and amulets.

Over 192,000 visitors attended, including over 20,000 schoolchildren and their teachers. Many found the displays astounding, showing as they did the Ancient Egyptians’ ‘passion for the world’, as the Guardian put it. The Independent encouraged its readers to hurry to Bloomsbury to revel in the ‘sheer beauty’ of the books. The exhibition climax was a great curving display of the 37-metre Greenfield Papyrus, the longest Book of the Dead in the world, never before shown in its entirety and specially conserved to permit this rare public outing.

The exhibition was the first of three focusing on journeys of faith, and is followed by Treasures of Heaven: Saints, Relics and Devotion in Medieval Europe in 2011 and Hajj: Journey to the Heart of Islam in 2012.

Cultural crossroads in Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Crossroads of the Ancient World, supported by Bank of America Merrill Lynch, with additional support from the Neil Kreitman Foundation, was ‘a must-see exhibition’, according to Night Waves (BBC Radio 3). The displays explored four millennia of culture at this crossroads along the Silk Road, for Afghanistan linked the great trading routes of ancient Iran, Central Asia, India, China and Europe. Its unique location left an extraordinary legacy.

The exhibition was opened by Mr Hamid Karzai, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, in March 2011. The displays were a significant opportunity for the public to consider not just the politics of Afghanistan, but its culture, with over 200 loans from the National Museum in Kabul, all of which survive only because they were hidden during the turbulent decades of the late 20th century. Rarely seen exhibits ranged from gold treasure from 2000 BC, the earliest found in Afghanistan, to ivory carvings of women, exquisite inlaid gold jewellery, bronze statuettes, precious glass vessels and a coruscating gold crown of the 1st century AD that folded up for easy transport.

Impressions of the world

‘Even by its own high standards, the British Museum this spring is surpassing itself,’ wrote the Financial Times. The paper judged The Printed Image in China from the 8th to the 21st Centuries, alongside Fra Angelico to Leonardo and Kingdom of Ife, one of ‘a trio of shows of great aesthetic beauty and conviction, taking us to the heart of three different civilisations’. Attracting nearly 230,000 visitors, the exhibition celebrated the invention of printing on paper in China – from an early repeated woodblock print of the Medicine Buddha to a contemporary scene from the People’s Republic, showing two men and a little girl chatting over tea in a noodle shop.

Over 340,000 people visited Picasso to Julie Mehretu: Modern Drawings from the British Museum Collection. The Independent found the exhibition of drawings by Picasso, Matisse, de Chirico, Kiefer, Richter, Jim Dine, Judy Chicago and others ‘fun, intriguing and . . . enlightening.’ ‘If this is what the British Museum is up to with its collection purchases, one can only say, “Good on them”.’

Literal impressions were the focus of Eric Gill: Public and Private Art. The display set coin, stamp and medal designs alongside engravings and sculpture to get to the heart of the inventor of the typeface Gill Sans and one of Britain’s best-known sculptors.

The varieties of religious experience

Jewish Living and Giving was one of many smaller displays that took religion as its focus. In 1759, the year in which the BM opened to the public, the Jewish merchant and scholar...
Solomon da Costa donated an astonishing group of Hebrew books and manuscripts that had originally belonged to Charles II to the BM. They were displayed among a fascinating array of Jewish artefacts in the collection. These included a wedding ring associated with London’s Bevis Marks synagogue and an 18th-century embroidered Torah binder. ‘Treasures from Medieval York’ included the gold and sapphire Middleham Jewel, engraved with Christian images of the Trinity and the Nativity, while ‘Images and Sacred Texts: Buddhism across Asia’ used artefacts to explain the ‘three jewels’ of Buddhism: the Buddha, dharma (teachings) and sangha (monastic community). Seals from the Islamic World were displayed in ‘Lasting Impressions’, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

A History of the World in focus

To coincide with the BM’s collaboration with BBC Radio 4, ‘A History of the World in 100 Objects’, the objects themselves became miniature displays set amid the galleries of the permanent collection. Visitors could pick up a special guide to the 100 objects, with maps directing them across the BM and the world history that its unparalleled collection represents.

The popular Asahi Shimbun Displays explore a single object and in 2010, three of the objects chosen featured in the radio series: an Ice Age swimming reindeer, a Mayan relief of royal blood-letting and an Akan drum, brought to Virginia from West Africa around 1700. These were followed by ‘Agents of the Buddha’, a pair of 17th-century wooden Japanese sculptures of the Bodhisattvas Fugen and Monju, and ‘Sikh Fortress Turban’, a display focusing on the history, symbolism and conservation challenges of a 19th-century cloth turban.

Conservation and scientific research

The BM is known across the world for its standards of conservation and scientific research. The very discipline of museum conservation, its philosophy and techniques, have in some areas largely been shaped by the BM’s historical work on the collection. The gradual development of such specialisations has left the BM with a number of discrete sites, each working in separate facilities that were never intended for the technologies now put to use in them. The new World Conservation and Exhibitions Centre is a forward-thinking solution to this problem. The Centre will bring together these dispersed disciplines in up-to-date facilities that will permit the finest inter-disciplinary work that can be achieved for the collection and for the many partners worldwide who consult the BM on collections care.

Exhibitions are opportunities to devote significant attention to different parts of the collection, offering new prospects for in-depth study. Conservation of over 160 Egyptian papyri, stone and wood coffins, black-varnished divine figures and scribes’ implements for the exhibition ‘Journey through the Afterlife’ was not just essential to permit the fragile items to go on display, but became a focus of popular interest, both in the exhibition...
itself, where conservation techniques were explained, and online, where videos on YouTube showed BM conservators treating the objects.

While analysis of materials and techniques in advance of an exhibition of paintings is common, such an investigative campaign of large numbers of drawings is still a rarity. The three-year long exploration of 47 Italian Renaissance drawings in the exhibition *Fra Angelico to Leonardo*, with support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, broke new ground in the close collaboration between scientists, conservators and curators.

Non-invasive analysis of the works uncovered new information about the papers and media the artists chose, hitherto unseen underdrawings by artists such as Mantegna and Leonardo, and fascinating evidence of working methods. The discoveries were presented in the exhibition and its accompanying publication, while detailed discussions of the findings were given in a sold-out conference and special journal, *Italian Renaissance Drawings: Technical Examination and Analysis*. It was this in-depth scholarly attention which made the BM – according to Jonathan Jones, writing in the *Guardian* – ‘the ideal place for such an exhibition’.

**Tough decisions in conservation**

Conservation can reveal the destructive relationship between the component parts of an object. A 19th-century turban for a Sikh warrior posed a particular challenge. Iron-based black dye in the cotton has made the cloth disintegrate beyond repair and has placed the metal elements on it at risk of corrosion. Should one remove the metal pieces and fabricate a new turban on which to mount them? Although removal of the metal parts would be best for their long-term preservation, their assemblage in the context of the original turban is very important, with its message of Sikh military prowess.

With the advice and help of the Sikh community, the BM was encouraged to conserve the metal elements separately and construct a new turban on which to mount them (setting aside the original cloth in safe storage for future study). Conservators worked with Sikh contributors, using traditional techniques to tie 37 metres of cloth into a towering 71cm-high turban. They based their work on a 1900 photograph of the original turban, and the results were shown in an Asahi Shimbun Display in 2011.

**Stolen ivories from Afghanistan**

In 2011, the BM showed 20 fragments of intricately carved ivories to the public for the first time since war broke out in Afghanistan in 1979. They were stolen during the looting of the National Museum of Afghanistan between 1992 and 1994, but were later reacquired by a private individual on behalf of the National Museum.

