

# Reaching out

Review 2019/20







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**Ready for X-ray**  
2020 marks 100 years since the BM launched one of the world's first dedicated museum science laboratories. Here the celebrated Roman sculpture of the Discobolus ('Discus-Thrower') is shown in the X-ray imaging lab of the BM's World Conservation and Exhibitions Centre.





## Director's preface

**The month of March 2020 saw unprecedented scenes at the British Museum as we responded to the COVID 19 health crisis. BM colleagues were outstanding, helping us to close the Museum in an orderly way and making sure that visitors, staff, collections and premises were safe and protected. This was, of course, the right decision but a difficult one nonetheless. In my time at the Museum I have found myself continually amazed by the creativity, resilience, and inventiveness of this extraordinary organisation. I know that in an uncertain environment the British Museum will adapt and thrive.**

Despite the profound change in our living and working habits, and this strange enforced period of 'exile', I have been so pleased to see how our audiences have continued to engage with the collection and the BM digitally. We have seen a surge in the number of users of our website, followers to our social media channels and visitors to our online galleries in the past few months. Culture is a source of comfort and encouragement at a time of turmoil, and collections like the BM's show us what it means to be human. For all of us who work at the Museum, it has been inspiring to see how so many people across the world have reached out and activated the collection as an inexhaustible resource. Many objects in the collection bear witness to humanity's ability to survive in adversity and we can gain encouragement from seeing how people from other places and other periods of history have overcome testing times.

As I walked through the deserted galleries just before leaving the Museum myself, sunlight shining through a large window directed me towards a bronze cat, an avatar of the Egyptian goddess Bastet, donated to a temple by a wealthy worshipper. This cat has traversed millennia; sitting motionless it holds the past, awaits the future. I felt consoled by its imperturbable presence, thinking that it was there to guide us silently to another époque, full of promises and new directions. Then I read the label: 'The scarab beetles on the cat's head and chest symbolise rebirth, while the silver udjat-eye on the pectoral invoke protection and healing.' Protection, healing, rebirth – the object speaks to our own predicament.

This situation does present an opportunity to think more calmly, perhaps more profoundly, about our work and our achievements but also to think about how to improve what we are doing once we have overcome this crisis, how we can continue to develop, collaborate and grow into the future. The Museum is rethinking how we display the collection in London and how we share it with the world, physically and digitally. These are hugely exciting projects which, even while in lockdown, we have been actively moving forward.

I cannot express how wonderful it has been to start to welcome our audiences back, to see the Museum up and running again. I look forward to witnessing the many fascinating projects we are working on come to fruition, and to make the Museum once again a national and global hub for building a new, shared understanding of the history of human cultural achievement – and an even more wonderful, exciting place to visit and enjoy.

**Hartwig Fischer**  
Director

### **Egyptian cat, c.600 BC**

The Gayer-Anderson cat, one of the most beloved objects in the BM, bears symbols of protection, healing and rebirth. (Height 14 cm)



# Chairman’s foreword

Three guiding principles shape the work of the British Museum. This Review spells out some of the ways in which they were followed in 2019/20.

The first is respectful collaboration – with individuals, communities and institutions around the country and the world. This means working with large numbers of partners in the regions and nations, sharing objects, knowledge and training. Roughly 10m people in the UK could see British Museum objects on loan to institutions outside London in the year.

Collaboration includes the Portable Antiquities Scheme – a project that supports the reporting of archaeological finds by members of the public in England and Wales. Around 81,000 finds were recorded in 2019. It means reaching out to engage with students of all ages, programmes to support disadvantaged visitors, and a host of other initiatives.

Good progress is being made on the development of the British Museum Archaeological Research Collection (BM\_ARC), which in partnership with the University of Reading will create a large new facility to store parts of the collection and host a variety of research programmes.

Outside the UK, the Review highlights collaborative projects undertaken in sub-Saharan Africa, Egypt, Oceania, Latin America and beyond, along with the loan of nearly 1,900 objects last year to 107 venues outside the UK. The International Training Programme has welcomed colleagues from 48 different countries over the last 14 years.

The Trustees’ second guiding principle is openness and understanding. The collections and archives are freely accessible. The Museum recognises its obligations to communities that have close cultural connections with objects in the collection, and is open about provenance.

Scholarship and research are of prime importance. The Review describes innovative work in the Museum’s specialist laboratories, and the new knowledge that is being generated in a wide range of subjects. Some 96,000 objects were examined by scholars in the Museum study rooms last year. In the past decade 91 PhDs have been jointly undertaken at the BM and UK universities.

Finally comes the overriding importance of preserving and sharing the collection for present and future generations. One way of doing this is through the temporary exhibition programme which brought new stories and experiences to very large and diverse audiences over the year, ranging all the way from manga to Troy.

The Museum closure has highlighted the importance of its digital offerings. A new website was launched last autumn and a much improved Collection online service is now available. Some 5m people now follow the Museum on various forms of social media. Expanding the reach and quality of this material is a high priority for the years ahead.

The Director and his colleagues have had a remarkable year, and have risen to the challenges brought about by COVID 19 with extraordinary commitment. The Trustees thank them, and all the Museum’s very many supporters, from the bottom of their hearts.

**Sir Richard Lambert**  
Chairman of the Trustees

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National

Touring exhibitions for UK audiences	Exhibitions on Vikings, LGBTQ histories and Britain's hoards of buried coins and treasure reached a record-breaking 640,000 visitors from Belfast to the Isle of Wight.
BM loans seen nationwide	Among the 2,800 objects the BM loaned across the UK was a Japanese dragon displayed in Wales and 18th-century botanical collages by Mary Delany shown in Scotland.
A record of England's archaeology	The BM encourages metal detectorists and others to report what they discover to its Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS). Over 81,000 objects were recorded in 2019. On the PAS website (finds.org.uk), the public can now access 1.5m finds from across England and Wales.
Hoard makes the news	Public and media interest was keen when a rare hoard of 2,500 coins from the time of the Norman Conquest was found in Somerset.
Viking treasure stolen	The BM helped to prosecute thieves who found Viking treasure in Herefordshire and tried to sell it illegally.
Prehistoric grave goods	With colleagues in Manchester and Reading, BM staff have undertaken a major research project exploring which objects are buried with the dead in Britain and why.
Launching the ARC	The British Museum Archaeological Research Collection (BM_ARC) is under construction in Berkshire. The storage and research facility is a collaboration between the BM and the University of Reading.
Research on Britain's earliest settlements	Alongside colleagues from UK universities, BM staff are studying sites in Norfolk and Suffolk, looking at early human behaviour and technologies.
Training the next generation	The BM is training young professionals in the digital preservation of collections. The Museum Futures programme is a BM collaboration with museums around the country.

What they've been saying

‘It’s a real achievement to secure the loan of items like this from the British Museum... it also opens the door for an ongoing strong partnership.’

Gill Kennett  
Chair of Trustees,  
Carisbrooke Castle Museum,  
Isle of Wight  
*February 2020*



**Anglo-Saxon brooch, 6th century**  
The BM loaned this gilded bird brooch with its garnet eye to Carisbrooke Castle for an exhibition about Anglo-Saxon life on the Isle of Wight. (Length 4 cm)

International

Two million visitors across the globe	The ground-breaking success of <i>A history of the world in 100 objects</i> has continued in a touring exhibition based on the BM/BBC radio series. Shown in 11 venues worldwide, the exhibition welcomed its two millionth visitor when it reached Hong Kong in 2019.
Training colleagues worldwide	BM programmes include the Iraq Scheme, training Iraqi professionals in emergency heritage management, and the International Training Programme, which welcomed fellows from 16 countries.
Fight against crime	To support authorities in countering the illegal trade in artefacts, the BM helped to identify and conserve looted antiquities from Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere to ensure their safe return to museums in those countries.
Museums in Africa	The BM is actively supporting new museums in Nigeria, Ghana and Egypt with loans, conservation and professional advice.
Pacific cultures	Collaborations with communities in the Pacific included lending Māori ancestral treasures to Aotearoa/New Zealand and visits to Rapa Nui.
Excavations in Egypt	At the ancient port city of Naukratis, archaeologists excavated the earliest levels of the Egyptian and Greek sanctuaries and the harbour.
Sudanese heritage	The BM and a local community in Sudan together created the Abri House of Heritage, a space inspired by BM excavations in the area and the living culture of the people today.
Indigenous America	Communities around the world and BM staff bring together cultural knowledge. Tribal educators unlocked the histories of objects loaned to the Chachalu Museum and Cultural Centre in Oregon. Murui-Muina elders came to London and studied the BM's collection from western Amazonia.

What they've been saying

‘The badly made wooden crates going through Heathrow airport caught the border officials’ attention. When they opened them, they found ancient Buddhist sculptures from Afghanistan, looted in the aftermath of war... Now, after a lengthy investigation and meticulous conservation by the British Museum, the artifacts are finally to be returned to Kabul.’

The Times  
July 2019



**Head of the Buddha, AD 300–600**  
This sculpted head from a monastery in Afghanistan was one of several which UK police investigated as suspected loot. BM experts helped authorities to identify and return the cultural artefacts. In recent years, the BM has played a central role in ensuring many such objects are returned to their countries of origin. (Height 16 cm)

# Headlines

## London

6.2m visitors	The BM welcomed 6.2m visitors in 2019. The increase of 7% from 2018 made the BM, once again, the UK's top visitor attraction.
Online in China	The BM leads the world museum sector in reaching audiences in China via Weibo and WeChat.
Maya reborn	Ancient Maya monuments recorded by Alfred Maudslay in the 1880s and 90s have been recreated online in partnership with Google Arts and Culture.
Popular exhibitions	Major exhibitions on Japanese manga, artist Edvard Munch and the myths and reality of ancient Troy attracted nearly half a million visitors.
Digital approaches to the collection	The Samsung Digital Discovery Centre reopened. The space offers free digital activities for families and schools, as well as virtual visits to classrooms across the UK.
Topics for today	The BM engages with public debates relevant to audiences today. New BM tours explored how the collection was formed. Discussion forums included topics such as reclamation and who owns culture.
Archaeology in action	The BM hosted the hugely popular opening of the 2019 UK Festival of Archaeology. Over 24,000 children and adults attended the weekend of installations and demonstrations in the Great Court.

## What they've been saying

‘I lingered for the best part of three hours... It was, simply, a pleasure to be immersed again in such a cracking and influential yarn.’

Daily Telegraph  
in a five-star review of the  
BP exhibition *Troy: myth and reality*  
November 2019



**Achilles and Penthesilea, c.530 BC**  
Stories of the Trojan War were brought to life by objects such as this amphora from Vulci in Italy. Here, the Greek warrior Achilles is shown in battle with the Queen of the Amazons. (Height 41 cm)



In the future

Climates and cultures	Future exhibitions include shows on the climate and culture of the Arctic, the philosophy and radical ideas of Tantra, the Roman emperor Nero and, on the 850th anniversary of his murder, the life of Archbishop Thomas Becket.
Helen of Troy sails to Scotland	Drawing on the success of the BM's exhibition on ancient Troy, a BM Spotlight loan based on the stories of Helen and Achilles will travel to Dundee, Reading and Haslemere in 2021.
Malaysia collaboration	An exhibition on the influence of Islamic art was jointly devised by the BM and the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia. Bringing together both collections, it will be shown in Kuala Lumpur, following its successful run in London.
A century of science	Events throughout 2020 will mark 100 years since the BM established a dedicated laboratory for conservation and scientific research. Workshops for children include learning about the techniques BM scientists use to analyse ancient Greek and Egyptian objects.
Ancient medical history	A major research project is set to examine medical texts from the ancient Assyrian library of King Ashurbanipal, a collection of over 30,000 clay tablets inscribed in cuneiform and discovered in the ruins of the city of Nineveh.
Keeping up appearances	In 2020, the BM plans to undertake major refurbishment to its front colonnade and roof, last repaired after bomb damage in the Second World War. Access to the BM will be unaffected.

What they've been saying

‘Wow, what a great resource for our children to explore!’

**Rattlesden School**  
Bury St Edmunds, on Twitter  
on visiting the BM galleries online  
*March 2020*

Frog vessel, c.3300 BC

COVID 19 temporarily closed the building in March, but visitors around the world continued to visit the BM online. As the largest indoor space on Google Street View, the BM can be explored gallery by gallery, as can the vast Collection online. This vessel for cosmetics is from ancient Egypt. (Length 6 cm)



# Headlines

The BM in numbers

6.2m

visitors to the BM

550,000

550,000 visits to special exhibitions

300,000

pupils from primary and secondary schools

10m

people had the opportunity to see BM objects on loan across the country

4,000

objects lent in the UK and internationally

81,000

archaeological finds reported under the Portable Antiquities Scheme

5m

social media followers

1.5m

people accessed the BM website in March 2020, following the COVID 19 closure

2m

world visitors from China to Abu Dhabi saw the touring exhibition *A history of the world in 100 objects*

48

countries have participated in the BM's International Training Programme







Small text label on the pedestal, likely providing information about the sculpture.



This figure is thought to represent Aphrodite, a goddess of love and beauty. The sculpture is made of marble and is a reproduction of the original. The original is in the collection of the British Museum.





# Reaching out

Everything the BM achieves is based on collaboration with communities, institutions and individuals across the world. With partners at home and abroad, the BM is exploring how museum collections can work together in the 21st century: telling new stories, pursuing fresh avenues of research, supporting international standards of science and conservation, and lending objects. The BM aims to ensure that a fruitful and continual dialogue takes place among all the cultural groups whose history the collection preserves and celebrates.



**Ivory medicine vessel**

Collaborations with colleagues in Nigeria include sharing objects and research on the culture of the Kingdom of Benin. This vessel of the Edo peoples represents Ofoe, messenger of the god of death. (Height 16 cm)

## New museums in Africa

The BM is supporting a number of important projects to help colleagues in Africa create new museums for their audiences. In Nigeria, the JK Randle Centre for Yoruba Culture and History is nearing completion. The new heritage centre in Lagos will explore Yoruba history as well as contemporary culture in the region. In September 2019, BM Director Hartwig Fischer met Shulamite Adebolu, the Commissioner for Culture in Lagos State, and further plans with BM staff include the selection of 12 outstanding objects from Nigeria which the BM will lend to the new Centre.

As part of the Benin Dialogue Group, the BM is working with other institutions across Europe and Africa to support the establishment of a new museum in Benin City. The Benin Royal Museum will focus on the historic arts and cultures of the Kingdom of Benin in southern Nigeria. Discussions are underway for the BM to lend objects to the new museum and develop further collaborations.

The Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB) and the BM are collaborating to draw up effective, sustainable strategies to regenerate Ghana's existing heritage infrastructure and develop new museums in the country. In November 2019, the BM in partnership with the GMMB delivered a three-day workshop in Accra focused on 'Exploring Narratives and Engaging Audiences', supported by the Gerda Henkel Stiftung. African and UK heritage professionals, academics and artists met to discuss how to tell new stories in the Ghana National Museum that will be relevant to today's audiences in Africa and around the world.

