

Review 2022|23

At a glance

The BM in numbers

27m

visits to the BM website

153,000

UK schoolchildren visit the BM

6m

followers on English language
and Chinese social media

68,000

participate in the Samsung
Digital Discovery Centre

4.5m

visitors to the BM in London

59,000

finds recorded through the
Portable Antiquities Scheme

4m

visitors see BM objects
across the UK

1,900

objects loaned across the UK

1.1m

views of YouTube video
explaining the Rosetta Stone

1,700

objects loaned internationally



Bodhisattva, 2nd–3rd century

The BM has loaned 45 objects to the new South Asia Gallery at Manchester Museum. They include this statue from Gandhara representing the Buddha of the Future. (Height 113 cm)

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Introduction

Chair’s foreword

The British Museum continues to attract large numbers of visitors, win plaudits for our great exhibitions and collaborate with partners across the UK and the world. However, the news that a significant number of items from the collection have been stolen, and the breach of trust involved, has been a blow. Disciplinary action has been taken, the police are involved and we have established a robust independent review to establish what happened, what could have been done to prevent it, and what the lessons are for the future. The Trustee body is determined the Museum emerges stronger from this sad episode, and we want to place on record our gratitude to so many members of staff who have worked hard to deal with these events.

The search for a new Director was already underway when Hartwig Fischer resigned. We asked Sir Mark Jones, one of the most highly regarded museum leaders of this generation, to become our Director for an interim period, and I am very grateful he has agreed. Together with his team, he is leading the effort to improve security and fully modernise how we care for the collection. On top of that our recovery programme has already seen a significant number of items returned.

It is important that we also remember what has been achieved in the last year – and ensure we maintain the momentum for the projects we have embarked on to build a Museum fit for the 21st century.

The opening of the British Museum Archaeological Research Collection (BM_ARC) this year completed the first phase of our long-term masterplan. It is a strikingly impressive centre, near Reading, which will allow study and comparison across ancient world collections, support cross-Museum and interdisciplinary research, and generate wider social, cultural and economic benefits. Associated projects to digitise and better document the collection will fully modernise our record keeping, and put us ahead of many of the world’s large museums in how we record the collection.

We have also begun work on the new Energy Centre in Bloomsbury, which will dramatically reduce our carbon footprint – laying the groundwork for us to become a net zero museum. In the long term, the masterplan will completely revitalise our estate, improving how visitors experience the collection – physically and virtually – in London, across the UK, and around the world.

Reimagining Tutankhamun

To mark the 100th anniversary of the discovery of Tutankhamun’s tomb, the BM invited Egyptian graffiti artist Ahmed Nofal to create a new work inside the BM.

Luxury and power

This Classical Greek drinking mug in the form of a bird was made between 490 and 470 BC. It featured in a 2023 exhibition on the use of luxury as a political tool, from Persia to Greece. (Height 24 cm)



This renewal is vital because the Museum remains a global institution, attracting millions of visitors from across the globe. This year they saw stellar exhibitions – from *Luxury and power: Persia to Greece* to *China's hidden century* – as well engaging with the permanent collection. On top of that we are seeing a strong return, post-pandemic, to our onsite research and study sites. In 2022 we facilitated over 2,000 visits to view archives and over 40,000 objects from the collection.

As well as engaging with the collection in London, nearly 2,000 objects travelled to partner venues across the UK, and a further 1,700 items were shared with partners across the globe. In this way we underline our international significance, and the positive role we play in the world.

In an age where some people question the value of big museums, we are underlining why they are so important. In an age when we are always being told what divides us, the Museum both displays – and connects us to – civilisations across the globe, reminding us of what we have in common. We are not just a museum of British history or Greek history, or Chinese history or Indian history, but a place where it is possible to see all of the civilisations of the world together. It is precisely because it would be impossible to assemble our collection today that it is so invaluable.

And we couldn't do what we do without generous support from donors, sponsors, patrons, members and visitors, and I would like to thank them all. I also thank Hartwig for his service over the last seven years. Finally, as ever, I want to thank our brilliant staff whose skills and commitment are so fundamental to what we do.