With support from the Bank of America Merrill Lynch Art Conservation Programme, the BM conserved these outstanding 1st-century AD ivories from the ancient city at Begram, today better known for its airbase than its art works. Featured in the exhibition *Afghanistan: Crossroads of the Ancient World*, they formed part of a larger discussion of projects to safeguard the country’s cultural heritage, after which they return to the National Museum in Kabul. A book on the history, conservation and examination of the Begram hoard by curator St John Simpson was published by the British Museum Press.

**Collaborating internationally**

The BM is part of a larger scholarly community. The collection and its experts are often consulted by and collaborate with other colleagues. A project with Japan's...
Renmei Scroll Mounting Federation, funded by the Sumitomo Foundation, has seen experts from both Japan and the UK conserve rare Japanese paintings in the BM’s Hirayama Studio.

The Chinese Admonitions Scroll of AD 500–800 – one of the 100 objects in the BM/BBC Radio 4 series, A History of the World in 100 Objects – saw visits by a deputy director of the Palace Museum, Beijing, among others from abroad, while investigations were being undertaken to assess its state of conservation and understand its materials and techniques using the latest scientific methods.

Colleagues from many countries came to London to visit the Department of Conservation and Scientific Research, such as Faeeza Al-Rubaye from the Baghdad Museum who came to study the conservation of archaeological ivories. BM conservators themselves travelled abroad to assist with conservation and training in Turkey, South Africa, Kenya and Sudan.

Encouraging the public awareness of science
The Royal Society celebrated its 350th anniversary in 2010. The BM contributed to its Capital Science programme by running 15 public events from March to July under the banner ‘See Further with Science’. Talks and hands-on participation using portable scientific equipment encouraged visitors to look beneath the surface of objects, be they cuneiform tablets from the Middle East, rock art from Africa or chesmen found on the Isle of Lewis.

BM conservators and scientists are engaged throughout the year to promote public understanding of their work, whether through ‘Conservation in Focus’ sessions for schools and young audiences or the annual ‘Zoom In: A Closer Look at Science’, an open laboratory held in the Great Court each March as part of National Science and Engineering Week.

Scientific research is also disseminated online, through lectures across the UK and abroad, and in the annual British Museum Technical Research Bulletin, which in 2010 featured studies on diverse artefacts – a 19th-century Ethiopian church painting; medieval metalwork from the Carpathian Basin; and a 14,000-year-old decorated jawbone of a horse, the oldest known work of art from Wales.

Debate, dialogue and learning
Work at the BM is increasingly engaged with the public eye. The collection has become much more than what is on display in the galleries. From collaborative research to children’s storytelling, the BM encourages visitors to approach the collection in a variety of ways. The new World Conservation and Exhibitions Centre currently under construction will extend these possibilities. Exhibitions and public events will be offered, as will practical and other learning programmes. Dialogue with the nation and the world will be increased by a purpose-built hub that will provide a secure, efficient environment for transporting loan objects in and out of the building with minimum risk.

Debating the world’s future
Public programmes at the BM aim to stimulate and challenge the visitor. A series of sold-out debates linked to exhibitions took culture as a starting point to discuss politics, the environment and immortality. During the Kingdom of Ife exhibition, a Guardian Public Forum at the BM asked whether Nigeria might be Africa’s superpower. Chaired by Jon Snow, the debate brought together a theologian, a barrister, an academic and a novelist to create a rounded portrait of Nigeria today.

Andrew Marr chaired a debate held in conjunction with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Conserving Biodiversity: Whose money, whose rules? united plant conservationists with representatives of government and business to challenge received opinion about the tensions between environmentalism and economic development. A Spectator discussion was held in November in connection with Journey through the Afterlife. The Ancient Egyptians had clear protocols for life after death, but speakers asked how modern cultures have fared dealing with the question of our own mortality. Bonnie Greer also chaired a debate with Henry Louis Gates Jr, Isaac Julien and others on the ‘image of the Black’ in western art.

In February 2011, the Sudanese-born author Jamal Mahjoub discussed with Egyptian novelist and political commentator Ahdaf Soueif how Ancient Egypt is represented in modern cultures. Soueif spoke of the Ancient Egyptian ideal of Maat (truth and justice) that features in the Book of the Dead and talked passionately about how the same concerns had inspired the recent revolution in Egypt. She noted how the protests had echoed Ancient Egyptian poems such as ‘The Eloquent Peasant’, reflecting the same values in...
ancient and modern Egyptian notions of justice. As well as her first-hand accounts of Tahrir square, she and Mahjoub discussed the continuity of ancient culture and its importance for modern Egyptian identity.

A moving community
Community events draw in those whom the BM might not normally reach, bringing groups into the Museum or working with them more flexibly off-site. Our Hearts in the Balance – a reference to the Ancient Egyptian belief that the deceased’s heart would be weighed in the afterlife – was a community project connected to the exhibition Journey through the Afterlife.

The BM worked with three groups: Modernisation Initiative for End of Life Care, Rosetta Life and the National Theatre Studio. Using storytelling and music, the team worked with care home residents and their carers to develop a script addressing how we prepare for death and what we wish to leave behind. On 27 November 2010, alongside a community evening view of the exhibition – itself about death and the afterlife in Ancient Egypt – the group performed the work in the BM Great Court, the Wellcome Trust Gallery of Living and Dying and the Asia gallery.

The heart-felt connections between those participating, their carers, families and friends, and spectators who were welcome to watch made for a moving performance on an issue many are uncomfortable discussing. The night was a joyous rendering of the important ideas and beliefs that the collection represents, not just for past societies but for every one of us today.

Schools, libraries and centres of discovery
Programmes of learning, both formal and informal, make use of the BM as a vast resource for young people. In 2010/11, 221,000 schoolchildren booked visits at the BM, nearly half of those from overseas. The extensive programme of taught sessions included helping children to understand chronology and change in medieval Britain, and everyday life in ancient Greece. Students of art and design were encouraged to develop their own ideas in the galleries, drawing inspiration from some of the greatest works of antiquity.

Training teachers is essential in order to reach pupils beyond the BM’s immediate access. In November, children’s authors and literacy experts led gallery workshops for over 120 primary school teachers. The one-day course showed how to use the BM and its collection to develop children’s writing. A partnership with the University of East London, supported by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA), trained 240 student teachers how to use storytelling techniques to bring museum objects to life for their pupils.

The BM’s learning resources encourage families and young people to explore the collection. Families can follow museum trails through the galleries, or take up family backpacks to draw and engage with the objects on display. The Samsung Digital Discovery Centre has proved popular with schools and families. With its innovative use of podcasts, photography and film, it is a leader in digital learning. As one teacher wrote, “the children were absolutely thrilled with the videos [they’d made] . . . Could we come again next year, please?”

Youth panel at the BM
Keeping relevant is a question of listening to new audiences. BMuse, the BM’s first youth panel, is a new direction not just for its 16–25-year-old participants, but for the BM itself. Working with the community partnerships team, panel members organised ‘Old Objects, New Voices’, an event showcasing ‘Talking Objects’, a BM programme supported by John Lyon’s Charity in London and the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation nationally that gets young people thinking and talking about objects differently.
Films produced in the BM by young people were shown in the galleries. BMuse gave talks to their peer group and organised boisterous Shout Outs: debates in which everyone in the room had to move according to their agreement or disagreement with the prevailing argument. An evening event complemented the day, with special guests including the Mayor of Camden and BM Trustee Bonnie Greer.

BMuse is forging links across the UK. As young ambassadors for the BM, the team visited YakYaks, a youth panel at Tullie House, Carlisle, to brainstorm ways of getting young adults to engage with Roman Britain and its legacy, from Roman statues in the BM collection to Hadrian’s Wall.