At the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, BM conservators assisted colleagues in assessing the condition of objects before their redisplay in updated galleries. The teams also worked together to assess conservation challenges relating to Egypt's oldest known wall painting from Hierakonpolis, an ancient capital of southern Egypt. With similar objects in both collections, staff were able to exchange valuable experiences concerning the successful care and display of paintings and other artefacts from ancient Egypt. The BM is one of several partners, funded by the European Union, working to renew Cairo's historic Egyptian Museum.

Forthcoming activity includes a partnership with the National Museums of Kenya, through the International Inventories Programme, that seeks to research Kenyan collections in museums around the world, including that of the BM.

### Listening and learning

**The BM conducts research on the collection in cooperation with a worldwide network of partners. Such dialogue is enormously rewarding, bringing people together, posing new questions and gathering usefully different viewpoints on the past and present meanings of objects.**

In the Pacific, the BM works with local communities to share knowledge and improve our understanding of how fragile organic objects were made. This information can often assist conservators in making decisions about how best to care for these objects. A research trip to Tahiti enabled staff to convey the results of recent intensive investigations into a famous Mourner's Costume, brought to Britain by Captain Cook in the 18th century. Staff engaged with a wide audience in Tahiti, giving press interviews, delivering public lectures and attending workshops and seminars. Important new relationships were also forged with the Museum of Tahiti and the Ministry for Culture as well as with contemporary artists and cultural practitioners. As no examples of these costumes have survived in Tahiti, there was particular interest and appreciation from contemporary artists. Students from the Art School in Papeete were excited to learn more and a small group travelled to London in December 2019 to continue discussions.

The BM is developing closer contacts in Rapa Nui (Easter Island). In 2019, staff travelled to the island to see important archaeological sites and meet an indigenous delegation who had come to London the previous year. The trip was organised by the Chilean government, and included fruitful talks about the island's celebrated statues. As a result of these discussions, the BM is looking to develop a number of future collaborations with Rapa Nui.

In October 2019, objects thought to have been collected on James Cook's first voyage featured in an international collaboration to mark the 250th anniversary of his arrival in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Thirty-seven treasured Māori objects from five museums in England and Germany, including the BM, were loaned to the Tairāwhiti Museum in Gisborne for a year-long special exhibition. The *taonga* (ancestral treasures) included belts, carvings, paddles, cloaks and prestigious ornaments worn by chiefs. BM staff worked with colleagues from Oxford, Cambridge and the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa in Wellington to install the pieces, and participated in public panel discussions exploring the legacy of contact since those dramatic first encounters between Europeans and the Māori.



In 2019/20, among many visits from source communities around the globe, the BM invited two Murui-Muina Indigenous elders and leaders, Oscar Jitdutjaaño and Alicia Sánchez, to work with collections from western Amazonia. The objects were acquired during the rubber boom in the early 20th century. The dialogue was one of many exciting projects supported by the BM's new Santo Domingo Centre of Excellence for Latin American Research ([sdcelarbritishmuseum.org](https://sdcelarbritishmuseum.org)). The Centre is bringing together people across Central and South America to challenge how Latin America is commonly represented and studied in museums.

Fighting heritage crime

**Museums are places of trust. Openness and integrity are at the heart of what the BM does. Each year, free of charge, the BM welcomes six million visitors into the galleries in Bloomsbury to enjoy outstanding objects from the collection. A rich programme of talks, tours and events, many of them also free, brings those objects to life.**

The BM's responsible use of the cultural heritage in the collection extends to our colleagues around the world. An important part of the BM's work is its partnership with law enforcement agencies to halt the illicit smuggling of objects into the UK. In recent years, the BM has repeatedly helped identify artefacts for sale or transported illegally from Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Sudan, Egypt and within the UK itself.

Many archaeological sites and buildings in Iraq were badly looted between 1994 and 2004. Of the 15,000 pieces stolen from the Iraq Museum, more than 8,000 are still missing. When such objects are seized in Britain, the BM works with the UK Border Force and HMRC to identify and store them for their safe return. In 2019, the BM helped return a number of significant artefacts. They included a Babylonian *kudurru* (boundary stone) of the 12th century BC, which records land given to a named individual. The ancient text concludes with a series of curses threatening anyone who disputes the gift or damages the stone. Later in the year, 154 cuneiform tablets – the largest group ever to be seized in the UK – were also returned. Speaking of the *kudurru*, Dr Salih Husain Ali, Iraq's Ambassador to the UK, said: 'We are grateful to the British authorities and in particular to the British Museum for the extraordinary efforts in identifying and returning this invaluable piece of Iraq's heritage.'

Circulating Artefacts is a programme designed to support putting the trade in antiquities from Egypt and Sudan under greater scrutiny. Funded by the British Council's Cultural Protection Fund, in partnership with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, the scheme is generating a closed, secure database of antiquities on the market and in private collections. By March 2020, 47,000 artefacts had been documented. The resource will be used by select Museum staff for research and, where appropriate, to help authorities trace provenances in order to recover illicit goods.



Stolen heads returned

With its expertise in world archaeology, the BM is the main advisory body in the UK in cases of illicit trafficking of antiquities. These clay heads of AD 300–600 are from one or more Buddhist monasteries in Afghanistan. BM staff helped police to identify them, and ensure their safe return to Kabul.

Several stories caught the public eye. 'Fourth-century Afghan treasure chest saved from black market' was the Evening Standard's headline when the BM identified a group of sculptures stolen from Afghanistan. The two crates impounded at Heathrow Airport included a stone bodhisattva of AD 300 and nine clay heads sculpted in the 4th to 6th centuries AD. Conserved with support from John Eskenazi, the sculptures displayed at the BM before their return to the National Museum in Kabul.

The theft of Treasure in the UK was also big news. Two detectorists were jailed for up to 10 years for failing to report a Viking Age hoard they found near Leominster in Herefordshire. While some stolen jewellery and a silver ingot have been recovered, most of the 300 coins are still missing, along with an unknown quantity of other material. Such a find would normally be reported through the BM's Portable Antiquities Scheme, and staff worked closely with national partners, the police and the Crown Prosecution Service on the case.





**BM in Reading**  
Construction is underway to build the new British Museum Archaeological Research Collection in Berkshire. This major facility will store artefacts from the BM collection and host a range of research programmes.

National moves

The BM collection is a testament to our shared human experience over millennia. To walk through the galleries is to try to make sense not of one place or time, but of the world and our multiple identities within it. The value of the collection as a public good is inestimable. It is through such a world collection that we and future generations can reassert, especially in times of conflict or turmoil, our common humanity.

The BM uses the collection to reach out. In the UK, such endeavours range from lending objects throughout the country (more than 2,800 in 2019/20) to research collaborations with British universities and museums. Public involvement is crucial to this sense of the BM working for all. The Portable Antiquities Scheme, which records artefacts found by members of the public in England and Wales, reported over 81,000 finds in 2019 – a vast joint effort nationwide between archaeological experts, museums, finds liaison officers and the British public to record our shared national history.

To expand its national role, the BM has undertaken its largest building project outside London. In partnership with the University of Reading, the BM is creating the British Museum Archaeological Research Collection (BM\_ARC) in Berkshire. Collaboration is at the heart of ‘the ARC’, which will create a large new facility to store artefacts from the BM collection and host a wide range of research programmes. Construction on the Shinfield site is now well underway.

Plans to make the most of the ARC as a national resource are also taking shape. To promote innovative research the University of Reading, working with the BM’s Department of Scientific Research, has appointed a Research Fellow in Material Science. The fellowship will design UK scientific research projects that bring together the staff of both institutions. A particular focus will be Roman glass and metal, using high-quality chemical analysis of the BM collection to understand better the exchange of knowledge between crafts, the flow of materials around the Empire, and the implications for identity in Britain within a larger sense of Roman citizenship. In addition to government funding, BM\_ARC is supported by the Headley Trust, Graham and Joanna Barker, Jayne Wrightsman OBE, the American Friends of the British Museum and British Museum Patrons.





**Research for the *Tantra* exhibition**  
This detail of an 18th-century Tibetan textile shows Saraha, an enlightened teacher of Tantric philosophy. Using X-radiography, researchers are able to distinguish earlier designs and elements later painted over.

100 years of conservation and science

The BM's foundational value resides in the breadth, scale, complexity and unity of its collection. Its origins lie in an Enlightenment fascination with both science and the humanities. Hans Sloane's 18th-century collection comprised specimens of natural history, books and hand-made artefacts, one person's interconnected collection that became the starting point in 1753 for the British Museum.

The great museum of human cultures has always preserved its proximity to scientific thought. The BM's first director was a scientist, the physicist and physician Gowin Knight. In the 1840s, figures suggested to adorn plinths inside the museum included the scientists Francis Bacon and Isaac Newton.

By 1920, the BM had its first dedicated science laboratory – one of the earliest museum labs in the world. Objects stored for safety during the First World War, many in tunnels beneath Holborn Post Office, had suffered badly from the damp. The renowned chemist Alexander Scott advised the government that 'every one of the Departments of the [British] Museum stands much in need of expert scientific assistance'. The conservation and scientific work began: removing incrustations from Tang Dynasty silver, softening leather so as to unroll and read Egyptian text. By 1931 the BM had its first X-radiography facility.

One hundred years on, BM conservation and scientific research is shared around the world, from improved practices in conservation to new discoveries in how to identify organic materials or the tiniest traces of colour. Specialist labs in its World Conservation and Exhibitions Centre undertake investigative research and care for the collection. Staff are at the cutting edge of new techniques. One BM team, working with precious terracotta figurines from ancient Cyprus, has been looking at the potential of lasers to remove biological growth without causing damage. Their innovative work won the 2019 Nigel Williams Prize for conservation.



**Sutton Hoo bowls**  
Conservator Harold Plenderleith (right) joined the BM in 1924. During the Second World War, he moved onto the BM premises to keep watch for fires and bomb damage each night. Here, in 1951, he and Herbert Batten examine finds from the Sutton Hoo ship burial.

**Detecting bugs in the bread**  
Using a scanning electron microscope, BM scientists identified these biscuit beetles in a loaf of bread 3,000 years old. The funerary offering was probably preserved in an ancient Egyptian necropolis in Thebes.









Around Britain, museums work with the BM to create compelling cultural displays for the entire country. Exhibitions and loans take the collection on tour. Partnership Galleries draw on BM expertise, as do the many training and knowledge-sharing programmes run by the BM. Britain’s archaeology is an important research focus, from specialist fieldwork to public involvement in recording finds through the Portable Antiquities Scheme.



**Ming Emperor’s seat**  
This garden seat was made in Jingdezhen, the porcelain capital of China for over 1,000 years. Part of the Sir Percival David Collection held at the BM, it was displayed at Manchester Museum as part of a UK tour. (Height 46 cm)

National tours and loans

The BM collection is loaned to museums around the UK. Curated collections of objects appear in touring exhibitions; others are particular loans for a gallery or special event. The BM works closely with its partners to draw the greatest benefit for local visitors.

BM touring exhibitions – supported by the Dorset Foundation in memory of Harry M Weinrebe – attracted large audiences around the country. *Viking: rediscover the legend*, created in partnership with York Museums Trust, drew to a close having reached 225,000 people around the UK. At its final venue, recent finds from Norwich Castle Museum’s own collection shed light on Norfolk and East Anglia from the time the Viking Great Army arrived in AD 865. ‘This is the first time many of the objects have been on show,’ noted *Current Archaeology* in its review of the Norwich show, adding that many of the finds had been discovered within the last two or three years and recorded through the Portable Antiquities Scheme, administered by the BM.

*Desire, love, identity: exploring LGBTQ histories* continued its national tour, travelling to Bolton, Norwich and Dorchester. At Norwich and Norfolk Millennium Library, the display drew more than 200,000 visitors. The show has been particularly effective at broadening audiences, prompting innovative programming and raising the museums’ profile. In September 2019, the National Justice Museum in Nottingham, where the tour appeared last year, won an East Midlands heritage award for reaching new audiences, as well as the region’s Museum of the Year for its presentation of the show and a publication of local LGBTQ stories.

After being shown in Salisbury and Belfast, *Hoards: a hidden history of ancient Britain* travelled to Buxton Museum, Brading Roman Villa on the Isle of Wight and Peterborough Museum. Developed in partnership with Salisbury Museum, the exhibition looks at the varied reasons valuable coins and metal objects are buried, lost and recovered and what such hoards can tell us about key periods of Britain’s past. Drawing attention to some of the UK’s outstanding archaeological finds, the show attracted 148,000 visitors during its five-venue tour.

# National

## *Nordic by nature*

A BM exhibition on Nordic art and design began its UK tour in 2019. The displays included this Norwegian birch-bark bowl made by Markku Kosonen in 1998. (Height 12 cm)



From the aurora borealis to local materials such as birch wood, the natural world has contributed to an identifiably Nordic aesthetic. *Nordic by nature: modern design and prints* was one of several new BM tours launched in 2019/20. Forty-four objects and works on paper showed how Scandinavian and Finnish artists and designers have created a distinctive style rooted in the traditions and industries of their nations. The show toured to Sheffield, Galashiels, Thurso and Redcar.

Well-known television panellist and editor Ian Hislop appeared in conversation with BM curator Tom Hockenhull at all three venues for the exhibition *The golden age of satire? Late-Georgian satirical prints*. Their selection of works by James Gillray, Thomas Rowlandson and others celebrated a high point of British political satire between 1790 and 1820. Appearing at Pontefract Museum, Newstead Abbey and the Beacon Museum, Whitehaven, the show drew 47,000 visitors.

*Ancient Iraq: new discoveries* is a new tour of 80 remarkable objects exploring the cultural history of Iraq. The show looks at the challenges today in trying to protect the country's extraordinarily rich heritage. The BM is closely involved with colleagues in Iraq to support their work, and the exhibition presents exciting finds made as part of BM training programmes in the region – including the excavation of a Sumerian temple and a massive fort on the border between the Roman and Parthian empires. Premiering at the Great North Museum: Hancock in Newcastle, the exhibition then tours to Nottingham.

A collaboration with English Heritage and Carisbrooke Castle reunited Anglo-Saxon treasures found on the Isle of Wight. To bring the show to life, a two-day living history event welcomed 300 schoolchildren to handle replica artefacts and watch a re-enacted skirmish between Anglo-Saxons and Vikings. The exhibition was supported by the Weston Loan Programme with Art Fund.





