Art in Arabia
Islamic treasures on display in Sharjah

Saving Pompeii
How to preserve the iconic Roman site

Antiquities auction report
Sales skyrocket in New York

Palmyra
Desert city fit for a warrior queen

The making of a museum
Building a house of wonders in Mougins
It is interesting to reflect on how history would have run its course if the Greeks had lost the war against the Persians in the 5th century BC. There would have been no Classical period as we know it, and the pervasive thread of classicism that stretches from antiquity through to the modern world would not have begun – instead it may well have been replaced by a culture rooted in Iranian society. Of course, this did not happen and the result is today’s Western civilisation, based on the artistic, architectural, democratic, literary and philosophical traditions of ancient Greece.

An intriguing by-product of this has been the perpetual reinvention of classicism. For many the Renaissance is synonymous with its literary rebirth, but this is a marker at the tail end of many revivals that occurred earlier in history, and in the vanguard of those that came later. The Romans, of course, readily identified with Greek civilisation, while the Byzantine Empire owed more to Greece than to Rome. After the Renaissance, classicism was expressed in the Enlightenment, and has permeated Modernity, especially in architecture and in the arts.

The enduring interest and relevance of the Classical world is obvious in this issue of Minerva. Graeco-Roman artworks are achieving staggeringly high prices when sold at auction. Tourists are still flocking to ancient sites like Pompeii, Herculaneum or Palmyra. Even the myths of antiquity continue to generate scholarly enquiry. With the impending opening of the Mougins Museum of Classical Art near Cannes, it will be soon be possible to trace the common strands of classicism which run from the dazzling array of Graeco-Roman artefacts, through to the neo-classical, modern, and contemporary art displayed alongside.

Dr Mark Merrony

Renaissance in perpetuity

The continuing reinvention of classicism in the Western world over the past 2500 years

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Myths and meteorites p. 14

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The collapse of Pompeii p. 26

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New York Sales Report p. 50
A lamp with a past

A Roman marble funerary urn that had been adapted for use as a lamp sold for an astonishing £445,250 at Christie’s on King Street, London, on 16 December. The urn, which dates to the 1st century AD, was acquired in the 1950s by Sydney Barratt (1898–1975), a chemist whose advice to Sir Winston Churchill and the War Cabinet from 1942 to 1944 helped to secure the development of the ‘bouncing bomb’ used in the famous ‘Dambusters’ raid carried out by RAF 617 Squadron in 1943. The urn formed part of the contents of Crowe Hall, one of the finest Regency villas near Bath.

Two small holes had been drilled in the top of the urn’s lid as well as through its base to allow a cable to be run up through the middle. On top of the lid a metal fitting had been fixed in place to secure a lightbulb. When in its guise of a lamp, the urn also sported a 1970s-style red shade. ‘It was a bit of a monstrosity,’ Georgiania Aitken, head of antiquities at Christies, told the BBC. ‘It was a shame that such a historically important item had been turned into a domestic lamp.’ Despite the recent adaptations to the urn, the shallow relief decoration carved on the urn remained undamaged. Garlanded bulls’ heads ran around the shoulder of the urn, while floral motifs and birds with outstretched wings featured on the upper register. The twin handles were also shaped in the form of satyr heads. It was the quality of these Roman carvings that motivated the buyer, a European dealer, to pay more than 40 times the estimate to acquire the urn – further proof of the astonishingly buoyant state of the antiquities market at present.

Sophie Mackenzie

Marble Roman cinerary urn, c. 1st century AD. H. 48.25cm. With an estimate of £7000–10,000 it sold at Christie’s for £445,250.

Mosaics at Hisham’s Palace

The Palestinian Authority and UNESCO have hired the Swiss architect Peter Zumthor to create a distinctive structure that will house the famous mosaics of Hisham’s Palace (Arabic Khirbet al-Mafjar). One of the best known archaeological sites in the Palestinian territories, located 5km south of Jericho, it is hoped that the new complex will boost tourist numbers to the region.

Hisham’s Palace was first noted in the West in 1873, and excavated by a British team under Robert W. Hamilton in the 1930s. The extensive compound is a treasury of early Islamic architecture, and the ruins occupy some 60 hectares. It is divided into three main sections, a two-storey palace, a mosque with a courtyard, and a bath with a throne room. While attributed to caliph Hisham (r. AD 724–743) it is likely that his nephew and successor Al-Walid II (r. AD 743–44) built the palace. However, five years after Al-Walid’s death, the building was destroyed by an earthquake.

Umayyad mosaics are well known for their bold colours and designs, but the mosaics in the palace are unparalleled. Those preserved in the Great Bath Room are of incredible size, spanning some 850 square metres. The mosaic in the audience hall is well known and depicts an apple tree, while two gazelles chew its foliage on one side, to the left a lion is attacking another gazelle. Although there are many ways to interpret such a scene, it is likely that it depicts the peaceful life under Umayyad authority, while enemies of the state face destruction.

The palace also boasts elaborate stucco decoration with clear parallels to Persian design. Many scholars have noted that the decoration of the palace exceeds Late Roman equivalents. There is ongoing debate as to the origins of the artisans, particularly for the mosaics and stucco-work.

The planned structure will protect the mosaics and allow visitors to examine them in natural light. Elevated walkways will also provide a perspective that will showcase the composition. Construction is set to begin in 2013, and the cost of the project is estimated at $10-15 million. It is the most significant investment in culture ever made by the Palestinian Authority. In recent years Jericho has encroached upon the perimeter of the palace, while the expansion of agriculture in the area has further threatened delicate structures. Hopefully the new plan is only the first step in opening this sprawling complex to the public.

Murray Eiland
**Attack on Egypt’s heritage**

Egypt’s political turmoil dominated the news during late January and February, and has had huge repercussions on the country’s archaeology and richly endowed museums. As we go to press, information concerning damage to ancient sites and the looting of artefacts from a number of storage units and museums is still often sketchy and contradictory.

The street demonstrations and acts of civil disobedience that began on Tuesday 25 January escalated three days later during the so-called ‘Day of Rage’. With thousands of protestors taking to the streets of Tahrir Square in central Cairo following Friday prayers, large numbers of people climbed the eastern wall surrounding the nearby Museum of Egyptian Antiquities. According to the website of Dr Zahi Hawass, newly installed as Minister of Antiquities, ‘ten people entered the museum when the apparent that the mummified remains – one of which had been decapitated – were unidentified bodies dating to the Late Period of Egyptian history (664–323 BC). As Prof Salima Ikram, from the American University in Cairo, later confirmed: “These were Late Period fragmentary mummies attacked the museum went in, in the area of the giftshop, they also breached the room in which the test mummy fragments were kept.’

Although it was at first believed nothing had been stolen from the museum during the break in on 28 January, checks against the inventory database subsequently revealed that 18 artefacts were missing. These included a limestone statue of Akhenaten bearing an offering table and a statue of his queen Nefertiti making offerings. Other missing Amarna period art included a sandstone head of a princess and a stone statuette of a scribe. The torso and upper limbs from a gilded wooden statue of Tutankhamun with a harpoon were also found to be missing.

A heart scarab, together with 11 wooden shabtis of the nobleman Yuya, husband of Tjuya were also removed.

There were also numerous reports of attacks on museums and archaeological sites outside Cairo. At Saqqara it was initially reported that looters had entered the funerary site following the disappearance of the police who

**New finds of Norwegian rock art**

Rock art in most cultures is difficult to date into context. Almost by definition it is found in isolation, and more or less elaborate methods have to be used to relate it to nearby objects. This was not the case for a recent find in Norway. Stjerdal, just north of Trondheim, yielded a burial mound that contained Bronze Age (1800–500 BC) petroglyphs. While the rock art can only be dated within a wide margin, the style of tomb suggests a date in the range of 500–400 BC. Archaeologists from the Museum of Natural History and Archaeology noted that the mound was built over an already existing hill that served to make the monument appear

**Rock art at Alta, Norway.** This scene has been interpreted as a hunter attempting to kill a moose, or a shaman communicating with the animal. Photo: courtesy of Ferkelparade.

even more impressive. However, that may not have been the main reason why the site was chosen. Underneath a burned layer that contained bone fragments of one or more people, the team found eight drawings depicting the soles of feet. Drawings of two boats and several other depictions of feet with toes were recovered to

the south of the mound. While no one can be certain, it appears that the tomb was constructed over the petroglyphs as part of the ritual. It is, of course, unknown if the rock was carved at the same time the tomb was built, or had existed at the site for some time before. Other Nordic sites have yielded similar burials and rock art particularly with foot soles.

Ostlandet, an area called Jong in Bærum, has similar burials, as does the world heritage site of Bohuslän in Sweden. Without a written record, no one can be certain how to interpret the symbols, it nevertheless seems that foot soles may represent a deity. Murray Eiland
usually guard the burial ground. According to an anonymous author on the Facebook group, ‘Egyptologists for Egypt’, one of the tombs had been entered ‘and the reliefs in the burial chamber have been hacked out’. An archaeologist with the French mission in Egypt, which has been carrying out excavations at Saqqara, was also quoted as saying: ‘We’ve heard a lot of conflicting stories and many things on the Internet are wrong… On Sunday, looters were shooting at inspectors, who were very brave. Looting in Saqqara is nothing new, but before the army arrived, the site was left unguarded.’

While the Egyptian Antiquities Ministry later agreed that some of the locks on tombs had been forced, it was denied that the site had been looted or any damage caused. However, several archaeologists with contacts at Saqqara have since maintained that storage facilities were robbed. With Saqqara currently closed to the public it remains difficult to get to the truth of the conflicting reports.

In Luxor there were warnings of armed looters attempting to rob the tombs of the West bank. However, Egyptian archaeologists stood guard over the archaeological sites until the military arrived. It was also reported that the army stationed tanks outside the Luxor Museum to warn off attempts to break into the building. However, the situation in the south of Egypt was rather more settled than further north, and French archaeologists working at Karnak, and a Polish team at Deir el Bahri, have continued their work without interruption. At Akhenaten’s capital of Amarna, located in the Nile Valley midway between Cairo and Luxor, Prof Barry Kemp of Cambridge University reported that the site was ‘as peaceful as ever,’ although the UCLA archaeological team was instructed to stop work and leave the area.

Dr Hawass’ website also mentions a number of other important sites which were attacked in late January. ‘The magazines and stores of Abusir were opened, and I could not find anyone to protect the antiquities at the site… East of Qantara in the Sinai, we have a large store containing antiquities from the Port Said Museum. Sadly, a large group, armed with guns and a truck, entered the store, opened the boxes in the magazine and took the precious objects. Other groups attempted to enter the Coptic Museum, Royal Jewellery Museum, National Museum of Alexandria, and El Manial Museum.’ On 11 February, an antiquities storage magazine in Dahshur, some 40km to the south of Cairo, was reportedly broken into and the contents removed.

As a result of the looting in Egypt, museums and auction houses around the world are on high alert for the stolen artworks and archaeological treasures that thieves might be attempting to introduce into the international antiquities trade. Although the Egyptian authorities have, as yet, not published a list of the items looted from the various museums and storage magazines that are dotted around the country, one will hopefully be available before too long.

James Beresford

Body of evidence

Body snatching from graves was a serious problem in the 19th century. With the proliferation of medical schools, and a decrease in the numbers of cadavers supplied by the court system, thieves stepped in to fill the niche in the market. The Anatomy Act of 1832 required teachers of human anatomy to be licensed. It also stated that unclaimed bodies, and those that were specifically donated, could be used for scientific purposes. When seen in this light, some of the reasoning of the Burial Act of 1857 is clear. It made it an offence to disturb bodies – even cremated remains – without a special license from the Home Office. Clearly one target was body-snatching. Another was to preserve graveyards that were being threatened with development from expanding cities and towns. However, as was pointed out in a letter printed in The Guardian newspaper on 4 February, it appears that the application of an old law has had unintended consequences.

In 2007 it was decided to transfer authority for human remains from the Home Office to the Ministry of Justice. They decided that the Burial Act should be more rigorously applied. Human remains (barring extensions) have to be buried in an accepted place of burial, within two years of death. Sadly for science, it cannot be assumed that all relevant information can be gleaned from human remains in so short a time. Anyone who is familiar with a museum or university environment will realise that research time it already scarce. Indeed, with the rapid advances in DNA technology, methods that were once expensive or time consuming have become commonplace. With such considerations in mind, new insights into the past are not just likely, they are almost certain, if given time.