The Rt Hon George Osborne CH

Chair, British Museum

Exhibitions

Exhibitions and loans carry the BM collection and the diverse stories it can tell out into the world. Sharing the collection fosters knowledge of different histories which museums might not be able to present through their own collections to local audiences.

Internationally, the BM presented its first-ever exhibition in New Zealand – a display on ancient Greek athletes and heroes – as well as shows in Japan and Spain. At China's Suzhou Museum, a BM tour on ancient Rome attracted 887,000 visitors.

National exhibitions and loans are part of the BM's wide-ranging programme of national partnerships. They share the collection with audiences around the UK, from Spotlight Loans to exhibitions on Bronze Age Britain and ancient Troy.

In London those diverse audiences come to the BM, the capital's second most visited tourist attraction in 2022. In 2022/23 visitors enjoyed shows on ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs, the latest research on Stonehenge, and feminine power as conceived across many of the world's religions and beliefs.

Ancient Greeks in New Zealand

A BM touring exhibition of ancient Greek artefacts at the Auckland War Memorial Museum attracted over 80,000 visitors.





Stonehenge

'As magical as a great barrow full of glinting treasure,' the *Guardian* reported. *The world of Stonehenge*, supported by bp, attracted widespread critical and popular acclaim: 190,000 visitors saw the show. Exploring the myths and legends that surround the towering stone circle, the exhibition shone a light on its varying purposes across millennia, its cultural power and the people who created it.

The exhibition encouraged visitors to engage with complex questions of deep history. It examined how Stonehenge, for all its solitary power, did not exist in isolation but was part of the development of cultures across Europe between 4000 and 1000 BC.

Stonehenge was much more than an exhibition. Local community organisations were invited to a special preview. A Solstice Late featured the Archdruid of Stonehenge, artist Jeremy Deller, films, music, crafts and solar astronomy. The event ended with a sunset ceremony on the BM lawns marking the solstice.

The wider world of Stonehenge

These polished stone axes were used between 4500 and 1500 BC. They come from Ireland, Scotland, England, Scandinavia, France, Spain, Germany, Italy and Romania. (Lengths 14–28 cm)

Kali Murti, 2022

For the exhibition *Feminine power*, Bengali artist Kaushik Ghosh created an icon of the Hindu goddess Kali. (Height 155 cm)



Exhibitions

Feminine power

Across the world demons, saints, goddesses and other spiritual beings are seen to embody feminine power. The Citi exhibition *Feminine power: the divine to the demonic*, in consultation with a wide range of contemporary faith groups, explored that power from the ancient world to the present day. The show was featured on BBC Radio 4's *Woman's Hour*; nearly 100,000 people attended.

Displays covered a vast terrain, from the ancient Iraqi Queen of the Night to a 20th-century Nigerian headpiece representing Mami Wata, the West African spirit of the sea, rivers and waterways. Figures included a gilded Nepalese statue of Lakshmi, Hindu goddess of abundance, conjoined with her partner Vishnu, and a scroll painting of Green Tara, who embodies compassion and wisdom in Tibetan Buddhism. A contemporary Hawaiian sculpture depicted Pele, goddess of volcanoes, who devastates so that new life may grow.

Spanning six continents and 5,000 years, *Feminine power* looked at how femininity has been associated with diverse areas of human experience, from war and passion to mercy and justice.

Seti II, 1200–1194 BC

This statue from Thebes shows a seated Egyptian pharaoh holding a ram's head. Hieroglyphic inscriptions appear on the base, the back and across his shoulders. (Height 164 cm)

Hieroglyphs

Marking 200 years since they were first deciphered, *Hieroglyphs: unlocking ancient Egypt*, supported by bp, took up a challenge: to tell the tale of the perplexing and ultimately revealing adventure, in which many nations took part, to decode the puzzle of Egyptian hieroglyphs. The show featured outstanding artefacts: a limestone sculpture of a seated Egyptian scribe loaned by the Louvre; the 3,000-year-old illustrated papyrus Book of the Dead of Queen Nedjmet; and at the show's heart, the celebrated and crucial object to the story, the Rosetta Stone.

The Times judged it 'the perfect show – deep, fascinating, full of beautiful things, full of beautiful ideas.' Over 136,000 people attended. Wider engagement for the exhibition included a short video on the BM's YouTube channel. Among the BM's most popular videos ever, 'The Rosetta Stone and what it actually says' attracted over 1.1m views.