## National



### Lending objects

Over 2,800 loans from the BM collection were seen across the UK. In Oxford a painted Etruscan cinerary urn of 150–100 BC from Tuscany was displayed. This iron dragon made in Japan in the 18th–19th century was shown in Treorchy, Wales. (Heights 76 cm; 12 cm)

Spotlight Loans are objects loaned by the BM as unique displays to attract new visitors to museums around the UK. One of the largest porcelains in the Sir Percival David Collection – one of the foremost assemblages of Chinese ceramics in the world and held since 2010 at the BM – is a 46cm-high, blue-and-white garden seat of 1573–1620. Never before loaned to an external venue in the UK, the Spotlight loan was a rare opportunity to tour this outstanding object. With support from the Sir Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art, the Ming Dynasty stool was shown in Manchester, and will tour to Exeter.



Other special loans included the popular Kiyoharu Dragon, which the BM showed at Treorchy Library in Wales as part of the 2019 Rhondda Arts Festival. 'It is a rare treat for our residents and visitors,' said local councillor Rhys Lewis, 'and allows us to marvel at the amazing craftsmanship.' Overall the BM loaned more than 2,800 objects to 105 venues in the UK in 2019/20. They included works by Rembrandt and George Stubbs (shown in Carlisle and Milton Keynes); botanical collages by 18th-century artist Mary Delany (Edinburgh); and an Etruscan cinerary urn of 150–100 BC displayed as part of an exhibition on Pompeii (Oxford). BM loans also featured in the new exhibition hall at Sutton Hoo. With professional support from the BM and colleagues in Suffolk, the National Trust reopened the hall in August 2019 to mark 80 years since the astonishing discovery – and gift to the public by landowner Edith Pretty – of a treasure-filled Anglo-Saxon ship burial. The BM marked the anniversary with a special display, and the anniversary proved popular on social media worldwide. A post on the Sutton Hoo discovery was one of the top-performing by the BM on Chinese site Weibo, with 188,000 views.





**Museum Futures**  
For the Museum Futures programme, trainees receive practical training in digital skills at the BM while they undertake year-long placements at UK museums.

**National partnerships**

For much of the BM's national engagement, the focus is on the future. In 2019, the Paul Hamlyn Foundation agreed to allocate its continuing support for the BM to a six-year grant to develop the BM's highly praised national and community partnerships. *Where We Are . . .* will invite young people to build on the strengths of the present programmes and identify new directions. How can the BM place community needs at the core of its activities? What are the most pressing issues, especially for young people? What stories do communities in Britain want to communicate about the place in which they live?

In 2019/20 BM-led training programmes continued to invest in young people and museum staff across the country. Museum Futures, a Skills for the Future Programme supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, entered its second year, with a new cohort of trainees looking at the digital preservation and management of collections and museum data. The traineeships give young people a jumpstart to their careers and have a positive impact on the partner museums who participate in the programme. In 2020, the UK partners included museums in Birmingham, Bristol, Carlisle, Derby, Hastings, Lisburn, London and Tyne & Wear.

Staff exchanges have proved an invaluable form of professional development across the UK, widening participants' knowledge by seeing how other museums operate. The BM continues to widen the circle of participating museums for its Knowledge Exchange programme – supported by the Vivmar Foundation – where staff spend time at another institution. In 2019/20, the placements included the American Museum & Gardens, Bath; National Museums Liverpool; Paisley Museum; Tees Valley Museums; University of Cambridge Museums; as well as the BM itself.

A development of the Knowledge Exchange programme (now in its 10th year) is the Visitor Services Knowledge Circle, with its particular focus on museum staff working in Visitor Services. The visitor experience varies widely among cultural organisations, and the 15 placements in 2019 to compare approaches ranged from Salford to Salisbury, Northern Ireland to the National Trust. Plans for future iterations of the programme are now underway.

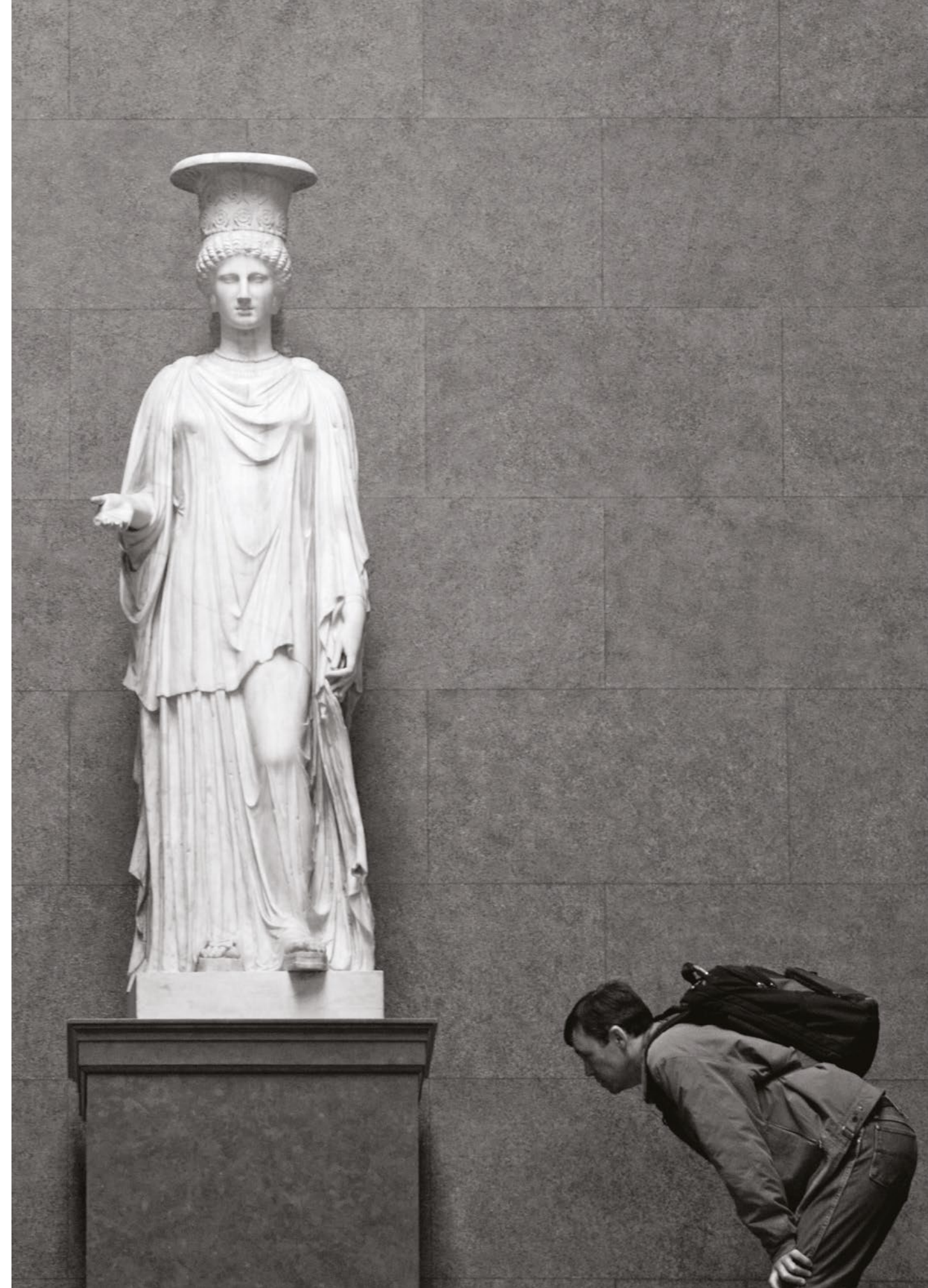


The Money and Medals Network, supported by Arts Council England, promotes collections of coins and medals across the UK. It also provides training and resources for museum staff and volunteers. Current projects include work on the collections of the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME) Museum in Wiltshire and the Yorkshire Museum. A comprehensive report on the state of numismatic collections in England was completed in December 2019.

Investment in the nation's museums extends to creating major Partnership Galleries. The goal is to improve what individual institutions can offer by bringing together the strengths of more than one museum. BM expertise and the BM collection are a valuable resource for museums to draw on as they redevelop their own spaces. The BM continued to work with Norwich Castle Museum on its new medieval gallery. For a new gallery on South Asia, Manchester Museum has created a South Asia Gallery Collective made up of volunteers from the local South Asian community. As well as visiting the BM, the collective has played a vital role in discussions in Manchester on the approach and content of the gallery, which will be created in partnership with the BM.

This national conversation is important to the BM. Director Hartwig Fischer visited a group of the BM's national partners in July 2019, including the Great North Museum: Hancock in Newcastle, the Bowes Museum at Barnard Castle, and Jarrow Hall Anglo-Saxon Farm, Village and Bede Museum. Colleagues in the Midlands and North of England shared their ideas for a wide range of possible collaborations with the BM, from academic research to Partnership Galleries.

The BM's annual conference for its national partners took place in November 2019. Over 300 people attended, to discuss equality and diversity in UK museum practice. The keynote address was by former BM Trustee Bonnie Greer; there were 80 speakers and contributors; and 40 breakout sessions enabled participants from across the country to share their thoughts on topics such as colonialism, race, gender and disability.







# National

## Archaeology and research in the UK

The BM, known for its international fieldwork, is also closely involved with archaeology in the UK. The Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) is jointly administered by the BM and Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales to record archaeological finds, large and small, made by the public in England and Wales. Working with around 100 partners and 40 locally based Finds Liaison Officers, the PAS recorded over 81,000 finds in 2019. Over 1,300 cases in England, Wales and Northern Ireland were deemed Treasure – a record number for a single year. Many will be acquired by museums for the benefit of the public.

In 2019, a hoard of Anglo-Norman coins was discovered on land near the Chew Valley in Somerset. Metal-detectorists found, dispersed in the ploughsoil, over 2,500 coins dating to a key moment of English history: the Norman Conquest. Mixed together, most of the coins depict Harold II, the last crowned Anglo-Saxon king of England, and his successor William the Conqueror. The discovery – the largest find of Norman coins in the UK since 1833 – was widely reported in the media.

Unusual finds included six Neolithic and Bronze Age arrowheads uncovered in Wiltshire. Such a group is rare, and finding six in one place marked the site as one of local importance. A beautifully worked medieval gold mount, with garnet inlay, was discovered on the Isle of Wight, while in Kent a rare silver penny from the reign of the 9th-century Mercian king Burgred was found. In Northamptonshire, a Roman amulet was discovered depicting a bird perched, and feeding on, a phallus. The phallus was a popular charm among Roman soldiers to avert the evil eye.

PAS Explorers, supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund continues. The project has recruited 610 volunteers to work on the PAS and offers training in recording finds, photography and how to deliver outreach work in archaeology. To date, volunteers have recorded 90,000 finds on the PAS database. PAS resources now available include specific County Pages on the PAS website ([finds.org.uk](https://finds.org.uk)), as well as 68 online recording guides, explaining how to describe and identify finds. In print, *Finds identified: an illustrated guide to metal-detecting and archaeological finds* was published. International outreach included advising Finnish colleagues on establishing FindSampo, a public finds recording scheme in Finland.



**Candle-holder 1100–1300**  
Finds reported through the Portable Antiquities Scheme included this medieval candle-holder in the form of a lion, found in Suffolk in 2019. (Height 7 cm)



A number of BM research projects focused on the archaeology and history of Britain. Excavations at Happisburgh in Norfolk are looking at buried land surfaces now being exposed by coastal erosion. They are providing evidence for the oldest known peopling of northwest Europe, some one million years ago. At a 400,000-year-old site at Barnham in Suffolk, stone tools, animal remains and traces of burning are offering new perspectives on human behaviour and environments. Both investigations form part of Pathways to Ancient Britain 3, a major research collaboration led by the Natural History Museum, which runs until 2022.

The Breckland Palaeolithic Project, completed in June 2019, showed how the development of human technology is represented in the Breckland in Norfolk and Suffolk and how early human activities related to the ecology of the region. The collaboration with Queen Mary University of London was funded by the Leverhulme Trust. An international conference at the BM in October 2019, supported by Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), provided an opportunity for colleagues from across the UK and Europe to debate the human occupation of Europe from 700,000 to 300,000 years ago. Experts presented innovative approaches to researching the significance of stone tools as evidence for human occupation.

Major support from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) enabled the BM to collaborate with the universities of Manchester and Reading to investigate the type of objects placed with the dead. Looking at burials 8,000 years ago up to the Roman Conquest, researchers are examining the frequency, diversity, pattern and possible purpose of pots, tools, weapons and jewellery found in graves. The project included public outcomes such as a grave goods trail that visitors could follow in the BM galleries. As a special commission, former Children's Laureate Michael Rosen gave a reading of poems he wrote in response to prehistoric objects such as the three Folkton drums, found buried with a small child. As he said in an interview in the *Observer*, such objects are emotionally charged: 'there is no such thing as a human being who is not intertwined with the objects of their lives.'

Anglo-Norman hoard found

In 2019, a hoard of more than 2,500 coins was discovered in Somerset. Dating from the time of the Norman Conquest, some like this one were 'mules', coins bearing a design from the reign of King Harold on one side, and William the Conqueror on the other.