Under the current interpretation of the law, according to 40 archaeology professors who wrote the open letter, valuable evidence – including material thousands of years old – is legally treated in the same manner as recent human remains. Such a state of affairs will greatly hamper future research into questions such as the diffusion of early humans in Britain and Europe. It is well known that studies of this kind have been curtailed in North America, where charges of ethnic insensitivity and neo-colonialist attitudes can easily be applied. While such charges cannot be levelled against the scientific study of human remains discovered in England and Wales, the current law has nevertheless clearly not been formulated with any great consideration for archaeological research.

Murray Eiland
New findings on Neanderthals

Since the publication of the results of the Neanderthal genome project in May 2010, further studies have enhanced our understanding of our closest prehistoric relatives, suggesting that they used sophisticated tool kits, cooked their food and may even have been able to speak. Additionally, according to a report published in the February issue of *Journal of Human Evolution* (Vol 60, Issue 2), entitled ‘The Neanderthal face is not cold adapted; one of the main explanations given by scientists to explain the prominent noses of Neanderthals may be incorrect. Todd Rae of Roehampton University’s Department of Life Sciences, together with Thomas Koppe from the Institute for Anatomy and Cell Biology in Giessen, Germany, and Chris Stringer of The National History Museum’s Department of Palaeontology, studied the morphological features of the Pleistocene fossil hominin *Homo neanderthalensis*, including the reputed large size of its paranasal sinuses, which have been interpreted as adaptations to extreme cold. However, analysis of humans, other primates, and rodents suggests that the maxillary sinus undergoes a significant reduction in volume in extreme cold, and analysis of X-rays and new 3D data found Neanderthal sinuses to be commensurate with the size of the cranium and comparable in scale with that seen in temperate climate Homo sapiens.

In an article published in *The Telegraph*, Dr Rae commented: ‘The view that Neanderthals were knuckle-dragging cave men who scraped a living by hunting large mammals on the frozen wastes of the tundra has been around since they were first discovered because they were known to live at a time when Europe was in the grip of the last Glacial Age. Our findings suggest that Neanderthals evolved in much warmer temperatures before moving into Europe and then they moved south to avoid the glaciers. The picture of them as more of a temperate climate creature than one that lived in the cold fits the data much better.’

A second study, published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* (December 2010), challenges the assumption that Neanderthals’ all-meat diet led to their demise. It has been proposed that biologically or technologically mediated dietary differences between Neanderthals and modern humans were a fundamental cause of the older species’ disappearance, and some scenarios have focused on the apparent lack of plant foods in the Neanderthal diet. However, analysis of fossilised matter in the dental calculus of Neanderthal skeletons from Shanidar Cave, Iraq, and Spy Cave, Belgium, suggests that they consumed a variety of plant foods, some typical of recent modern human diets, including date palms, legumes, and grass seeds. Many of the grass seed starches also showed damage that is a distinctive marker of being subject to some form of cooking process. The researchers concluded that Neanderthals made use of the diverse plant foods available in their local environment and transformed them into more easily digestible foodstuffs in part through cooking them, suggesting an overall sophistication in Neanderthal dietary regimes that has not previously been acknowledged.

Sophie Mackenzie

German beers from the Iron Age

While the evidence for the final product is fleeting, it is possible to reconstruct ancient food and drink given careful analysis of excavated material. To date the earliest evidence for making beer is from the Near East. Although many cultures have made alcoholic beverages, the production of beer is usually associated with domesticated cereals. Europe has good evidence of an early and distinctive tradition of making beer. Archaeobotanist Hans-Peter Stika, of the University of Hohenheim in Stuttgart, has identified six ditches in Eberdingen-Hochdorf (south-west Germany) as being used to make barley malt. Dating to about 500 BC, this site yielded thousands of carbonised seeds. The grain would have been soaked in the ditches until they sprouted. Once this occurred fires were then lit at either side to dry the seeds. The fires would have added a smoky flavour, and the author suggests that because the grain was dried slowly lactic acid from bacterial action would have given even more souness to the final product. A few seeds of the intoxicating herb henbane were also recovered from the site. Ancient beer was quite different from its modern counterpart that uses hop as a flavouring and preservative. Celtic beer would therefore have looked rather cloudy and tasted very sour in comparison with that of today. It is likely that ancient beers would not have been transported far before going stale. While unappetising to a modern palate, ancient beer was undoubtedly a common drink, while during the Middle Ages it was consumed daily by all social classes. It would have provided a safe way to obtain hydration, as well as a sizable amount of calories in the diet.

The reinterpretation of the ditches in Eberdingen-Hochdorf may prompt a re-appraisal of past assumptions. Enigmatic ditches from prehistoric and protohistoric sites across Europe that have long been assumed were intended solely for the disposal of refuse, may have had a very different function.

The full article can be viewed online in the January issue of *Archaeological and Anthropological Sciences*. Murray Eiland
The Curse of Minerva

Composed two centuries ago, Lord Byron's poem condemning the removal of the Parthenon Marbles initiated a dispute that has rumbled on into the present.

James Beresford

It is 200 years since Thomas Bruce, 7th Earl of Elgin, arranged to have many of the statues, friezes and metopes removed from the Parthenon and shipped from Greece. Ever since their arrival in Britain, these 'Elgin Marbles' have generated huge controversy and there have been innumerable calls for their repatriation to Greece. This debate is not new: from the moment the Marbles first arrived in Britain there was opposition to Elgin's actions. One of the most strident of these early critics was the great Romantic poet, Lord George Gordon Byron (1788-1824). Byron's opposition to the removal of the Marbles from the Parthenon is voiced in the poem The Curse of Minerva, dated to 17 March 1811, in which the poet describes the once powerful patron goddess of Athens appearing before him in a weakened and enfeebled state. Athena condemns the Scottish aristocrat, and all the people of Britain, for despoiling her ancient temple, which had survived the depredations of two millennia:

Lo! Here, despite of war and wasting fire,
I saw successive tyrannies expire.
'Scaped from the ravage of the Turk and Goth,
Thy country sends a spoiler worse than both.

Byron had witnessed the effects of Elgin's actions during his travels in Greece while on the Grand Tour. On arriving in Athens in January 1810, Byron was shown around the Acropolis by Giovanni Lusieri, the Neopolitan agent in the employ of Lord Elgin. On the Parthenon, the young poet saw the blank spaces from which the friezes and metopes had been removed. At Piraeus, he also saw the final 50 crates of Elgin's Marbles being readied for shipment to Britain.

In a note to his most famous poem, Childe Harold's Pilgrimage (1812-18), Byron commented: 'When they carry away three or four shiploads of the most valuable and massey relics that time and barbarism have left to the most injured and most celebrated of critics; when they destroy, in a vain attempt to tear down, those works which have been the admiration of ages, I know no motive which can excuse, no name which can designate, the perpetration of this dastardly devastation.'

Even before leaving for his travels on the Continent, Byron had given voice to his distaste for Elgin's collection of Greek sculpture. In English Bards and Scotch Reviewers (1809), the poet commented on Elgin's public display of some of the first Marbles he had removed from the Parthenon and exhibited at his house in Park Lane, London, in 1807:

symbol of that struggle, the Parthenon' (Stealing History, 2004, p. 136). In The Curse of Minerva, Byron furthermore has the goddess warning that, as a result of Elgin's actions, the British Empire would suffer not only her divine anger, but also international condemnation:

'Mortal' – 'twas thus she spake – 'that blush of shame
Proclaims thee Briton, once a noble name;
First of the mighty, foremost of the free,
Now honourned less by all, and least by me

These predictions that Britain would suffer loss of prestige as a result of Elgin's actions were quickly taken to heart by politicians. In June 1816, only five years after the composition of The Curse of Minerva, British MP Hugh Hammersley proposed the Marbles be held in trust in Britain, to be returned to Athens as soon as Greece was liberated from Ottoman rule. Nevertheless, that same year the Marbles were purchased from Lord Elgin by the British Museum with a grant voted by Parliament.

Following Greek independence in 1832, there have been intermittent claims for the repatriation of the Marbles, although the Greek government only made its first official request in 1983, when the actress turned Minister of Culture, Melina Mercouri, spearheaded a campaign to reclaim the artworks. In Britain, the Department of National Heritage concluded in 1996 that the British Museum had no legal claim to answer. Three years later the Culture, Media and Sport Committee also found no reason for moving the Marbles from their Bloomsbury home.

Despite Byron's condemnation of Elgin's actions at the Parthenon, the poet's own respect for ancient monuments was, at times, questionable. Unlike many aristocrats of the early 19th century, he never shipped crates of antiquities back to Britain, writing in 1821: 'I opposed, and will ever oppose, the robbery of ruins from Athens, to instruct the English in Sculpture (who are as capable of sculpture as the Egyptians are of skating)'. Byron nonetheless felt the need to inscribe his name into one of the columns of the Temple of Poseidon at Cape Sounion.

A decade after composing The Curse of Minerva, Byron returned to Greece to join the fight for Greek liberation. It was in the Greek city of Messolonghi, while preparing an assault on the Turkish fortress at Lepanto, that the 36-year-old poet fell sick and, following ill-advised blood-letting, developed the fever that, on 19 April 1824, claimed his life. Together with his death in the cause of Greek independence, Byron's condemnation of Elgin's removal of the Parthenon Marbles, most forcefully set out in The Curse of Minerva, ensured the aristocratic poet would forever after be acclaimed a champion of the people and culture of Greece. n

Dying the Egyptian way in San Jose

Murray Eiland takes a look at the wonderful collection of mortuary artefacts on display in the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum and Planetarium

San Jose is the third largest city in California, and the tenth largest in the United States. It is cited by residents as being the unofficial capital of Silicon Valley because of its size and large number of high-technology industries situated in and around the city. San Jose was founded in 1777, the first town in the Spanish colony of Nueva California, and although few structures date to this period, the city is well known for housing an important collection of Egyptian antiquities in a distinctive purpose-built museum. It is run by the Ancient Mystical Order Rosae Crucis (AMORC), commonly referred to as the Rosicrucians, whose founder, Harvey Spencer Lewis (1883–1939), assembled a large collection of ancient artefacts reflecting his esoteric interests.

Interested in hermetic studies, H. Spencer Lewis recounted that he had been initiated into the order during a trip to Europe. He set about establishing it in America, and became the first Imperator when he founded the order in 1915. From a background in advertising, he was quickly able to generate interest in his new organisation, which, he said, revealed ancient truths, some of which had been passed down through a secret order originally founded during the 18th dynasty of Egypt’s New Kingdom, during the joint reign of Pharaohs Thutmose III and Hatshepsut (c. 1498–1485 BC). Regardless of one’s view of such traditions, the collection of ancient Egyptian artefacts, acquired in the years following the establishment of AMORC, is undeniably impressive.

During the 1920s H. Spencer Lewis and other members of AMORC donated money to assist in the excavation of Tel el Amarna by the Egypt Exploration Society. They were subsequently presented with antiquities from the excavations, and these were put on display in 1928. H. Spencer Lewis also made a tour of Egypt in 1929, and received more antiquities through purchase and donation. His son and the second Imperator of AMORC, Ralph Maxwell

Fig 1. This high quality mask of the Ptolemaic period appears to invoke the deity of Hathor, known as ‘the Golden One’ via the gold leaf on the face. RC101.

Fig 2. Early Dynastic coffins (such as this one from the 2nd dynasty) were made in a simple style, unlike those of later ages. This was excavated from Kafr Tarkhan near the Faiyum by Sir W.M.F. Petrie. RC1585.

Fig 3. Stele of Ire and his wife, Meru. Dating from the First Intermediate Period, the art of this period concentrated on the family. The breakdown of society led to a loosening of long held artistic conventions, such as the wife being depicted as smaller than the husband. RC2067.
Lewis, built a new museum for the collection, which opened in November 1966. The museum houses the largest public exhibition of Egyptian antiquities in western North America, and has unique buildings, designed in an ‘ancient Egyptian style’. It is perhaps best viewed in light of the Egyptian revival of the Victorian era. Purists may find the architecture something of a hybrid, incorporating Moorish elements with clear nods to Western functionalism, but the entire ensemble is in the eyes of the reviewer beautiful if taken on its own merits. It is well situated in an extensive garden (with many plants known to the ancient Egyptians), which immediately draws a bright line between it and the ancient Egyptian monuments in the desert. The museum also has an attached planetarium, only the fifth to be built in the US and the first with an American-built Star Projector.

The museum buildings follow the Temple of Amun at Karnak in style, the major buildings of which were begun by Ramses II (c. 1279–1213 BC) and were the main focus of worship of the Theban Triad – Amun, chief of the gods, his consort Mut, and their son Khonsu. The complex proved to be a durable cultural focal point and was in use from the Middle Kingdom (11th–12th dynasties, c. 2134–1782 BC) through to the Ptolemaic period and beyond. It has been estimated that over the centuries at least 30 pharaohs contributed to building the temples at Karnak.