Both groups are participants in People & Place (www.peopleandplace.org.uk), a national programme managed by the BM to put young people at the heart of museum displays, resources, events and volunteering opportunities, including young people with learning difficulties and other groups who can suffer social marginalisation. Funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Department for Education, the programme saw young people from Bristol to Wallsend form clubs, make films and even, for a lucky ten from Colchester, travel to China.

**What’s on at the BM**

Events at the BM reach all ages. Children’s events ranged from amulet-making to Korean calligraphy. Adults could hear Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka, watch a horror film about mummies, feast on Italian food with Antonio Carluccio at a Renaissance Late, or enjoy poetry and music as part of Nowruz, the new year celebration held in many countries from Iran and Afghanistan to Uzbekistan. Much of the programming is themed to special exhibitions, with events connected to *Kingdom of Ife* and *Fra Angelico to Leonardo* each attracting approximately 10,000 visitors.

A series of lectures in partnership with the *London Review of Books* saw Judith Butler put the competing cases for Israel and Germany in their struggle over Kafka’s cultural legacy, and T. J. Clark revisit Picasso’s *Guernica*. The BM’s 900 volunteers support and run a number of events, including Hands On, a gallery activity in which members of the public can handle real museum objects. Since its launch a decade ago, over a million visitors have taken part.
Nelson Mandela Day
Could you pledge 67 minutes of your time? To mark the 67 years that Nelson Mandela has been involved with human rights work, the BM organised a day-long event as part of the South Africa Landscape programme, sponsored by Barclays. The programme was part of the international celebrations of Nelson Mandela Day.

Over 22,000 people attended the free event in July 2010, 30% of them making their first visit to the BM. There was a video message from Nelson Mandela; storytelling for children and readings by author Gillian Slovo and others; documentary films about South Africa; gospel choirs and marimba bands; beat-boxers, Zulus and gumboot dancers. The focal point was the BM’s South Africa Landscape, where 22 voluntary organisations – from the Nelson Mandela Children’s Fund to the African Foundation for Development – set up stalls to encourage people to volunteer just 67 minutes of their time. As visitors wrote their pledges on coloured ribbons, a pledge tree was laid across the Forecourt – celebrating the ideals of Nelson Mandela and his continuing legacy.
Cyrus Cylinder,
539–530 BC
Describing the freedoms brought to the citizens of Babylon by Cyrus the Great, this 2500-year-old ‘human rights’ charter was displayed in Iran – one of the year’s outstanding international loans.
(Length 22.5 cm)
National exhibitions and programmes

Partnership galleries
Partnership galleries are a direct means of ensuring that the BM is a key resource for the UK. The Yorkshire Museum and the BM have worked in partnership since the late 19th century. In 2010, the two institutions collaborated on the redevelopment of the Yorkshire Museum. To keep them publicly accessible, celebrated medieval artefacts from York were put on show at the BM while the Yorkshire Museum was closed – the first time a UK partner museum’s collections have been displayed in this way at the BM. As part of the exchange, the BM has also loaned a number of artefacts for the new Roman gallery in York, allowing the Yorkshire Museum to tell a more comprehensive and wide-ranging story than would otherwise have been the case. Sharing staff expertise was a significant part of the exchange, and the two museums continue to collaborate. BM partnership galleries to open in 2011/12 include displays on Roman Britain in Carlisle and South Asian religions in Birmingham.

Loans and collaborative displays
Last year’s collaboration with the London Museums Hub improved visitor activity at the Brent Museum, where the celebrated Gayer-Anderson Egyptian cat from the BM was displayed. Such transformative loans to smaller museums are a focus for attracting public attention and resources and have proved a successful model. In 2010/11, the BM made similar loans, providing staff support and expertise, to a number of UK museums. Changing exhibits were sent to the Museum of Croydon to support their own collection of Chinese ceramics, while as part of the programme Something Borrowed, Beatrix Potter’s original illustrations of Flopsy Bunny were loaned to Mill Green Museum in Hatfield; an Egyptian mumified cat to Ely Museum; and Egyptian, Roman and medieval seals to Dunwich Museum in Suffolk. Together the museums in Hatfield and Ely attracted over 11,000 visitors during the three-month loans.

Sex and high kicks
BM national tours ranged from an exhibition on Roman sexuality in Nottingham to a popular show of prints by Toulouse-Lautrec, High Kicks and Low Life, that toured to Liverpool, Middlesbrough and Bedford. The Liverpool Daily Post found the prints ‘captivating’ and the show attracted over 70,000 visitors at the three venues.

Touring exhibitions ranged from Ghanaian fabrics to Iranian art – all objects in the BM collection that might not otherwise be seen by the many visitors who viewed them outside the capital in 2010. Nameless, a display of anonymous drawings from Renaissance Italy, took to the Moray Art Centre in Scotland Old Master drawings similar to those which visitors to London could see in the exhibition Fra Angelico to Leonardo.

The touring exhibitions make of the BM collection a national lending library. National activities such as loans and joint conservation projects will be improved by the BM’s new World Conservation and Exhibitions Centre. Intended in its founding charter as a free resource for all, the BM looks through its UK loans, tours and partnerships to be the museum for the nation. The BM’s national programme is generously supported by the Dorset Foundation.
The Lewis chessmen were among 2891 BM objects loaned to 178 UK venues in 2010/11, an increase of 47% on the previous year. Other loans included sending the fragile Roman Vindolanda tablets, loaned for the first time, to Hexham; a Bronze Age gold piece to Penzance; and Ice Age sculpture to the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds. A prehistoric fishhook at least 10,000 years old made of reindeer antler was sent to the National Museum Cardiff for Fish and Ships, an exhibition of archaeological discoveries made in the Severn estuary.

Training and sharing knowledge
A Heritage Lottery Fund grant to the BM helped establish a new UK programme to train young curators. In collaboration with five regional museums, MLA and the Museums Association, the programme will provide work-based placements to train curators across the country in collections expertise and public engagement.

With support from the Vivmar Foundation, the BM's Knowledge Share programme works with museums across the UK. Staff exchanges benefit colleagues nationally and develop skills across the museum sector, including curatorial, development, marketing and visitor services. Partner museums in 2010 included Tyne & Wear Archives and Museums, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, National Museums Scotland, Manchester Museum and Bristol's Museums, Galleries & Archives.

The BM's World Cultures Collection Partnership gives advice to regional museums looking to take full advantage of their world collections, as they draw on the success of national interest in A History of the World. Partners included Newcastle, Sheffield, Leeds, Doncaster, Whity and Glasgow. A national strategy is being developed on sharing cross-sector museum knowledge effectively.

Unfolding Egypt with Norwich Castle Museum
An ancient Egyptian shroud has been in the collection of Norwich Castle Museum since 1921. Despite its compressed and folded state, hieroglyphs could be glimpsed on its linen surface and the shroud was potentially over 3000 years old.

To unfold and conserve the shroud – and reveal its history – Norwich Museum and Archaeology Service joined up with the BM Conservation and Scientific Research Department. Experts from both institutions worked together on the shroud at the BM's conservation studios, as well as training a visiting textile conservator from France in the care of such fragile and easily damaged ancient material.

Interest inside and outside both museums was keen, and a blog on the BM website kept online followers up to date as the work progressed. When at last revealed in March 2011, the linen measured 140 x 160 cm and Ipu, the name of the deceased, could be deciphered. The cloth is part of a complete shroud, another fragment of which is in Cairo.