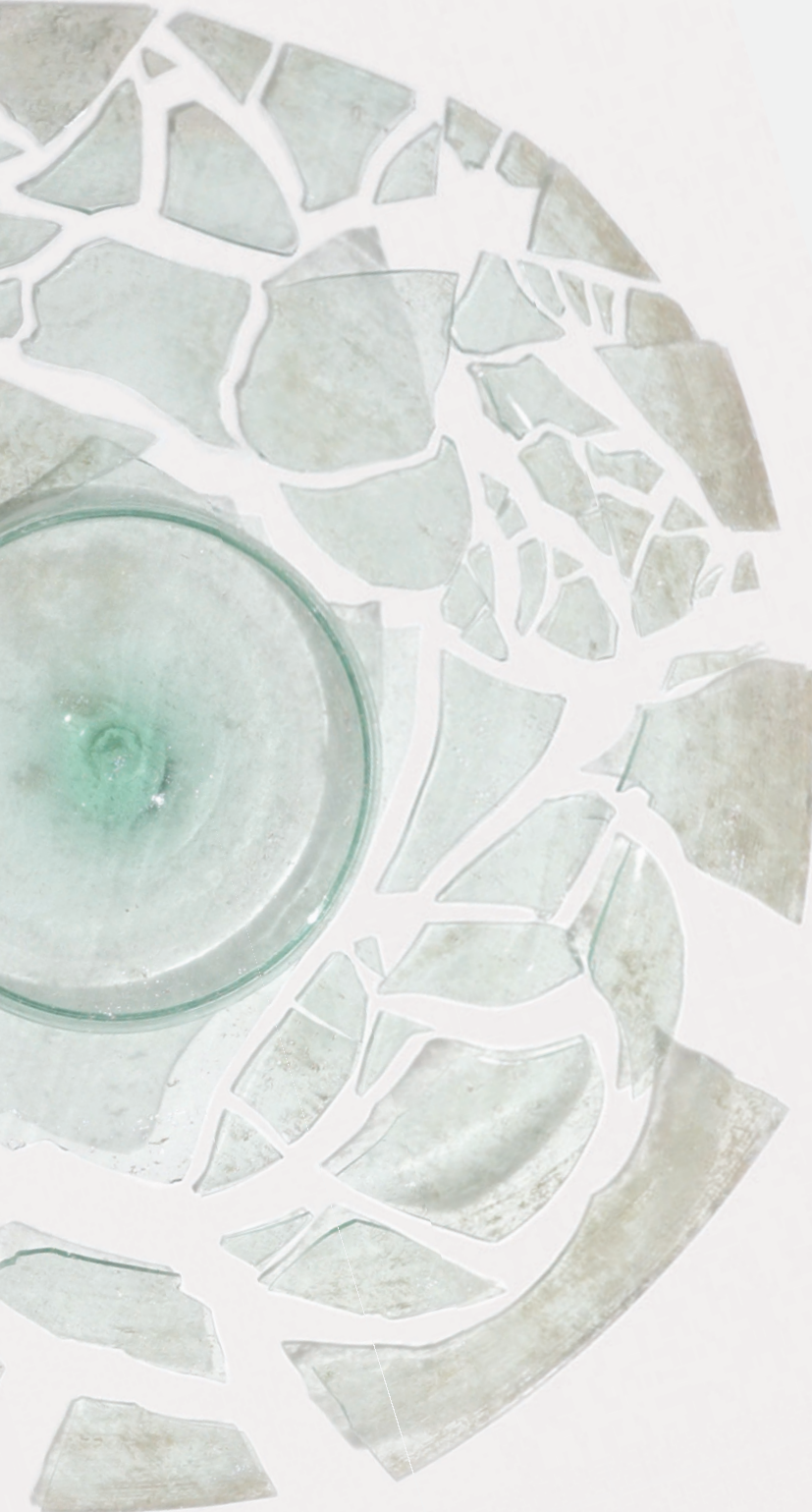


Unlocking ancient Egypt

The exhibition exploring Egyptian hieroglyphs drew 136,000 visitors. Online, over 1.1m watched a video explaining the Rosetta Stone.