The museum at San Jose begins with a selection of Predynastic (c. 5000–3000 BC) material and works its way through until the Christian Coptic period of Egyptian history (1st–7th centuries AD). There is also a small collection of Near Eastern material, including cuneiform tablets, which have recently been placed online. Reproductions of well known objects held in other museums are also on display. Pride of place in the Egyptian collection goes to an impressive range of magnificently displayed coffins. The coffins may appear to be an iconic aspect of ancient Egyptian society, changing little over time. However, while there are general themes that occur in Egyptian art across the ages, coffin types did evolve significantly with the passing of time. They also reflect the state of society as a whole.

The ancient Egyptians lavished attention upon the dead, and coffins were a major focus for craftsmen. During the Predynastic Period clay coffins or mats could be used to protect bodies that were placed in the ground. Some scholars have suggested that wooden structures used to stabilise burial pits were the precursors for what later became wooden coffins. A sarcophagus might also be used to house the coffin, which explains why many coffins from ancient Egypt retain their vivid colours. However, coffins used during the early dynasties (the Early Dynastic Period, dynasties 0–2, c. 3050–2663 BC; and the Old Kingdom, dynasties 3–6, c. 2663–2181 BC) were far less elaborate than would later be the case. Coffins of this period were little more than simple wooden boxes, designed to accommodate a body in a flexed foetal position (Fig 2). While the Egyptian elite rapidly differentiated itself from the mass of common burials, the concept of family also emerged as a powerful force in art. Modern scholars suggest that during the First Intermediate Period (dynasties 7–10, c. 2195–2066 BC), funerary art emphasised family rather than kingship, reflecting the lack of a strong and effective monarchy during this period (Fig 3). For the elite, families extended beyond relatives: brightly painted wooden models of servants...
accompanied the dead to their graves, and provide important information relating to various aspects of everyday life (Figs 4, 6).

False doors and painted eyes were an early feature on coffins. These motifs were not unique to coffins, and could appear on many objects designed to accompany the dead. In shape the early coffins, in use through the Middle Kingdom (dynasties 11–12, c. 2066–1650 BC), were simple rectangular boxes, sometimes with an inner coffin more closely resembling the human form contained within them. The decorations on the coffins of this period often appear to be widely spaced (Fig 5). Over time, elite burials tended to become more crowded and elaborate in their decoration, but continued to include models of servants, a tradition that was to prove to be an enduring one (Fig 4).

Nestled coffins were popular, particularly during the Second Intermediate Period (dynasties 13–17, c. 1650–1549 BC). It was thought that the inner coffin would also act as a dwelling place of the spirit (the ka) of the deceased. The lids of these anthropomorphic coffins could be elaborately painted or gilded. During the New Kingdom (dynasties 18–20, c. 1570–1070 BC) as many as four coffins could be used for elite burials. The wood of choice was expensive cedar, but sycamore and acacia were also used, while the addition of gold and silver acted as a clear indicator of status.

Following an intermediate period of political turmoil, the establishment of the 18th dynasty (c. 1570–1293 BC) is often regarded as a golden age in Egyptian history. It was primarily during this period that anthropoid coffins were painted with bands imitating mummy wrappings. Many scenes could be depicted on the coffin, including burial rites involving various deities, mourners or offerings. One of the most prominent features on coffins is that of the protecting goddess Nut. Her name is often translated as 'Night', and on her head was a circular water pot, which may symbolise the uterus. According to Egyptian mythology, during the day the celestial bodies would move across her body, and at dusk she would swallow them. They would pass through her at night and be reborn the following morning. She is often represented on the underside of coffin lids and ceilings in royal tombs in The Valley of the Kings as a star-filled body, arching herself over the earth. As protector of the dead, she drew their souls into her body.

By the 19th dynasty, a shift in funerary artistic decoration was becoming apparent, and coffins that had previously been covered in a dark resin were increasingly being elaborately painted on a yellow background, which imitated gold and the flesh of the gods (Fig 8). While at first many of the sculptures (barring royalty) were of indistinct figures, as time went on greater emphasis was placed on personalised images. Coffin portraits carved of wood appear in the New Kingdom, although these faces were still idealised. The best known representations, some of which aspire to naturalism, are from the 18th
dynasty (c. 1570–1293 BC), but there were already moves in this direction at the end of the 17th dynasty (c. 1663–1570 BC) (Fig 9). From the beginning royalty were regarded as gods on earth and, although they were not depicted in a natural manner by modern standards, their connection to the pantheon was reflected by their portrayal alongside, and equal to, the gods.

There is considerable debate about burial practices. Some modern scholars suggest that a mummy with arms crossed over the body indicates a royal burial (Fig 10), perhaps reminiscent of the typical pose of Osiris as Lord of the Dead. Several mummies without provenance have been recovered in this pose, leading to great speculation regarding their identities. While crossed arms may well indicate a connection with royalty, it is not necessarily associated with a legitimate heir.

In the Classical manner. The Egyptian god of the afterlife Anubis appears in the corner. RC2246.

who can be identified historically. Increasingly, scenes came to be rendered in a variety of different colours. By the 21st dynasty (c. 1069–945 BC), anthropomorphic coffins are common and extremely expensive tomb buildings seem to have been neglected in favour of lavish burials. The images on the coffins were also much broader, and depicted a number of different rituals. During the Late Period (525–332 BC), beginning with the 27th dynasty, figurative decoration tends to be less pronounced and texts take on a greater role. By the period of Ptolemaic rule (305–30 BC), local variation takes on a new importance, foreign gods and elements are also introduced, and traditional Egyptian elements are often combined in ways that were never used in earlier periods (Fig 11). Many funerary masks and effigies appear gaudy to modern taste, with gold used in abundance (Fig 1). Large numbers of mummies from the Ptolemaic period have been recovered, and during this period it appears that the afterlife was subject to democratisation, with a far larger proportion of the population now provided with elaborate funerals, allowing archaeologists to study a wider segment of Egyptian society during this period.

A considerable amount of information regarding disease and congenital defects has been discovered. In many respects the Ptolemaic period was the swan song of ancient Egypt, and by the period of Roman domination (30 BC – AD 395), the rule of the Pharaohs was a distant memory (Figs 13, 14). At this time the portrayal of humans in funerary contexts placed even greater emphasis on individuality. Later still, the arrival of Christianity would complete the linkage of Egypt with the wider Mediterranean (Fig 12) which began with the Hellenism that followed Alexander's conquest in 332 BC.

In 1968 Dionne Warwick sang a song entitled: 'Do you know the way to San Jose?' The song is about the return of a native to the city after making a bid for fame and fortune. Anyone interested in ancient Egypt should know the way to the city, particularly as it is so close to the San Francisco bay area. Somewhat surprisingly, some have been put off a visit by assuming that the museum contains little of interest, and is operated by a cult. While the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum is not a major research institution, it nevertheless has an excellent collection, and the material on display is not presented in a biased or partisan way. The museum provides an excellent illustration of the impact ancient civilisations have had on modern society.

All photos © 2004 to © 2011 English Grand Lodge of AMORC, used with the permission of the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum, San Jose, California.

For further information about the Museum see www.rosicrucianegyptianmuseum.org
The Roman writer Ovid (43 BC – c. AD 17), in Book II of the *Metamorphoses*, provides the most detailed version of the myth of Phaëton: a Greco-Roman geomyth prescribes the memory of a meteorite impact in Bavaria (south-east Germany) (Vol 84, No 324, pp. 428–439). The paper, authored by a group of German and Greek scholars, suggested that the ancient story of Phaëton’s calamitous ride in his father’s chariot, which ended with the youth tumbling to earth in flames (Figs 1, 2, 6), was inspired by a meteorite impact in Bavaria during the Bronze Age.

Coined by US geologist Dorothy Vitaliano in 1968, the term ‘geomythology’ refers to the idea that some mythological motifs preserve memories of catastrophic events in the real world, in a veiled symbolic form. To many ancient thinkers, celestial bodies such as the Morning Star belonged to fair Venus, while the Roman god Jupiter was associated with the largest of the planets. These planets were gods, visible to all in the night sky. With such a religious background in place, ancient astrology gained far greater acceptance than is the case today. The gods who inhabited the heavens could, after all, be expected to exert powerful influences on the world. When stars fell from the sky, it was only reasonable to assume that something dramatic was taking place in divine circles.

However, geomythology is not a commonly accepted school of thought among scholars of ancient religion or geologists, mainly because these interpretations are difficult or impossible to test. By definition a geomyth would be a veiled and symbolic record of the event in question, and the ease with which mythological motifs can be shoehorned into representing any

According to Greek myth, Phaëton was a youth who foolishly believed he could drive the chariot of the sun across the heavens. Phaëton’s attempt led to his death and almost consumed the world in fiery destruction.

With great reluctance, Helios prepared his son for the ride, rubbing heat-resistant oil upon his youth's face to protect it from the consuming flames of the fiery horses. As Phaëton prepared to drive the chariot into the heavens, Helios provided his last words of advice: ‘If you are determined to continue with this venture, then spare the horses the whip, but keep them closely reined-in. Follow the ruts of the chariot’s path that I have cleaved across the sky over the countless years and, by so doing, you will ensure that heaven and earth receive equal warmth. Should...
geological event gives free rein to speculation.

...The fall of Phaethon’ paper in Antiquity shows just such a pattern-seeking eagerness to see every detail of the Classical texts about Phaëton as supportive of the hypothesis. This is a methodological flaw known as confirmation bias, and it is invariably a worrying sign. The authors also fail to point out any potential weaknesses in their theory, which could be explored by future contributors looking to test the hypothesis. Furthermore, in order

for the interpretation to work, eyewitness accounts of any meteorite strike would have had to travel from Bavaria to Greece and, once the tale had reached the lands of the Aegean, it would have needed to sufficiently impress Greek poets that the story of the impact was worked into the ancient mythologies.

The Mediterranean area would, in all likelihood, have felt the climatic after effects of a large meteorite impact like that alleged to have taken place in Bronze Age Bavaria. However, it seems unlikely that the Greeks would have connected increased levels of dust in the atmosphere, and a possible series of poor harvests, to wild tales of fire balls crashing from the sky that might have been circulating in proto-Celtic languages, told by refugees or traders who had come from lands beyond the Alps. The Antiquity paper presents the Bavarian meteorite impact as a geological event that might provide explanations for aspects of Greek mythology and archaeology. However, there is virtually no evidence that any asteroid or meteor impact ever occurred in Bavaria.

The authors of the paper theorise that the meteor impact that gave rise to the Phaëton myth occurred at Chiemgau, an area in the Bavarian foothills of the Alps. The landscape of this region has been remodelled time and again by the advance and retreat of glaciers from the mountains. Thus a quaternary geologist travelling through this scenic region will find many textbook examples of glacial geomorphology to admire. One is the little Tüttensee, a post-glacial kettle lake (Fig 4). It came into being after an enormous chunk of ice broke off from receding glaciers at the end of the last Ice Age and became covered by sediment. When the buried block of ice melted away, water filled the resulting cavity and created the lake. This much is clear from landscape forms, corings, excavations and radiocarbon dating.

Yet since 2004, a small group of scientists and scholars have busily promoted the idea that the Tüttensee is an impact crater. According to their theory, the lake lies at the centre of a region, many miles wide, that still bears traces of many smaller impact scars on the landscape. Every depression in the ground seemingly belongs in the context of that single astronomical event, which would have taken place some time in the 2nd or early 1st millennium BC.

The people behind this idea form the Chiemgau Interdisciplinary Research Team (CIRT), which has no conventional university affiliation. The CIRT

you ride too high then you will scorch the roof of heaven; lead the team too low and it is the earth that will burn.’ With these words the gates of the palace were pushed open and the horses sped out and, lifted by their wings, pulled the chariot aloft with such speed that it overtook the winds that were rising from the east. However, without their true master at the reins, the horses quickly began to run wild. Phaëton was filled with dread at the great heights to which the horses were drawing him and, unable to find the well worn track his father had cautioned him to follow, found himself unable to control the powerful team.