UK finds and the Portable Antiquities Scheme
The Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) encourages the public to report all Treasure and other finds in England and Wales – from Bronze Age bracelets to Civil War silver – so that valuable knowledge of our past is not lost. In 2010, the Government announced that as of April 2011, the scheme is to be managed directly by the BM, ensuring an effective mechanism is in place for the next four years to deal with archaeological finds made by the public. The work of PAS is generously supported by the Headley Trust.

A new online database has made contributing to PAS much simpler. Finds recorded grew as a result, with 90,000 reported in 2010, an increase of 36% from 2009. There were 859 cases of Treasure in 2010, an increase of 10% from 2009. Among the year’s most fascinating finds was an 11th-century lead spindle-whorl found at Saltfleetby, Lincolnshire, with a runic inscription naming the Norse gods Odin and Heimdallr.
Hoard of over 52,000 Roman coins found

The most astounding of the year’s discoveries was made in April 2010 in a soggy ridge near Frome, Somerset, where a pot of 52,503 Roman coins was uncovered. It is the largest hoard of coins ever found in England. Dave Crisp, who discovered it, did not dig it up, but reported the find to his local authority who, with archaeologists, were able to excavate fully. BM conservators quickly assessed and stabilised the wet, muddy coins before they dried out, and some were put on immediate display for a curious public who had followed the media coverage. Most of the coins are ‘radiates’ of silver or bronze dating from AD 253 to 293. Somerset County Council’s Heritage Service succeeded in raising funds to acquire the hoard, including support for the BM to conserve the coins fully. The BM published a short book telling the story of the Frome Hoard and its discovery to support the appeal and a major research project on the hoard is planned.

Media and publications

Broadcasting and film

The overwhelming success of A History of the World in 100 Objects – as a 100-episode BBC Radio 4 series, set of public events and major book published by Penguin – dominated the BM’s broadcasting output throughout 2010 (see p.50). By 31 March 2011, there were 19 million downloads worldwide of the series from the website, nearly half from overseas, making it one of the BBC’s most downloaded programmes. Many radio and television programmes attached themselves to the project. An episode of the Antiques Roadshow was filmed in the BM Forecourt, to which members of the public brought their objects for evaluation by the show’s experts. The programme included Neil MacGregor showing two of the series’ 100 objects to presenter Fiona Bruce. Shown on BBC1 in November 2010, the episode and its later repeats attracted on average 5.5 million viewers per broadcast.

Many television and radio programmes draw on the BM and its staff. Two episodes of Channel 4’s The Genius of British Art, presented by David Starkey and Gus Casely-Hayford, were filmed at the BM and featured objects from the collection, as did Seven Ages of Britain. Presented by David Dimbleby, the series was shown on BBC1, with repeats on BBC2 and BBC4.
Cultural material
BM publications range from scholarly catalogues to activity books for children. A new iPhone App made it possible to explore Egyptian artefacts at the stroke of a finger.

and overall reached an estimated 8–10 million viewers. Other filming at the BM included Ancient Worlds, with historian Richard Miles (BBC2), and Inside Incredible Athletes about the British men and women preparing for the 2012 Paralympics (Channel 4). The BBC2 television series Digging for Britain followed a year of archaeology across Britain. BM fieldwork and research played a large part, from the study of early human occupation in Happisburgh, Norfolk, supported by the Leverhulme Trust, to the topical discovery of the Frome Hoard of over 52,000 Roman coins. On radio, staff were interviewed across the globe, from Gulf Radio to Radio Beijing.

The BM’s own film productions included the exhibition documentary Fra Angelico to Leonardo: Italian Renaissance Drawings, in which the sources and techniques of Renaissance drawing were explained.

Widening engagement online
Engaging with online social spaces takes the BM to people who might not otherwise hear of its activities. Launching its own YouTube channel in 2010, the BM screens short videos about exhibitions and museum events and shows viewers what goes on behind the scenes, from installing an Afghan princess’s crown in an exhibition case to conserving papyri from Ancient Egypt.

BM presence on social networking sites continues to grow. On Twitter the BM attracts over 40,000 followers, with a current average increase of 10% per month. Its Facebook fans rose from 17,500 in April 2010 to 75,000 one year later.

The BM was the first institution globally to host a Wikipedian-in-residence. Articles such as Wikipedia’s on the Rosetta Stone are viewed five times more often than the BM’s own and the site is one of the largest sources of referrals to the BM website. The five-week residency was devoted to improving the quality and amount of information about BM objects. A two-day conference was also held to explore collaboration between Wikipedia and cultural organisations.

A BM blog launched in April 2010 shows the variety of the BM’s work, with curators, conservators and others discussing excavations, exhibitions, conservation and international programmes.

Apps and downloads
Digital access to BM information included its first-ever App, launched for iPhone users about the Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead exhibition. A featured App on the iTunes store,
it was downloaded by over 96,000 people by the time the exhibition closed.

The BM website continued to diversify with the launch in 2010 of a Chinese language version and a version in Arabic, both supported by the World Collections Programme. Lively videos on the history of writing, time and other topics were added to the Young Explorers space aimed at children aged 6 to 12. Online collection records grew to 1.93 million. There are now nearly 800,000 images of the collection available for public consultation on the BM website. Areas augmented in 2010/11 included coins, flints, prints and new acquisitions. Web-users also had free access to an increasing number of online research publications, from the BM Technical Research Bulletin to scholarly studies of Roman Republican coins, or paper money in England and Wales.

About 8.7 million people accessed the main BM website in 2010/11, with 21 million visits overall to all the BM websites.

Publications

The British Museum Press published 46 new books in 2010/11. Exhibition books and catalogues included The Printed Image in China, Afghanistan: Crossroads of the Ancient World, Eric Gill and Fra Angelico to Leonardo: Italian Renaissance Drawings, which sold nearly 13,000 copies. Journey to the Afterlife: Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead was highly praised in the national press. The Telegraph called the catalogue ‘magisterial . . . the best of the year’. It sold over 16,000 copies.

Other successful titles included a children’s book called Hunefer and his Book of the Dead and a box set of Objects in Focus books on five iconic artefacts in the BM: the Gayer-Anderson cat, Hoa Hakananai’a, Rosetta stone, Lewis chessmen and Sutton Hoo helmet.

The BM was awarded First Prize at the Gift Retailer Awards for best Visitor Attraction Gift Shop 2010. Evening events promoted new books such as AD 410: The Year That Shook Rome and South Indian Paintings: A Catalogue of the BM Collection. Among the many works on the collection that the BM Press published in 2010/11 were major catalogues on Roman cameo glass, Japanese coins and the Maori collection.

International exhibitions and programmes

BM loans abroad

Over one million people visited the National Museum of Iran – including Iranian schoolchildren, as the Tehran Times reported – to see the Cyrus Cylinder. The celebrated artefact made in Babylon in 539 BC was loaned to Tehran from September 2010 to April 2011. Excavated in Iraq in 1879, this ‘declaration of human rights’ records in cuneiform script that when Cyrus captured Babylon (aided by the God Marduk), he restored shrines dedicated to different gods and allowed people deported to the ancient capital to return to their homelands. As author and BM Trustee Karen Armstrong noted, ‘at a time of political tension, it is essential to keep as many doors of communication open as possible . . . This cultural exchange may make a small but timely contribution towards the creation of better relations between the West and Iran.’ The display was opened by director Neil MacGregor and the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

At 2.72m tall, the war god Ku was the most towering of the year’s international loans. In May 2010 a group of Hawaiians performed chants at the BM to prepare Ku for his journey to the Pacific. He was exhibited alongside two similar wooden figures in the newly restored Hawaiian Hall at Honolulu’s Bishop Museum. When the sculpture came back to the BM in October, the delegation, appearing in traditional dress, again ensured Ku’s ritual return was appropriately marked.

