Signs and omens
If only Julius Caesar had listened to his wife

Vikings ahoy
A longship sails into the British Museum

Saints alive
Down with St George and up with St Edmund

The Gorgon’s gaze
A menagerie of mythical monsters on show in Rome

Bill Wyman, once a Rolling Stone – now a rock star who really digs archaeology at his home in Suffolk
ROMAN IMPERIAL MARBLE PORTRAIT BUST OF A LADY turned to her left and wearing a stola and palla. Her coiffure is parted and drawn behind the ears and up into a tiered turban of braids, small incised curls escaping at the temples. Early Hadrianic, ca. AD 120-125. Ht. 25 in. (63.5 cm.)

Ex Stora Sundby Castle, Eskilstuna, Sweden, collected in the 18th Century; Swedish private collection, acquired in 1912; Dr. F. collection, North Carolina, acquired from Royal-Athena in 2002.
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Monsters, mummies, rock stars and saints

The Rolling Stones were certainly not saints, but the one who got away went on to contribute to the study of British archaeology.

We begin this issue with a famous assassination – TS Eliot wrote that ‘April is the cruellest month’ but, for Julius Caesar, it was definitely March. As the song goes, ‘When in Rome I do as the Romans... disregard the signs and omens’, and this, to his cost, is exactly what the most powerful man in Rome did. You can read all about what happened on the Ides of March on pages 8 to 11.

Remaining in Rome, we visit an exciting exhibition at the National Museum. In Monsters: Fantastic Creatures of Fear and Myth, you will meet all kinds of mythical creatures – centaurs, chimeras, griffins, harpies, mermaids, satyrs and tritons, not to mention the Hydra, the Minotaur, the Sphinx and the Gorgons, as you will see on pages 12 to 17. They are a pretty frightening bunch but, as Dalu Jones points out, perhaps rather than simply being archaic phantasies, they are the projections of our inner fears and conflicts today. Must we all face the violent beast at the dark heart of our own personal labyrinths one day? If so, let us hope that, like Theseus, we have an Ariadne with her golden thread to help us retrace our steps and get out again. Both Freud and Jung drew on mythological themes when analysing their patients.

An artist who was influenced both by the Classical world and by Freudian theory is Giorgio de Chirico (1888-1978). You can find out more about him on pages 18 to 21 and see his work in an exhibition in London that runs until 19 April.

If you turn to pages 22 to 24, you may be surprised to find that Bill Wyman, the Rolling Stones’ former bass player, is our interviewee. He left the band in 1991 after nearly 30 years because he wanted to pursue his other interests – one of which was archaeology. It all began when some plumbers came to fix a frozen pipe at his mansion in Suffolk and found a pot that turned out to be a 16th-century water jug. After that Bill started using a metal detector and discovered all sorts of things. He became so keen on this that he even patented his own lightweight detector, supported the Portable Antiquities Scheme (set up to encourage the voluntary recording of archaeological objects found by members of the public in England and Wales) and wrote Bill Wyman’s Treasure Islands, a book about extraordinary archaeological finds made by accident. Bill has done most of his detecting work on his estate near Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk.

Bury St Edmunds is the focal point for our next feature. The Once and Future Saint. After King Edmund was killed by the Vikings in AD 869, he became a martyr whose shrine was the most popular site of pilgrimage for centuries. He was also our first patron saint, and Mark Taylor, who has written a book about him, believes he should be reinstated and should replace St George. Turn to pages 26 to 29 and see if you agree.

The Vikings are the villains of this story, but they are not complete brutes, as you will see if you turn to pages 30 to 33, or visit the latest major exhibition at the British Museum.

Although Egypt is a very long way from America, enthusiasm for its ancient civilisation has caused quite a stir there over the centuries. We asked Dr Bob Brier, also known as ‘Mr Mummy’, to tell us about Egyptomania in the United States. This ties in with a small exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art telling the story of how Cleopatra’s Needle travelled from Alexandria to Central Park in New York. It was quite a journey and one that involved hundreds of Freemasons, as you will discover on pages 34 to 37.

Alentejo in Central Portugal is the destination of choice for our travel feature this time; see pages 38 to 41. This is followed, on pages 42 to 45, by an extended review of some of the excellent books on the history and archaeology of the Mediterranean.

We finish with three saleroom reports, including one about a collection of fabulous Roman gold coins, and our Calendar, compiled by Raphie Varley.

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The Lod Mosaic is coming in June

One of the oldest surviving complete Roman mosaics, a spectacular discovery made in Lod in Israel, dating 1,700 years back, will go on show at Waddesdon Manor, near Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire, from 5 June. Measuring eight metres long and four metres wide, and in exceptional condition, the Lod Mosaic depicts a paradise of birds, animals, shells and fishes, including one of the earliest images of a rhinoceros and a giraffe, richly decorated with geometric patterns and set in lush landscapes.

The mosaic is thought to have been laid down circa AD 300 as part of the floor of a wealthy patron, but the full extent of the entire complex has yet to be determined. The surrounding mud-brick walls, which would once have been covered by frescoes, collapsed and preserved it. The juxtaposition of scenes of animals hunting and marine life, complete with ships, combined with a complete absence of human figures, makes the Lod Mosaic uniquely interesting.

The mosaic was discovered by accident in 1996, during road construction work in the Israeli town of Lod, the site of the ancient city of Lydda, just a few miles from Tel Aviv. Destroyed by the Romans in AD 66, during the Jewish War, Lydda was later refounded by Hadrian and remained in Roman hands before becoming a Christian city, and eventually succumbing to Arab conquerors in AD 636.

The public reaction to this discovery was extraordinary: when the mosaic was uncovered for a single weekend, over 30,000 people travelled to Lod to see it. Work has now begun to create a permanent museum for the mosaic on the site where it was found. This is due to open in late 2015.

Waddesdon Manor is a spectacular country house, built between 1874 and 1889 in the style of a Neo-Renaissance French château, for the legendary collector Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild. The Lod Mosaic will be installed in the Coach House Gallery there, with a purpose-built viewing platform that will enable visitors to study the entire mosaic, as well as allowing close access to all its fascinating details.

The display will also cast light on the important role of the Rothschild family as collectors and supporters of archaeological excavations. Seeing the Lod Mosaic at Waddesdon between 5 June and 26 October is an opportunity not to be missed. It is one of the stops on its world tour – it has already been on show in the Metropolitan Museum in New York, the Field Museum in Chicago, the Louvre in Paris and, most recently, the Altes Museum in Berlin. Following on from Waddesdon, it will travel to the Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg, where it will be on display from December of this year.

(For further information on the Lod Mosaic visit http://lodmosaic.org/explore.html; for Waddesdon Manor www.waddesdon.org.uk).
Good news and bad from Italy

The New Year started with some good news concerning Italy’s cultural heritage, whose situation has seemed to worsen daily from the founding government department responsible for it. Despite repeated official declarations of intent the Italian government does not seem to take into account the excellent source of both income and employment that tourism and culture could provide for a population constrained by an ongoing economic crisis and with soaring unemployment.

Archaeological sites – Pompeii for one – are visibly decaying from lack of proper maintenance, and cutting back on the number of museum attendants means that galleries are only partially open to visitors or, worse still, closed entirely. The appointment of a new minister for culture, Massimo Bray, last year may set Italy on a new course. Let us hope so.

The good news is the reopening of almost all the sections of one of the most important archaeological museums in Italy, one that has been long neglected and partially closed for years. This is the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Taranto, which contains outstanding masterpieces found in Apulia, including a stunning collection of Greek gold jewellery dating from the 4th to the 2nd centuries BC.