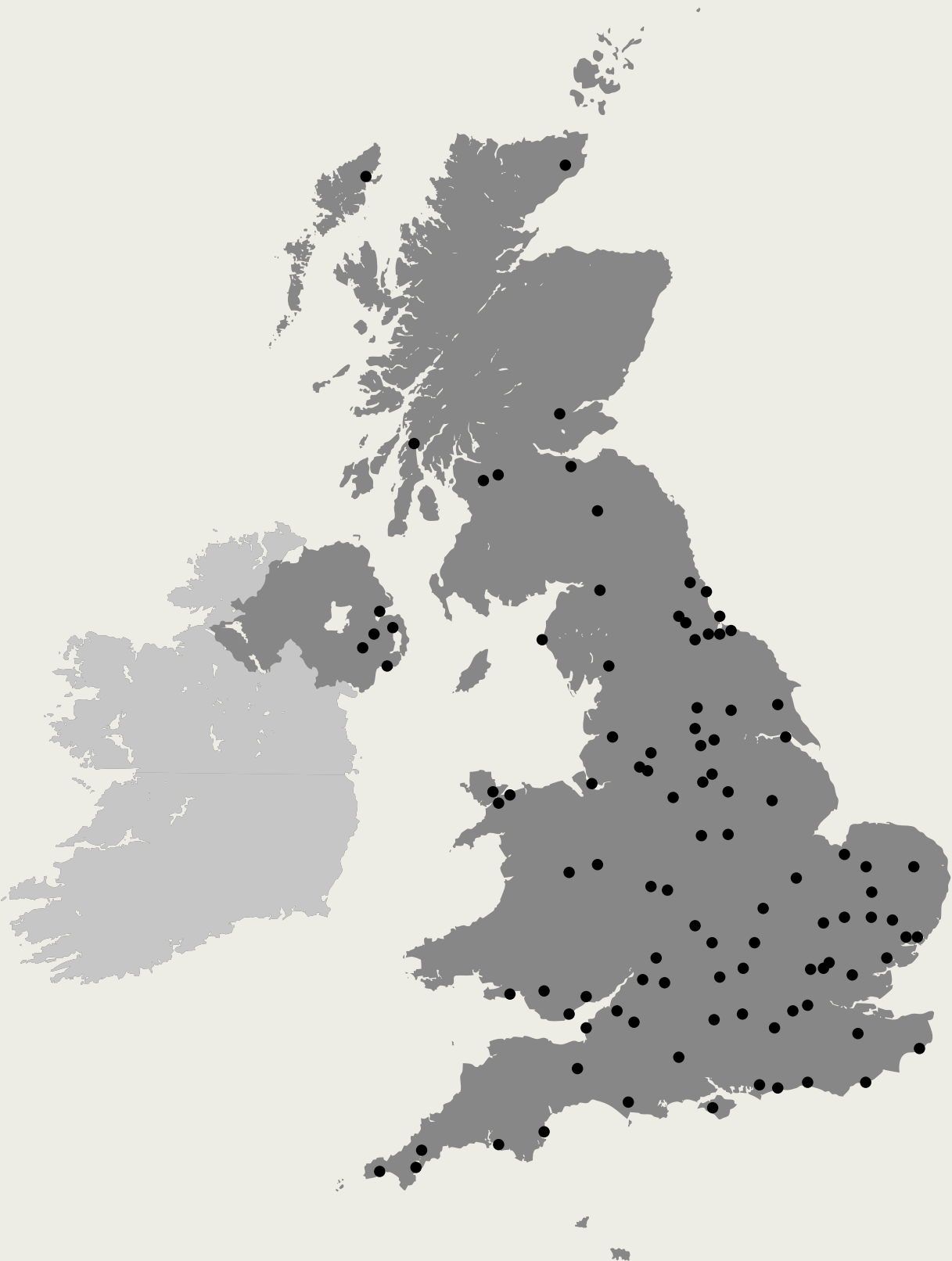




BM across the UK

The BM works with partners around the UK to ensure loans, partnership galleries, knowledge exchange, public archaeology and training are an effective national resource. Partnerships in 2019/20 took place across the country.

Anglesey	Harrogate	Reading
Banbury	Hartlepool	Richmond
Bangor	Hastings	Rochdale
Bath	Hertford	Rotherham
Belfast	Hull	Salford
Birmingham	Ipswich	Salisbury
Bishop Auckland	Isle of Wight	Sheffield
Bishop's Stortford	Kendal	Shrewsbury
Brighton & Hove	Kilmartin	Stockton-on-Tees
Bristol	King's Lynn	Stornoway
Bury St Edmunds	Kirkleatham	Stowmarket
Buxton	Leeds	Stroud
Caerleon	Lincoln	Sunderland
Cambridge	Lisburn	Swaffham
Cardiff	Littlehampton	Swansea
Carlisle	Liverpool	Taunton
Carrickfergus	Llanfairpwll	Thetford
Chatsworth	London	Thurso
Chelmsford	Maidstone	Torquay
Cheltenham	Manchester	Treorchy
Chichester	Middlesbrough	Truro
Cirencester	Milton Keynes	Waddesdon
Colchester	Newbury	Wakefield
Compton Verney	Newcastle	Wellingborough
Darlington	Newmarket	Welshpool
Derby	Norwich	Weston-super-mare
Dorchester	Nottingham	Whitehaven
Dover	Oxford	Woking
Downpatrick	Paisley	Woodbridge
Driffield	Penzance	Worksop
Dudley	Perry Green	York
Durham	Perth	
Edinburgh	Peterborough	
Falmouth	Plymouth	
Galashiels	Pontefract	
Glasgow	Preston	







# International

A collection that spans the world is the starting point for collaborations across the globe. Museums from Singapore to San Diego draw on the BM to present stories their own collections could not otherwise tell. Our partnerships operate in many areas, from academic research to conversation with local communities. All contribute to an open and rewarding dialogue about sharing objects and ideas and working together to support the knowledge of cultures around the world.

## Olmec stone mask

In 2019, the number of visitors to see the international touring exhibition *A history of the world in 100 objects* reached two million. This mask was made by the Olmec, who developed artistic traditions more than 2,000 years ago which are still prevalent in Mexico today. (Height 13 cm)

## International tours and loans

The BM has a long history of staging popular exhibitions in the UK and internationally. The aim is to share the great variety of the world's cultural histories with audiences around the globe. In 2019/20 the BM displayed Egyptian mummies in Montreal; an exhibition on the Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca in Amsterdam; and Italian Renaissance drawings in Macao. A collaboration with the State Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg showed for the first time in Russia treasures of Assyrian art from the BM collection.

*A history of the world in 100 objects* reached its two millionth visitor in 2019. The remarkable attendance for this touring show – based on the BM's successful 100-part series narrated by Neil MacGregor on BBC Radio 4 – reflects its continuing relevance to audiences. Visitors around the world are eager to join together the many global histories that can be told through objects from the BM collection. Seen by 217,000 visitors at the Hong Kong Heritage Museum in 2019, the tour has travelled to Abu Dhabi, Australia, China, France, Japan and Taiwan. The exhibition has often included objects and ideas nominated by the host country. Additions have ranged from origami cranes (Japan) to QR codes (China) to a foot-controlled car (Abu Dhabi). The book has been published in 16 languages.

New tours in 2019/20 included *Christ: life, death and resurrection* which explored the life of Christ through prints and drawings by Michelangelo, Tiepolo and others. Spanning the Renaissance to the 18th century, the show was seen in California and New Mexico. Successful tours are often linked to BM programming in the UK. *Germany: memories of a nation* (shown in Denmark in 2019/20) grew out of a BM exhibition and collaboration with BBC Radio 4.





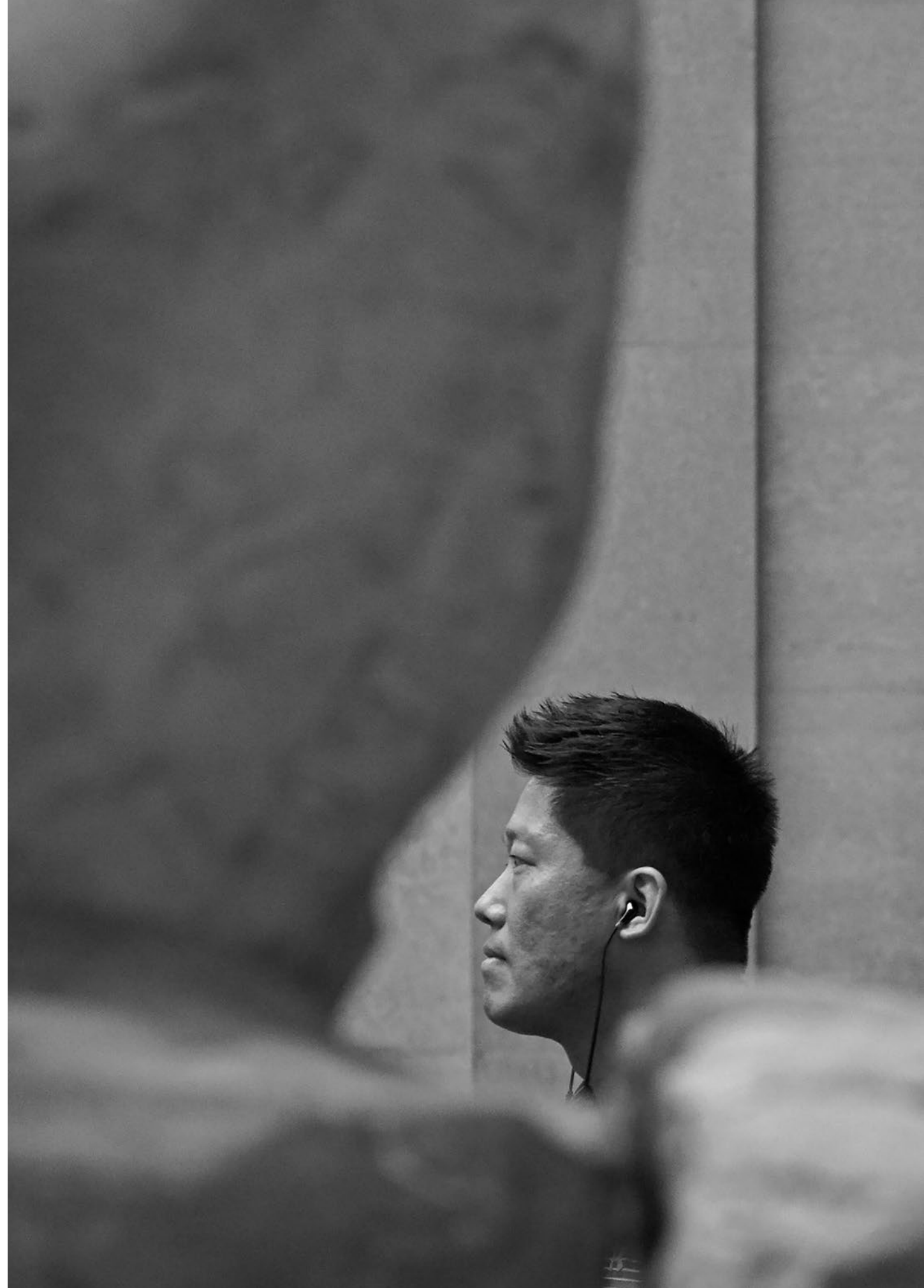
### ***Adoration of the shepherds***

Carlo Maratti was Rome's leading painter in the late 17th century. This drawing by Maratti, alongside works by Michelangelo, Tiepolo and others, toured to the United States in a BM exhibition about the life of Christ. (Height 17 cm)

Since 2016, a BM partnership with La Caixa Banking Foundation has toured a number of important exhibitions around Spain. In 2019/20 *Pharaoh: king of Egypt was seen in Girona*, Seville and Tarragona. *An age of luxury: the Assyrians to Alexander* toured to Barcelona, Madrid and Zaragoza. The collaboration has proved enormously popular and has so far attracted 1.3m visitors.

Elsewhere a BM touring exhibition helped the National Museum of Australia gain a Canberra Region Tourism Award in 2019. When the museum showed *Rome: city and empire*, it drew more than 150,000 visitors to the exhibition of artefacts from ancient Rome. In Singapore, *Raffles in Southeast Asia: revisiting the scholar and statesman* was realised in partnership with the Asian Civilizations Museum. The show attracted 142,000 visitors.

Beyond touring exhibitions, the BM supports programming by our colleagues in many countries by lending individual objects to museums around the globe. In 2019/20 the BM loaned nearly 1,900 objects to 107 venues outside the UK. In addition to loans to Africa and the Pacific (see pp.27–8), the BM sent works from the collection to Japan for exhibitions on artist Yokoyama Kazan (Sendai) and the *ukiyo-e* artists of the Edo period (Fukuoka); to China to help present a comprehensive display of Longquan celadon ceramics (Hangzhou); and to the United States for a survey of the art of Fiji (Los Angeles). To Morocco, the BM sent loans for an exhibition on *The Islamic Treasures of Africa* (Rabat), while a 3,000-year-old stone relief of an archer from Tell Halaf was loaned to the Louvre for a display on the forgotten kingdoms of Turkey and Syria, from the Hittites to the Aramaeans.





International partnerships

The BM works with countries around the world. Through its Endangered Material Knowledge Programme, supported by Arcadia – a charitable fund of Lisbet Rausing and Peter Baldwin – the BM awarded grants to 15 international applicants in 2019, who will document global cultural practices at risk of being lost. The topics range from bee-keeping in Kenya, to making paper clothes in Japan and musical instruments in Cambodia. As a first stage, the scholars came to the BM for training in systematic documentation, methodology and principles for collaboration with local communities. The BM plans to upload the results onto a digital database so that the knowledge is freely accessible to all.



**Training at the BM**  
In 2019, the BM's annual International Training Programme welcomed participants from 16 countries, including Colombia, Georgia, Romania, Sri Lanka and Uzbekistan.

Training is an essential component of much of the BM's international work. The Iraq Emergency Heritage Management Training Scheme, funded by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), combines training at the BM for Iraqi heritage professionals with practical fieldwork at two sites in Iraq. In 2019, trainees and BM archaeologists were joined by members of Iraq's State Board of Antiquities and Heritage. The excavations undertaken for the Iraq Scheme have proved archaeologically significant. At Darband-i Rania, a pass in Iraqi Kurdistan, the fifth season of fieldwork revealed the full extent of a large, early Parthian building (2nd to 1st century BC) and the fortification walls of a Neo-Assyrian fort (9th to 7th century BC). At Tello, in southern Iraq, fascinating finds have included fragments of statues, cylinder seals, royal inscriptions and a temple bakery, with bread ovens and water installations for producing food at a large scale.

**Music in Cambodia**  
Men in Cambodia play the *angkuoch* (Jew's harp) as a pastime, to accompany folksongs and to flirt with women. Studying how these instruments are made and used is one of many projects featured in the new Endangered Material Knowledge Programme.



Each summer the BM runs a popular International Training Programme for museum professionals from around the world with lead support from the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust. In 2019, the BM brought together nine UK museums to welcome 23 fellows from 16 countries. For the first time participating countries included Colombia, Georgia, Romania, Sri Lanka and Uzbekistan. BM departments and museum colleagues around the UK offered advice to participants as they researched individual projects and compared wider museum practices. Among the professional talks, external speakers led sessions on the importance of project evaluation and the uses of cultural heritage for building peace.



Transformation was the theme of an international Museum Summit in Hong Kong, co-hosted by the BM and the Hong Kong Leisure and Culture Services Department. Over 1,000 delegates exchanged ideas about the ways in which new technologies and visitor expectations are changing what a museum is. Talks were given in English and Chinese, with simultaneous translation.

The BM works closely with local communities across the globe. In Oman, BM scientists interviewed the country's last female silversmith. Tuful bint Ramadan Awadh Bimkhalef, now in her 80s, explained how she made her way in a predominantly male craft and demonstrated how to make silver beading for dresses and twisted wire toe-rings of the sort found in the BM collection. In Sudan, a local carpenter helped archaeologists understand bed fragments they had excavated at Amara West. He created a Nubian-style *angareeb* bed, a type used for thousands of years. In and around the town of Abri in northern Sudan, the BM team consulted the local community to create a heritage centre. Those consulted wanted both a museum display on the region's history and a place to celebrate memory. The Abri House of Heritage, an outcome of BM excavations in the region, features a display on the history of the local area, library and performance space to act as a focus for celebrating living culture.

Staff engaged with communities around the world. Both the public and experts in Tahiti and Rapa Nui (see p.28) contributed to research on the BM collection by sharing their insights. In Oregon, a year-long loan of 16 objects to the new Chachalu Museum and Cultural Centre became a focus of intense study and interpretation, with tribal educators unlocking community knowledge of artistic and cultural traditions prompted by the objects. In the BM's conservation studios, Inuit artist and leader Piita Irniq constructed an *inuksuk* – a stone cairn that can signal crossing places or good fishing or hunting.