Free displays



Shattered glass

Among the year's Asahi Shimbun Displays, *Shattered glass of Beirut* was a powerful testament to how objects convey the world's history.

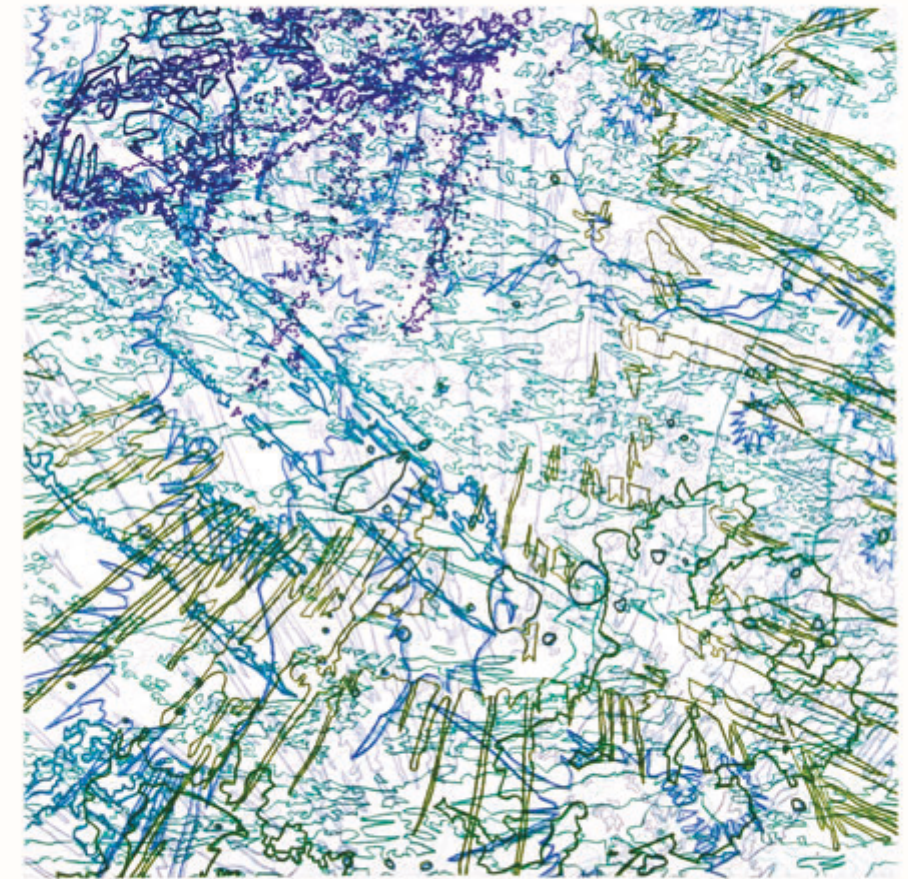
In 2020 a massive stockpile of ammonium nitrate blew up in Beirut. The explosion killed over 200 people, injured 7,000 and caused widespread damage. At the Archaeological Museum of the American University of Beirut, a display case of rare Roman, Byzantine and Islamic glass was shattered.

From those thousands of fragments, mixed as they were with the glass of the windows and the case itself, staff from the Archaeological Museum, Institut National de Patrimoine in France and the BM spent three months painstakingly reassembling eight of the vessels. Visitors could see the joins, the areas that remained missing. The effect of such a cataclysm – on the material world, on the people of Lebanon – was palpable in these frail, but enduring, objects.

After their display at the BM, they were returned and displayed anew at the Museum in Beirut. This project was made possible thanks to TEFAF Museum Restoration Fund and other generous donors.

Bringing back the past

For three months, colleagues from Lebanon and France worked with conservators at the BM to reconstruct eight glass vessels shattered by an explosion at the port of Beirut in August 2020.