In 2010/11 the BM loaned 1607 objects to 125 venues outside the United Kingdom, an increase of 39% on the previous year. They included sending Vorticists to Venice, ancient Greek vases to Malibu, Islamic art to Munich, Celtic swords to Saarbrücken, drawings by Degas to Toronto, medieval floor tiles to Los Angeles and a Maori neck ornament to Leiden.
BM exhibitions abroad

‘Greek civilization at a glance’ was how the Korea Times headlined the arrival in Seoul of a BM touring exhibition, *Gods, Heroes and Mortals: Art and Life in Ancient Greece*. From daily life in Athens to the sanctuary at Olympia, the exhibition explored classical Greek ideals of the beautiful body. Among the 136 objects loaned were celebrated works such as the *Discobolus* (‘Discus-Thrower’) as well as Greek painted pottery, a gold diadem, marble statues and terracotta figures. Over 366,000 visitors saw the exhibition at the National Museum of Korea and the National Palace Museum in Taipei, where it was opened by the Vice President of Taiwan. It travelled to Kobe, Japan in March 2011.

Over 92,000 people in Madrid came to the BM exhibition, *Treasures of World Cultures*, presented with Arte de Canal. This array of nearly 300 objects from across the world has toured the globe, introducing the BM collection and the world history it represents to large audiences internationally.

**Middle East**

In December 2010, plans were unveiled for the new Basrah Museum, whose director has spent many months in the BM. The BM is actively supporting the new museum, which is to be housed in the former Lakeside Palace. Gallery development, retrieving and storing collections, staff training and research are among the programmes the BM is helping the museum to achieve in extremely challenging circumstances.

BM exhibitions on Afghanistan and Oman drew public attention to those cultures, but also prompted collaborations with colleagues from both countries – from helping to identify stolen Afghan objects to building international ties through loan arrangements, having visiting curators work at the BM and shared research.

With the University of Cambridge, the BM plans to offer a higher education course in Museum Management in the United Arab Emirates. Announced in November 2010, the programme will explore all aspects of museum development, from the civic and educational roles museums can have, to financial modelling and visitor services. His Highness Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, Minister for Higher Education and Scientific Research, said of the announcement, ‘This is part of a broader relationship that will bring great benefit to the people of the UAE.’ Other Middle Eastern projects included training sessions for staff at the Museum of Islamic Art in Qatar.

**Zayed National Museum**

Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan is considered the founding father of the United Arab Emirates. To tell his story and that of the UAE, from its prehistoric landscape to the present day, the Zayed National Museum is one of a group of museums being built on Saadiyat Island. Designed by Foster+Partners, the museum will sit alongside the Louvre Abu Dhabi (designed by Jean Nouvel), Guggenheim Abu Dhabi (Frank Gehry), a performing arts centre (Zaha Hadid) and maritime museum (Tadao Ando). Foster+Partners’ architectural design was officially unveiled in November 2010 by HM the Queen and HH Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

BM staff are helping to develop the Abu Dhabi museum galleries in conjunction with TDIC, Abu Dhabi’s Tourism Development & Investment Company. Research, collections development, conservation, international loans, gallery design, learning and visitor programmes are some of the many areas in which BM experts are working with colleagues in the UAE. In anticipation of the new museum, the first of a series of

**East Africa**

In East Africa, the BM provides training and programmes to share expertise and develop the capacity of museums. With funding from the Getty Foundation, the BM has visited 40 institutions in East Africa to define areas of particular need—from collections management to visitor engagement—and find solutions that fit each location, whether in smaller centres or busier ones such as Dar es Salaam or Zanzibar.

Over the past three years, with support from the World Collections Programme, the BM has worked with the National Museums of Kenya (NMK) to find solutions to issues of humidity, dust, overcrowding and security in storing museum objects. In 2010 new storage spaces, a study room, office, workshop and wet room were completed and in December the Cultural Heritage store in Nairobi was officially opened. The new facilities have made the collections more accessible to students and researchers.

With support from the BM, NMK is arranging a touring exhibition on the popular East African printed cloth, the kanga. Lead staff were invited to the BM on work placements, and BM staff travelled to Nairobi to provide training sessions on textile mounting and other processes for NMK colleagues, as well as participants from regional museums in Mombasa, Kisumu and Kitale. The exhibition opened in Nairobi, before touring to Mombasa and western Kenya.

**West Africa**

The BM’s work in West Africa was highlighted by the success of the exhibition, *Kingdom of Ife*, in which 20 colleagues from museums across Nigeria played an essential role in researching, conserving and installing the African sculptures. Behind-the-scenes access to the BM has been a fruitful method of sharing ideas and providing training.

With support from the Ford Foundation, the BM delivered training programmes in museum storage, display, documentation and interpretation in Nigeria, Ghana and Sierra Leone. They included a ‘Train the Trainer’ project focusing on the care and display of textiles to ensure a legacy of specific skills within the region. In November, the King of Asante invited deputy director Andrew Burnett to Ghana to discuss future BM collaborations in the region.

New projects emerge through strong international ties. The BM holds 1500 photographs of Nigeria taken in 1903–15 by Charles Partridge, a colonial official. Objects left by Partridge are now in the Ipswich Museum. The National Commission
for Museums and Monuments in Nigeria sent two curators from Lagos and Port Harcourt to identify and curate these materials. Working with UK staff to write storylines, they assisted in producing two exhibitions, one in Suffolk and one to tour Nigeria, as well as providing information for a catalogue about the Partridge collection.

Links with India and China

In Shanghai, 683,000 people visited *India: The Art of the Temple*. This joint exhibition by the BM and V&A displayed in China the visual culture of Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism in India. The tour’s 106 sculptures, paintings, bronzes and textiles spanning more than a millennium included a 2nd-century stone Buddha from Gandhara and a bronze of the Hindu god Shiva dancing in a ring of flames.

A multimedia display was developed especially for the exhibition in China, using geometric visuals to explore Indian temple architecture. The BM also loaned 20 objects from the collection to Shanghai for the World Expo Urban Footprint Pavilion, which was visited by 5.41 million people from May to October 2010.

Cultural ties with both India and China are central to the BM’s work. As part of the UK government’s World Collections Programme, the BM, British Library and V&A signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Indian Ministry of Culture in June 2010 to promote future collaborations that include exhibitions, digitising collections and conservation. Director Neil MacGregor visited India in July 2010 as part of a UK delegation led by Prime Minister David Cameron, and joined a similar prime ministerial delegation to China in November. BM links with China are extensive and include an ongoing staff exchange between the BM and Shanghai Museum. Lectures in New Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai by the director received significant press coverage in India, where he was praised for his ‘innovative approach to global history’.

International Training Programme

In March 2010, to mark the fifth anniversary of the BM’s highly successful International Training Programme, a reunion of all the participants was organised in Cairo. Fifty-two were able to attend the celebration, hosted by Dr Zahi Hawass, now Minister of Antiquities, Egypt, which included talks and tours of the Coptic Museum and the Egyptian Museum. Past participants gave presentations as part of a conference to analyse the achievements and future direction of the International Training Programme.
Fieldwork and research

Africa, Middle East and the Mediterranean

In 2010/11 BM archaeologists in northern Sudan, with the support of the Leverhulme Trust, continued to excavate houses at Amara West from the New Kingdom and its aftermath (1300–950 BC). The research seeks to uncover evidence for changes in health and diet in ancient Nubia. Excavations at Dangeil with the Sudanese National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums discovered traces of wall paintings in a temple of Amun (1st century AD). Archaeologists found a copper-alloy clepsydra, or water clock, in the ancient cemetery at Kawa, which will be worked on by BM conservators. In Egypt, a team recorded and conserved pharaonic rock-tombs in Hagr Edfu, supported by the American Research Center in Egypt.