Inspired by the crucial historical, cultural and artistic importance of Greek colonies in Italy, and the outstanding archaeological discoveries that were being made in the region, this museum was set up in 1887 by the archaeologist L. Viola with the intention of devoting it entirely to Magna Graecia. More than a century later this goal has still not been attained. For decades the museum’s treasures were displayed only partially and temporarily, and the building itself was closed for complete refurbishment (including the installation of efficient energy-saving heating and lighting) from 2000 to 2007.

This sad state of affairs is now being remedied. The first-floor galleries, devoted to more than one necropolis dating from the 4th and 3rd centuries BC to the Roman period, were completed in 2007 and are already open to the public. This year nine more rooms will open and further exhibits will eventually be displayed in the lovely convent cloisters next door.

The new first-floor display follows thematic and chronological lines, no longer with isolated single pieces but with entire groups of funerary goods, shown together as they were when found. The artefacts excavated during the past 10 years and never seen before include Late Antique and Byzantine figurative and geometric mosaics found in public and private buildings in Taranto. There is also a room devoted to funerary inscriptions carved on Christian, Jewish and Moslem tombs, all bearing witness to the cosmopolitan life of the city over the centuries.

With its narrow alleyways, churches and palazzi built over the ancient Greek settlement founded in 706 BC, the medieval core of old Taranto, an island connected to the modern city by bridges, is potentially a magnet for tourists. (A few Greek ruins also remain, including part of the old city wall, two columns from a 6th-century BC Doric temple, and tombs.)

There is a major drawback to this, however: Taranto is currently fighting a fierce battle to save itself from a major environmental crisis. Heavy pollution from uncontrolled steel plants, chemical factories and oil refineries coats the city in toxic, possibly carcinogenic, dust and destroys marine life along its once-beautiful coast. Whether the captains of industry will bow to the demands of the citizens is extremely unlikely.

(For further information visit www.museotaranto.org/)

Dalu Jones

St Piran’s Oratory rises again

Photographed between 1892 and 1909, visitors stand on the walls of St Piran’s Oratory although it has been fenced off.

The Oratory in 1910, before a concrete shell was built around it for its own protection, it was claimed at the time.

Believed to be the oldest, four-walled Christian building on mainland Britain, St Piran’s Oratory in Cornwall has not been open for public viewing since 1902, when a concrete building was built around it to protect it. Over the centuries, stones had been removed from the Oratory’s walls and tourists have even
The world of the dead under St Peter’s

Excavation work in Rome continues within Vatican City in an underground site near the basilica of Saint Peter’s. This is the necropolis of the Via Triumphalis that reopened to the public early this year after a long period of excavation and restoration that made it possible to unite two previously separated sectors of the burial ground. The whole site has now been transformed into one large single museum space, measuring more than 1,000 square metres, where visitors can gain poignant insights into the daily life of ordinary Roman citizens who lived and died 2,000 years ago.

As the director of the Vatican Museums, Professor Antonio Paolucci, explains: ‘The aim is to create an excavation laboratory open to the public, a place where people are able to view the area and the works while they are being carried out.’

The on-site laboratory also processes data from anthropological analyses investigating burials in earth and cremation practices. The necropolis is under the Via Triumphalis, the road that ran round the north-easterly part of the Vatican hill, connecting the capital to the former Etruscan city of Veii (Isola Farnese) near the Magna Mater sanctuary, and some imperial gardens that once belonged to Empress Agrippina (AD 15–59), outside the city walls in what at the time was an unhealthy, marshy spot. It was here in the Gaianum (an area in the ‘naval combat’), a large space set aside for naval battles staged as entertainment. According to tradition, this circus is also where Saint Peter was crucified. A sector of the necropolis was first discovered and excavated during the construction of a car park between 1956 and 1958. In 2003, when the new Santa Rosa garage was being built, a second sector was found. It was open to the public for two years only, from 2006 to 2008. Archaeologists have found a total of 40 small and medium-sized mausolea and more than 200 individual graves on various levels, many with inscriptions specifying the profession and place of origin of the occupants. Many of the tombs – dating from the end of the 1st century BC to the 3rd century AD – have fine stucco decorations, wall paintings and mosaic floors. The more grandiose ones have quadrangular barrel vaults, with red plaster exteriors, and are decorated inside with floral or linear designs. They belonged to reasonably well-off imperial freedmen such as Alcinus, a scene-painter for the theatre of Pompey and one of Emperor Nero’s servants. He is portrayed in a relief with a chisel in his hand, surrounded by the tools of his trade: a set square, compasses, a level, a surveyor’s cross and a plumb-line.

Thanks to their exceptional state of preservation, the altars, sarcophaguses and various furnishings have shed light on aspects of funeral rites about which little was known until now. Most of the people buried here were cremated, and their bones and ashes were placed inside terracotta jars and urns. An *aestrum* (cremation ground) was also found along the path that divided the necropolis into two parts. The site of the funeral pyres was marked by overlapping layers of terracotta and earth deposits, with coal fragments and burnt pine cones.

During the past few years references have been made to an ancient necropolis under St Peter’s Basilica, where the tomb of St Peter is venerated. Now it is possible to go beneath Vatican City and visit two of the most complete and well-documented necropolises of Imperial Rome. (See visitspeciali.musei@vatican.va)

Dalu Jones

Part of the large underground necropolis near St Peter’s containing tombs dating from the end of the 1st century BC to the 3rd century AD.

Minerva March/April 2014
Celebrating Sutton Hoo 75 years on

A new display of the British Museum’s unparalleled Early Medieval collections (from AD 300-1100), including the famous Sutton Hoo treasure, will open in the new Sir Paul and Lady Ruddock Gallery (Room 41) on 27 March.

Marking 75 years since the discovery of Sutton Hoo, finds from the ship burial in Suffolk, one of the most spectacular and important discoveries in British archaeology, will form the centrepiece of the new display.

Excavated in 1939, on the eve of the Second World War, this 27-metre-long ship burial (below right) may have commemorated an Anglo-Saxon king who died in the early 7th century AD. It remains the richest intact burial to survive from Europe.

Many of its incredible treasures, such as the helmet (right), gold buckle (below) and whetstone have become icons not only of the British Museum, but of the Early Medieval period as a whole.

The project coincides with and relates to the Vikings: Life and Legend exhibition, which opens on 6 March at the British Museum in its new Sainsbury Exhibitions Gallery.

The objects in Room 41 tell the story of a formative period in Europe’s history. This time of great change witnessed the end of the Western Roman Empire, the evolution of the Byzantine Empire, migrations of people across the Continent and the emergence of Christianity and Islam as major religions. By the end of the period covered in the gallery, the precursors of many modern states had developed; Europe as we know it today was beginning to take shape.

The new gallery gives an overview of the whole period, ranging across Europe and beyond – from the Atlantic Ocean to the Black Sea, from North Africa to Scandinavia. It is the unique chronological and geographical breadth of the British Museum’s Early Medieval collections that makes such an approach possible.

As well as giving the Sutton Hoo ship burial’s treasures greater prominence within the museum, the new display will also act as a gateway into the diverse cultures featured in the rest of the gallery, in chronological, geographical and cultural zones. These include the Late Roman and Byzantine Empires, Celtic Britain and Ireland, migrating Germanic peoples, Northern and Eastern Europe, the Anglo-Saxons and the Vikings.