Prints and drawings

***Art on paper since 1960: the Hamish Parker collection* showcased over 100 outstanding works of contemporary art. The collection, accepted by the UK government under the Cultural Gifts Scheme, was allocated to the BM in 2020.**

Visitors to the exhibition saw an exciting range of art being created around the globe today. Pakistani artist Imran Qureshi draws on the history of Mughal miniatures. Vietnam's Tiffany Chung has responded to the political crisis in Syria with her UNHCR Red Dot Series. Other leading artists featured included Lucian Freud and Jake and Dinos Chapman, South African painter Marlene Dumas and German American artist Kiki Smith.

Parker's collection is his most recent gift to the BM. His longstanding generous support included funding the purchase of Picasso's *Vollard Suite* in 2011.

Art on paper since 1960

Works exhibited from the Hamish Parker collection included this print by the American artist Ingrid Calame. (61 x 61 cm)

Communities

Youth Collective

The BM's Youth Collective work together to devise innovative programmes for young people at the BM.



As a resource for all, the BM strives to reach the public in new and creative ways. Our work with communities has encouraged us to understand better what inhibits some visitors from coming to the galleries.

Run in conjunction with the charity Mind and supported by JTI UK, Walk and Talk tours aim to improve people's mental health and confidence as they introduce them to the BM. 'I had no idea that the British Museum did projects like this,' wrote one participant. 'I would compare this project to having a ramp for a wheelchair.'

Inclusive programmes range from widening diversity among those who volunteer to encouraging the participation of young people. The Young People's Programme, supported by the Greengross family, attracted younger audiences to events such as '(No) sex please, we're the British Museum'. The BM's national programme for young people, *Where we are ...* supported by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, encouraged participants in Barnsley, Bury and Hackney to respond to their local heritage and develop a sense of pride and agency.

Community groups were drawn to a wide range of activities, from exhibition previews to the Platinum Jubilee Party in June 2022, which invited families to picnic on the lawns. Questions of community were very much to the fore during Refugee Week in June 2022. The BM welcomed the public to listen to musicians from Syria and Ethiopia, storytellers and filmmakers. In the Parthenon Gallery, Arcola Theatre presented extracts from *Children of War*, based on Euripides. *We are You* by the Young Vic/DOST was performed by young people from around the world who now live in London. Moving installations around the BM included *The Open Gateway*, covered with messages and airmail letters, and on the front lawn, a UNHCR tent painted by Syrian children.



Community partnerships

The BM works with many groups across London and the UK. An event organised with Neasden Temple and Subrang Arts celebrated the festival of Diwali at the BM.

Museum partnerships



South Asia Gallery team

A new partnership gallery at Manchester Museum was co-curated with over 30 community members from Manchester who worked with museum professionals and designers on every aspect of the gallery’s development.

In February 2023, an exciting new South Asia Gallery opened at Manchester Museum. The innovative gallery was co-curated by Manchester Museum, the BM and a collective of 30 community leaders, educators, artists, historians, journalists and musicians.

With a performance space and six over-arching themes, the South Asia Gallery combines objects of the past (including 45 long-term loans from the BM) with contributions from the present day. It includes personal stories not often told in museums. ‘This is a place I would bring my child and say, “This is your heritage”,’ said co-curator Nusrat Ahmed in the *Financial Times*.

The success at Manchester typifies the BM’s expanding work with partners around the UK. In 2022, the BM and the Dorman Museum in Middlesbrough jointly created an exhibition exploring how ancient Egyptians journeyed to the afterlife.

They involved local primary schools too. The BM took an Egyptian canopic jar into the schools and arranged discussions for the children with curators from the BM and Dorman Museum. Some of the works they created were included in the exhibition. ‘If you want to bring history alive to children,’ said one teacher, ‘then you have to involve them in a project such as this.’

Canopic jar, 1550–1295 BC

In Middlesbrough, the BM took an ancient Egyptian canopic jar selected by schoolchildren into local schools and later exhibited it at the Dorman Museum. The jar was shown with the children’s responses to it, alongside other loans. (Height 40 cm)



National programmes

The BM engages audiences across the UK. Events draw in local communities; loans from the BM help regional museums entice new visitors to explore their local museums. Over 1,900 objects were loaned in 2022/23, attracting over 4m people.



UK touring exhibitions, supported by the Dorset Foundation, included *Troy: beauty and heroism*, which told of Helen's abduction, Achilles' anger and other stories of the Trojan war. A 3,000-year-old sun pendant – shown in Truro, Lincoln and Sunderland – was the star object in a tour associated with the *Stonehenge* exhibition in London.