Relations between Egypt and Greece from the late 7th century BC are the subject of work on Naukratis and Daphnae (Tell Deffeneh) in Egypt, supported by the Leverhulme Trust and the Leon Levy Foundation. Finds from Naukratis – an important Greek trading post mentioned in Herodotus and rediscovered by Sir William Flinders Petrie in 1883–4 – are distributed over more than 60 collections worldwide. The ambitious project will explore Mediterranean trade and interaction by taking a comprehensive look at all excavated material, some 13,000 finds in all. Other fieldwork and research included excavations at Sidon, Lebanon; a geophysical survey in the area of Hadrian’s villa at Tivoli, in collaboration with the British School at Rome; studies of Minoan pottery in Crete; cataloguing Parthian coins with the National Museum of Iran; and excavations at Miletus and Domuztepe in Turkey. Several of these projects were made possible through major funding from the Leverhulme Trust, as was the long-term programme Money in Africa.

Projects like these frequently entail running learning programmes alongside the excavations. For the Dangeil Training Initiative, staff offered training in excavation, conservation and site protection. The FitzGerald African Scholarship Fund also provided research placements at the BM and UK partner institutions for colleagues from Kenya and Ghana.

Australia, Oceania and Japan

A joint project between the BM, National Museum of Australia and Australian National University received a major grant from the Australian Research Council for research and a later exhibition on indigenous communities and how their histories are represented in museum collections. Preparations for Out of Australia, the summer 2011 BM exhibition on Australian art from the 1940s to the present, supported by Rio Tinto as part of the Australian Season, included acquiring an etching of Ned Kelly by Sidney Nolan, purchased with the support of the BM Friends of Prints and Drawings. Other BM projects included long-term research in Melanesia and a study of historic photographs of the Pacific in the BM.

Academic collaborations with Japan include a three-year research programme on shunga, erotic Japanese art. This is a joint BM project with SOAS, the International Centre for Japanese Studies, Kyoto and Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto. A lavishly illustrated survey of the subject, with works by Hokusai, Utagawa and others, was published by the BM Press in October 2010. Other research projects include a survey of Japanese porcelain in the BM, a three-year study of prehistoric Japanese artefacts from the Mounded Tomb (Kofun) period and digitisation of Japanese illustrated books in the collection.

Archaeology in Britain

Three substantial site excavations at Happisburgh have proved to be of international importance. Evidence for the earliest human habitation in northern Europe, between 800,000 and a million years ago, was discovered and the findings published in Nature in July 2010. The unique organic preservation of the site in Norfolk has enabled archaeologists to reconstruct the environment, showing that humans were surviving in cool, coniferous forest on the northern banks of the proto-Thames.

A group of Iron Age cauldrons of 800–100 BC discovered near Chisleledon, Wiltshire – the largest single group ever found in northern Europe – are being conserved and studied, with
In 2010, BM staff published over 200 books and articles. They included studies of Iron Age mirrors, ancient Syrian writings, hollow-handled spade money in China and a biography of Eirik Bloodaxe, the last king of Northumbria. Talks given by BM curators ranged from a lecture in São Paulo on ushnus, apachetas, sayhhuas and wankas in the Andean landscape, to an address on Yongle and Xuande ceramics in Beijing. Among academic events was a conference on the future of numismatics, held to mark the 150th anniversary of the BM’s Department of Coins and Medals.

Nearly 11,000 people visited the departmental study rooms and libraries to examine an estimated 163,000 artefacts. In October 2010, curator Andrew Shapland won the Hellenic Foundation Prize (2009) for his doctoral thesis on human–animal relations in Bronze Age Crete. The BM supervised 26 doctoral candidates, in partnership with 16 universities across the country.

Scholarship and dialogue
International scholarship at the BM fosters cultural dialogue and builds ties worldwide. Such work is sometimes acknowledged by external bodies. In 2010/11 prizes went to curator Venetia Porter, given the 2011 Rawabi Holding Award for contributing to Saudi-British relations, and curator Tim Clark, awarded the 2011 Ueno Satsuki Memorial Research Award for contributions to research into Japanese culture.
A History of the World in 100 Objects

The enormous success of the BM/BBC Radio 4 series *A History of the World in 100 Objects* catapulted the BM’s activity to extraordinary new levels of popularity in 2010. The programmes reached an international audience through radio, television, print and online.

Over the year, BBC Radio 4 broadcast 100 15-minute episodes, each taking a single object in the BM collection to wander down the known and less well-known paths of world history. An omnibus edition was broadcast on the BBC World Service, and a 13-part children’s television series, *Relic: Guardians of the Museum*, was broadcast on BBC1.

Director Neil MacGregor narrated the programmes, with a variety of BM experts and notable contributors. The episodes could be listened to again online or downloaded from a special *A History of the World* website. A CD of the entire series was produced for release in 2011. When the book was published by Allen Lane (Penguin) in October 2010, it reached several best-seller charts. It will appear in Spanish, German, Chinese, Taiwanese and Korean, with further translations planned.

Public participation was immense. A guide to finding the objects in the galleries was produced, talks and events were run, and 90% of visitors to the BM engaged in some form with the project. Across the UK, 550 museums raised the profile of their own objects of world history: putting them on display and on the web, and running events that attracted over 145,000 people. Online, over 4000 people uploaded an object of their choice and narrated their own world histories.

An additional 50 hours of regional radio and television programming was tied in with the series, and *Relic* trails akin to those the BM produced drew children across the country to more than 170 museums, historic houses and cathedrals. An estimated 45,000 children have already taken part in this introduction to the nation’s heritage, most of whom first encountered the series on television or online.

*A History of the World in 100 Objects* has changed public perception of the BM. Its audience has widened, with nearly two thirds of visitors in 2010 saying they were aware of the radio series before visiting. Many longstanding visitors noted that the project had introduced a new sense of the collection’s world stories, widening their understanding of and interest in the BM. Evaluation showed that for many visitors, the project led to a deeper engagement with the collection. Scholarship within the BM has also changed, with a greater sense of the need to tell history across, rather than within, disciplines.

The series won the 2010 Voice of the Listener and Viewer Award for Best New Radio Programme. It has been shortlisted for the 2011 Art Fund Prize as a ‘groundbreaking and enormously successful project exploring world history through the British Museum’s unparalleled collection’.

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*Joining in on the Isle of Man*

Four successful participants in the Relic Trail at the Manx Museum – one of more than 170 venues across the UK to run events inspired by the award-winning BM/CBBC series, *Relic: Guardians of the Museum*.

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*A History of the World Reviewed*

*a brilliant success . . . as the weeks pass (and each week is given a theme) it seems to me that we are being encouraged to meditate on the point and purpose of human existence*

*Times Literary Supplement*, September 2010

*it deserves to take its place alongside television classics such as Kenneth Clark’s Civilisation and Jacob Bronowski’s The Ascent of Man*

Dominic Sandbrook, *Telegraph*, October 2010
Fans of the landmark BBC radio series, A History of the World in 100 Objects, felt lost when the programmes came to an end and their days were no longer book-ended by the British Museum director’s gentle wit and erudition in describing the history, significance and beauty of 100 objects from the BM’s collection. None could have imagined quite how the series would permeate the national consciousness.