Among the outstanding treasures on display will be the Lycurgus Cup, the Projecta Casket, the Kells Crozier, the Domagnano Treasure, the Cuerdale Hoard and the Fuller Brooch.

The design, object selection and interpretation aims to develop a more coherent narrative and to display star objects more effectively than ever before – this includes extraordinary objects from a period that was anything but the ‘Dark Ages’.

The new display will also feature artefacts never shown before – including Late Roman mosaics, a huge copper alloy necklace from the Baltic Sea region, and a gilded mount discovered by X-ray in a lump of organic material from a Viking woman’s grave, over a century after it was acquired.

Despite so many different peoples spread across vast distances over a long period, the key themes running through the gallery’s narrative will put the objects on display in context, highlighting how diverse parts of the collections relate to one another.

Masterpieces: Early Medieval Art by Sonia Marzinzik (published in hardback by British Museum Press at £25) explores the history of Europe and the Mediterranean from the end of the Roman Empire to the 12th century, as told through objects in the British Museum’s vast collection.

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Ushabti of Amenemope
Egyptian
19th/20th Dynasty, 1292-1075 BC
Steatite Dimension: 18.1 cm H

We are pleased to announce our new gallery location in the heart of London’s Mayfair opening Spring 2014
6 Hill Street
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In a matter of seconds the great Caesar went from being a near-god at the peak of his power and popularity to a mere mortal gasping his final breaths – and, as his warm blood stained his robe and spread over the cold marble floor, he had time to contemplate the pain. But what hurt most? Was it the sudden realisation that his death would not be at the hands of an enemy in battle but as a result of the treachery of those he held most dear? Was it the comprehension that he would be unable to complete the many works and military campaigns he had planned? Was it his departure from those he loved, primarily his wife Calpurnia? Was it the searing physical pain of the multiple stab wounds – some say there were 23, others 35? Or was it the deep regret he must have felt for ignoring all the warnings and omens?

Today there exist several accounts of his murder written by ancient historians: Nicolaus of Damascus (b. 64); Marcus Velleius Paterculus (19 BC-AD 31); Lucius Mestrius Plutarchus (AD 46-120); Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus (AD 69-122); Cassius Dio (AD 150-235). Nicolaus of Damascus was the only one alive at the time, but even his account, part of his Life of Augustus, was written much later. Despite the time lapse, the consistent nature of these accounts indicates that they were based on a common source – earlier accounts, perhaps accounts of accounts, by someone, perhaps more than one, who was there and witnessed the murder.

It was 15 March, the Ides of March, 44 BC. Julius Caesar was in his mid-50s. He had travelled that day, probably in the late morning, from his house (the domus publica) in the Forum to the Senate’s temporary meeting place in the portico of Pompey’s Theatre to the west, outside the city’s boundary. The Senate normally met at the Curia, located in the Forum, but, on that day, it was not available as the building was being renovated.

Having been elected Pontifex Maximus (chief priest) in 63 BC, Caesar was entitled to reside in the domus publica, which at that time was part of the House of the Vestals, between the circular Temple of Vesta, part of which still stands today, and the Regia, adjacent to the Via Sacra. The Regia was an administrative building, a depository for wills and important papers where Caesar spent many of his working hours.

He may have walked the kilometre or so to Pompey’s Theatre, or he may have been carried there by litter, probably the latter, as he was not feeling well that day and also because he was the first citizen of Rome, having been named dictator for life a month earlier. But however he travelled, we can assume that, despite many ill omens, Julius Caesar did not expect to die when he did and especially not at the hands of men he had trusted, supported, and even protected. But he should have known, and would have known if he had heeded the omens.

According to Suetonius, some months earlier, Caesar had ordered that sections of Capua, a township outside Rome, be demolished to make way for new housing. While this was in progress, workers discovered a tomb in which there were ancient vessels and a brass tablet. The tomb was said to be that of Capys, the founder of Capua, and the tablet bore a curse in Greek which read: ‘Whenever the bones of Capys come to be discovered, a descendant of Iulus will be slain by the hands of his kinsmen, and his death revenged by fearful disasters throughout Italy’.

Now Caesar was of the Julia, or Julians, clan and, according to the Roman poet Virgil, a descendant of Ascanius, also called Iulus or Julus, whose father was Aeneas, whose mother, in myth, was the goddess Venus. Aeneas was third cousin to King Priam of Troy and, after the...
Roman history

Gaius Cassius, Decimus Brutus – although it is thought that, in the end, between 60 and 80 senators participated in the conspiracy. Since it was well known that Marcus Brutus's mother, Servilia Caepionis, had maintained a long relationship with Caesar, it was rumoured that he may have been Caesar's son. This is possible but seems unlikely, since Caesar would have been only 15 at the time Brutus was born. But if it is true, it might explain why Caesar favoured Brutus even though he had sided with Pompey in the recent civil war.

The honours granted to Caesar by the Senate, much encouraged by Marcus Brutus and Gaius Cassius, were so great in number that they should have given rise to suspicion. The historian Cassius Dio listed them. First, Caesar was named father of the country and the title appeared on coinage. Then a vote that Caesar's birthday be celebrated with a public sacrifice was passed. Next, they made Caesar sole censor for life and gave him immunity equal to that of the tribunes. They authorised that his tomb should be located within the city boundaries. Caesar was also allowed to wear the garb of triumph, purple robes like that of kings of old and a laurel wreath, and always to sit in his stately gilded chair. At the Games he would be seated with the tribunes and annual festivals were to be held in his name. The Senate ordered, furthermore, that statues of Caesar he erected, and that he wear a crown in recognition of his stature and be made dictator for life.

After all this it is not surprising that Caesar believed that he was well loved and felt so secure that he dismissed his personal guard. Ironically, it was his acceptance of these honours and privileges that fed the contempt that grew among the 80 or so senators and drove them to participate in the conspiracy.

But let us return to the Ides of March. Because of the many omens, the appeals from his wife and friends, and because he was not feeling well that day, Caesar at first decided to remain at home and not to go to the Senate meeting. The senators had gathered at the portico at dawn and, when it became evident that Caesar was not coming, they sent Decimus Brutus to his home to persuade him. Decimus made light of the omens and reminded Caesar that he had called for the assembly himself and

fall of Troy, Aeneas led Trojan refugees to Italy and founded Rome.

Suetonius went on to relate how the story of the brass tablet was circulated by Caius Balbus, a close friend of Caesar's, and also how the horses on which Caesar crossed the Rubicon stopped eating and shed tears just prior to his death. Days earlier, too, the soothsayer Spurinna had warned Caesar that some danger would befall him before the Ides of March passed.

The day prior to the murder, various birds pursued a wren with a sprig of laurel in its beak into Pompey's Theatre and tore the bird to pieces. The night before his death Caesar himself dreamed that he soared above the clouds and at one point joined hands with the god Jupiter. His wife, Calpurnia, also had a doom-laden dream in which the gable, or pediment, of their house collapsed and, worse, that Caesar had been stabbed and came seeking refuge in her bosom. Both she and his friends begged him not to go to the Senate meeting that day. His doctors also recommended that he stay at home, since he was suffering from vertigo, an ailment that often afflicted him. So why did he ignore the omens and the appeals of his wife and friends?

Caesar was probably lulled into a false sense of security by the many rewards and privileges that had recently been heaped upon him. Perhaps these were given to him for this very purpose, especially since they came from those who secretly harboured the most ill will towards him – Marcus Brutus,
that important matters needed to be discussed. Then, despite Calpurnia’s pleading, her husband changed his mind and decided to attend.

