LONDON, 17 May: The British Museum has today announced the return of a further 268 missing and stolen objects, taking the total number of recovered items to 626.

The Museum also confirmed that it is currently working on new leads for around 100 objects.

The Museum’s recovery operation is global, with objects now recovered from across Europe and North America.

Chair of the British Museum George Osborne said:

“Few expected to see this day, and even I had my doubts. When we announced the devastating news that objects had been stolen from our collection, people understandably assumed that was it – we were unlikely to ever see more than a handful of them again. That’s usually the history with thefts like this.

“But the team at the British Museum refused to give up. Through clever detective work and a network of well-wishers we’ve achieved a remarkable result: more than 600 of the objects are back with us, and a further 100 have been identified – in total almost half the stolen items that we could recover. It’s a great result but we’re not resting here – the hunt goes on for the remaining missing objects. I urge anyone with any information to follow the example of all who’ve helped us and get in touch.”

Notes:

The Museum’s recovery programme webpage has published photographs of some of the items that have been returned in order to give a clear indication of the types of material that were stolen. If anyone has any knowledge of missing items, or is concerned that they may have inadvertently purchased something from the collection, we encourage them to contact recovery@britishmuseum.org.

Breakdown of recovered objects

The Museum estimates that there are approximately 2000 damaged or missing items in total.

Within that, the number that are missing or stolen is around 1500, and the number damaged (but physically present in the Museum) is around 500.

Of the 1500 missing or stolen, 626 are now back in the Museum.

Of the approximately 500 damaged items, around 350 items have had portions of gold removed (which we sadly believe is unlikely to be recoverable) and around 140 have been damaged by tool marks.

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Further information

Contact the Communications team: communications@britishmuseum.org

Images: https://bit.ly/4amcPMo