Economist, November 2010

Radio 4’s surprise hit series. It was as ambitious as it was hugely popular: a radio series that used 100 beautiful artefacts from the British Museum to weave a fascinating narrative through human history.

Daily Mail, October 2010

A splendid achievement

Sunday Times, October 2010

When I reached the end of the book, I could not help reflecting warmly that, if I were a ‘thing’, the British Museum would be a very nice place to end up.

Mary Beard, Guardian, October 2010

A History of the World in One Year

Letters, emails and online comments

January

This morning, Sunday, in the minister’s sermon, he spoke about A History of the World, quoting several objects. We were looking at the less than exciting book of Leviticus, and he wanted to put it into a historical context . . . He put Moses’s writings alongside what the Egyptians, Minoans and Chinese were doing at the same time.

Email, 31 January 2010

February

Listening to your voice . . . has given me the keys to the Museum, and I have found that it’s an enormous box of wonderful stories.

Letter, 7 February 2010

March

Your explanation and illustration of the (pre)history and meaning of the objects is quite outstanding and has given us a whole raft of understanding of the evolutionary path of mankind and society.

Website comment, 4 March 2010

April

I want to thank you for this ongoing series. I am a blind person, and therefore, would never see these objects. May I thank you for the wonderful descriptions of the objects, and also for having the series on radio.

Letter, 12 April 2010
May
I have listened to the whole series [so far] several times and find it
enthralling. It has made me constantly rethink assumptions about art,
history, human activity – you name it.
Website comment, 19 May 2010

June
Thank you for this illuminating programme. It is all that one can wish for.
True nourishment
Website comment, 1 June 2010

July
This series has been the most wonderful that I have ever had the pleasure
to listen [to] and I am deeply thankful to you [the BBC] and the British
Museum, particularly tireless Mr Neil MacGregor, for expanding my
horizon. I love his comforting voice. I would love to visit London some day
to see these objects myself
Website comment, India, 7 July 2010

August
This is amazing! I wonder how difficult it is to get to Rapa Nui? Does the
British Museum actually have one of these statues?
Website comment, 15 August 2010

September
Seen through this lens, history is a kaleidoscope – shifting, interconnected,
constantly surprising, and shaping our world today in ways that most of
us have never imagined
Blog, Scotland, 16 September 2010

October
I’m grateful to this series for giving me a reminder of how I became me,
and including the progress that those like me have made in being more fully
part of the world
Website comment, 20 October 2010

November
I am very appreciative of [BM curator Catherine Eagleton]’s contribution
[online] . . . To have a curator join the discussion here is a bit like being
able to speak with one of the curators in an episode of The Museum
after having viewed it
Website comment, 7 November 2010

December
The ethnic/political complexities are wonderfully illustrated by this drum
Website comment, 27 December 2010
Financial support

It has always been at the heart of the BM's mission to make its collection and expertise accessible to audiences not just in London, but everywhere. Support received from individuals, companies and foundations has been instrumental in the growth of activity in this area, and we are pleased to note the establishment of an independent trust which will be able to support the Museum. Across the UK and internationally, such support has enabled the BM vastly to expand the number and scale of its collaborations across the globe. From funding for training programmes in Africa to a touring exhibition on the Isle of Lewis, the generosity of the BM's donors is felt both within and far beyond the capital.

The BM has extensive programmes to share its collections and expertise for the benefit of audiences nationally and worldwide. In what is a challenging time for museums, particularly those operating across the UK, it is more important than ever that the BM is able to sustain these partnerships and programmes through the help of its supporters. Without them, regional museums in particular are bound to suffer.

An outstanding example of corporate commitment to the BM has been our longstanding relationship with BP. The company has supported the BM for 15 years, providing invaluable long-term funding for both infrastructure and programming. The partnership began in 1996 when BP helped fund the construction of the award-winning Great Court. The relationship developed further when in 1999 a major donation from BP led to the opening of what became the BP Lecture Theatre, located in the BM's new Clore Education Centre. Inaugurated by Nelson Mandela in 2000, the theatre remains a state-of-the-art resource for the BM, with debates, films, talks, conferences, theatrical performances and the BP Annual Lecture. Those who use the theatre range from international scholars and politicians to groups of schoolchildren from across the UK.

In 2001 BP supported their first BM exhibition, Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth, an international collaboration with the Fondazione Memmo in Rome. Its success led to a five-year partnership with the BM, beginning in 2003 and involving support of major exhibitions which became known as the BP Special Exhibitions. So successful have these exhibitions been that the partnership was renewed in 2008 for a further five years.

To date, BP Special Exhibitions have included some of the BM's most popular, including Mummy: The Inside Story (2003); The Forgotten Empire: The World of Ancient Persia (2005); Michelangelo Drawings: Closer to the Master (2005); Hadrian: Empire and Conflict (2008); Fra Angelico to Leonardo: Italian Renaissance Drawings (2010) and Journey through the Afterlife: Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead (2010). The final BP Special Exhibition for the current partnership will be Shakespeare’s Theatre of the World which will be on display from 19 July to 25 November 2012. This exhibition is the BM's special contribution to the Cultural Olympiad, a series of events to showcase the nation's arts and culture to the rest of the world.

Beyond the BP Special Exhibitions, BP also supports a range of important BM activities. To coincide with the BM's extensive China programme, BP helped the Museum celebrate Chinese New Year on Saturday 9 February 2008, enabling a phenomenal 35,000 people to visit the Museum and enjoy an array of Chinese cultural activities from games to performances free of charge. As an introduction for visitors who may never have visited the BM otherwise, it was an unparalleled success. From 2009 to 2012, BP also supported the UK touring exhibition, China: Journey to the East, which took rare objects that tell the history of China across the UK. Recent events include BP’s support for a Mexican Day of the Dead fiesta on 1 November 2009. Held as part of a wider Mexican season at the BM, the popular event was attended by 31,500 visitors.

The most recent exhibition supported by BP is a display of Omani jewellery and costume. Adornment and Identity: Jewellery and Costume from Oman, on show until 11 September 2011, coincides with the 40th anniversary of the Sultanate of Oman. It prompted a donation of Omani costumes to the BM collection from the Government of Oman and captures exactly that necessary relationship between the BM and its world partners that we could not hope to achieve without generous financial support.
BM across the globe
A selection of activities in 2010/11

1. USA: Los Angeles
The heroic figure of Tristram is shown on this 13th-century tile found at Chertsey Abbey. It was loaned to the Getty Museum for an exhibition on imagining the past.

2. BRAZIL: São Paulo
In conferences from Brazil to London, BM fieldwork on Andean ushnus, ceremonial platforms from which Incan kings might preside during festivals, was presented to the public. Published results of the three-year project are in preparation.

3. ITALY: Venice
This 1915 study for a lost painting entitled Two Step is by the English painter William Roberts. It was among a number of Vorticist works loaned to the Peggy Guggenheim Museum in Venice in 2010/11.

4. IRAN: Tehran
Cultural collaboration included lending the Cyrus Cylinder, made in Babylon in 539 bc, to the National Museum of Iran. BM staff advised on the display, which proved so popular the loan was renewed to allow the cylinder to remain in Tehran until April 2011.

5. EGYPT: Naukratis
This sherd from an East Greek vessel was found in Egypt at Naukratis where, from the 7th century bc, Greeks, Egyptians and others met and traded. A comprehensive study of the material excavated at the site is underway.

6. NIGERIA: Lagos
BM workshops in Nigeria and Ghana included how to care for, mount and display textiles. Visiting curators from Nigeria used the BM’s collection of early photographs of Nigeria for a joint project with Ipswich Museum.