Along the way, when Caesar met Spurinna, the soothsayer he chided him, saying that his prophecy was obviously wrong, since the Ides had come and no harm had befallen him. But the historian Dio said that Spurinna replied: ‘Ay, it is come, but is not yet past.’ Further along, another person (who is not identified by the historians) approached Caesar with a note and told him that it pertained to him personally and that he should read it as soon as possible. But Caesar simply placed it, unread, with his other documents and moved on. Later, after his death, the note, which was still among his papers, was found to contain full details of the plot to kill him and the conspirators involved.

The final omen came from the augurs, the priests whose duty it was to interpret signs in order to foretell the will of the gods. Prior to Caesar’s entry into the place where the Senate was meeting, they sacrificed animals and studied their entrails. The results were extremely auspicious, and the augurs immediately reported the fact to Caesar, but he chose to ignore it. Nicolaus of Damascus wrote that Caesar turned away from them in disgust to face west, where the sun would set, whereupon the augurs interpreted this as a dark omen. Caesar’s friends begged him to postpone the meeting, but Decimus Brutus approached him once again and, reminding him of the high regard in which he was held, managed to persuade him to ignore the omens.

At this time the number of senators probably totalled around 600. On this day there was a quorum of hundreds, and all of them stood as Caesar entered the portico and stepped up to his seat of honour. As consul of Rome that year, Marcus Antonius convened the Senate and was supposed to be there, but he was deliberately delayed, engaged in conversation at the door by Gaius Trebonius, a military commander, politician and, more importantly, a co-conspirator. The faithful friends who had accompanied Caesar were unarmed and greatly outnumbered by the conspirators who, with daggers hidden in their robes, gathered around Caesar as he sat down.

Tullius Cimber approached him first, looking as though he intended to make an appeal, probably for the return of his brother, whom Caesar had exiled. Suetonius reports that Caesar waved him off, but then Tullius seized his robe at the shoulder, thus preventing him from rising. Caesar is said to have exclaimed, ‘Violence is meant’ – but by then it was too late. Standing close behind Caesar’s chair, Publius Servilius Casca Longus struck first, probably aiming for the neck, but he missed and instead jabbed Caesar in the left shoulder just above the collar bone, causing a slight wound.

The historian Plutarch reports that Caesar grabbed the handle of Casca’s dagger and cried out in Latin: ‘Villain Casca, what do you?’ Then, according to Suetonius, Caesar stabbed Casca in the arm with a stylus. Casca called out in Greek to his brother, Gaius Servilius Casca, to help him as Caesar sprang up and attempted to defend himself, whereupon Casca’s brother stabbed Caesar in the side. Gaius Cassius Longinus slashed Caesar across the face and Decimus Brutus stabbed him in the thigh. Eager to strike again, Cassius Longinus missed and instead wounded Marcus Brutus in the hand. Lucius Minucius Bilus likewise missed and ended up stabbing Rubrius Ruga in the thigh. Pandemonium ensued as the conspirators continued to hack at Caesar, while those senators not involved ran terror-stricken from the portico. When Caesar realised that he was totally outnumbered and that it was futile trying to defend himself, he pulled his robe up over his face and slipped down on to the floor.

Claiming to offer the most accurate account, the historian Dio reported that Caesar said nothing as he died, acknowledging that others reported that when Marcus Brutus struck with a serious stab, Caesar said simply: ‘Thou, too, my son?’

So Julius Caesar lay dead at the foot of a statue of Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus (Pompey) – an effective general, three times a consul and his former ally. He had become Caesar’s nemesis in the civil war of 49-48 BC. Caesar chased Pompey into Egypt, where he was killed on the orders of the young king, Ptolemy XIII, who thought that this would serve Caesar. But, Pompey may have had his revenge in death, as Brutus and Cassius, two of the main conspirators, were his allies during the civil war. Defeated and forced to accept Caesar’s mercy, they had never forgiven him for this humiliation.

Caesar’s body was left untouched until, later that day, three slaves carried him home, wrapped in his blood-soaked robe, his arm dangling lifeless over the edge of the litter. Following his funeral a few days later, the grief-stricken people piled together tables and benches from nearby shops and burned his body.

Two years later the Senate deified Caesar and began to construct a temple on the spot where he was cremated. Augustus dedicated the completed temple in 29 BC. Fresh flowers, a tribute to Caesar, are still strewn inside what is left of it today. The omens foretold the death of a man but not of his cause, for while Brutus and Cassius acted in part to maintain the Republic, it was Caesar’s death that ushered in the first emperor – Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus, later called Augustus – the great-nephew Caesar had adopted in his will. Augustus went on to consolidate power, further reform Roman society, and expand the Empire just as Caesar himself had intended to do.
A ROMAN ROSSO ANTICO MARBLE HEAD OF A SATYR

Flavian Period, late 1st Century A.D.
set on an 18th – 19th Century after the antique rosso antico bust
12in (30.5cm) height of head; 24½in (62.2cm) overall height including marble socle
£200,000 - 300,000

Provenance:
Althorp House, Northamptonshire.
After a two-year reorganisation of its permanent collections, the Palazzo Massimo alle Terme in Rome is hosting a superb and unusual temporary exhibition entitled *Monsters: Fantastic Creatures of Fear and Myth*. The more than 100 objects on display have come from the most important archaeological collections in Italy, as well as from museums in Athens, Berlin, Basel, Vienna, Los Angeles and New York.

Illustrating some of the more fascinating and mysterious Classical myths, these are legendary creatures that have no counterparts in the real world but appear regularly in Western art. Gorgons, griffins, centaurs, chimeras, harpies, mermaids, tritons, satyrs and silenoi jostle to take centre stage alongside the Sphinx, the Minotaur, the Hydra, Pegasus and Scylla. Monstrous creations of all sorts and sizes from many different ages and different cultures have been placed together in unexpected, beautifully lit groups along a dramatic sequence of dark labyrinthine passages. The visitor will be enthralled.

The monsters are made of many materials (clay, granite, marble, metal) and appear as sculpture, as architectural elements, as figures on ceramics, in wall paintings and mosaics from the ancient Greek, Etruscan and Roman worlds. As well as archaeological artefacts, three paintings are included in the exhibition to show the inexhaustible source of inspiration that Classical mythology has provided for artists down the centuries.

The earliest, dating from the first half of the 17th century, is *Medusa* (4). Once attributed to Leonardo da Vinci, it is now thought to be by an anonymous Flemish painter. Next comes *Perseus Frees Andromeda* (1), by the Cavalier d’Arpino (1568-1640), which shows the hero flying in on Pegasus to liberate the captive

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**Monsters of the deep**

*Dalu Jones* comes face to face with a collection of powerful mythical creatures from the Classical world.


2. Black-figure amphora showing Theseus killing the Minotaur, attributed to the Painter of Tarquinia or the Painter of Witt. 540-520 BC. H. 36.5cm. Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Florence.

3. Marble statue of a Minotaur, part of a group with Theseus, 1st century AD, found in Rome in *Via San Tommaso in Parione* in 1895. H. 105cm. Museo Nazionale Romano, Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, Rome. © Archivio fotografico SSBAR. Photograph: Simona Sansonetti.
maidens, who is guarded by a monstrous sea dragon. Lastly, there is Alberto Savinio’s Creta, a portrait of a Minotaur with the head of a giraffe. Savinio (1891-1952) was the younger brother of the more famous Italian metaphysical painter Giorgio de Chirico (1888-1978) – see pages 18 to 21.