The horses ran unchecked through unknown regions of the sky, and with the passage of the chariot rain clouds boiled and were reduced to smoke. When the chariot came close to the earth, the land also burst into flame. Mighty cities were destroyed and entire populations were reduced to ashes. The people of Ethiopia acquired their dark colour, while Libya was transformed into a desert. Great rivers also began to boil away; even the mighty Nile fled before the consuming heat, hiding its head near the end of the earth. When Poseidon attempted to rise out of his waters, even he could not endure the burning air. Seeing the suffering that was befalling the earth as the chariot of Helios careened around the skies, Zeus climbed to the highest peak, took a lightning bolt in his right hand hurled it at Phaëton, instantly killing the youth and quenching the fire of the chariot with that of his own. As the horses threw off the broken harness and bolted in different directions, the shattered chariot and the body of the dead youth fell from the heavens, cleaving a long trail across the sky as they fell. Crashing to earth in a distant part of the world, the broken remains of Phaëton were recovered by the river god Eridanus. The body was bathed by nymphs, and the boy’s smoke-blackened face and hair washed before he was buried. Near the grave was carved a verse to honour the impetuous charioteer:

Here he, who drove the sun’s bright chariot, lies;
His father’s fiery steeds he could not guide,
But in the glorious enterprise he died.

Fig 3. The Colossus of Rhodes, 1880. Woodcut of the statue, as imagined by Sidney Barclay. One of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, the statue depicted the sun god, Helios. Erected at the harbour entrance between 292–282 BC, the 30m statue honoured the city’s patron deity and commemorated the Rhodians repulse of the invasion led by the Demetrius Poliorcetes (‘the besieger’), who unsuccessfully attempted to take the city in 305/4 BC. Photo: courtesy of Lother Versi.

Fig 4. Post-glacial kettle lake (Fig 4). It came into being after an enormous chunk of ice broke off from receding glaciers at the end of the last Ice Age and became covered by sediment. When the buried block of ice melted away, water filled the resulting cavity and created the lake. This much is clear from landscape forms, corings, excavations and radiocarbon dating.

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started its campaign in the popular science media, and soon received enthusiastic support from the local tourism industry. While the scenery of Chiemgau is beautiful in its own right, a meteor crater would, of course, be an additional magnet for tourists visiting the region. Academic geology and astronomy initially paid no attention to the impact hypothesis and it was not presented in any professional research journals. In 2006, when the publicity reached the extent that it could no longer be ignored, a number of well-credentialed scientific specialists issued a press release explaining that none of them believed in the impact. This did not diminish local enthusiasm, but nor did academic controversy follow and German geologists still agree that the Tüttensee is a kettle lake. The CIRT therefore changed tactics.

There is no way to establish whether the CIRT has attempted to publish its hypothesis in academic journals specialising in geology or astronomy. However, it is notable that in 2010, when the Chiemgau Impact Hypothesis finally entered the peer-reviewed scientific literature, it did so in the first volume of the Engineering & Technologies Journal of the Siberian Federal University, based in Krasnoyarsk. This is no doubt a fine journal and one that will hopefully enjoy a long and successful run. Fine journal and one that will hope-
Over the past 20 years, the study of prehistoric rock art in Britain has finally been embraced by mainstream archaeology; prior to this, it was primarily a pastime for amateurs and very much a localised affair. It is estimated that over 8000 Neolithic and Bronze Age sites exist in England and Scotland, and many of these are statutorily protected, designated as Scheduled Monuments. Pioneering work carried out in northern Britain by A.W.B. Morris and later by Stan Beckensall highlighted the importance of these prehistoric sites and eventually led to the establishment of English Heritage’s Rock-Art Pilot Project in 1998. As a result of this all-encompassing report, an online interactive research project was set up by the University of Newcastle in 2004 which involved field-walking, recording and detailing over 1300 sites in Northumberland, north-east England. The results of this project were later uploaded on the internet. Based on the many thousands of ‘hits’ on this site, it was clear that experts as well as the general public were interested in these enigmatic prehistoric carved symbols.

Although the pilot project was later extended to County Durham and then to Staffordshire, elsewhere coordinated research into prehistoric rock art has been sporadic and academics and enthusiasts have only recently started to pull together a diverse range of imagery from a variety of sites. By far the most spectacular recent discoveries have been made at Church Hole Cave in Creswell Crags, a limestone gorge along the Derbyshire/Nottinghamshire border (see Minerva, January/February 2010, pp. 8-11), and in Aveline’s Hole in Burrington Combe in the Somerset Mendips. At Church Hole Cave, a Sheffield University team discovered up to 26 images, including depictions of red deer and aurochs, which date to the Late Upper Palaeolithic (c. 14,000 BC), the earliest British artistic endeavour yet discovered. At Aveline’s Hole, a series of scratched lines located near an Early Mesolithic cemetery within
the cave is believed to date to around 9400 BC.

In Wales only a handful of rock art sites had been recorded, and these were principally associated with Neolithic chambered monuments dating to c. 4000–2500 BC. Interestingly, there are many stylistic similarities between the rock art sites in Wales and those of northern Britain; both regions mainly comprise art with multiple carved abstract motifs such as chevrons, concentric circles, cupmarks, cup-and-rings, spirals and zigzag lines (Fig 3). There are, however, considerable differences in the provenance and context of the rock art, and while sites in northern Britain tend to feature prehistoric rock art on open-air rock outcroppings, the rock art found in Wales is usually associated directly with death and burial. This is mainly located on the capstones and uprights of stone chambered monuments such as Portal Dolmens, one of the oldest Neolithic stone chambered monument types in Wales (Fig 7). However, in both regions, there are also examples of rock art, mainly cupmarks that occur on rock outcroppings close to monuments.

Although there are a relatively limited number of rock art sites in Wales, many are now listed on the regional Historic Environment Records (HERs) and the CARN (Core Archaeological Record Index) database managed by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, as well as on the site index held by Cadw, the national heritage organisation for Wales. Despite the interest in this enigmatic group of monuments, there has been no move to replicate the success of the English Heritage Rock-Art Pilot Project. There have, however, been a number of important studies that have identified and dated a series of Welsh regional styles.

Prior to 2005, the number of rock art sites recorded in Wales numbered around 45. At this time, a team led by the authors conducted a series of field surveys around a number of Neolithic burial-ritual monuments in North Wales, on the island of Anglesey, the Llyn Peninsula and the coastal landscape around Harlech. Based on this and later fieldwork, the majority of the rock art sites appear to be located within a 24–32km (15–20 mile) corridor of the coast. This distribution pattern was also recognised in South Wales, where rock art was also focused on or close to Neolithic stone chambered monuments close to the sea.

The initial reconnaissance in North Wales yielded a number of significant discoveries, and as a result the authors inaugurated the Anglesey Rock-Art Project (ARAP) in 2005. The recording methods employed at each site included high resolution digital photography working alongside controlled lighting, usually photographed during the hours of darkness (Fig 8). In addition, conventional tracing with marker-pen onto acetate sheeting was used (Fig 2).

Over the past five years, ARAP has made a number of important discoveries, two of which are associated with the Late Neolithic passage graves of Barclodiad y Gawres and Bryn Celli Ddu (Figs 1, 6). These monuments both comprise an entrance leading to a passage and central chamber, all covered by a turf and/or cairn mound. Both monuments have undergone restoration over the years, but the arrangements of each passage and chamber remain largely intact. Both sites were
also sympathetically and meticulously excavated; in the case of Bryn Celli Ddu the excavator, W.J. Hemp, kept detailed notes on all aspects of the excavation including the discovery and provenance of the Pattern Stone which lay face down over a central pit that lay behind the walls of the chamber (Fig 4). Accompanying the excavation team at Barclodiad y Gawres in 1952–53 was J.L. Forde-Johnson from the Museum of Liverpool, who undertook detailed tracings from the five decorated stones that then stood within the inner passage and chamber. The artistic repertoire from both monuments was clearly megalithic and showed stylistic links between the passage grave traditions of North Wales and Central Ireland.

Since 2001, new megalithic art has been discovered at Barclodiad y Gawres within the chamber area. This includes additional cupmarks, geometric motifs and spirals on several upright stones (Fig 5). Most of these motifs were so finely pecked that they were overlooked when the site was first excavated during the early 1950s by seasoned archaeologists Glyn Daniel and Terrence Powell. The art from these and four other stones faced inwards into the central gallery area of the chamber, where a hearth was excavated. The light from this fire, and from burning torches, would have been the only sources of illumination when the physical remains of the dead were interred in the side chambers. When the eastern and western chamber floors were excavated, they revealed an array of cremated human bone, pottery and flint. Accompanying these grave goods was a plethora of carved imagery.

Interestingly, no rock art had been carved on to the walls of the southern chamber, which could be viewed from outside the monument. It is likely that viewing of the art was restricted to high status individuals at this time – probably a shaman and select members of the deceased’s family. Several panels, one within the central gallery and another forming the northern upright of the eastern chamber, were so finely pecked that they remained hidden until recently. It is conceivable that the artist creating these engravings was intentionally concealing the art from the living and the images were instead intended exclusively for the deceased and the ancestral ghosts that occupied this realm of the dead. Strategically placed rock art such as this would have played a significant role, linking the world of the living who accompanied the Neolithic funeral entourage with the world of the dead who inhabited the deep recesses of the mound and the tomb.

At Bryn Celli Ddu, rock art in the form of up to 30 cupmarks was found on a large rock-outcrop some 90m west of the monument. The ARAP team deduced that the rock outcrop, a nearby standing stone, and the Bryn Celli Ddu tomb formed part of an extensive ritual landscape with the passage grave at its centre. This phenomenon of cupmarks being carved onto rock-outcroppings also appears at other sites within the coastal Neolithic core areas of Wales. This demarcation of the landscape using cupmarks may have played a similar role to the relationship between, say, the medieval church and its churchyard, whereby the protocols of ritual and symbolic behaviour were strictly adhered to.

These initial discoveries prompted further fieldwork on other sites in Anglesey and North Wales, including at the double chambered Neolithic monument of Dyffryn Ardudwy, near Harlech, where faint megalithic artistic incisions were discovered (Fig 7). This multi-phased site includes a Portal Dolmen at its western end which has been incorporated into a much larger monument. Located within the...
facade of the western chamber are two uprights that forms the entrance to the chamber. Carved on the northern upright are cupmarks, whilst on the southern upright are a series of faint lines that form a series of megalithic artistic symbols including lozenges and chevrons. The faintness of these engravings is probably due to exposure to the coastal elements over the past 5500 years.

Following the successful recording of the site, the ARAP team turned its attention to a small forgotten stone at Llwydiarth Esgob Farm in north-eastern Anglesey. The stone was sketched in the early 1970s, but when first visited by the ARAP team much of its surface had been completely covered by moss and lichen. During the summer of 2009 an international team was assembled to excavate and record this curious stone, which contains a unique set of mainly artistic symbols including lozenges and chevrons. The faintness of these engravings is probably due to exposure to the coastal elements over the past 5500 years.

Fig 10. An Aerial-Cam view of the Trefael site, with work in progress. Photo: Adam Stanford.

Fig 11. Two of the excavation team successfully exposing the compacted cairn at Trefael, Pembrokeshire. Photo: George Nash.

Fig 12. The exposure of the capstone at Trefael, revealing new prehistoric artistic endeavour. Photo: Adam Stanford.

Due to the success of the fieldwork, it was decided by members of the ARAP Team in 2009 to set up a Welsh Rock-Art Organisation (WRAO), and that same year an application was made to join the International Federation of Rock Art Organisations (IFRAO). This affiliation allowed the team to access European funding, and also drew attention to the unique prehistoric heritage of Wales from the rest of the international rock art community. By early 2011, WRAO had over 470 supporters from many corners of Wales and England, reinforcing the popularity of this branch of archaeology. WRAO also has a fully interactive website which lists all the known rock art sites in Wales including our discoveries. The website will be further enhanced and new sites uploaded as more prehistoric art comes to light.

For additional information on the rock art in Wales, visit the WRAO website: www.rockart-in-wales.co.uk

Dr George Nash is a part-time lecturer at Bristol University and co-founder of WRAO. He has undertaken extensive fieldwork in Britain, Europe, and Indonesia, and has published many books on rock art. Adam Stanford (MIfA) is co-founder of the WRAO. He is also founder and Director of Aerial-Cam, which provides expert archaeological photography.
The teachings of Confucius (c. 551–479 BC) relating to sound government and all that flowed from it – order, harmony, moral rectitude, civility and benevolence – held sway in ancient China, up to a point. However, during the Warring States Period (c. 475–221 BC), the pragmatists, with their certainties and their new technologies – including stronger bronze alloys and the development of the crossbow – asserted themselves. Skirmish followed skirmish, and unrest increased. In this period of confusion the state of Qin prospered. Geographically it was the most westerly of the Warring States and its rulers were, to begin with at least, dismissed as little more than barbarian upstarts. Such an assessment proved ill founded, and the state became a powerhouse of innovation, accompanied by major programmes of construction. Work commenced in earnest on the Great Wall (see Minerva, July/August 2009, pp. 39–43), and more land was brought under cultivation through ambitious irrigation projects. What had been a fragmented entity began to be unified through the development of a uniform writing system; weights, measures and currency were standardised; fiscal systems were overhauled and work began on a vast network of roads which would eventually prove to be more extensive than that developed by imperial Rome. By 256 BC the state of Qin had subdued its neighbours through military campaigns and by 221 BC had effectively unified all of China, laying the basis for the single country and centralised bureaucracy that exists to this day.