Some loans respond to current events. *Crossings: community and refuge* toured the Lampedusa cross, made from the remnants of a refugee boat wrecked off the island of Lampedusa. Each of the four partner museums around the UK expanded the exhibition to connect with local communities, fostering the museum as a place of dialogue and understanding.



***Crossings: community and refuge* (opposite)**
An eight-city UK exhibition fostered conversation about migration and those seeking refuge from war and poverty. Works included the Lampedusa cross from southern Italy and Syrian artist Issam Kourbaj's installation of small boats, *Dark Water*, *Burning World*.

***Gathering light* (above)**
Following the exhibition on Stonehenge, the BM toured rare Bronze Age metalwork to museums in Truro, Lincoln and Sunderland (shown here). The show travels to Stornoway in 2023.



Visits from UK pupils reached 153,000, an increase of 30,000 over pre-pandemic levels. BM resources reflect the varied approaches to learning today, from school sessions to home education. All Key Stages of the UK curriculum are targeted, using the collection to take in subjects from mathematics and money to civic life.

Wider programmes draw in families and adult learners. A display marking the centenary of archaeologist Howard Carter's discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun was accompanied by a trail staged across the Egyptian sculpture gallery. They told not just a world history, but the history of artefacts and collecting as a vital part of that history.

The past also leapt to life in July 2022, when the BM hosted its much-loved day for the annual Festival of Archaeology. Over 17,000 visitors took part in events that ranged from bronze-casting to learning medieval fight techniques.

Access to learning inspires work across the BM. Scholarly publications sit alongside a range of popular books. At the Cultural Enterprises Awards 2023, the BM's *A History of the World in 25 Cities* won Best Children's Publication.

In 2022/23, over 68,000 people engaged with the BM's popular Samsung Digital Discovery Centre (SDDC). Nearly 20,000 students and teachers undertook Virtual Visits which enabled them, long-distance, to visit the BM. The virtual sessions are continually updated. Topics range from a Roman Britain treasure challenge to investigating the Indus Valley of South Asia.

Armed with tablets and inspired by stories of the past, young people in the BM use the SDDC as a starting point for an inventive journey out into the galleries. Families too can enjoy sessions on Sutton Hoo or ancient Greece. Nearly 7,000 took part in weekend and holiday programmes throughout the year, with another 40,000 engaging with the SDDC online.

The largest programme of its kind in the UK, the SDDC has shown, since it opened in 2009, how technology is not in competition with museums, but a rewarding new approach to them.



Festival of Archaeology

Over 17,000 visitors took part in a day of hands-on archaeological activities at the BM. Activities ranged from re-enacting early uses of raw materials to a multimedia experience that enabled children and adults to reimagine five sites from Uist in the Outer Hebrides.

Around the world

The MOWAA Archaeology Project
Prior to the construction of new museum buildings in Nigeria, excavations are taking place in Benin City.



With our partners around the globe, the BM finds new ways of showing the collection and sharing our expertise. Loans to France helped tell the histories of Afghanistan and Uzbekistan. For a research project on Aboriginal material from Australia, BM staff are collaborating with the Australian National University, University of Cambridge and the La Perouse Aboriginal community in Sydney.

Benin

In Nigeria, the most significant archaeological research in Benin City since the 1960s is being undertaken. The Museum of West African Art (MOWAA) Trust is working with the BM on the five-year project through to 2025. Prior to construction of a new Creative District, the fieldwork aims to investigate the historic urban development of Benin City, including researching the chronology and origins of the city and its Edo culture.

The joint Nigerian-British project team is working in collaboration with the Nigerian National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM) and other stakeholders in Nigeria, with support from the Cambridge Archaeological Unit and Wessex Archaeology.

The partnership focuses on developing a specialist archaeological project team within MOWAA, to help train a new generation of Nigerian archaeologists and develop a blueprint for best practice in preconstruction archaeology in Nigeria, including through fieldwork opportunities in the UK. Public activities for the local community, schools and young people will include opportunities to gain hands-on experience of archaeology.