A more conventional large, beautiful bull-headed Minotaur in white marble (3) greets visitors at the start of the exhibition. The statue is a 1st-century AD Roman copy of a 5th-century BC Greek original, which the ancient traveller and geographer Pausanias (circa AD 110-180) saw when it was still in situ in the Acropolis in Athens. (He wrote about it in Pausanias I, 24, 1.) It was found in Rome in the Stadium of Domitian, the present-day Piazza Navona. The Minotaur, born the son of Queen Pasiphae of Crete after she had coupled with a bull, is shown as he is about to be slain by the hero Theseus. His body is that of a handsome athlete but his bull’s face has a sad expression; he is a fierce but innocent creature, half man, half beast. A victim of his mother’s lust and the wrath of the pitiless gods, he was condemned to live a doomed life in a maze-like underground lair, where he received an annual ritual tribute of youths and maidens who were sacrificed to satisfy his hunger.

The labyrinth itself and Theseus’s
journey through it to face the raging monster at its centre, is the ultimate metaphor for our struggle to challenge and overcome our lowest instincts, and to seek redemption through trust and love. Ariadne, who provides the hero with the thread that will lead him out of the maze, embodies this trust and love. The Minotaur’s Greek name, Asterion, meaning ‘the starry one’, suggests that he was associated with the constellation Taurus. The heavenly bull is linked to the spring equinox, providing an astronomical and astrological reading of this very complex myth.

Like the Minotaur, the monsters that people the archaic and Classical past always confront gods, heroes and humans with a test that evokes their deeper fears and nightmares, compelling men and women to come face to face with their unconscious, irrational selves and their inner conflicts.

This confrontation is the initiatory stage in a quest to discover one’s own true identity, with all its conflicts and contradictions. For far from being alien, these monsters are born of our collective unconscious. Guides and guardians, these archetypal figures appear and reappear in endless guises over the centuries in the arts, literature, psychology and cinema, moving from one culture to the other, from East to West, right up to...
modern times. In the 20th century Freud and Jung used Classical myths and monsters to help unravel their patients’ complexes during analysis. The myths of the Classical world mostly originated in the Near East before moving westwards and evolving into Greek, Etruscan, Italian and Roman mythologies. The Greek terms for monster, tēras (a wonder or marvel) and pélor (which gave rise to ‘peloric’, abnormal), suggest a prodigy, and the Latin monstrum (from monere, to admonish) indicate a being that, through its abnormality, is capable of signalling the will of the gods to mankind. Bizarre, violent, aggressive and sexually potent, monsters are blessed or cursed with superhuman powers. Although they have no counterparts in the real world, they are often composed of parts of actual creatures through a process described by anthropologists as ‘reshuffled familiarity’, whereby known elements are arranged into new combinations that are unsettling. A monster subverts the natural order, and its death at the hand of a hero indicates the beginning of civilisation, in which reason prevails. It is thanks to his methis (‘reason’) that the hero overcomes the forces of nature.

Crete is where some of the oldest and most potent of the Greek myths originated. It is the place where the Minotaur lived in his labyrinth and the home of other monsters. An image of the Griffin, a keeper of treasures with the head of a fiery-eyed eagle and the body of a feline with wings, is painted on the walls of the palace of Knossos. An early image of griffins, together with winged sphinxes, was already known from carved ivories from the 8th century BC found in Nimrud. As symbols of death and rebirth, griffins became popular in the Greek colonies of Italy and Etruria,

14. Hydria (ceramic water container) from Etruria, attributed to the Painter of Aquila, 530-500 BC. H. 44.6cm. © The J Paul Getty Museum, Villa Collection, Malibu, California.
where they decorated bronze and terracotta cauldrons (*lebete*). A large one topped with fierce griffins’ heads from the 7th-century BC (6) was found in a rich woman’s tomb at Ficiana. Another of these vessels is on show near a tomb slab, found in a 4th-century BC tomb at Paestum, that is also painted with a scene of griffins attacking a panther (5). Griffins went on to become heraldic motifs on armour, sometimes combined with a Gorgon’s head: both were symbols of imperial military power and victory over death. Griffins also became a favourite motif in Roman furniture and architectural decoration, and a huge griffin tower over an enemy in a fresco from the Villa dei Misteri in Pompeii, on display in the show.

The chief of the three Gorgons, Medusa (*‘the terrible one’* in Greek) and the only one who turned out to be mortal, had writhing snakes for hair and a look that turned her enemies to stone. She was beheaded by the hero Perseus, who used the stony stare of her severed head to help him kill the marine monster that guarded the captive Andromeda (1). The head of Medusa was used to decorate one of Emperor Caligula’s magnificent parade ships on Lake Nemi and, as a deterrent to enemies, was displayed on the temple of Venus in Rome, and in the city of Leptis Magna in Libya. Today, it is the logo of the Italian fashion-house Versace. Born in Reggio di Calabria, (once Magna Graecia), Gianni Versace collected antiquities and, according to his sister, Donatella, chose the symbol because “he thought that whoever falls in love with the Medusa can’t flee from her”.

When Medusa died, she also gave birth to Pegasus, a magnificent, pure white, winged stallion, sired by the sea god Poseidon. With the help of Athena and Poseidon, the magical mount was captured by the hero Bellerophon, who rode him while defeating the Chimera (15), a fire-breathing monster with the head and body of a lion, a second head of a goat on its back and the tail of a snake. A magnificent large bronze Chimera, which once decorated a 6th-century BC shield, is one of the show’s highlights. A friend of the Muses, Pegasus (whose name is derived from Tharros in Sardinia (9) dating from the 6th-5th century BC. Also present is the Hydra of Lerna, a many-headed reptile with venomous breath that was killed by Herakles (14). Muscular Tritons and glamorous Nereids ride sea monsters with pointed teeth and very long scaly tails, known as *ketoi* or *pistrix* (13).

Another marine monster is the very beautiful fish-tailed woman called Scylla (16), who guarded the straits of Messina and lured sailors to their deaths by distracting them so that their ships were wrecked on the rocks. All these aquatic creatures were favourite subjects in the decoration of fountains, baths and basins and in Roman mosaics, while satyrs entwined in vegetation are often seen in wall paintings, or appear as garden sculpture in the villas of the Roman Empire.

Gradually new monsters were created and the terrifying archaic beings of the deep past were transformed into merely decorative, grotesque or whimsical devices. By the time of the Renaissance the fearful, fantastic monsters of earlier centuries had been tamed and their link to archetypal primordial forces was temporarily lost.

### Monsters: Fantastic Creatures of Fear and Myth

**Exhibition**

- Monsters: Fantastic Creatures of Fear and Myth is on show at the National Museum of Rome, Palazzo Massimo alle Terme ([http://archeoroma.beniculturali.it/](http://archeoroma.beniculturali.it/)+39 06 39 96 77 00) until 1 June. The catalogue (in Italian only) is edited by R Paris, E Setari and N Giustozzi and published by Electa at €35. The admission ticket (€10), which is valid for three days, also allows entrance to the Baths of Diocletian, Palazzo Altemps and the Crypta Balbi.
When Charles Darwent digs deep he finds that the work of Giorgio de Chirico was influenced not only by his Classical roots but by one of the most avant-garde of 20th-century thinkers.

In 1966, at the age of 78, Giorgio de Chirico made a small (32cm high) sculpture in gilded bronze called *The Archaeologists*. If you are in London this spring, you can see it in a show at the Estorick Collection of Modern Italian Art, on loan from a private gallery in Bologna. The little bronze is unlikely to hold many surprises if you know your de Chiricos, however, because the artist had already made a work of the same name and subject in 1948. This is also in the show.