The most prominent and ambitious of the Qin rulers was Shihuang (r. 246–221 BC), who reigned over the kingdom for the last 25 years of the Warring States Period, then went on to rule as the first emperor of a unified China until his death in 210 BC. Shihuang’s legacy, the creation of China, has endured for more than two millennia, yet he felt the threat of being overshadowed by the past. Beginning in 213 BC, the emperor initiated a campaign of book-burning intended to ensure his reputation would not be eclipsed by accounts of the achievements of previous rulers. This also provided the means by which the writing system could be properly reformed; manuscripts containing older scripts were destroyed in the name of standardisation. In addition to burning the books of scholars and philosophers, it also appears that Shihuang executed hundreds of the country’s most learned men when they were found to be in possession of forbidden manuscripts.
Shihuang also greatly feared death and assassination, and slept in different palaces on different nights to foil any plots directed at his life. This craving for immortality led him to extend his empire deep into the earth, creating a subterranean world covering an area of many kilometres. Centered on the Li Mountain, 35km east of Xi'an, this later became the site of Qin’s mausoleum. The tomb was accompanied by four brick-lined burial pits, three of

Fig 1. Bronze animal mask ‘ring-holder’, Qin Dynasty (221-206 BC). Excavated from No 1 Palace site at Xianyang in Shaanxi, 1974-75. H. 11cm. Xianyang Municipal Museum

Fig 2. Group of terracotta soldiers excavated from Qin Shihuang tomb complex. Photo © Araldo De Luca.

Fig 3. Terracotta armoured general, excavated in 1980 from Pit 1, Qin Shihuang tomb complex. Museum of Qin Shihuang’s Terracotta Warriors and Horses.

Fig 4. Iron sword blade with a hilt of gold inlaid with turquoise. Excavated from Tomb 2 at Yimen village in Baoji, Shaanxi, 1992. The high quality weapon dates to the Spring and Autumn period, 770–476 BC. L. 37.8cm.

Fig 5. Section of a canopy pole from bronze chariot No 1, Qin Dynasty (221-206 BC) crafted from bronze with inlaid gold and silver ornaments. Excavated from the Bronze Chariot Pit at Qin Shihuang tomb complex, 1980. L. 13.9cm. Museum of Qin Shihuang’s Terracotta Warriors and Horses Museum.

Fig 6. Silver cross-bow holder, excavated from the Bronze Chariot Pit at Qin Shihuang tomb complex, 1980. L. 12.6cm. Museum of Qin Shihuang’s Terracotta Warriors and Horses.

Fig 7. Head of an infantryman from Pit 2, with the original paintwork peeling from the face. H. 31.2cm. Museum of Qin Shihuang’s Terracotta Warriors and Horses Museum.
which housed thousands of terracotta warriors which formed Shihuang’s personal honour guard (Fig 2). It seems almost 750,000 conscripts were created in a project that spanned 36 years (246–210 BC). In scale and conception, Shihuang’s burial ground far exceeds anything the cultures of the ancient Mediterranean ever brought into being.

These terracotta warriors reflect the various racial groups that were found across Shihuang’s empire, ranging from five feet, eight inches (1.72m), to six foot six (1.98m), each portrayed with different facial features. There are generals (Figs 3, 12) together with regular infantry soldiers, including archers depicted both standing and kneeling. Cavalry and charioteers were presented complete with their horses, while warriors were equipped with real chariots and bronze weapons (Figs 4, 5, 6). All the figures were organised with military precision. The soldiers were moulded from interchangeable parts, but were hand-finished to give an astonishing individuality and realism to each statue. They were also originally painted in bright colours (Fig 7). When the warriors were brought to the surface, the pigments on their faces and bodies flaked and faded on exposure to light and air, providing yet another challenge to archaeologists and restorers. Human remains were also found in the pits, giving rise to speculation that the craftsmen were entombed alive when their work was completed to prevent them from revealing its contents or whereabouts. The army remained concealed until 1974, when farmers digging a

...group of ritual bronzes whose forms echo those of earlier Shang (c.1600–1046 BC) and Zhou (1046–256 BC) periods. These had been cast with great skill, specifically for use in ceremonies to placate deities and to please the ancestors. Other artefacts, such as silver tiger plaques and gold finials, buckles and inlaid sword hilts, illuminate a sparsely documented stylistic repertoire and provide a narrative of designs and motifs which extend to the Caucasian regions and the Russian steppes.

All these recent discoveries amplify the growing body of knowledge about Shihuang’s reign, but perhaps more importantly, create a context for his remarkable achievements. He is the most visible of a procession of rulers of great skill and ruthlessness who drew on and refined the long-established procedures of the Western Zhou culture. The remarkable exhibition enables us to glimpse the spirit of a man, his age and the one preceding him.

*The First Emperor: China’s Entombed Warriors* runs at Sydney’s Art Gallery of New South Wales, until 13 March. Entry is $20 with concessions of $15. For additional details, see www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au or call 1800 679 278.

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The Collapse of Pompeii?
A view from Herculaneum

Prof Andrew Wallace-Hadrill outlines the problems and possible solutions for the crumbling buildings of Pompeii.

On 26 January, the Italian Minister of Culture, Sandro Bondi, narrowly escaped a vote of no confidence in parliament. The motivation and voting was party political, but the main charge laid against him was that the collapse of a structure in Pompeii, known as the Schola Armaturarum, on 6 November last year, was the result of his neglect of his duties. On the same day, an article appeared in the national newspaper Il Giornale, one of many defending the Minister and the government’s record. It was by Giordano Bruno Guerri, the Director of the museum at the heart of Rome called the Vittoriale, where the library of the poet Gabriele D’Annunzio is held. Guerri defended the government’s emphasis on marketing and communication, in the face of a storm of academic protest. His own experience demonstrated, he wrote, the effectiveness of the policy, and he had seen visitor numbers at the neglected Vittoriale rise by 11,000 in a single year.

The very terms of this defence are a spectacular illustration of a gap in understanding. Pompeii is in no need of marketing and communication. It does not need to increase its almost unmanageable total of nearly three million visitors. Its worldwide fame is unchallengeable, the flood of visitors unstoppable. The news of the disastrous collapse of an entire structure will only increase its ceaseless exposure. No marketing skills could make the site more famous, though they might exploit its fame to promote some more ephemeral product. The oracular wisdom of Field of Dreams, ‘Build it and they will come’, works for Pompeii. So long as it is there, they will come. Not just tourists, but the palpable ghosts of the Roman past. The problem is, how much longer will it be there? What the site so desperately needs is not marketing but conservation.

The Italian constitution lays upon the government the duty not of marketing, but of tutela, the safeguarding of the national cultural heritage. It is in this constitutional obligation that the government is falling short. The constantly cited counterpart of tutela is valorizzazione, an ugly word untranslatable in English, which roughly means ‘extracting the financial potential of cultural heritage’. On a kindlier
reading of the term, it also involves realising the inherent value of culture, for instance by making it available to the public. But here the failure of Pompeii is double: the catastrophic state of conservation of the site means that many of the most important and interesting houses remain closed to the public, both on safety grounds and for lack of the personnel to keep them open. There is of course a scenario under which valorizzazione might help to save the site: if by exploiting the fame of Pompeii more resources were generated for conservation, both from skilful merchandising to existing visitors and from sponsorship, the visitor experience would improve and yet more revenue would be generated. And indeed under the Superintendency of Piero Guzzo, an archaeologist held by his critics to be an incorrigibly impractical academic, steps were taken to increase revenue, introducing an official, high-quality bookshop and closing the appalling stands outside the gates, renegotiating the rent from the monopoly on-site restaurant, and persuading firms like the local wine-producer, Mastroberardino, to enter into sponsorship deals. To little avail. The government of the day simply diverted €30 million of resource, ignoring the fact that they were committed to existing projects, blaming Guzzo for not having spent them earlier.

It is clear, then, that Sandro Bondi did not create the problems of Pompeii, but inherited them, and it must also be said that his Ministry has made evident efforts to address what it saw as a crisis. By declaring a state of emergency at Pompeii, and introducing the temporary figure of a Commissioner with extraordinary powers, it was hoped that the bureaucratic inertia that slows even the most urgent intervention to a snail’s pace could be overcome. Something was achieved, and Marcello Fiori was able to bring into play the sense of urgency that is the hallmark of the Civil Protection. Yet in the end, his focus was on high-profile media events, and not on the unglamorous but essential maintenance work that the situation required. Moreover, the state of emergency was too ephemeral a tool to address deep-rooted problems, and, once again, the diversion of resource from the Superintendency itself only undermined its own capacity to develop a sustained programme.

Although reforms in 1997 gave the Superintendency limited financial and administrative autonomy from the Ministry, the weakness of that reform was its failure to address shortcomings in human resources. The Superintendency is desperately understaffed, lacking the sort of professional figures needed – architects, conservators, engineers, IT specialists – and swollen with unskilled personnel, the legacy of an era when posts in public service were regarded as a political payoff. That, together with a stranglehold by the unions limiting flexibility in staff deployment, ensures that even were the necessary resources to flow into Pompeii, there is not the capacity to ensure that they are spent well on priority areas.

These are hard words, and the foreigner, ever a guest in Italy, should beware of creating the impression that only the Italian government has problems (English Heritage too has suffered damaging cuts), or that only foreigners have solutions. Yet the criticisms...
voiced above are not those of a foreigner, but those formulated repeatedly by Italian staff of the Ministry, and at the highest levels. The internal frustrations are enormous. Piero Guzzo devoted much of his 15 years as Superintendent to careful analysis of the fundamental problems of management of the site, and rather than trying to cover up and offer good news stories through spectacular new discoveries, fearlessly published his critique, *Pompei 1998–2003. L’esperimento dell’autonomia*. It was also his willingness to involve an external body, the Packard Humanities Institute, in the battle to save his sites, that has allowed the neighbouring Roman city of Herculaneum to be turned into a sort of laboratory in which the persistent problems of these sites can be studied and solutions explored (Fig 2).

Herculaneum has been lucky indeed to attract the interest of Dr David Packard, whose Packard Humanities Institute has been able to provide substantial support for the site, running to many millions of euros (Fig 7). Yet this support is as a drop in the ocean in comparison with the scale of revenue generated by Pompeii’s ticket sales or by wider tourism attracted by the outstanding archaeological remains on the Bay of Naples. The strength of the programme he set up, the Herculaneum Conservation Project, lies in its capacity to act outside the constraints of existing bureaucratic practice, and in the benefits brought to the site by the constant presence of a team with the necessary interdisciplinary expertise to reinforce the Superintendency staff. In addition, the sourcing of good quality works contractors has made it possible to intervene on small problems at short notice, and the recruitment of research contractors has made it possible to add to the Superintendency staff. In addition, the sourcing of good quality works contractors has made it possible to intervene on small problems at short notice, and the recruitment of research contractors has made it possible to bring about improvements in basic conservation practice. The close collaboration with the Superintendency staff from the outset has allowed the project to fill the gaps in their defences, and to help to deliver some of the solutions they so desperately want and need to deliver themselves.

What are the crucial lessons to emerge? The first is a message of *Back to Basics*. Most of the damage on these sites is caused by water, specifically by enormous fluctuations in humidity over time, combined with fluctuations in temperature, causing salts to leach through the walls, irreparably damaging frescoes and occasionally (as in the *Schola Armata ararum*) bringing entire buildings crashing down. The problem is universal, across Pompeii, Herculaneum and the preserved Roman villas, and the first priority must be to manage water through the provision of cover (roofs) and drainage. Reactivating the ancient drainage network at Herculaneum rapidly emerged as a priority, combined with repair of the roofs. Initial suggestions to roof over the site as a whole, or to undertake major reconstruction work rebuilding ancient rooflines, were rapidly rejected as impractical and ludicrously expensive. Much has been achieved both by replacing existing roofing and by providing low-cost temporary cover over areas that could not await more ambitious solutions (Figs 4, 5, 6). At Pompeii too, priority should be given to addressing infrastructural problems, as indeed has started to happen in recent years.