7. KENYA: Nairobi
Ties with India are building on a Memorandum of Understanding signed with the Indian Ministry of Culture in June 2010 to promote loans, research and future collaborations. BM fieldwork in India includes a study of 7th-13th-century temples.

8. INDIA: New Delhi
The BM is collaborating with the National Museum of Australia on a four-year research project on indigenous objects such as the 1.7m Discobolus which included this seated Buddha. The BM also loaned objects for Shanghai’s World Expo Urban Footprint Pavilion. It was visited by 5.41 million people.

9. CHINA: Shanghai
Over 683,000 people saw the exhibition, India: The Art of the Temple, which included this seated Buddha. The BM also loaned objects for Shanghai’s World Expo Urban Footprint Pavilion. It was visited by 5.41 million people.

10. SOUTH KOREA: Seoul
Gods, heroes and athletes such as the 2.72m Discobolus drew over 366,000 visitors to a BM touring exhibition in South Korea and Taiwan. In 2011 the BM exhibition Ancient Greeks will travel to South Korea.

11. AUSTRALIA: Canberra
The BM is collaborating with the National Museum of Australia on a four-year research project on indigenous objects such as the 19th-century cane necklace. A joint exhibition is planned in 2013/14.

12. USA: Honolulu
A towering figure of the war god Ku (2.72m tall) was loaned to the Bishop Museum to celebrate the opening of their new Hawaiian Hall. He was one of over 1600 BM loans outside the UK in 2010/11.
Warder, 1150–75
Made of walrus ivory, this figure is one of a major group of Lewis chess pieces that toured Scotland in 2010/11.
(Height: 7.1 cm)
to the BM

invaluable

to thank all staff and

The Trustees and the

Staff

The Trustees and the

Director would like
to thank all staff and
volunteers for their

appreciate;

the BM

invaluable contribution

to the BM

invaluable

to thank all staff and

The Trustees and the

Staff

Appended

S.I. Awolaja
G.W. Austin
S.I. Awolaja
Volunteers
R.J. Stacey
P.J. Stacey
R. Stallard
A.J.R. Stansbury
F. Stansfield
G. Steel
R.G.A. Stevens
C.R. Stewart
N.A. Stewart
S.D. Stonim
K. Stipala
R. Starrie
U. Strachan
C.A. Stritter
E.J. Strudwick
J. Stuart
A.E.S. Stubnings
J. Suggitt
K. Sugiyama
G. Sukumaran
J. Sulaman
S. Sullivan
S.L. Sullivan
J.A. Sunderland
J.R. Sunliffe
A. van Camp
G. Vareldel
J.M. Swaine
T. Sweek
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R.I. Thomas
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M. Tsilampunga
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J.C. Twinn
J. Tyndall
L. Taleb
A.S. Szulc-Bierdrawa
C.N. Sykes
R.A. Swift
T. Sweek
M.J. Swaine
J. Swaddling
S.L. Sullivan
S. Sullivan
F. Suleman
N. Tallis
L.K. Zimmer
C. Salvador
E. Baldi
R. Baker
D. Bailey
M. Badcott
J. Bacon
K. Austin
R. Ashton
E. Apostola
D. Arap Mitei
E. Apostola
D. Arap Miteri
M. Araldi
G. Arlindo
M. Arishi
E. Armstrong
T. Arnold-Forster
R. Ashon
V. Assas
H. Aslaya
A. Auti
J. Austin
K. Austin
P. Au-Yeung
N. Awaai-Dean
J. Bacon
M. Backott
D. Bailey
T. Bainbridge
R. Baker
J. Bakis
M. Balcombe
E. Baldi
C. Balsamo
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B. Bannett
Y. Bao
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S. Barlas
K. Barnett
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H. Beale
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P. Bence
A. Bender
J. Benn
D. Berenger
B. Beresford
V. Beresford
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E. Beyer
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D. Bhundari
L. Bickford
A. Bickler
B. Biddell
I. Birmina
B. Biggs
M. Bismon
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M. Binder
A. Binns
L. Bishopp
C. Blackstone
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D. Blair
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N. Blumenthal
M. Bock
A. Bolland
A. Bonneux
O. Bonnerot
R. Boome
J. Booth
N. Boscher
S. Boucher-Levin
H. Bourdillon
J. Bourg
M. Bourka
J. Boyce
E. Brachaw
V. Brady
A. Brand
B. Broeck
S. Brandt
S. Bridges
A. Bridgewater
B. Brind
E. Brindell
D. Broadhead
L. Brodie
T. Brome
D. Brostoff
L. Brown
C. Browhead
P. Graddock
L. Crampton
L. Crowe
J. Griffin
R. Crockett
H. Crossman
J. Crowley
D. Crosier
C. Cummings
M. Czarnynoga
L. Czembrak
R. da Costa
L. Dabinazhad
A. Dallapiccola
J. Dalrymple
Z. Dalby
K. Daniels
D. Daniels
P. Davan
E. Davison
J. Davino
C. Dawes
J. Day
L. de Caro
M. de Pascale
M. Deary
M. Delphahavan
M. Deliketore
G. Dempsey
S. Dempsey
S. Denham
A. Deng
S. Dillon
P. Ding
A. Dixon
J. Dipierro
A. Dmochowska
J. Doman
S. Doolan
T. Doherty
S. Doorish
S. Dorr
J. Drouvet
S. Drukker
A. Drum
M. Dunbar
M. Dunlea
Jan Dulp
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J. Durston
S. Dutton
A. Eastmond
J. Edwards
K. Elkin
B. Elliott
C. Elliott
L. Ellis
S. Ellis
E. El-Tayeb
J. Engstrom
M. Etheridge
A. Evans
T. Fahimida Begum
O. Fairfax
I. Fairgrieve
H. Fancay
J. Feather
K. Felstead
M. Field
P. Field
T. Tike
I. Flakerud
C. Flood
C. Flitwick-Hill
L. Fox
T. Francis
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J. Freeborn
A. Freyene
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A. Garcia Perez
C. Garcia-Jane
H. Gaizner
S. Genbrugge
D. Gerstle
S. Genbrugge
H. Gardiner
A. Garcia Perez
C. Garcia-Jane
H. Gaizner
S. Genbrugge
D. Gerstle
M. Geslevitz
M. Ghanem
B. Ghazelayagh
P. Gibson
R. Gibson
World loans

Between 1 April 2010 and 31 March 2011, BM objects have been seen in cities across the world

Eastbourne
Edinburgh
Ely
Essen
Florence
Fora
Fort Worth
Frankfurt
Galmpton
Geelong
Glasgow
Gloucester
Hartlepool
Hatfield
Hemel
Honolulu
Houston
Ipswich
Istanbul
Izmir
Karlsruhe
Knaresborough
Kingston-upon-Hull
Kobe
Lagos
Launceston
Leeds
Leiden
Leicester
Lincoln
Littlehampton
Liverpool
Llanfairfechan
London
Londonderry
Los Angeles
Luton
Lyons
Madrid
Manchester
Middlesbrough
Milan
Montreal
Moosanvar
Munich
New York
New Haven
Newbury
Newcastle
Norwich
Nottingham
Oldenburg
Orleans
Oxford
Paris
Perth
Plymouth
Puente
Quebec
Rawenca
Reading
Rome
Romford
Rovereto
Saarbrücken
Salern
Salisbury
Seoul
Shanghai
Sheffield
Seyr
St. Louis
Stockholm
Stroud
Stuttgart
Sunderland
Swaffham
Swansea
Sydney
Taiwan
Tehran
Tokyo
Tongeren
Toronto
Toulouse
Truro
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Text by Mark Kilfoyle
Design by McConnell Design Ltd
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