An earlier version of *The Archaeologists*, in coloured crayon on cardboard, was already itself something of a déjà vu. The 1948 work is the reprise of a terracotta sculpture (28cm high), which de Chirico had made eight years earlier, in 1940. And that sculpture in its turn echoed, in three dimensions, a series of paintings called *The Archaeologists* that the artist had begun in 1927.

Just to complicate matters more, *The Archaeologists* of 1966 was not the last work he made with that name and of that subject. The De Chirico Foundation in Rome owns a painting of the same image with the same title dating from 1968, when the artist had lately turned 80, and there are yet others done between then and his death, at the age of 90, in 1978.

Like all of *The Archaeologists* from 1927 on, the 1968 canvas shows two faceless figures in togas sitting on a low bench, their foreheads touching and arms resting on each other's shoulders, with fragments of Classical sculpture and...
architecture where their intestines should be. The pair had by now been appearing in de Chirico’s art—sculpture, painting and drawing—for over 40 years, and would continue to do so for another decade.

What, you may reasonably ask, is going on? To answer that, you need to rewind to a time before any of these artworks was made, to 1919 and, beyond that again, to 1888.

In the year after the end of the Great War, Giorgio de Chirico, lately turned 30, published an article, part essay and part manifesto, called *The Return to the Craft*. This ended with the ringing declaration: ‘As for me, I am calm as I dedicate myself anew with three words that I wish to be the seal of all my work: *Pictor classicus sum*.’

That last, Latin phrase – ‘I am a Classical painter’ – sent shock waves through the avant-garde art world that had worshipped de Chirico for a decade. For artists such as the Surrealists, his so-called ‘metaphysical’ works – those confections of mannequins, clocks and arched railway viaducts, which are probably the ones that still spring to mind if you hear the name ‘de Chirico’ – had a personal as well as a public meaning. Where Picasso had unearthed his past from African tribal art and Rivera from that of the Aztecs, de Chirico delved down deep into Classical antiquity.

It was, quite literally, in the earth beneath his feet. Born in 1888 to Italian parents in Volos, a sleepy port in Thessaly, he imbibed both of the great Mediterranean cultures – the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome – with the childhood air he breathed. Like those twins, *The Archaeologists*, antiquity was in his guts.

De Chirico’s *Enigma* paintings may have been prompted – or at least so he said – by a vision he had had in the Piazza Santa Croce, but he had been to art school in Athens, not in Florence. Like the basilica of Santa Croce, he was an amalgam of several antiquities, not the product of

*Minerva* March/April 2014
Exhibition

just one. As the architects of the Florentine church had done through the ages, he built on what he found.

So there were two parallel archaeologies going on in de Chirico’s work after the Great War, a cultural one and a personal one.

Look at any of the pre-war Enigma paintings and you may wonder what he was on about when he wrote of a return to Classicism. His paintings before 1919 had already been deeply Classical, even if idiosyncratically so.

De Chirico’s pictorial language had always been one of arches and colonnades, fluted columns, Graeco-Roman statues on plinths. The colour sense and composition of his pre-war work hark back to Greece and Rome via the Renaissance, even if his bending of Alberti’s rules is always, and intentionally, odd: vanishing points that are just too low, perspective lines too flat, shadows implausibly long, colours a shade too acid. It is an art that is Classical, but in a subversively Modern way.

So what was this more literal Classicism the post-war de Chirico now claimed to be going back to? In what sense had he suddenly become a pictor classicus? The work in the Estorick Collection’s show offers several answers to that question.

First, as the title of his 1919 article suggested, there was a return to craft. Until that date, de Chirico’s work had been almost entirely in oil paint on canvas, hardly a Classical mode. After 1919, he began to experiment with other ways of making, notably sculpting in such resolutely un-Modern materials as terracotta and bronze. When de Chirico painted post-war, it was often in the archaic medium of egg tempera rather than oils.

As to his subjects, the titles of the works: Castor, Hermes, Hector and Andromache, Hippolytus (Greek Ephebe on Horseback), Achilles on the Shore of the Aegean Sea – tell their own story.

Surrealists who had once worshipped de Chirico as the ultimate one-off, the most modern of all the Moderns, threw up their hands in horror.

But were they right to do so? At the heart of de Chirico’s newly Classicised work was a text that had been published not in 501 BC but in AD 1901: Sigmund Freud’s The Psychopathology of Everyday Life. Even in 1919, it was hard to think of a book more fearsomely avant-garde – indeed, to think of the post-war avant-garde as existing without Freud. The Viennese master, too, had squared the circle between ancient and modern, using archaeology as a metaphor for his exploration of the mind. The uncovering of buried fragments was crucial to Freudian psychoanalytic theory, as were ideas of surface and depth, the hidden and the revealed, the broken and the whole.

An aesthete as well as a scientist, Freud collected antique artefacts as
psychoanalytic object lessons. When he looked for an explanation of the relationship between the ego and the id, he turned to the Hellenistic sculpture of a rider that he owned: ‘It is like a man on horseback, who has to hold in check the superior strength of the horse,’ Freud wrote of his newly minted mind.

De Chirico, similarly, put the ancient to modern use. In his pre-war work, the figure of the mannequin – a faceless, standardised Everyman – had stood in for what the Surrealists would later call l’homme moyen sensuel: roughly, ‘the average bloke’. This disturbing figure did not disappear after 1919, but it did acquire a name, or rather a series of names.

Sometimes these were generic – The Archaeologists, The Great Metaphysician, The Disquieting Muses in its numerous forms are all mannequins – but often they were specific. Hector and Andromache, for example who, despite being named after characters in the Iliad, appear in de Chirico’s 1942 painting as a pair of shop dummies armoured with set squares and other symbols from the painter’s pictorial arsenal.

What de Chirico seems to be doing here is to reinvent Homer’s mythical hero and heroine as human archetypes rather than as specific characters. That process, too, had a good Freudian provenance – think of the Oedipus complex, the myth of Laius and Oedipus universalised into the story of all fathers and sons. The relationship of brother to brother held a special appeal for Giorgio de Chirico, who was inseparable in childhood from his brother, Andrea, three years his junior.

Andrea (pseudonymously famous in later life as the writer, painter, and composer Alberto Savinio) had always been more like a twin brother to Giorgio than a younger sibling. To make the point, both brothers chose to identify themselves in their work with the twin sons of Leda, the Dioscuri, Castor and Pollux.

Like the de Chirico brothers, the Dioscuri were Thessalonian. Like them, too, they had to leave home to find fame, Castor and Pollux signing up with the Argonauts, Giorgio and Andrea moving to Rome. In 1973, two decades after his younger brother’s early death, Giorgio de Chirico made an oddly lonely little mannequin-warrior sculpture in silvered bronze, also on loan from Bologna to the Estorick Collection’s show. It is called, simply and rather sadly, Castor.

As you walk around Giorgio de Chirico: Man and Myth, in other words, you might usefully muse on the show’s title. The fate of myth-makers, from Homer on, has been to be mythologised. De Chirico may have dealt in myths, but he also became the subject of them.

We remember his earlier work better than his later in large part because the Surrealists insisted we should, and that insistence was based on a misunderstanding. To be old is not the same thing, necessarily, as to be old-fashioned.