Part of going back to basics is resisting the temptation to focus on overambitious projects. What we need is *Simple Solutions Now*. In recent years, archaeological conservation has increasingly been seen not as an ongoing problem, but as a series of major interventions. A comprehensive project of conservation on a single house can cost several millions, and since such sums are hard to raise from the recurrent annual budget, there is a queue of major projects awaiting special funding, typically from European funding to the Region of Campania. But a house (and those of the Bicentenary and the Mosaic Atrium at Herculaneum are good examples) may have to wait years to get to the top of the list, and even once funding has been approved, the process of putting it out to public tender is long and cumbersome.

In the meantime, water pours through the ceilings (Fig 8), frescoes are damaged (Fig 10), even structures are rendered unstable (Fig 9). If instead a roof is repaired when it starts to leak, a less ambitious intervention that may cost only tens of thousands, further damage can be avoided (Fig 14). So in the House of the Bicentenary, the ideal solution to the leaking roof of the atrium might have been to remove entirely the enormous reinforced concrete beams built in the 1930s, substitute them with wooden beams, and replace the tiled roof. The costs would have been high, the timeframe slow and their removal posed a risk of further trauma to the ancient remains. However, it proved possible to treat the iron reinforcement bars of the beams to halt the rusting and replace the tiled roof with a temporary one in a lightweight, copper-clad sheet roofing material. The atrium is now dry, and the imminent risk of terminal damage to the decoration suspended for at least some years to come (Figs 9, 12).

The message that above all comes over loud and clear from the conservators is the need for a programme of *Ongoing Maintenance*. Pompeii once had a team of up to one hundred workmen continuously addressing the small problems that arose from day to day. For various reasons, including the desire to outsource such work, this workforce has gradually retired and not been replaced, so there is nobody
on hand to attend to small problems. One of the most obvious examples, as any householder should know, is the importance of keeping gutters and outlets unblocked. A blocked drain can create a lake of water after a storm that then threatens a concatenation of damage. An alert maintenance team can remove the blockage in a matter of minutes. Not all problems are so easy, and what is needed is a detailed programme of monitoring and running repairs. It is not necessary to recreate the establishment of one hundred workers; so long as there is a well defined and detailed programme of ongoing maintenance, and an adequate and reliable stream of funding behind it, the work can be put out to contract. There must however, be enough professionals retained by the Superintendency to oversee and document the work.

More abstract, but equally fundamental, is an effective system of managing information. If there is no real continuity of personnel, it is soon forgotten what interventions were undertaken for what reason in the past, nor is there the follow-up of monitoring to test the effectiveness of the approaches chosen in each case. A well-designed database driven by the needs of users makes it possible to store and recover information about past interventions, analyse the distribution of different types of problem, prioritise among situations in need of attention by the degree of urgency and the inherent value (archaeological, aesthetic, touristic, etc) of the artefact at risk. Such a hands-on database now exists for Herculaneum. The database for the larger site of Pompeii needs a similar user-led approach so it can also become an effective working tool rather than a drain on staff time (Fig 13).

Finally, it is about teamwork, coordination, and empowerment of the human resources you have. Many of the employees of the Superintendency are deeply dispirited, and this extends to the tiny handful of professionals in charge. They have neither the time and resource to deliver what is needed, nor the confidence that those above them, who deflect the constant chorus of criticisms in the press down the line, are actually the people on the ground. As Pompeii is our site, ‘Tourists used to be ashamed of their site. ‘We used to be ashamed of Herculaneum,’ said one. ‘Tourists should have been angry at us for imposing solutions from above which don’t heal the patient. They expect the system to work. If the last ten years at Herculaneum offer a lesson it is perhaps that of decision-making driven by needs on the ground and the recognition that those best placed to identify them are the people at the coal-face. Let us hope that the collapses in Pompeii do not become another excuse for imposing solutions from above which don’t help the patient.

One of the most encouraging signs that our conservation project in Herculaneum was taking effect was when the custodi started to take pride in their site. ‘We used to be ashamed of Pompeii,’ they would complain that everything was closed, and it didn’t seem so well looked after as Pompeii. Now they compliment us, and we are proud to be here. It has been a complete turn-around – cambiato da così a così! They prove their pride in the site by reporting new cases of damage, and helping with prompt intervention. If the workforce of Pompeii could be convinced that they are not, after all, fighting a losing battle, or one in which they had no power to help, it would emerge that they represent a pool of unrealised talent (Figs 15, 16).

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Birth of a museum

As the Mougins Museum of Classical Art prepares to open its doors to the public, its Director, Mark Merrony, gives Minerva an exclusive preview

The concept of establishing a new museum combining ancient art with that of the modern world – the two united through shared Classical styles and themes – was conceived in a Wimbledon restaurant on a balmy summer night in 2008. Almost three years later, and a thousand kilometres to the south, that dream is set to become reality as the Mougins Museum of Classical Art (MMoCA) is readied to receive visitors to its unique collection.

The location of the village of Mougins, just six kilometres north of Cannes, and within sight of the sparkling waters lapping against the Côte d’Azur, lends itself perfectly to the underlying concept of the museum’s collection. Mougins lies in the former Roman province of Gallia Narbonensis, near the Graeco-Roman settlements of Nice (Nicaea), Cimiez (Cemenelum) and Antibes (Antipolis). The recent history of the village is also of great interest. Pablo Picasso spent the last 12 years of his life in Mougins while other prominent artists have also made their homes here – Fernand Leger, Francis Picabia and Man Ray all set paint to canvas while living in the village. It was therefore envisaged that the museum would marry the rich artistic associations of Mougins with the art and artefacts of Classical culture that have had such an enduring influence on the artistic trends of the modern world (Figs 3, 4).

Once Mougins had been chosen as the new home for the remarkable collection of ancient and modern art built up over the last decade by Christian Levett, the next step was to acquire a building in the Old Village (Vieux Village de Mougins) capable of accommodating more than 650 artistic and archaeological treasures. The first possibility lay adjacent to the village church, but proved too small; the second building in the main square, though sufficiently large, was unsuitable for development; the third option was, however, just perfect. Located near the Office de Tourisme, and on the principal axis into the village, was a beautiful private house with four floors (Figs 1). It was swiftly purchased and work began on transforming the building into a world class museum in a manner that was sympathetic to the architectural character of the village.

While the overriding theme behind the collection was that of classicism, the museum also had to house a large collection of ancient Egyptian art. It made sense to put the Egyptian gallery in the basement; this vaulted subterranean level was to prove the ideal setting in which to evoke the atmosphere and mystery of the afterlife. The Egyptian ideal of frontality and axial alignment made it appropriate to place a coffin lid on the centre of the long axis, to mask the kink in the building on the last third of its length. It was envisaged that the three floors above would adopt the principles of Graeco-Roman symmetry: again the axial shift of the museum would be compensated for by placing objects on the centre of the long axis – a solution developed...
by the Romans in Italy and provinces across the Empire. An additional idea – again in the classical tradition – was to pare down the interior space with the inclusion of wall niches and so gain additional gallery space. The ground and first floor of the museum were therefore set aside to accommodate the Greek and Roman art, which had to be displayed in such a way that it would harmonise with more recent art (neo-classical through to contemporary) which it had inspired (Fig 5). The museum would culminate on the second floor with a spectacular Armoury in which would be displayed the world’s largest private collection of Greek militaria – armour, helmets and weapons – supplemented by an extraordinary assemblage of martial material from the Roman, Sasanian, and Migration periods.

The concepts outlined above were refined by a team of sceneographers, whose remit was to provide the definitive design and placement of all items in the Museum collection (Fig 9). This task has been orchestrated with a precise architectural scheme of drawings and planning. The latter entailed a comprehensive redevelopment of the interior of the house (Fig 7), and the commensurate involvement of air conditioning engineers, builders, carpenters, decorators, electricians, electronic technicians, plumbers, scaffoldors, and showcase manufacturers. The latter are based in Milan and the end product is quality on an unprecedented scale (Fig 8).

Essentially, the greatest challenge of the project is bringing it to fruition on time and managing its complex and multi-faceted nature. This has entailed hundreds of meetings to discuss architectural and sceneographic development, insurance, security (personnel and surveillance), policing, ticketing and merchandising. There have also been innumerable consultations with audio visual specialists, educational specialists, graphic designers, interactive designers and translators. Last, but by no means least, has been the need to deal with the growing interest of the media, which has increased dramatically in recent weeks as the opening of the museum gets ever closer (Fig 2).

A major aspect of the project is the conservation of the ancient art. This ranges from superficial cleaning of marble sculpture, through to the time-consuming process of restoring ancient artworks and archaeological artefacts that have suffered damage over the course of the centuries (Fig 6). There has also been the need to treat bronze disease, especially among exhibits destined for the Armoury. This intensive programme of preservation has been underway since May 2010. A uniform set of mounts for all the objets d’art have been manufactured specially for the museum collection. As this article goes to press, the entire collection is being carefully installed into its new home, a process that will be completed by the end of March.

A detailed catalogue for the museum is also in preparation. Due for publication later this spring, it draws on the expertise of highly accomplished international scholars including, amongst many others, Professors John Pollini, Jeffrey Spier, Sir John Boardman and Chris Howgego. Set out over 14 chapters, the catalogue will contain studies on every aspect of the collection: the wide range of Egyptian and Greek material culture; Roman bronzes, silver, jewellery, mosaics, glass, sculpture; Graeco-Roman militaria; neo-classical, modern and contemporary art.

From start to (almost) finish, the entire MMoCA Project has been blessed by the excellent work of many professionals, from artisans to world-renowned academics, and a great debt of thanks is owed to everyone involved. Indeed, this heart-felt appreciation is also extended to the villagers of Mougins who have been exceptionally patient in the face of so much activity – ‘Rome ne s’est pas construit en un jour’ is uttered frequently. As the spring opening day of rapidly approaches, the pressure has inevitably increased, and time has become even more precious: scheduling is now critical, the stakes are high, and there are ‘daily resolvable’.

Moreover, contrary to popular perception, it does rain in the South of France. In fact, between October and May the precipitation can be excessive and concentrated with flash floods, as was the case last winter. It is, however, fair to say that the sun does shine in between. Establishing a new museum is a tough job, but someone’s got to do it!
The banks of Sharjah Creek are still lined with wooden dhows, while stevedores bustle to unload cargoes that have been brought into the desert emirate from around the Gulf and the Indian Ocean. Across the corniche from the crowded berths rises the impressive structure of the Sharjah Museum of Islamic Civilization (Fig 1). Although the building that now houses the museum was originally built in 1987 as an indoor market – the Souq al-Majaraa – selling a variety of goods including gold and textiles, its traditional Arab-Islamic architecture, with two storeys surmounted by a high dome covered in 24-carat gold, lends itself perfectly to its new role. Before opening its doors to the public in June 2008, the souq was also carefully and tastefully remodelled to house the impressive collection of more than 5000 artefacts, gathered from around the Islamic world by Sheikh Dr Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qasimi, who has ruled Sharjah for almost 40 years. Sheikh Al Qasimi holds doctorates in history and political geography, and has published a number of acclaimed history books. The collection at the Islamic Museum reflects his long interest in the art of the Gulf region, and indeed the wider Muslim world. The emirate of Sharjah is all too often overshadowed by the glitz consumer-driven glamour of its close neighbour, Dubai. However, Sharjah can justifiably claim to be the cultural heart of the United Arab Emirates.

The ground floor of the museum contains two galleries given over to permanent displays. The first of these is the Science and Technology Gallery, and features displays of the equipment, machinery and scholarly advances made by Islamic societies – preserving and improving upon the discoveries of the ancient Persian, Indian and Graeco-Roman civilisations. Wonderful scale models are on display: a small water-wheel, replicated from details in a 12th century Arabic manuscript, emphasises the ingenuity of Islamic engineers. Their mastery of the use of water-wheels, pumps and elaborate channelling systems to ensure that water would reach medieval towns and cities and be accessible to farmers seeking to irrigate the land. The technical skills of Islamic scientists was also utilised to produce military technology. Displays such as a model of an early Islamic hand grenade (Fig 4) not only indicate the advances in weaponry, but also highlight the role

James Beresford takes a trip to the United Arab Emirates and the city of Sharjah, home to one of the greatest collections celebrating Islamic civilisation

Fig 1. The golden dome rising above the Sharjah Museum of Islamic Civilization. Originally constructed as a souq, the interior of the building was extensively renovated before it became the new home for the 5000 artefacts collected by Sheikh Al Qasimi.
of the Islamic world in the transmission of knowledge and technologies from distant regions such as China and India in the east, to the feudal states of Europe in the west.