The BM and the source communities it welcomes are eager to share such living cultural knowledge as widely as possible. The *inuksuk* will feature in a BM exhibition on the Arctic in 2020, while a short film on Tahitian culture, which unites local expertise and wider research to interpret a mourner's costume collected in the 18th century, is one of many available on the BM's YouTube channel. The film was shortlisted at the 2019 AHRC Research in Film Awards, as was a BM short film on community archaeology in Asyut, Egypt.



## Exploring Tahiti

The BM is working closely with colleagues in Tahiti to study aspects of the BM's collections from the region. This double-headed figure of the late 18th or early 19th century is one of the important objects in the Tahitian collection. (Height 59 cm)





World archaeology and research

Discoveries take place in the field and back at the BM itself, as archaeologists, scientists and curators investigate recent finds and, increasingly, reassess former excavations in light of newer evaluative tools. In Sudan, a monumental brick building, 15m in diameter, was discovered during excavations for the Berber-Abidiya Archaeological Project, a collaboration with Sudan's National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums. Set within a wider temple precinct, the circular building appears to be an indigenous 1st-century AD Kushite shrine to a local god.

A seventh field season in Naukratis, supported by the Honor Frost Foundation, was completed in April 2019. The international team excavating the port city on the Nile Delta unearthed the earliest levels of the Egyptian and Greek sanctuaries and the port's harbour. Working with Egyptian colleagues, the BM team has now surveyed most of the 64-hectare site and excavated 38 trenches, revealing over 42,000 artefacts. The results will be published in 2020.

Two research projects funded by the European Research Council span an ambitious geographical range of cultures and countries. *Beyond Boundaries* (2014–20) is a multidisciplinary examination of how religion and royal ideology operated across South and South East Asia during the Gupta Empire (3rd to 6th century AD). A large-scale study (2016–21) of the ceramics used by the hunter-gatherers of north-eastern Europe is a collaboration with the University of York and Schleswig-Holstein State Museums. Other international collaborations include a study of Neanderthal behaviour (2019–23), a joint project between the BM and colleagues in Paris, Tarragona, Ferrara and Rome, funded by the French National Research Agency. Recent grants awarded to the BM include generous support from the government's Arts and Humanities Research Council for an international project on China during the turbulent years of the late Qing Empire (1796–1912).



**Fieldwork in Iraq**  
As part of the BM's Iraq Emergency Heritage Management Training Scheme to share skills with colleagues in Iraq, fieldwork is undertaken at Darband-i Rania.



# International

## Middle East study room

In 2019/20, the BM study rooms welcomed 7,000 researchers from across the globe. They studied 96,000 objects from the collection.



## Coin of Orodes II, 57–38 BC

Recent research from an extensive international study of coins of the Parthian empire will feature in *Rivalling Rome*, a forthcoming display that explores this ancient Iranian culture. (Diameter 3.3 cm)

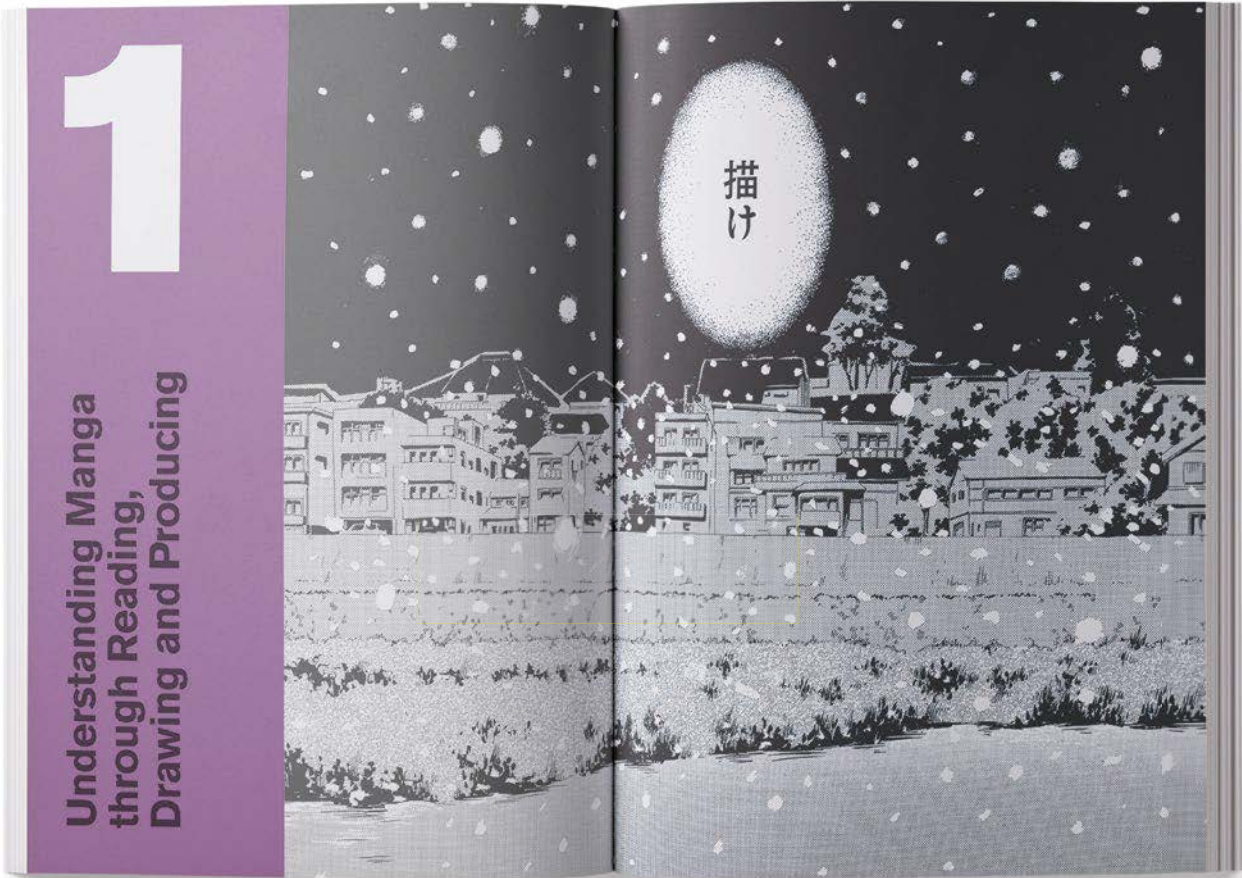
The collection itself is the focus of international study. Scholars draw on the collection as a global entity, studying not just single cultures but the endless interactions between them. The research is often collaborative. Programmes such as the Amorepacific Project for the Conservation of Korean Pictorial Art at the BM draw substantially on the generous transfer of knowledge between colleagues, in this instance from South Korea and the UK. In a co-operative global setting, museums are keen to learn from each other. BM staff advise on designing museums elsewhere, such as the creation of a new Museum of the Viking Age in Oslo, or carry specific expertise around the world. A legacy of the BM exhibition and BBC radio series *Living with gods* is a three-year project started in 2019 to consider global perspectives on religious objects in museums. Funded by Marburg University, Germany, the research is a collaboration among experts from Japan, Russia, Germany and the UK.

The history of the collection is an exciting topical avenue of research. How and where have objects moved? How do colonial histories affect what we see in museums? What is the public understanding of museum collections? In 2020, the BM appointed a special curator to work on the history of the collection to understand it better in its wider historical context. Young scholars today are particularly drawn to teasing out the fascinating nature of collections. BM Collaborative Doctoral Students in recent years have worked on topics as varied as the history of conservation techniques to collecting in East Africa in the 19th century. The programme, supported by the AHRC, has proved a great success, enabling PhD students to enrol jointly at a UK university and the BM, and is producing the next generation of curators and historians. In 2019, the AHRC announced a further three years' funding for collaborative doctorates at the BM. Study of the collection is also pursued more widely. In 2019, 7,000 visitors studied 96,000 objects in the BM study rooms and collections.

BM research is published widely. In 2019, staff published 150 peer-reviewed books and articles, as well as giving talks around the globe. Many are the essential point of reference on particular collections or excavations. In 2019/20, these included a catalogue of southern Italian coins and a study of ceremonial living in the 3rd millennium BC based on fieldwork at Ringlemere in Kent, supported by the William and Edith Oldham Charitable Trust. A BM Research Publication on Viking winter camps looked at their role in the transition from rural societies in Viking-Age Scandinavia to the development of towns such as York, Lincoln and Dublin. The book was launched at the Jorvik Viking Festival. Popular publications included exhibition catalogues on Japanese manga and Troy, which together sold over 30,000 copies.







**Books from the BM**  
BM publications ranged from specialist research volumes to children's books. Popular titles included exhibition catalogues on Troy and Japanese manga. For young readers, *Icarus* was *ridiculous* sold 25,000 copies.







The galleries attract over six million visitors each year. They continue to inspire, educate and fascinate audiences, as they always have done. New elements respond to our changing times. Acquisitions ensure archaeological discoveries and objects from our own day are preserved for the public. Special exhibitions find new paths through cultures past and present. The BM's learning and community programmes ensure everyone, young and old, can enjoy the collection and all that it represents.



**Newly acquired sun pendant**  
This gold pendant, discovered in Shropshire in 2018, was made 3,000 years ago. Now acquired by the BM, the rare find will be made available for public display in Shrewsbury and London. (Height 4 cm)

Collection

The global public health emergency of COVID 19 dominated the end of the year. To protect staff and visitors from the spread of the Coronavirus, the BM temporarily closed its doors on 18 March 2020. While countries grappled with the crisis, the importance of culture was evident, as people flocked to visit the BM digitally through its website, social media, videos and podcasts. As the BBC and others reported, over 1.5m people accessed the BM online in March, more than double the usual number. The BM and its world-famous collection were for many a powerful symbol of what we value in humanity, and its enduring ability to survive precarious times.

The BM works closely with partners across the country so that important historical finds made in the UK are, where possible, preserved in public collections. A discovery in Shropshire in 2018 unearthed a rare gold pendant, one of the most significant pieces of Bronze Age metalwork ever found in Britain. When the finder reported the discovery to the local Finds Liaison Officer, he could scarcely contain his excitement. The crescent-shaped 'sun pendant' made around 1000 BC was declared Treasure and in 2019, with support from Art Fund, British Museum Patrons and the American Friends of the British Museum, was acquired for the British public by the BM. Future plans include displaying the gold ornament at Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery and elsewhere in the UK. The find is of such interest that the BM has funded fieldwork on the discovery site, in collaboration with University College Cork in Ireland and Trent Peak Archaeology.

Among the new acquisitions was *The death of Breuse sans Pitié* (1857) by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, one of an outstanding group of 900 watercolours, drawings and prints collected by the late art historian John Christian and accepted by HM Government in lieu of inheritance tax. A tabla ensemble played by renowned Indian musician Ustad Alla Rakha and given by his family will be displayed in the Sir Joseph Hotung Gallery of China and South Asia. In *Lifu* (2019), Torres Strait Islander Jimmy K. Thaiday has crafted a shark out of discarded commercial fishing nets. The newly acquired work highlights marine pollution, a major environmental concern of our time.

Changes to the galleries included a new display of Chinese paintings and prints on the theme of seasonal festivals. The Sir Harry and Lady Djanogly Gallery of Clocks and Watches was reconfigured to incorporate the German 16th-century Orpheus Clock, decorated with scenes that show Orpheus charming an elephant and other animals with his music.





## London

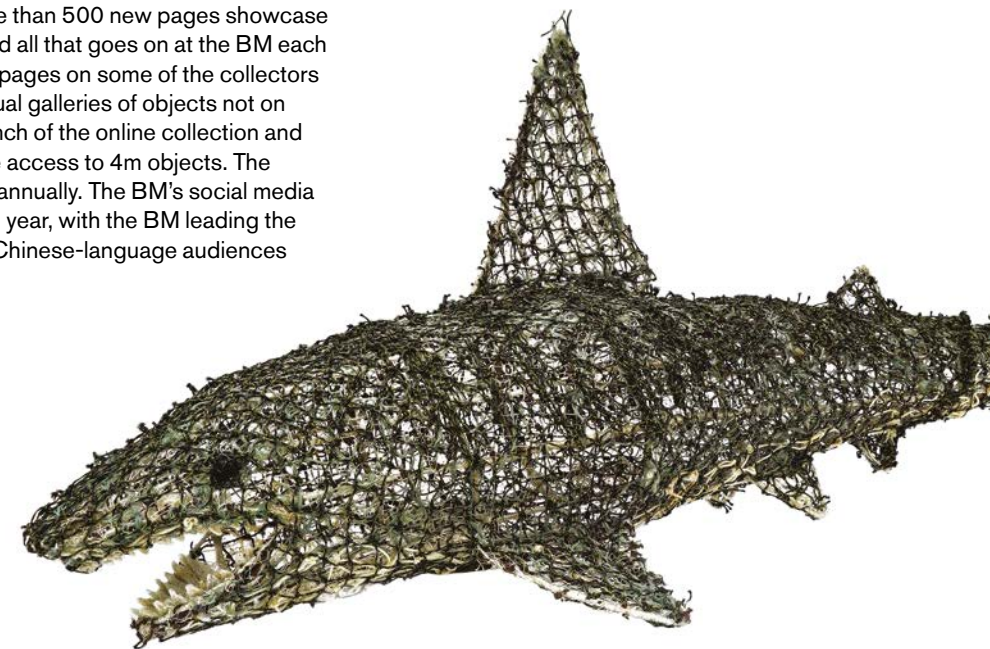
Beyond the building, the BM collection has a vital role to play digitally. In 2019, the BM and Google Arts and Culture launched the final stage of a project to digitise the collection of Alfred Maudslay. Photographs, documents and over 350 plaster casts made during Maudslay's research in Mexico and central America in the 1880s and 90s document ancient Maya culture, including sites now damaged or destroyed. Online visitors can now see digital re-creations of the ancient monuments, with insights from academics and Maya commentators today. The intensively detailed scans of Maudslay's casts also enabled a reproduction to be made for one site. In collaboration with the Mexican government, a hieroglyphic stairway has been engineered for display at Palenque, showing once more the details and protecting what exists of the original.

Interest in such innovative use of the collection is growing. With support from the Rijksmuseum Van Oudheden, and the Spanish and Iraqi governments, the BM and Factum Foundation presented plaster facsimiles (based on high-resolution scans) of two Assyrian *lamassu* from the BM collection to the University of Mosul. The imposing stone Mesopotamian figures, part human, part winged lion, were given as a gesture of solidarity and a sign of hope for the role that technology and cultural heritage will play in the reconstruction of Iraq.