In an essay called Statues, Furniture and Generals written in 1927, Giorgio de Chirico had this to say about the way Classical sculpture had traditionally been shown. ‘We have long grown accustomed to seeing statues in museums,’ he wrote. ‘To discover newer and more mysterious aspects, we must have access to new combinations’. What was needed, he said, was sculpture that sat in armchairs or leaned out of windows – rather than simply standing on plinths. It is a very subversive idea, and a very modern one.
Inside a Stone

The Rolling Stones’ former bass-player Bill Wyman talks to Mark Merrony about his passion for archaeology and history and how it developed

Were you interested in archaeology and history from an early age? As a kid I used to go around my local area with a little Brownie box camera, taking photos of buildings, but there weren’t many ancient ruins in South London – so the bombing during the War. But, later, when I went out into the countryside and first started to travel, I used to visit ruins and take photographs of them. Then, when I bought a house in Suffolk in the Sixties, I visited the ruins of the old abbey in Bury St Edmunds, which are fantastic. I also used to read about early cultures: the Incas, Aztecs, ancient Egyptians, Aborigines, American Indians, the Norse gods and the Icelandic Sagas. In the early Sixties I also read books about early cultures: the Incas, Aztecs, ancient Egyptians, Aborigines, American Indians, the Norse gods and the Icelandic Sagas. In the early Sixties I also read books like Worlds in Collision, Ages in Chaos and Earth in Upheaval by Velikovsky – they were fantastic. Then I went on to those rather silly books Chariots of the Gods, Return to the Stars and The Gold of the Gods by Erich von Daniken. At first I thought they were quite good, then I realised that they were pseudo and I found more sensible books about archaeology.

What made you decide to leave the Rolling Stones after all that time together? I left because I wanted to do all the things I had not had the chance to do during 30 years with the band. When the Stones started in 1964 we all thought that we would last a maximum of two or three years, which was normal in those days. We used to sit around in clubs – us, the Beatles, the Hollies and the Animals – and say, ‘How long do you think it’s going to last? Another year if we’re lucky, maybe two?’

That’s the way it was. So I put everything – all my other interests – on the back burner. I thought, I’ll do three or four years in the band, then I can do all the other things I want to do, like photography, maybe write books and do some archaeology and learn more about astronomy. But when I looked around, it was 30 years later, I was in my late 40s and I hadn’t done any of those things. I actually left the Rolling Stones in 1991 but they refused to accept it until 1993.

It was in 1991 that I started to use a metal detector for the first time. It was at my house in Suffolk [Gedding Hall, the 15th-century manor house, near Bury St Edmunds, that Bill bought in 1968]. Some workmen who had come to repair frozen pipes came knocking at my door and said, ‘Mr Wyman, we’ve just found this. Do you want it or shall we throw it away?’ It was a glazed pot, a drinking vessel with a handle, complete with just a chip. I said I wanted it, then I sent it to Ipswich Museum. When they told me it was a 16th-century water jug, I thought, blimey, there must be more things like that buried in the ground around here. That’s when I bought a metal detector. The first thing I found was a French jeton from the 1300s. I thought it was a coin at first – because I wasn’t experienced then, I sent everything to the museum. I learned very quickly after that, I thought, this is fantastic, and that’s when I started to get into it.

If you had not become a rock star what do you think you might have done instead? If I had not joined the Stones I would have ended up being a museum curator or somebody who worked in a library, because I love researching. I like digging out old information. For example, I’ve found out that the De Geddings lived in my house, Gedding Hall, from the mid-1100s to the mid-1300s, then the Chamberlains were there for 250 years – all lords and knights – and after them, came the Buckingham family. The De Geddings are named after the village of Gedding. I had always thought that the village was named after the people. Then I learned that they were named after the village. They didn’t have surnames in those days – Johann de Gedding, for example. Then the De Geddings just disappeared in the middle of the 1300s. The last reference to any of them is in 1348, then there’s a 30-year gap until the next owners, the Chamberlains, bought the manor and the lordship. So I wondered, where did the De Geddings go?

Suddenly, it came to me – ding – the Black Death, 1348 to ‘49. It was like being Sherlock Holmes. It’s obvious the Black Death wiped them all out and they would all have been buried in a mass grave. It was 30 years before anybody dared to come near the Hall again, and some villages disappeared because people just didn’t go there any more. I found the mass grave next door after I bought a cottage in front of the church in the next field. I was having it renovated. It didn’t have foundations, because it was built in 1580, so we had to put them in, and when we dug down about four feet we found some skulls. I realised it had been built above the grave and

The grounds of Bill Wyman’s beautiful Suffolk home, 15th-century Gedding Hall, near Bury St Edmunds, proved a rich hunting ground for archaeological finds.
guessed it was medieval, so I sent some of the remains to the museum to be examined. They confirmed the date and said, ‘You can keep them.’ But I said, ‘No thanks!’ Then I got the local priest to rebury them in the regular graveyard of the church. It was the only thing to do, really.

What is the most interesting find you have unearthed in Suffolk?
There have been lots of interesting things, but finding the robber’s hoard was really great. It was behind the church in Rushbrooke, a village about three miles from my home. I got a signal, went down about an inch and found a little Elizabethan coin, a nice little penny in quite good condition. So I went to cover the hole and I thought, no, you’d better check again, and got another signal. I brushed more earth away and found a similar coin, an Elizabethan groat, a boy bishop token, and a seal from the 1500s. I put them all in my pouch, went on another foot and got another signal. It was a curved piece of copper, V-shaped with holes. I knew exactly what it was – a bar that was used in the bottom of purses. Obviously a guy had stolen this purse and buried it. Over the years the purse had disintegrated and the bar had been moved by a plough. When I sent it to the museum, they confirmed that this was from a hoard that had been buried by a robber. He had no doubt been sent to jail, where he died, and so he never retrieved it, which was often the case.

I discovered a Roman site in our village, and found pottery, Roman locks, brooches – a beautiful lady’s brooch with a lion pouncing, inlaid with blue enamel. That was a rare find. I’ve also uncovered about 300 coins, including a few Iron Age bronze coins, and a silver one, which was fantastic, and some Roman coins dated about AD 20.

One had the names of King Cunobeline [after whom Shakespeare’s play Cymbeline is named] and his father Tasciovanus on it – they were kings of the tribes in Suffolk, the ‘Southfolk’. They were friends with the Romans, unlike Boudicca’s people, the Iceni in Norfolk. Then there was a half noble of Edward III dated 1360 or 1361. That was a great find – and it was only an inch below the surface. Ipswich Museum told me that with a half noble, you could have paid a man-at-arms to protect you for a whole year – that’s how valuable the coin was.

You patented your own metal detector. How is it different from other detectors?
I made it for children originally, and also for older people. Most metal detectors are heavy. You get quite tired if you’re not used to using them because you have to keep swinging your arms all the time. So I asked C-Scope to make a lightweight model, a sort of miniature version but still a pretty good detector, with just three simple controls.
**Interview**

**Do you support the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS)?**

I used to be involved with PAS quite a lot and go to their identification days in Cambridge. There would be tables with the experts sitting at them and people used to bring in their finds and they would tell them what they were. Of course, a lot of my finds have gone into the Portable Antiquities Scheme. Instead of everything being separate, now when someone finds something in Northumberland or wherever, anyone can go on to the website and see what it is and where it was found. PAS also brings out an annual report – I’ve got the whole series listing all the finds. When I wrote *Bill Wyman’s Treasure Islands* [2005], I needed to have all that information.