Reconstructions of early Islamic astrolabes, star globes and armillary spheres emphasise the importance of calculating the correct direction of Mecca, as well as the time of day at which prayers should be said while facing the holy city. Close observation of the stars also allowed Muslims to calculate the dates of the important religious festivals. The vast area encompassed by the Islamic world, stretching from eastern China and northern India to the Atlantic coast of Spain, encouraged cartographers to carry out geographical surveys of the world. The most famous of these was Al-Idrisi (AD 1099–1165/66) who, under the patronage of the Norman king Roger II of Sicily, combined the knowledge of the Greeks and Romans with that of reports from medieval scholars and travellers, to create an atlas and disc-shaped relief map in silver (Fig 2). Models of famous buildings from across the Islamic world are also on display, including the hospital of Nur al-Din in 12th-century Damascus, and Mustansiriyya University in Baghdad, as it would have appeared in the 13th century. These models highlight the outstanding architectural skill used to build Islamic structures such as mosques and madrasas, as well as a wide variety of other buildings intended to fulfil religious or secular functions.

The Islamic Faith Gallery provides visitors to the museum with an interesting introduction to the principles of the religion. At the heart of this gallery is the Qur'an; the holiest book in the Islamic religion, which contains the collection of requirements dictating how Muslims should live their lives and how Islamic society should conduct its religious, social and legal affairs. All Muslims believe that the Qur’an is a perfect record of the words passed from Allah to the Prophet Mohammad by way of the angel Jibril (Gabriel). These divine revelations were first committed to writing soon after the death of the Prophet in AD 632 by the first Caliph, Abu Bakr (r. 632–34), and the work was completed by AD 645 during the Caliphate of Uthman (r. 644–56). The gallery therefore features a superb collection of...
copies of the Qur’an, most of which are written in one of the three common styles used by Islamic calligraphers: the angular Kufic script believed to originate from Kufa in Iraq (Fig 3); the rounded Naskh style which came into widespread use from the 10th century onwards; and the Thuluth writing style, with its sloping characters.

The upper floor of the museum is devoted to Islamic art, spread over four different galleries set out in broadly chronological order. Gallery 1 is focused on the art that evolved between the 7th and 13th centuries. These were the expansionist years for Islam, during which the religion was adopted across a vast geographical region, from the coasts of the Atlantic in the west to the shores of the Bay of Bengal in the east. The spread of the religion across such varied landscapes and communities led to a diversity in the art of Islam, says Aisha Deemas, Curator at the museum. ‘Whenever Islam spread into a new area it took on aspects from the cultures of the peoples of those regions. That’s why there are influences from Persia, India, China, and from Europe, all of which added to the traditions that originated in the Arabian Peninsula.’

Many of the artefacts on display emphasise this cross-pollination of artistic styles that blossomed during the early centuries of Islam. A beautiful lustreware plate with a rabbit motif in the centre, made in Iraq or Egypt during the 9th–10th centuries, emulates Chinese luxury ceramics that were being imported into the Islamic world (Fig 6). A bowl produced in the Nishapur region of north-eastern Iran at about the same time, draws heavily on local Persian ceramic traditions, depicting a horse and rider surrounded by birds, flowers, palmettes and rosettes (Fig 8). However, the Kufic script that appears around the inner rim of the bowl is the result of Islamic influence.

Depictions of human and zoomorphic figures, such as those in Figs 5 and 6 also demonstrate that, despite negative attitudes towards figural decoration set down in the Qur’an (which have led many to assume that figural decoration is forbidden in Islam), they were very much a part of the early Islamic artistic tradition. Depictions of human and animal figures are considerably less common to Islamic art than in other religions. However, other ceramics in the gallery highlight the prominent role played by animals in the design of ceramics (Fig 5), while mythological figures were also occasionally incorporated into the decoration (Fig 7).

Zoomorphic designs were also used in other media of Islamic art. From Afghanistan or eastern Iran, and dating to the 11th–12th century, is a wonderful bronze incense burner with a perforated body in the shape of a large deer, phoenixes and parrots. Probably from Kashan, Iran, early 14th century. Diam. 34.5cm. SM 2006 – 985.

Fig 10. Plate featuring deer, phoenixes and parrots. Probably from Kashan, Iran, early 14th century. Diam. 34.5cm. SM 2006 – 985.

Fig 11. Brass bowl inlaid with gold and silver. The figural decoration came from Persian literary epics and contemporary miniature paintings. Produced in western Iran during the 14th century. Diameter at mouth, 18.2cm. SM 1996 – 175.

Fig 12. Bronze incense burner from eastern Iran or Afghanistan, 11th–12th century. Incense was common used in both religious and secular settings, but a figural burner such as this would have never been used in a mosque. H. 22.5, L. 26.5cm. SM 1996 – 211.

Fig 13. Silk and gold tunic from Iran or Central Asia of the 13th–14th century, the lampas weave was reserved for luxury fabrics. L. 131cm. SM 2006 – 1421.

Fig 14. Blue-and-white porcelain bottle, decorated with partridges and lotus flowers. Ceramics of this type emulated imports from Ming China, Possibly produced in Kerman, Iran, during the second half of the 17th century. H. 30cm. SM 2007 – 300.
cat (Fig 12). Incense played an important role in both religious and secular settings across the Islamic world. With a cleverly designed head that could be tilted back to allow incense and hot charcoal to be inserted into the body, the long tail acted as a carrying handle. Aisha Deemas explains: ‘We have to differentiate between Islamic items that were used in religious contexts, and those that were used in more secular contexts. You would never find any zooamorphic objects in mosques.’ Instead, feline incense burners similar to this are often associated with royal courts, where big cats symbolised the strength of a ruler.

Art and calligraphy were also used to decorate more utilitarian objects. For example, the museum collection contains a large weighing stone, fitted with an iron suspension ring and carefully incised with large Kufic script (Fig 15). Though little is known about this 11th–12th-century stone, it may well have been part of a set of commercial scales, possibly belonging to Al-Hassan Ibn Hatim, the name carved on display. This sitara (Fig 16) was made of black silk embroidered with quotations from the Qur’an embroidered in gold and silver, this sitara covered the Ka’ba in 1982, although the appearance of the curtain has changed little over the centuries. Made in Saudi Arabia, L 650cm. SM 2006 – 1465.

Invasions of Hulagu Khan (r. 1256–65), grandson of Genghis Khan, and the establishment of the vast Mongol Empire. A beautiful plate from 14th-century Iran, decorated with a hart and hind running through lotus flowers, while phoenixes and parrots are depicted on the rim, clearly reflects the Chinese influence (Fig 10). Imitation and assimilation of Eastern artwork would continue over the following centuries. Blue and white porcelain imported from Ming China had a huge impact on Islamic ceramics during the 15th–17th centuries, and a lovely blue-and-white bottle from late 17th-century Iran combines Chinese shape and colour scheme with depictions of partridges and lotus flowers that are very much Persian in style (Fig 14).

Production of high-quality metalwork also soon recovered from the Mongol incursions, and luxury items continued to be produced for the wealthier classes in society. An elegant bronze bowl in the museum’s collection highlights the skill of Islamic metalworkers, as well as the preoccupations of the ruling elite – six roundels on the bowl depict well-dressed men mounted on proud horses (Fig 11). Textile production also continued to play an important role in Islamic society following the Mongol invasions and remained a mainstay of the economy, with fabrics produced in Muslim societies highly sought after by non-Islamic cultures to the east and west. Textiles seldom survive the ravages of time, but the museum has a wonderful tunic of silk and gold on display. This was produced in Iran or Central Asia during the 13th–14th century (Fig 13), and is woven in an extremely complex technique known as lampas weave, decorated with delicate designs, picked out in gold, that have a strong Eastern influence.

The last two galleries focus on the modern period and the cultural and artistic changes that developed as a result of the interactions between Islamic countries and the industrialised states of Europe. These two galleries contain some wonderful examples of jewellery and ornaments, some of the most beautiful and intricate of which were produced in Mughal India (Fig 16). However, the most prestigious exhibit in these last two galleries of the museum is a complete sitara. This is the largest and most decorated portion of the kiswa, the curtain of black silk, embroidered with gold and silver thread, that is draped over the Ka’ba in the Holy Mosque at Mecca. The cube-like Ka’ba is an ancient structure that stands at the centre of Mecca, and indeed the centre of the Islamic World. The Hajj, the great annual pilgrimage of the Islamic world, starts and finishes at the Ka’ba, and on the ninth day of the month in which the Hajj takes place (the Islamic month of Dhul Hijjah), a new kiswa is draped over the structure. The old curtain is then cut into pieces which are presented as gifts or sold for charity.

There is a larger sitara on display in the Faith Gallery of the museum which covered the doorway section of the Ka’ba in 1982 (Fig 17). Despite its relatively recent date, the importance of the artefact is stressed by Aisha Deemas: ‘The sitara has become one of our most popular exhibits, even for the overseas non-Muslim visitors, because of its very strong religious and cultural significance. For those Muslims who have been to Mecca and have visited the Ka’ba then it gives a feeling of nostalgia of their pilgrimage to the holy city.’

While the distance from the centre of Sharjah city to that of Dubai is less than 10km, the heavy traffic that builds up on the roads connecting the two capitals, and the lack of a public transport network, can deter visitors from travelling out to Sharjah from the popular tourist destination of Dubai. However, for visitors to this part of the Middle East wishing to see more than shopping malls and beaches, then a trip to the Islamic Museum and the other centres of culture in Sharjah is well worth the effort. With its internationally important collection and cool, airy interior, the Museum of Islamic Civilization offers a welcome refuge from the summer heat when temperatures frequently soar above 40°C.
Tiffany Jenkins expresses concern about the way in which visitors to British museums are being denied exhibitions featuring human remains.

In May 2008, three Egyptian mummies on display at Manchester Museum were covered with a white sheet. Without being requested to do so by the present-day Egyptians, or the public with whom the display has always proved popular, professionals at the institution took it upon themselves to place a sheet over the unwrapped mummy of Asru, the partially wrapped remains of Khary, and a child mummy. After protests from local audiences and the press, the museum uncovered the mummies.

This sensitivity by museum professionals to the display of human remains is far from an isolated case. Over the last 30 years, human remains in museum collections have become the focus of various claims and campaigns. The issue developed in the 1980s, when requests from indigenous movements for the repatriation of human remains and funerary artefacts developed in the United States, Canada and Australasia. It took more than a decade before the issue reached Britain. However, from the late 1990s, the repatriation of human remains became a major point of controversy for museums. In 2004 the Human Tissue Act permitted the deaccessioning of human remains from named institutions. Two years later the British Museum and Natural History Museum agreed for the repatriation of human remains to Australia having previously resisted such a policy.

The repatriation of material from museum collections is significant. This is potentially important research material. Traditionally museums in Britain do not let anything leave their collections; indeed there are legal barriers designed to preserve art and artefacts for future generations and protect museums from the political and financial pressures of the moment.

There has been less pressure on institutions in Britain in comparison with those in Australasia and North America, where museums and galleries faced claims from their own indigenous groups. In 2003, the Scoping Survey for the Working Group on Human Remains found that claims from overseas indigenous groups on English institutions were ‘uneven’ and ‘low’. A total of only 33 claims were found to have been made; some of these were repeat claims made by the same group, while in seven of the claims, settlements had already been reached for the return of the human remains.

This observation begs the first question of how this comparatively limited pressure from overseas groups came to have such impact in Britain. This succeeded in forcing changes to English law, and achieving the repatriation of human remains, despite the protestations of scientists from major national institutions and from the wider public.

One of the most significant aspects concerning the contestation of human remains held in British museums is that the strongest campaigning activity has been waged, not by social movements outside of the museums, but rather by people in the institutions. Many key and influential activists were members of prestigious museums and of the Museums Association, the professional body for the sector. As the issue progressed, new individuals within the profession emerged and expanded the problem, campaigning for a new kind of respect for all human remains. This issue is influenced by a wider debate concerning the over-arching purpose of museums in modern society and the crisis of cultural authority experienced in the museum sector.

Museums are traditionally institutions holding ‘cultural authority’. They fulfil a role that allows us to better understand the world by interpreting the past, and indicating what makes sense in the present.

Displaying the dead

Fig 1. The recent British Museum exhibition ‘Journey Through the Afterlife: Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead’ used the display of mummies to great effect, and has proved highly popular with visitors to the museum.