The digital collection was at the heart of the relaunch of the BM website in November 2019. New photography, a new design and, to start with, more than 500 new pages showcase the collection, the building and all that goes on at the BM each day. Special features include pages on some of the collectors behind the collection and virtual galleries of objects not on permanent display. The relaunch of the online collection and database in 2020 will provide access to 4m objects. The BM's online presence grows annually. The BM's social media reaches over 5m people each year, with the BM leading the museum sector for reaching Chinese-language audiences on Weibo and WeChat.

### Recent acquisitions

Works the BM acquired in 2019/20 included Dante Gabriel Rossetti's watercolour, *The death of Breuse sans Pitié* (1857) and *Lifu* (2019), a shark made of discarded fishing nets by Jimmy K. Thaiday. (Painting 50 x 35 cm; sculpture length 167 cm)





Exhibitions

‘The sophistication and range of the manga art form,’ stated the *Financial Times* in May 2019, ‘bursts into life in a British Museum exhibition’. The Citi exhibition *Manga*, supported by Citi with logistics partner IAG Cargo, drew 184,000 visitors to the largest display of manga ever seen outside of Japan. They were the BM’s youngest audience ever for a major exhibition, with 70 percent of visitors under the age of 35. Manga are Japanese comic books or graphic novels, serialised in magazines and read by audiences around the world. A multi-billion-pound business that embraces anime and gaming, manga have forged a new international visual language. Tracing their visual inspiration back to great Japanese masters such as Hokusai and Kyōsai, the BM show worked extensively with creators, publishers and lenders to introduce manga in all its forms: as art, film, game, story and social commentary.

A popular feature of the exhibition was the MangaMe kiosk. Visitors could pose, then be transformed into a manga image. Over 22,000 people participated, with many sharing their manga portraits online. Posted on Flickr, the snaps from the BM show have been seen more than 300,000 times. Also linked to the show was a diverse programme of activities that attracted over 16,000 people. Events included a free exhibition preview for community groups, which the BM arranges for all its major exhibitions, and a hugely successful Friday Late, featuring manga-inspired cosplay, and a fashion show devised with the University of the Arts London and celebrated fashion designer, the late Yamamoto Kansai.

**BM visitors become manga**  
The Citi exhibition *Manga* attracted 184,000 visitors. One hugely popular feature was a kiosk where visitors could stand and be transformed into a manga cartoon. Over 22,000 people posed.







**Tales of ancient Troy**  
The BP exhibition *Troy: myth and reality* drew over 190,000 visitors. Works included this 1825 marble sculpture by Filippo Albacini, showing the wounded Greek hero Achilles.



## Mosque lamps, 19th century

Artistic exchange between East and West was explored in the exhibition *Inspired by the east*. These French lamps drew on examples made in the 16th-century Ottoman city of Iznik (left) and 14th-century Egypt and Syria. (Diameters 21 cm, 40 cm)



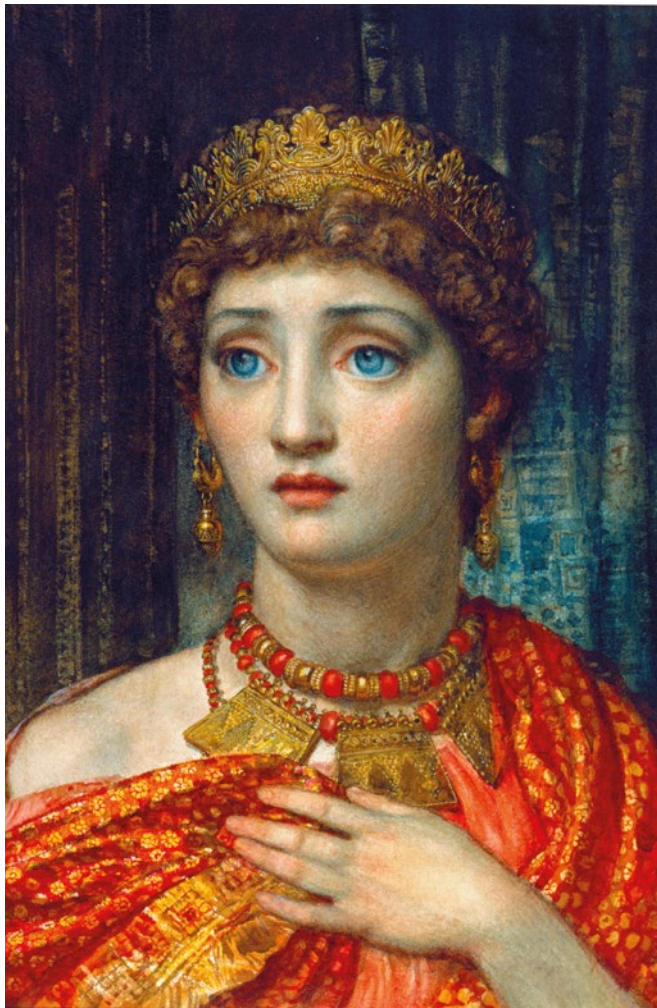
*Edvard Munch: love and angst* triumphed, according to the *Spectator*, as 'a masterclass in print-making'. Created in collaboration with the Munch Museum in Oslo and supported by AKO Foundation, the exhibition was the largest display of Munch's prints in the UK for half a century. The prints, which included a version of Munch's most iconic work *The Scream*, showed the artist's absorption of radical ideas and social change, and his gift for depicting intense psychological states. Over 118,000 people attended. Events included an evening talk with best-selling Norwegian author Karl Ove Knausgaard and workshops exploring mental health and creativity.

The year's major exhibitions aimed to get beyond conventional attitudes towards graphic art or the ancient world and encouraged visitors to adopt a more complex view of cultures and their mutual influence. A collaboration with the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia (IAMM) took just this approach to the long history of artistic interaction between western artists and the Islamic world. *Inspired by the east: how the Islamic world influenced western art*, supported by Jack Ryan and sponsored by Standard Chartered Bank, drew 67,000 visitors. Outstanding loans from IAMM in Kuala Lumpur, never before shown outside Malaysia, were combined with the BM collection to examine many types of influence – of subject matter, style, technique – in both directions. Familiar genres of Orientalist painting were shown alongside rare ceramics, metalwork, glass, textiles, furniture, jewellery and costume. The result, said the *Times*, stressed 'the depth and diversity of this two-way exchange . . . Even as European artists and craftsmen adopted eastern styles and techniques . . . the people of the Middle East were incorporating western traditions into their own.' The exhibition travels to Malaysia in 2021.

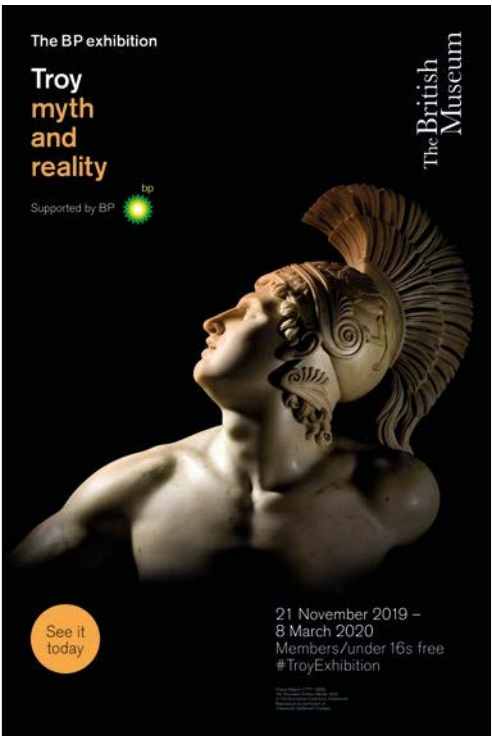
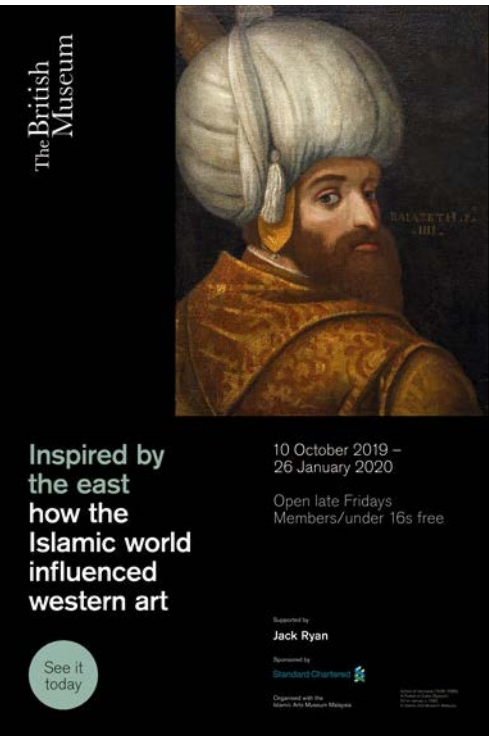
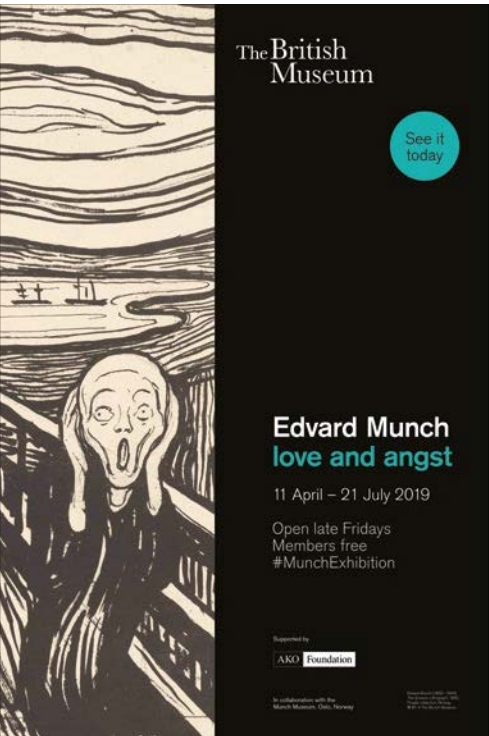




**Helen, 1887**  
Troy's enduring interest down the centuries was illustrated in a wide range of works, including this watercolour by the English artist Edward Poynter depicting Helen of Troy. (29 x 22 cm)



The BP exhibition *Troy: myth and reality*, supported by BP, magicked the Trojan War into life in what the *Telegraph* called ‘a rip-roaring display of scholarship and storytelling’. Delving into the heart of the BM collection and featuring important loans from Berlin and elsewhere, the popular exhibition used objects from ancient Greece to tell celebrated tales from the Greeks’ ten-year siege of Troy: the abduction of Helen, Achilles’ anger with Agamemnon, the winning trick of the Trojan horse. The show then explored the archaeological rediscovery of Troy by Heinrich Schliemann and others, using finds from the site in western Turkey, and the enduring influence of the tales of Troy. The histories of European nations and Britain itself were often given Trojan pedigree, their founding fathers named as legendary descendants of those who fled the sacking of Troy. Translations, paintings, sculpture and other art forms have transfigured the stories of the Greeks and the Trojans and kept them alive for centuries. Contemporary retellings included transforming Odysseus’ travels into a Black African *Odyssey* through the Caribbean islands and African shores and a video of Syrian refugees performing Euripides’ play, *The Trojan Women*. The stories retain their fascination, and BM videos about Troy on Instagram received over 400,000 views. Over 190,000 people attended the exhibition.





London

Javanese shadow puppet

An exhibition about the British statesman Sir Stamford Raffles looked at Southeast Asia through objects he collected during his time in Java, Sumatra and Singapore in the early 19th century. (Height 52 cm)




Special displays throughout the BM included *Sir Stamford Raffles: collecting in Southeast Asia 1811–1824*, which used objects from Java and Sumatra to raise questions about what is collected and why, and how colonial histories are interconnected with what we know about the past. The exhibition asked: what can such groups of objects tell us about collectors such as Raffles and about the countries themselves? The show was supported by the Singapore High Commission. The exhibition has prompted further research into the provenance of numerous items Raffles collected during his time in Southeast Asia, many of which have more complex origins than previously assumed.

*Playing with money* used the collection to look at the fascinating connections between currency, toys and games, from Monopoly to Game of Thrones. *Currency in Crisis: German emergency money 1914–1924* explored how a temporary currency could give particular insight into shifting German attitudes towards homeland and identity at a time of national crisis. *Edmund de Waal: library of exile*, supported by AKO Foundation, was a meditation on banished culture. The installation of 2,000 books by exiled authors, from Ovid (banished from Rome in AD 8) to writers of the present day, was presented alongside porcelain vessels by de Waal as well as a list of lost and erased libraries from around the world.

*Portrait of an artist: Käthe Kollwitz*, supported by Cockayne – Grants for the Arts and the London Community Foundation, displayed nearly 40 works by the celebrated German artist and examined the enduring impact of one of the 20th century's most influential printmakers. *Pushing paper: contemporary drawing from 1970 to now*, supported by the Bridget Riley Art Foundation, celebrated drawing in a remarkable range of styles and media by artists such as Tacita Dean and Anish Kapoor. The exhibition was a collaboration with curators from across the UK, and after being shown at the BM, travelled to the Oriental Museum, Durham in February 2020, the first venue in a year-long UK tour. Other exhibitions of art included prints by French Impressionists, supported by Ronald E. Bornstein, and drawings by Giovanni Piranesi, supported by the Tavolozza Foundation, marking the 300th anniversary of the Italian artist's birth in 1720. Among a variety of smaller displays was a selection of 20th-century prints and drawings by Picasso, Matisse and others, generously bequeathed to the BM by the film critic Alexander Walker, with a publication *Living with art: the Alexander Walker collection* supported by Hamish Parker. With the support of the Dorset Foundation, the Walker works will travel to venues around the UK.

The British Museum




Sir Stamford Raffles  
collecting in  
Southeast Asia  
1811–1824

19 September 2019 –  
12 January 2020

Free  
Room 91

Supported by  
Her Majesty's Government  
on behalf of the British  
Government

25 Pfennig



25 Pfs.

Currency in crisis  
German emergency  
money 1914–1924

3 October 2019 –  
29 March 2020

Free  
Room 69a

Supported by  
The British Museum

The British Museum

Portrait of the artist  
Käthe Kollwitz

12 September 2019 –  
12 January 2020

Free  
Room 90  
Prints and Drawings Gallery



Supported by  
Cockayne  
Organised in  
partnership with  
Art Gallery, Birmingham

The British Museum

Pushing paper  
contemporary  
drawing from  
1970 to now

12 September 2019 –  
12 January 2020

Free  
Room 90  
Prints and Drawings Gallery

Supported by the Bridget Riley Art Foundation



**National Treasure from Japan,  
AD 700–800**

An exhibition of sacred works from Nara featured outstanding loans of Buddhist sculpture. Works of bronze included Buddha at Birth and ablution basin from Todaiji Temple. (Figure height 47.5 cm)

A collaboration with Nara Prefecture enabled the BM to put on public display 15 outstanding treasures from Japanese shrines and temples. Supported by The Asahi Shimbun and sponsored by Mitsubishi Corporation, *Nara: sacred images from early Japan* included a gilded bronze sculpture of the Bodhisattva of Compassion from Horyuji Temple, a Shinto female deity of the 1100s and an imposing pair of 8th-century divine kings. With support from the Japan Foundation and Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation, the BM and Nara Prefecture hosted a two-day symposium at which experts from around the world discussed the displays from Nara.