The African Histories and Heritage Programme has been made possible by a major grant made to the British Museum by an anonymous donor.

Around the world

Girsu

The rediscovery of Girsu in the 19th century revealed the Sumerian civilisation to the world. Conflicts in Iraq since the Second World War have left the site exposed, with little conservation to address its stability or issues of erosion.

The Girsu Project is a collaboration with the State Board of Antiquities and Heritage in Iraq, supported by the J Paul Getty Jr Charitable Trust, to raise awareness of Girsu’s importance. The project incorporates major excavations, site conservation, heritage management and specialised training for both professionals and students from universities across Iraq.

The discoveries have been astounding – the mudbrick walls of the palace; more than 200 cuneiform tablets; and Enninu, the White Thunderbird temple, the main sanctuary of the Sumerian god Ningirsu and one of the most important in ancient Mesopotamia. Until now known only from inscriptions, the temple had been sought by archaeologists for decades.



Ancient Iraq

This surviving impression was made by a 4,000-year-old cylinder seal that once belonged to a governor of Girsu. It depicts the Sumerian hero-god Ningirsu. (Height 6 cm)

Revealing the past
Archaeologists excavate a
5,000-year-old animal foundation
deposit in the oldest temple
platform of Girsu in southern Iraq.



Portable Antiquities Scheme

The BM manages the enormously successful Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) in England, which records finds made by the public. Over 100 national partners support the scheme, which grows busier every year. To date over 1.6m finds have been recorded and are accessible on the PAS database.

Fascinating finds in 2022/23 included a gold posie ring of around 1550–1650 discovered in south Gloucestershire. The elegant finger-ring has a ‘posie’ inscribed on the inner band: As God Wil So It Shal Be. Overall, 59,000 finds were recorded during the year, including items such as this ring which were submitted for consideration as Treasure.

Reforms to the Treasure Act 1996 will assist the future work of PAS. A new definition effective from 30 July 2023 ensures that not just gold and silver, but any item of metal over 200 years old of outstanding archaeological or cultural significance is protected by law.

Tudor necklace found

Café owner Charlie Clarke (right) discovered a gold Tudor pendant in a field in Warwickshire in 2019. (Heart 6 x 5.5 cm)



An outstanding discovery

Friday the 13th turned out to be a lucky day for café owner Charlie Clarke. Metal-detecting in a field in Warwickshire, he was about to call it a day when he encountered a strong signal. When he dug down, he shrieked ‘like a little schoolgirl,’ he said.

What he discovered was an astonishing Tudor pendant made of gold. Nothing of this size or importance from the Renaissance had been found in Britain for 25 years. The heart-shaped pendant, attached to a chain of 75 links, is decorated with the Tudor rose and a pomegranate, respective symbols of Henry VIII and his first wife, Katherine of Aragon. On the reverse appear the initials H and K.

Nothing like it exists, and the specialists are currently discussing its function. One suggestion is that it may have been a valuable prize awarded at one of the king’s tournaments. Research is ongoing.



Towards a National Collection

To dissolve the barriers between museums, *Towards a National Collection* is laying the foundations of a unified UK virtual collection. The ambitious five-year £18.9m project, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, involves around 20 UK archives, museums, libraries and galleries, looking to find ways to join up their digital collections.

One strand is *Sloane Lab*, which is looking at the dispersed collections of Hans Sloane found in the Natural History Museum, British Library and BM. Sloane was a physician and naturalist whose vast collection, bequeathed to the nation, became the foundation of the BM. Led by University College London, *Sloane Lab* will find innovative ways of interconnecting objects, natural specimens and archival material to create a searchable, multiform history platform for researchers, curators and the public to explore.

Sloane Lab
A collaboration with University College London and other partners is re-examining the handwritten catalogues Hans Sloane made of his collection in the 18th century.



Research

An external review in October 2022 praised the quality and impact of the BM's research. The panel was impressed with its breadth, its portfolio of diverse funding and its presentation through exhibitions and public platforms. Our work with external partners, including the collaborative doctoral programme run with UK universities where postgraduates can research projects at the BM, was highly commended.

Research in 2022/23 ranged from an international project examining the library of the Assyrian king Ashurbanipal to quantitative analysis of how the BM's own collection grew.