Photo: courtesy of the trustees of the British Museum

Tiffany Jenkins expresses concern about the way in which visitors to British museums are being denied exhibitions featuring human remains.
is valuable and meaningful. While aspects of the museum can be traced back to the medieval wunderkamer, or private collecting during the Renaissance, it is the development of public collections in the 18th and 19th centuries that rationalised private collections into a specific meaningful public context. With the Enlightenment, ideas developed about the absolute character of knowledge, discoverable by the methods of rationalism and its universal applicability, which informed the purpose of the museum and the rationale of the display of artefacts. This foundational remit has now been called into question. The primary reason is the cumulative impact of Western society’s disenchantment with the Enlightenment. Since the 1960s, cultural relativism, postcolonial theory, and postmodernism have called into question the institutions claims to objectivity, neutrality and a benign social role. Culture and science have come to be viewed not as universal or objective, but as a damaging reflection of the prejudices of European cultures. As a consequence of these intellectual shifts, the outlook of the earlier period which informed the role of museums – to validate the superiority of modern reason, to make judgments, and to pursue the truth – have been discredited, and with it the foundational purpose of the museum.

The question of ownership of human remains has acted like a lightening rod for a wider, internal debate over the purpose of the museum. Human remains have become a vehicle allowing the repositioning of the museum away from its foundational role of research and authoritative knowledge. It is this that helps explain why there have been continuing expressions of concern over the display of human remains. In the early 2000s, museum professionals campaigning for the repatriation of overseas remains associated their cause with a number of different issues, including the highly emotive topic of the Holocaust. The event that had the greatest impact on the debate was the controversy over the retention of children's body parts that was focused on Alder Hey hospital in Liverpool. Exploited by the British government, the high-profile Bristol Royal Infirmary Inquiry (2000) and The Royal Liverpool Children's Inquiry (2001) investigated the circumstances leading to the removal, retention and disposal of human tissue, including children’s organs, and led to legislation on the issue of consent. Campaigners such as activist and archaeologist Cressida Fforde suggested the two issues – the retention of remains of those who were long-since dead, and the organs of recently deceased children – were equivalent.

With concerted activism linking the two issues, the idea that holding human remains less than a hundred years old alone displaying any human remains is problematic entered into the policy and practice of many museums. Following the introduction of the Human Tissue Act in 2004, museums holding human remains less than a hundred years old had to purchase a licence from the Human Tissue Authority. The very idea of a licence, which had not been required before 2004, is suggestive that there is something fundamentally wrong in holding this kind of material. The result is that 17 museums have since drafted policies on human remains, with most advocating that signs be erected in advance of any displays involving human remains to provide warning for visitors. The Royal Cornwall Museum in Truro, does not now show any images of human remains, other than wrapped mummies, in its online or publicity material. The Egypt gallery at Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery has also changed their display of Egyptian human remains. Instead of the previous display featuring mummies in open coffins, the museum now exhibits the mummies with the lids half closed, which it considers more respectful. The Museum of London’s policy states: ‘As a general principle skeletons will not be on “open display” but located in such a way as to provide them some “privacy”’. It also says that ‘The Museum will normally not allow its holdings of human remains to be photographed or filmed for external media purposes’ (Fig 2).

These new guidelines are all written by museum professionals. However, research conducted to investigate visitor concerns about human remains on display suggests that the vast majority of the British public are not in any way distressed by the display of human remains. Indeed, most people want to see human remains displayed in museums (Figs 1, 3). In fact, the inclusion of human remains in museum exhibitions will generally lead to a rise in visitor numbers. Unfortunately, actions by professionals in the heritage sector runs counter to the desires of millions of people who enjoy learning from the display of human remains. It is therefore time to uncover the mummies and appreciate what they can show us.

Dr Tiffany Jenkins is a Visiting Fellow at the London School of Economics and Politics, and Director of Arts and Society at the Institute of Ideas. Her recent book, Contesting Human Remains in Museum Collections: The Crisis of Cultural Authority, was published by Routledge in 2010.

Minerva March/April 2011
Interview

Among collectors

James Stourton, Chairman of Sotheby’s UK, talks to Minerva about life in one of the oldest and most respected auction houses

It is almost unheard-of for a professional in the 21st century to have spent their entire career with just one employer, but that is true of James Stourton, who has worked for Sotheby’s since leaving Cambridge, where he read Art History. ‘I left Cambridge on the Sunday and started as a junior cataloguer in the British Paintings department at Sotheby’s on the Monday,’ he says. ‘I suppose you could say that I was very keen! I was most interested in neo-classical architecture and painting, and was fortunate enough to have been taught by two very different, but equally brilliant men, professors David Watkin and Ron Middleton. While Professor Watkin wore pin striped suits to lectures and tutorials, Ron reflected the style of the 1970s and wore flowered shirts, snake-skin jackets and velvet trousers!’

His experience at Sotheby’s has given James an exceptional insight into the nature of collectors and the desires that drive them – but has he ever identified a set of characteristics common to collectors? ‘All the collectors I know are extremely intelligent, extremely informed, and all have a very strong compulsion. I don’t subscribe to the view that collecting is a neurotic activity. Most collectors are extremely well adjusted and extremely successful. However, some people do over-step common sense and collect beyond what they can really afford. Nevertheless, there is something wonderful about such passion.’

‘These days, public exhibition is the most powerful motivation, which isn’t surprising when one realises that most collectors are themselves chairman of boards or benefactors who are involved with museums. There are people like Frank Cohen, who loves showing art and to put on exhibition, while Charles Saatchi is an impresario who buys art primarily for public display rather than simply to possess it.’

For centuries, Britain and Europe lived in the shadow of Graeco-Roman culture. During the Greek revival in the 18th century, the Society of Dilettanti was established, and it became the ‘done thing’ to acquire ancient sculpture from diggers and dealers in ancient cities. However, following the Napoleonic Wars, there were far fewer digs and the supply had begun to close down. Above all, 19th-century tastes changed, as James explains. ‘Collectors in Liverpool and Manchester identified more closely with Florentine art, which had been created by artists like Botticelli for the merchant princes of Italy. Nevertheless, Graeco-Roman culture completely dominated the public school system, and the idea of learning Latin and Greek and to provide a solid foundation for the British Empire prevailed until the turn of the 19th and 20th century, when new cultural influences began to arrive from all around the world including Japan, Africa, China and the Pacific. This fragmentation of culture also resulted in fewer private collectors specialising in the Classical world. Instead, the transmission of Classical values effectively goes to museums and archaeologists. Private antiquities collections today are much broader, they look at broader culture typologies. For example, George Ortiz collects early civilisations such as Sumerian, Egyptian and Babylonian, and combines them with artworks from ancient Greece and the Roman Empire to produce a melting pot of cultures. He has devoted his life to collecting and understanding that extraordinary
moment in the history of art when the human spirit emerges and man breathes life into the human image. George is somebody who, in many ways, opened my eyes to this cross-fertilisation of cultures in a collection and demonstrated how you could tell a story through a collection brilliantly using wonderful pieces. This is the approach taken by most contemporary collectors of ancient art and artefacts.

In 1997 Sotheby’s was caught up in a press investigation over trading in antiquities that had been illegally imported and sold, with provenance checks that were alleged to be inadequate. As a result, Sotheby’s London closed its antiquities department, transferring all sales of ancient art and artefacts to the United States, and establishing the first Compliance Department in the industry so that such problems could in the future be anticipated and avoided. Despite the recent boom in the market for antiquities, James believes it is unlikely that the auction house will reestablish its sales in London. ‘I don’t know whether it would be justified. We’ve gone to New York and that works very well. There are no plans to reopen the department in London at the moment, although I would very much like it, because it is a wonderful thing to sell antiquities.

‘Since World War II, there’s been an increased awareness of the problem and damage caused by the looting of antiquities, with the result that collectors began to become anxious and nervous about the provenance of art in a way they had not been before. However, over recent years, the antiquities market has rediscovered itself and it’s currently full of life. The key thing is obviously the context and, for most collectors, knowing where and how an artefact was discovered is more important than anything else. However, if you look back more than 200 years or so, then you usually just have to accept there is no documentation available. This is why the English collections are suddenly becoming so interesting, because they have a provenance that can extend back to the 18th century. The difficulty in the market is that without good provenance you can’t touch antiquities. The UNESCO...
Contribution to the blooming British passion for antiquities was one of the first Englishmen to have a deep love affair with Italy. He travelled around 17th century Italy, getting the dust on his feet and staying in rundown inns, while learning the language and gaining an intimate understanding of the culture. He's also a crucial figure because he not only collected from Italy, but he was ahead of his time in sending agents to Asia Minor to acquire ancient sculpture. At the time, people ridiculed his love of collecting Graeco-Roman art, but he really started the fashion of buying antiquities. During the first half of the 18th century, the two greatest collectors in Britain were the Earl of Leicester and the Earl of Pembroke.

James's unique insight into the world of art collectors has provided material for three books. He originally turned to writing as a way of reestablishing his intimate connection with art after several years in management positions at Sotheby's. 'Because I spend most days with collectors it was an obvious step for me to focus on the history of collecting. I was lucky to be able to write about a topic that hasn't really been covered in any detail by previous writers. I also try and write books to reflect the flavour of my job, so in 2007 I published Great Collectors of Our Time: Art Collecting Since 1945 (Fig 6). This was written while I was the Deputy Chairman of Sotheby's Europe, so it made sense to do a book that was international in scope. However, I've since become Chairman of Sotheby's UK, and have just completed a new book, The British as Collectors. It will hopefully be out in April/May 2012, and will be the first narrative history of British art collecting, from Cardinal Wolsey through to Charles Saatchi. Writing the books was a labour of love really, and I feel very lucky to have the opportunity.

In The British as Collectors, James devotes a chapter to the blooming British passion for archaeology and antiquity. 'The first British collector of ancient artworks was Thomas Howard, the Earl of Arundel (1585–1646) (Fig 4). He was one of the first Englishmen to have a deep love affair with Italy. He travelled around 17th century Italy, getting the dust on his feet and staying in rundown inns, while learning the language and gaining an intimate understanding of the culture. He's also a crucial figure because he not only collected from Italy, but he was ahead of his time in sending agents to Asia Minor to acquire ancient sculpture. At the time, people ridiculed his love of collecting Graeco-Roman art, but he really started the fashion of buying antiquities. During the first half of the 18th century, the two greatest collectors in Britain were the Earl of Leicester and the Earl of Pembroke, and housed the collection of Graeco-Roman statuary of the Bavarian king Ludwig I (r. 1825–47). Photo: courtesy of Chris73.

but by then the problem was getting the art out of Rome and both found it very difficult to buy important pieces. This was really when digging for lost sculptures and other artistic treasures began to take off. By the second half of the century it had grown into an industry in which the wealthy collectors of the British aristocracy employed agents like the Scotsman William Hamilton (Fig 5), or Welshman Thomas Jenkins, to generate contacts with Roman families who then acted as archaeologists, restorers, and shippers. It was a very well organised system which lasted until the Napoleonic Wars.' In 1999 James published Great Smaller Museums of Europe. A decade on, which of the museums featured in the book would he choose to return to first? 'Nothing would give me more pleasure than to go back to the Glyptothek in Munich (Fig 7). When researching and writing the essay for the book I learned a huge amount about antiquities from my time spent in that museum. It's just the right size, with beautiful displays, in a perfect museum building. I think it's the best place in the world to go to learn about antiquities.' Among the many other museums and galleries to have captured James' affection is Sir John Soane's Museum in central London (Fig 8). 'The Soane is interesting because of the interrelationship between the architecture of the building and the sculptures and paintings on display within. Visiting the museum becomes like looking through the stratigraphic layers of an archaeological dig with Egyptian antiquities at the bottom, followed by those from Greece and Rome. Alongside all these are modern British paintings. The Soane Museum is enthralling because it hits every right note: it's original, it's quirky, and it's brilliant.

'The Mougins Museum of Classical Art will also be interesting to see when finished this spring. I love the concept of displaying antiquities alongside the works of great painters and sculptors who have been Classically influenced. Intermingling ancient artefacts and armour with art that spans the Renaissance through to the 21st century is an absolutely marvelous idea.' (See pages 38–9.) What treasures will James take from his career at Sotheby's? 'I'll take away three souvenirs from my time working here: firstly there's the art souvenir; secondly, the customer's souvenir; finally the colleagues souvenir. Of the three, the most important is the relationship with my colleagues with whom I live, work, laugh, and cry. However, I enjoy all three because, in the end, this place is full of art. It is like a museum imagined: it's like going to a new exhibition every day.'

Jessica Cummings is a museum researcher who has worked at Sotheby's and antiquities dealerships in London. She is currently a consultant for the Mougins Museum of Classical Art.

Fig 7. Glyptothek in Munich. Designed and built in a Classical Greek-Italian style, with an Ionic portico, the museum opened in 1830 and housed the collection of Graeco-Roman statuary of the Bavarian king Ludwig I (r. 1825–47). Photo: courtesy of Chris73.