*Nara: sacred images from early Japan* was part of the year-long programme of The Asahi Shimbun Displays, which included an examination of collecting and colonial relationships in the Solomon Islands, and a look at the history of disposable objects before the invention of plastic, including a 3,500-year-old Minoan clay cup designed to be thrown away after a single use. The Asahi Shimbun Displays are supported by The Asahi Shimbun.







*Library of exile*

An installation by artist Edmund de Waal drew together 2,000 books by exiled authors to explore ideas of banishment and loss.



Learning

The BM organises a wide range of inspiring activities to engage audiences. Young visitors in particular are at the heart of many of the BM's busiest programmes. In September 2019, the Samsung Digital Discovery Centre reopened, with new digital screens and improvements to its interior design, as well as the latest Samsung e-boards and tablets. The award-winning partnership between the BM and Samsung offers free digital activities at the BM for families and schools. Since it first opened in 2009, over 150,000 people have taken part in interactive workshops and used technology to explore the collection, discovering through a digital portal the world's history and cultures. The enhanced Centre will do even more. New peer-led programming shaped by teenagers for their own age group is being developed, and a major expansion of the Virtual Visits will allow schools unable to come to the BM to experience its collection through a learning session broadcast directly into their classroom. The BM and Samsung have created 35,000 places for pupils from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to take part over the next five years.

With support from the Greengross Family, the BM welcomed a new youth forum to produce a programme for young people aged 16 to 21. In 2019, this new Youth Collective designed the inaugural Greengross summer programme where young people learned skills in fashion, curating and filmmaking. They met industry professionals and took inspiration from the BM collection. The programme culminated in a dramatic catwalk in the Great Court, film screenings, Q&A sessions and thought-provoking displays that brought a younger perspective to museum curation.

Looking and learning

Technology is a key means to engage young people with the collection. The Samsung Digital Discovery Centre encourages families and schools to explore the galleries with tablets, smartphones and other devices.





The ambition to widen access to the BM has generated a number of successful programmes in recent years. Renewed funding from JTI in October 2019 is enabling the JTI Cross Partner Project to run activities for disadvantaged adults. Over 150 people were able to engage with the BM through creative projects, outreach, bespoke workshops and facilitated visits with curators. To mark the International Day of Disabled People, Purple Light Up was a day of disability-led performances and workshops in six galleries, including a music project for adults with learning disabilities and a creative storytelling workshop to build a 'city of heroes'. For the BM's first out-of-hours event for children with autism, over 100 families attended arts and crafts activities and storytelling sessions from 8am to 10am. Early Morning Explorers is supported by the Lord Leonard and Lady Estelle Wolfson Foundation.

The BM's many tours and trails also promote inclusivity. Walk and Talk tours welcomed local participants from the mental-health charity Mind in Camden as part of an assisted visit to the BM. Supported by BM Volunteers, Walk and Talk tours won the 'Bringing Innovation' category at the 2019 London Heritage Volunteer Awards. Volunteers also support the BM in running monthly LGBTQ tours, as well as a new touch tour for blind and partially sighted visitors in the Parthenon galleries.



**Purple Light Up Day**  
Performances and workshops to mark the International Day of Disabled People included this light show by ActionSpace artists in the BM's Korea Foundation Gallery.



**Festival of Archaeology**  
The UK-wide Festival of Archaeology was launched at the BM in 2019. The busy opening weekend in the Forecourt welcomed 24,000 children and their families to a range of archaeological displays, re-enactments and activities.

Among the latest pioneering paths through the BM is Collecting Histories, launched in June 2019. The trail takes visitors around the galleries to explore how museum collections are formed, from the founding collection of Hans Sloane in the 18th century to recent acquisitions. Collecting Histories picks up the many different ways in which objects can end up in a museum. A series of related talks was given by members of staff and community partners to foster better public understanding of museum collections and how they came about.

To encourage public interest in archaeology, the BM hosted the 2019 Festival of Archaeology in collaboration with the Council for British Archaeology. The hugely successful weekend attracted 24,000 children and adults, who were greeted in the bustling Forecourt by a half-size replica of the Sutton Hoo ship burial (marking 80 years since its discovery in Suffolk), alongside a Roman encampment, gladiators and a display of prehistoric crafts. Visitors could take part in hands-on archaeology and speakers included members of Channel 4's *Time Team*. The kick-off event at the BM launched a national programme of more than 1,000 events across the UK.



With the collection's global connections so essential to understanding its importance, many events explored the BM as a world stage. Music in 2019 included a concert by Zohra, Afghanistan's first all-female orchestra; Faiths in Tune, the largest interfaith music festival in the world; and a performance of traditional Chinese *xiao* flute music to mark the 10th anniversary of the installation at the BM of the Sir Percival David Collection of Chinese ceramics. Global politics also featured. In January 2020, playwright and former BM Trustee Bonnie Greer launched a series of events under the title 'The Era of Reclamation'. The talks were a forum for discussing a prominent issue in today's cultural debates: the ownership not just of ourselves, but of our identities and what we feel belongs to us. The series, the first of several debates, provoked a positive conversation about diversity, belonging and the risks of separating cultures and groups into discrete categories.



## Sounds of Afghanistan

World music events celebrated contemporary cultural life across the globe. A performance by Zohra showcased Afghanistan's first all-female orchestra.

Formal learning programmes at the BM continued to invite children and adults to engage with the Museum and connect to it as a meaningful part of their lives. Adults could attend a study day on ancient Troy or register for language courses in Japanese, Latin or Sanskrit, run in conjunction with City Lit. In 2019/20, 300,000 primary and secondary pupils were booked for school visits to the BM. Many attend activities linked to BM exhibitions. For the exhibition on Edvard Munch, teachers were encouraged to attend an initial private view to see the show prior to a school visit. The BM created a resource pack, with specific elements for pupils at different Key Stages, and designed a special printmaking project for secondary school students. As one teacher wrote, 'This has been a fantastic opportunity . . . I would like to thank you for all the time, effort and thought that have gone into this project. The students have loved it.'







**New-look BM**

Popular events at the BM included a manga-inspired fashion show devised by the late Japanese designer Yamamoto Kansai with students from the University of the Arts London.





## Support

### Ensuring the BM's future

**The work featured in this Review has benefited from the generous support of companies, individuals, trusts and foundations. The BM would like to thank the 570 supporters who collectively contributed over £16.4m in 2019/20 and the 200 donors who gave in-kind. In addition, the Museum is grateful to the British Museum Friends for their generous grant of £4.1m this year.**

A number of benefactors continue to support the BM in caring for and enhancing its collection. Conservation of the Sherborne cartonnage, an ancient Egyptian mummy case, is being made possible by the generosity of the John S Cohen Foundation. Support from the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation is enabling vital conservation of the BM's major collection of Chinese scroll paintings, one of the finest in Europe. A group of Dutch and Flemish drawings from the 16th and 17th centuries – including significant works by Rubens, Bruegel and van Dyck – is being conserved with support from the Leche Trust.

The BM is extremely grateful to David and Molly Lowell Borthwick for their visionary gift to establish the Borthwick Fund for the Ancient World. The Fund will support the research, display and care of the collections from ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome. The Borthwicks have also made it possible to begin the detailed documentation of the BM's Egyptian small stone sculpture collection. In due course detailed photography and catalogue data from the project will be made available to the public via the Collection online.

Private support has also enabled the BM to appoint expert curators to care for and provide public access to the collection. The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art is supporting a Project Curator to carry out research for the upcoming *Thomas Becket* exhibition. Support from Lynne and Marc Benioff is enabling the appointment of a Project Curator for the Oceania section. The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of the Republic of Korea has renewed its long-term support of the Curator of Korean Collections.



## Support

Valuable contributions from the American Friends of the British Museum and other funders have enabled the BM to continue to enhance the collection. The Dr Lee MacCormick Edwards Charitable Foundation enabled the BM to purchase British 19th- and early 20th-century drawings and watercolours. Following an export stop, the acquisition of *The Trumpeters*, an exquisite 18th-century watercolour by Nainsukh of Guler, was made possible by the support of Art Fund, National Heritage Memorial Fund and Brooke Sewell Permanent Fund. A late Anglo-Saxon walrus ivory seal matrix was acquired with the support of John H. Rassweiler, the Ruddock Foundation for the Arts, Henry Moore Foundation and British Museum Patrons.

At the heart of the BM's work is its professional expertise. A number of gifts have made it possible to enhance this work in 2019/20: the Smirnov Family has newly pledged support for the Curator of Italian and French Prints and Drawings; the A.G. Leventis Foundation continue to fund the Curator of Ancient Cyprus; Sir Joseph Hotung supports the Project Curator: Chinese Collections, Jades. The Tabor Foundation Curator of South Asia has completed her second year in post. The Kingsley bequest funds two senior posts in the Middle East Department; the Rothschild Foundation's generosity allows for the continuing study of the Waddesdon bequest; and the support of Ed and Anne Teppo has allowed the BM to appoint its first Laser Science Researcher, to develop and test techniques that can be used to clean and conserve the collections.

Graham & Joanna Barker and the Richard Beleson and Kim Lam Beleson Fund have also kindly jointly funded the position of Assistant Finds Advisor and Treasure Curator of Iron Age and Roman Coins, to support the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) run from the BM. The BM holds one of the finest collections of coins and medals globally, comprising over one million objects, and is home to the PAS, which is a world-leading finds recording and Treasure processing centre. The Headley Trust continues to support a series of internships in the Portable Antiquities Scheme to provide people at the start of their careers with archaeological training focused on finds recording.

### *The Trumpeters (detail)*, 1735–40

In 2018, the UK government halted the export of this striking Indian miniature by Nainsukh of Guler. The BM raised the funds to acquire it in 2019, and the watercolour was put on public display in the Sir Joseph Hotung Gallery of China and South Asia.







Ways to engage

Generous support has enabled the BM to improve its materials to help all visitors enjoy the collection. They include free family trails through the galleries and new braille books with tactile drawings.

Support from the Band Trust has enabled the BM to create new interpretation for the Parthenon galleries. Worn braille labels for casts that visitors can touch in Room 18b have been replaced with a braille book with tactile plans and drawings. A new free audio-descriptive tour has been developed, large-print books have been introduced and the gallery lighting improved. The galleries are now significantly more accessible to visitors who are blind or have limited sight.

With the support of the Helen Hamlyn Trust, the BM is designing new Helen Hamlyn Family Trails which guide family visitors on a fascinating journey of discovery around the BM; the Steel Charitable Trust is supporting new large-print texts and braille books with tactile drawings in the permanent galleries. Support from the Lord Leonard and Lady Estelle Wolfson Foundation towards the Access and Education Programme enables the BM to support children and adults with learning difficulties or autism to engage with the collections.

A gift from the Institute of Bioarchaeology has allowed the BM to establish the Barbara Mertz Laboratory, a new hub to expand our bioarchaeology research programme. The BM curates one of the most important collections of ancient human remains from around the world, and their scientific study is revealing rare information about the people who inhabited the ancient world.

Support for research publications enables new scholarship at the BM to be shared more widely. Julia and Hans Rausing are supporting a publication focusing on the collection of Robert Henry Codrington and his donation of objects from Melanesia to the BM. A study of the Hay Cookbook, a Coptic ritual text dating from the 7th century AD, will be published with support from the Robert Kiln Charitable Trust. The second volume of the *English Medieval Coin Hoards* series will be published with support from the Marc Fitch Fund. BM research continues to be generously supported by the European Research Council, Wellcome Trust, Arts and Humanities Research Council and the Leverhulme Trust.





The BM provides training and development opportunities, both internationally and in the UK, thanks to private support. The International Training Programme benefits from the generosity of a wide range of trusts and individuals, with lead support from the Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust. Bequests to the BM, of all sizes, have also enhanced the BM's work over the last year, including funding for acquisitions, curatorial posts, exhibitions, conservation and priority projects.



**Seal of Wulfric, c.1050**  
After two attempts to purchase it in 1977 and 1996, the BM successfully acquired this late Anglo-Saxon seal matrix for a public collection in 2019. Made of walrus ivory shortly before the Norman Conquest, the rare seal belonged to Wulfric, whose name is inscribed around the central figure of a man holding a sword. (Length 6 cm)

The BM remains grateful for the continuing support from companies to both the Museum's exhibition programme and its wider scope of work. The Patrons of the British Museum likewise continue to provide significant collective support for projects where there is greatest need. The 2019/20 events programme provided Patrons with the opportunity to get closer to the work of the BM, including previews of all major exhibitions. Thanks to the generosity of the British Museum Friends, over £100,000 was raised through the 2019 Members' appeal to complete vital conservation projects. This fund will enable the BM's dedicated conservation team to preserve iconic objects such as the Lewis Chessmen, Haida and Nisga'a totem poles, and pre-Columbian Andean textiles for future generations to study and enjoy.

**Lewis chessman, 1150–75**  
The 2019 appeal to the British Museum Friends raised over £100,000. The money will go towards the conservation of important artefacts across the collection, including the celebrated Lewis chess pieces. (Height 8 cm)





### Manga meets the public

Posters for the Citi exhibition *Manga* were installed in Shoreditch. Here artist Tom Blackford responds to the Japanese popular art form as part of a commission to create a graffiti wall underneath.