A six-year study of ceramics from the Ural mountains to the Baltic Sea, funded by the European Research Council, concluded in February 2023. Through food residue analysis and radiocarbon dating, the project has changed our understanding of how hunter-gatherers made and used pottery vessels, and how this technology spread, long before the introduction of farming in the region. The project was a collaboration with the University of York and Schleswig-Holstein State Museums.

Early pottery (below)
These containers were made by hunter-gatherers in the Eastern Baltic. Research has shown they used the larger vessels for cooking. The elongated bowls filled with fish oil served as lamps.

Korean screen (top right)
The folk paintings on this early 20th-century screen depict magpies and tigers with their cubs. (Height 56 cm)



Conservation



New guidelines issued for the BM's environment and lighting in the past year reflected the latest science in collection care. Advice on temperatures, humidity, vibration and pollutant control will ensure the best possible long-term conservation of objects.

Research into the transport of objects was undertaken with the University of Southampton. Studying the effects of shocks and vibration will help museums limit the impact to objects by developing better packaging to protect them when on loan or moving to new stores.

The BM houses a significant collection of Korean paintings: on folding screens and scrolls, as well as modern framed works. A five-year project to conserve Korean pictorial art was completed in 2023. Supported by Amorepacific, the collaboration with Korean scroll mounters, dyers, artisans and experts researched appropriate techniques to preserve this rare and diverse group of works.

Conserving Korean paintings

A five-year project to conserve Korean pictorial art concluded in 2023. Staff worked with Korean scroll mounters, dyers and other experts.



One last thing



Famous objects in the BM are much loved. The Rosetta Stone. The Gayer-Anderson Cat. But the wonder of the collection, and its value, can lie in small overlooked objects which tell complicated, often unique histories.

A piedfort is a disc struck from the same die as a coin. It is even of the same metal. The reason it is not an official coin is that the weight, which guarantees the value, is completely random. No one has ever fully explained their function. They may have been used by important officials as counters.

This recently discovered silver piedfort shows the famous warrior king of the Scots, Robert the Bruce. It was found in Pontefract, Yorkshire in 2018, but was probably made in Berwick-upon-Tweed around 1320. Our understanding of it keeps changing. In 2018, there was no known coin to match this piedfort. But in the five years since, the corresponding Scottish coin has also been discovered.

Silver piedfort, c.1320

This piedfort (4.1g) is over six times the weight of its corresponding silver halfpenny. (Diameter 1.5 cm)

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Supporter spotlight: BM Patrons

The BM is immensely grateful to our community of Patrons for their enthusiasm, warmth and incredible generosity. Twenty-three new Patrons joined the scheme in 2022/23.

Highlights of the year's special events included a Stonehenge tour that explored the exhibition in greater depth. With visits to Salisbury Museum and Wiltshire Museum, Salisbury Cathedral and Wilton House, the trip culminated in guided tours of both Stonehenge and Avebury.

At the BM a viewing of the Tonindeye Codex from Mexico allowed Patrons to examine close-up its vivid depictions of the life and religion of the pre-Columbian Mixtec culture. A behind-the-scenes visit to the Japanese study room focused in on recent acquisitions that had been supported by individual Patrons.

The Patrons are invaluable to the work of the BM. Their continued support and advocacy help us continue to reach new audiences.

Patrons trip
BM Patrons enjoy a private tour of Stonehenge in Wiltshire.



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The best books

British Museum publications were widely recognised in 2022/23 for their creative design and scholarship. From children’s books to exhibition catalogues, they reach a substantial audience worldwide.

Books for young readers, published by Nosy Crow in collaboration with the British Museum, won several awards. They included a Creative Play Award for *The Curse of the Tomb Robbers*, which showed children aged seven to nine how to read Egyptian hieroglyphs. A 2023 Cultural Enterprises Award went to *A History of the World in 25 Cities* (below).

Prize-winning catalogues included *Thomas Becket: murder and the making of a saint*, joint winner of the 2023 Historians of British Art Book Award for an exhibition catalogue. *Hokusai: The Great Picture Book of Everything* was shortlisted for Exhibition Catalogue of the Year at the British Book Design and Production Awards 2022.



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