Exhibitions

London

**Edvard Munch: love and angst**  
11 Apr – 21 Jul 2019  
*Supported by AKO Foundation*  
*In collaboration with the Munch Museum, Oslo, Norway*

The Citi exhibition  
**Manga**  
23 May – 26 Aug 2019  
*Supported by Citi*  
*Logistics partner IAG Cargo*  
*Organised with the National Art Center, Tokyo and the Organisation for the Promotion of Manga and Anime*

**Inspired by the east: how the Islamic world influenced western art**  
10 Oct 2019 – 26 Jan 2020  
*Supported by Jack Ryan*  
*Sponsored by Standard Chartered Bank*  
*Organised with the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia*

The BP exhibition  
**Troy: myth and reality**  
21 Nov 2019 – 8 Mar 2020  
*Supported by BP*

**Witnesses: emigré medallists in Britain**  
4 Oct 2018 – 7 Apr 2019  
*Sponsored by Spink*

**Arabesque**  
Oct 2018 – Sep 2020  
*Supported by the Albukhary Foundation*  
*Organised with the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia*

**Reimagining Captain Cook: Pacific perspectives**  
29 Nov 2018 – 4 Aug 2019  
*Supported by Stephen and Julie Fitzgerald*

**Rembrandt: thinking on paper**  
7 Feb – 4 Aug 2019

**The World Exists To Be Put On A Postcard: artists’ postcards from 1960 to now**  
7 Feb – 4 Aug 2019

**Playing with money: currency and games**  
18 Apr – 29 Sep 2019

**Symbolist prints**  
12 Apr – 18 Jul 2019

**At home: royal etchings by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert**  
18 Jul – 2 Sep 2019

**John Christian: collecting the last Romantics**  
3 Sep – 12 Nov 2019

**Pushing paper: contemporary drawing from 1970 to now**  
12 Sep 2019 – 12 Jan 2020  
*Supported by the Bridget Riley Art Foundation*

**Portrait of an artist: Käthe Kollwitz**  
12 Sep 2019 – 12 Jan 2020  
*Supported by Cockayne – Grants for the Arts and the London Community Foundation*

**Sir Stamford Raffles: collecting in Southeast Asia 1811–1824**  
19 Sep 2019 – 12 Jan 2020  
*Supported by the Singapore High Commission*

**Nara: sacred images from early Japan**  
3 Oct – 24 Nov 2019  
*Supported by The Asahi Shimbun*  
*Sponsored by Mitsubishi Corporation*  
*Co-organised with Nara Prefecture*

**Currency in crisis: German emergency money 1914–1924**  
3 Oct 2019 – 18 Mar 2020  
*Supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council*

**Living with art: Picasso to Celmins**  
14 Jan – 5 Mar 2020

**French Impressions: prints from Manet to Cézanne**  
20 Feb 2020 – TBC  
*Supported by Ronald E. Bornstein*

**Piranesi drawings: visions of antiquity**  
20 Feb 2020 – TBC  
*Supported by the Tavolozza Foundation*

**Edmund de Waal: library of exile**  
12 Mar 2020 – 12 Jan 2021  
*Supported by AKO Foundation*

The Asahi Shimbun displays

**Feeding history: the politics of food**  
28 Feb – 27 May 2019

**Collecting histories: Solomon Islands**  
20 Jun – 1 Sep 2019

**Nara: sacred images from early Japan**  
3 Oct – 24 Nov 2019

**Disposable? Rubbish and us**  
19 Dec 2019 – 23 Feb 2020

*Supported by The Asahi Shimbun*

UK and international

United Kingdom

**A Ming Emperor’s Seat**  
*Manchester Museum*  
7 Feb – 19 Apr 2020  
*Supported by the Sir Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art*

**Rodin: rethinking the fragment**  
*New Art Gallery, Walsall*  
8 Feb – 28 Apr 2019

**Viking: rediscover the legend**  
*Norwich Castle Museum*  
9 Feb – 8 Sep 2019

**Desire, love, identity: exploring LGBTQ histories**  
*Bolton Museum*  
15 Mar – 26 May 2019

*Norwich and Norfolk Millennium Library*  
8 Jun – 31 Aug 2019

*Shire Hall Historic Courthouse Museum, Dorchester*  
21 Sep – 17 Nov 2019

**Hoards: a hidden history of ancient Britain**  
*Buxton Museum*  
13 Apr – 16 Jun 2019

*Brading Roman Villa, Isle of Wight*  
29 Jun – 29 Sep 2019

*Peterborough Museum*  
12 Oct – 15 Dec 2019

**Nordic by nature: modern design and prints**  
*Weston Park Museum, Sheffield*  
4 May – 28 Jul 2019

*Old Gala House, Galashiels*  
5 Aug – 31 Oct 2019

*Thurso Art Gallery*  
16 Nov 2019 – 1 Feb 2020

*Kirkleatham Museum, Redcar*  
15 Feb – 20 Sep 2020

**The golden age of satire? Late-Georgian satirical prints**  
*Pontefract Museum*  
11 May – 20 Jul 2019

*Newstead Abbey, Nottingham*  
27 Jul – 6 Oct 2019

*Beacon Museum, Whitehaven*  
12 Oct 2019 – 12 Jan 2020

**Pushing paper: contemporary drawing from 1970 to now**  
*Oriental Museum, Durham*  
29 Feb – 17 May 2020  
*Supported by the Bridget Riley Art Foundation*

**Ancient Iraq: new discoveries**  
*Great North Museum: Hancock, Newcastle*  
7 Mar – 2 Nov 2020

*The UK touring exhibitions programme is supported by the Dorset Foundation in memory of Harry M Weinrebe*

Canada

**Egyptian mummies: exploring ancient lives**  
*Montreal Museum of Fine Arts*  
14 Sep 2019 – 28 Jun 2020

China

**A history of the world in 100 objects**  
*Hong Kong Heritage Museum*  
18 May – 9 Sep 2019

**Italian Renaissance Drawings**  
*Macao Museum of Art*  
11 Apr – 30 Jun 2019

Denmark

**Germany: memories of a nation**  
*National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen*  
8 Nov 2019 – 1 Mar 2020

Netherlands

**Hajj**  
*Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam*  
14 Feb 2019 – 12 Jan 2020

Singapore

**Raffles in Southeast Asia: revisiting the scholar and statesman**  
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1 Feb – 28 Apr 2019

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- Aesthetics of the everyday in Iron Age East Yorkshire (Helen Chittock)
- Alabaster carvings of Medieval England in their wider context (Lloyd de Beer)
- Alfred Maudslay, photography and the mimetic technologies of archaeology (Duncan Shields)
- The application of Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT) to the study of vitreous materials in museum collections (Margaret Read)
- Approaches to the historiographies and iconographies of the Roman worship of Mithras (Philippa Adrych)
- Back to nature? Geologically-informed consolidation techniques for conserving stone artefacts in museum collections (Jennifer Booth)
- Bejewelled: the male body and adornment in Early Modern Europe (Natasha Awais-Dean)
- Between Asia and Europe: Mediterranean networks and island identity on Rhodes, 8th to 5th centuries BC (Nicholas Salmon)
- Brick foundations: Ahichhatra and the formation of Indian sacred architecture in the Gupta period (Laxmi Greaves)
- Byzantine gold glass (Daniel Howells)
- Ceramic traditions of early northern China: painted pottery in context (Evgenia Dammer)
- Chimu state art (Kirsten Halliday)
- Chinese weapons: warfare, ritual and burial in the Bronze Age, c.1500–500 BC (Cao Qin)
- Collecting in East Africa, 1880 to 1940: from the end of exploration to colonisation and settlement (Alison Bennett)
- Collecting Renaissance decorative arts and the making of the modern museum, 1850–1900 (Eloise Donnelly)

- Colour in the New Kingdom town: the technology of painted vernacular architecture at Amara West and Tell el-Amarna (Kate Fulcher)
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- Containing commodities: determining organic residues in Greek painted pottery (Eleanor von Aderkas)
- Continuity and change: the imagery of Visigothic Baptistries in 5th/6th-century Spain (Stefanie Lenk)
- Continuity as response: the movement of religious ideas through material culture from the 1st to 6th centuries (Dominic Dalglish)
- The corrosion of archaeological iron (Melanie Rimmer)
- Criminal skill: coining and coiners during the long 18th century (Robert Rock)
- Dental approaches to population movements in prehistoric and early historic Nubia (Emma Phillips)
- Displaying the Palaeolithic (Jo Hall)
- Domesticating the Sumerians: contextualising Woolley’s excavations at Ur, 1922–34 (Agnes Tulstrup Henriksen)
- Dress, adornment and identity in Late Iron Age and Roman Britain: Roman brooches and other items in the PAS database (Michelle Statton)
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- Early Neanderthal social and behavioural complexity during the Purfleet Interglacial (Luke Dale)

- The end of the mounded tombs: cultural and religious change in the Japanese archipelago in the later Kofun period, 5th–8th centuries AD (Luke Edgington-Brown)
- Exhibition design at the BM: histories and legacies (Kate Guy)
- Exploring economy, society and culture through glass bangles: origins, circulation and cultural impact in the Western Indian Ocean (Charlotte Nash)
- From ‘wretched savages’ to the world’s ‘most beautiful’ artefacts: British ethnographic collections from Western Australia (Nicola Froggatt)
- From sea to sea: working techniques and trade in organic luxuries from the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean, 1500–500 BC (Hannah Gwyther)
- The global and the national: South Asian collectors at the BM (Kajal Meghani)
- Gothic ivories: evidence from the collections of the BM (Naomi Speakman)
- Hidden, revealed: investigating representations and narratives of disability in the BM (Isabelle Lawrence)
- Historicising the BM’s Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collection (Alison Clark)
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- Human behaviour and adaptation during a period of cultural, social and environmental change: the dental anthropology of the inhabitants of the 4th Cataract, Sudan (Rebecca Whiting)
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- Individuality and identity in cuneiform: personalising economic documentation from the 21st and 20th centuries BC (Mathilde Touillon-Ricci)
- Interventive conservation of black-dyed organic materials: the problem of metal-polyphenol complexes (Helen Wilson)
- Introduction of nanolime in a museum context: from experiments to applications on BM collections, a proposal for a protocol for stone conservation (Cyril Maucourant)
- Investigating socio-economic transformations in highland SW Iran during the 5th millennium BC through the BM Stein Collection (Helen Taylor)
- Iron Age metalwork hoards in Britain (Rachel Wilkinson )
- Iron Age tribes and coinage (Ian Leins)
- The kingdom of Kush: the archaeology of its development (Ruth Humphries)
- Leather trousers and leopard skin waistcoats: absent objects and endangered material knowledge from the Kalahari (Novelette-Aldoni Stewart)
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- Medieval coinage and currency on the Swahili coast of East Africa (John Perkins)
- Merit, competition and the visual/ material culture of useful knowledge: the collection of scientific prize medals at the BM (Liam Fitzgerald)

- Metalwork deposits in Roman Britain: their social context and implications (Rachael Sycamore)
- Miniature boats and maritime culture in Iron Age Cyprus: model clay boats reassessed (Mark Dolan)
- Miniaturisation and material culture in Native North America (Jack Davy)
- Money for inflation: histories of Notgeld in Germany, 1914–23 (Johannes Hartmann)
- A multi-disciplinary approach to the characterisation of ancient leather processing in the Nile Valley during the Pharaonic era (Lucy Skinner)
- Museum shopping: objects, practices and meanings (Hannah Errington)
- Narrative, identity and the museum visitor experience (David Francis)
- Object Journeys: co-production of collections knowledge and display at a national museum (Julia Ankenbrand)
- Optimising preservation in the development and use of museum, library and archival collections through applying approaches from operational management (Jessica Stitt)
- Palaeolithic archaeology of the Solent River: human occupation in its stratigraphic context 1 (Marcus Hatch)
- Palaeolithic archaeology of the Solent River: human occupation in its stratigraphic context 2 (Robert Davis)
- Paper money, forgers and forgery, 1776–1826 (Jack Mockford)
- Patterns of monetisation and coin loss in England during the Middle Ages, 11th–16th centuries (Richard Kelleher)
- Pewter hoards from Roman Britain (Lindsey Smith)
- Picturing the Antipodes: race, image and empire in 19th-century Britain (Mary McMahon)



Collaborative doctorates

Plants in pots: the molecular and isotopic identification of cereal residues in prehistoric pottery (Edward Standall)	Site-seeing: postcards of the Middle East and the visual construction of place, 1890s to 1990s (Seonaid Rogers)
Polished axes: object biographies and the writing of world prehistories (Elizabeth Wilkes)	Sloane: a data-driven investigation and analysis (Deborah Leem)
Prints in play: printed playing cards, board games, fans and the fashioning of social roles in early modern Europe (Naomi Lebens)	A study of late Hallstatt and early-middle La Tène brooches in Britain (Sophie Adams)
Reconnecting Sloane: texts, images, objects (Felicity Roberts)	Swords in Iron Age Britain (Catherine Jones)
Reframing Oceania: towards new narratives of the colonial Pacific in the BM (James Finch)	The typology and chronology of penannular brooches in Britain (Anna Booth)
Religious and political propaganda on Parthian coins of the 2nd century BC (Alexandra Magub)	Understanding the Norman Conquest through the Bayeux Tapestry (Miranda Rainbow)
Ringling the changes: the social significance of finger-rings in Roman Britain (John Ford)	
Roman coin loss patterns from the PAS (Philippa Walton)	
Roman finds in the PAS (Tom Brindle)	
The Royal Navy and colonial collecting in Australia c.1820–70 (Daniel Simpson)	
Safeguarding museum objects from shock and vibration during transit (Elena Gil Marin)	
Sailing the monsoon winds in miniature: model boats as evidence for Indian Ocean maritime technologies and cultures (Charlotte Dixon)	
Seeing the sacred in the museum: exploring the significance of religious and secular subjectivities for visitor engagement (Stephanie Berns)	
Settlement and connectivity in the English Channel: the Isle of Wight and its setting in the Iron Age and Roman periods (Stephanie Smith)	

Loans

In 2019/20, BM objects were seen in the UK and across the world

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Anglesey	Kirkleatham	Agen	Macerata
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Bangor	Liverpool	Amsterdam	Mantova
Birmingham	London	Antwerp	Mexico City
Bishop Auckland	Lowestoft	Barcelona	Milan
Brighton	Maidstone	Beijing	Montpellier
Bristol	Manchester	Bergen	Montreal
Buxton	Milton Keynes	Berlin	Munich
Cardiff	Newcastle	Bern	Naples
Carlisle	Newmarket	Bologna	New York
Carrickfergus	Norwich	Bolzano	Newport
Chatteris	Oldham	Budapest	Nijmegen
Chelmsford	Oxford	Cambridge	Ottawa
Cheltenham	Preston	Canberra	Padua
Chichester	Salisbury	Chambord	Palma
Cirencester	Shrewsbury	Chemnitz	Paris
Colchester	Stornoway	Copenhagen	Pordenone
Compton Verney	Stroud	Dallas	Prague
Dover	Sunderland	Dazaifu	Rabat
Downpatrick	Sutton Hoo	Denver	Rome
Driffield	Swaffham	Doha	San Diego
Durham	Thetford	Dresden	Sendai
Exeter	Thurso	Dusseldorf	Seoul
Falmouth	Truro	Evanston	Seville
Galmpton	Wakefield	Fontanellato	Singapore
Glasgow	Walsall	Frankfurt	St Petersburg
Harrogate	Welshpool	Fukuoka City	Stockholm
Hartlepool	West Stow	Girona	Sydney
Hexham	Weston	Gisborne	Tarragona
Highclere	Whitehaven	Grand Ronde	Tbilisi
Ipswich	Woking	Grenoble	Tokyo
Kendal	York	Halle	Toronto
Kilmartin		Hong Kong	Urbino
		Karlsruhe	Venice
		Kyoto	Vienna
		Leeuwarden	Warsaw
		Leiden	Washington
		Lisbon	Zaragoza
		Los Angeles	Zhejiang
		Lyon	Zurich
		Macau	

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