**Apart from Britain, what other countries, ancient cultures and objects have caught your interest?**

David Rohl, who was digging in Egypt, once asked me if I’d like to join him, but by that time I had given up flying and I couldn’t do it. So he sent me full details of the site and a piece of pottery, part of a perfume jar from the dressing room of that famous Egyptian lady, Nefertiti. He said, ‘You’re only the third person to touch this, because she dropped it, I picked it up, and now you’ve got it.’ David also showed me maps of how the ancient Egyptians had laid out the pyramids [at Giza] in the shape of Orion’s Belt. That’s extraordinary. And it’s not only the three pyramids – which are two on a level and one just up a bit, exactly like the belt of Orion – but all of the other stars around fit exactly with the other ancient sites.

Another place that fascinates me is Easter Island. They’ve just discovered something about all those giant heads. They’ve excavated and found that the stones go down twice as deep underground as they are above the surface. It looks like they’re just sitting on the ground but they go right down deep.

Some years ago I went to the National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City and spent the day there. It’s the most extraordinary place, because it has all the Inca and Aztec stuff, all the great calendars.

When I was on tour with my band, the Rhythm Kings, playing in Carlisle and Newcastle, I had a day off and went with some experts up on to the moors, to see these huge boulders with carved circles – all Stone Age – and that was really interesting.

There’s also a place in the south-east of France – the Valley of the Merveilles – that’s supposed to be one of the most extraordinary places, full of Bronze Age carvings.

As for objects, if there is one particular thing, it has to be the Rosetta Stone, which was amazingly important because it’s got the Greek and Egyptian [demotic] inscriptions, and this meant they were able to translate the hieroglyphs.

‘If I hadn’t joined the Stones I would have ended up being a museum curator or somebody who worked in a library, because I love researching’

**Apart from touring with your band, the Rhythm Kings, what else do you have planned for the future?**

I’m going to publish a book on the history of Gedding Hall which takes in archaeology, because I’ve found so much stuff in the grounds and around the area. I’m using the finds to illustrate the book and I’m getting to the very end of it now. But every time I think it’s finished I find something else. A few years ago I thought, now I can find a publisher and that’s it. Then we found a place in a nearby field where they made the bricks for my house, a 15th-century brick kiln, so we had to open that up. I got an expert in from Bury St Edmunds. He took some of the bricks back to my house and we measured them on the wall and they were exactly the same. So we know that’s where the bricks were made to build my house in the 1480s. The De Geddings, the Chamberlains and the Buckinghamhs are the main three families who lived there. I’ve got their crests in the stained-glass windows and linenfold panelling and other oak panelling dating from the 1700s to the 1800s. The windows, which still have their handmade catches, are triangular, with diamond-shaped panes of stained glass, and when the sun shines through them all the different coloured light – blue, pink, yellow, green – is reflected through into the house.

I think we still have primeval senses that are not acknowledged by science. I do have a very warm feeling about being part of nature. When I go out detecting in the fields in Suffolk and want a rest, I go sit by a hedgerow, have my flask of tea, and listen to the birds sing and maybe pick a few blackberries. Then I feel I am part of nature, rather than being religious. It’s a natural spirituality – that’s the only way I can explain it.

For more about Bill Wyman, including tour dates for the Rhythm Kings, visit billwyman.com/; for details of his metal detector visit www.billwymandetector.com

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A Roman silver skyphos with a chariot race scene, 2nd - early 3rd century

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What purpose do our national saints serve today? Do they have a role in the 21st century, or are they simply an anachronism? Perhaps, like so many other feast days, a national saint’s patronal day is now, at best, a good excuse for a knees-up, denuded of meaning and any understanding of the saint’s life and works. St Patrick’s Day (17 March), a public holiday in Ireland, is a good-natured, often inebriated celebration of all things Irish; and St David’s Day on 1 March is a public holiday in Wales. St Andrew’s Day festivities seem to become more expansive every year, and this year’s referendum on independence for Scotland may make 30 November 2014 a particularly significant event for Scottish nationalists. Yet in England, St George’s Day, April 23, is still quite a low-key affair, especially as his flag is still associated with the more unsavoury aspects of English nationalism, and the average citizen knows very little about their current patron saint beyond his dragon-slaying abilities.

The role of our national saints is worth exploring further, particularly in England, where a campaign is under way to reinstate St Edmund as our rightful patron saint. That’s right – reinstate. Within 20 years of his death in 869, King Alfred declared Edmund England’s first patron saint. At his peak he was one of the country’s most popular martyrs. But in the 14th and 15th centuries a new saint gained traction, namely St George, and St Edmund was ousted and, over time, all but forgotten.

One might argue that St George satisfies the brief for national saint as well as any other, so why seek a replacement? But if England is going to have a patron saint, then let it be one who embodies noble, inspirational qualities and, more importantly, is actually linked to the country. Not in an unpleasant nationalistic way, but one that gives patron-sainthood true context and meaning.

To explain why Edmund is the right and proper candidate, we must investigate the story of his life and death. Born in approximately 841 and crowned in 855 at the age of 14, he was probably the last native East Anglian king, ending a line that began with Wehha, legendary founder of the Wuffinga royal line, a dynasty made famous by the magnificent Anglo-Saxon ship...
burial at Sutton Hoo. Ruling for over a decade, Edmund is described by his chronicler as a model king. His ‘fitness to rule, eloquence, manly beauty and quiet devotion were coupled with his eschewing of all vain arrogance; his character coupled the cunning of serpents with the harmlessness of doves. He took generous care of his kingdom and people. He embodied the right balance of the Good and the Beautiful, the combination of virtues that could create the perfect nobleman.’ He was in every sense an ideal ruler.

Yet his rule was blighted by the incursions of the ‘Great Heathen Army’ of the Vikings into East Anglia. Edmund did what he could to either appease or repel the invaders, and had some success at first. But the Danes, unsurprisingly, persisted. Their Great Heathen Army was met by Edmund’s forces on a few occasions, with victories on either side. But the decisive blow was struck in a final battle at Thetford, once a stronghold of the great Iceni queen Boudicca.

Defeated, the East Anglian army withdrew, and the Danes issued terms for surrender. Consulting his bishop, Edmund declared: ‘I would rather die fighting so that my people might continue to possess their native land.’ The bishop advised Edmund either to flee or submit, but the king asserted that ‘it was never my way to flee. I would rather die for my country if I need to.’

So the young king, then 29, was brought before the Danish leaders and tortured. He was tied to an oak tree – thought to have been in Hoxne – and scourged, shot with arrows and speared with javelins until he was covered with missiles ‘like the bristles of a hedgehog’. Finally, he was beheaded. In this act, Edmund became a willing sacrifice; he gave his life for his people and kingdom – an example of selflessness regrettably absent in most leaders throughout history. The departing Danes left his body and discarded his head in woodland. According to folklore, it was shortly after this that a miraculous series of events took place.

Edmund’s men began the process of searching for the body and decapitated head. They found the former, but the latter caused them to track deep into the woods. They called out, ‘Where are you now, friend?’ And, in response, a voice cried, ‘Here, here, here.’ They rushed to the source and found Edmund’s head, still capable of speech, clasped between the paws of a great wolf. They took the head, and the guardian-wolf followed them until both parts of the corpse were safe, then it loped back into the woods. The head then became miraculously reunited with the body.

Edmund’s body was first installed in a simple wooden church nearby, before later being moved to the abbey at Bury St Edmunds (then known as Bedericsgueord). At this point the body was disinterred and, according to legend, ‘was entirely fresh as if he were alive, with an uncorrupted body, and his neck, which had been cut through, was healed. There was as it were a silken thread about his red neck, as an indication to the world how he was slain.’

Over time, as both the abbey and the shrine grew, Edmund became associated with miracles of fertility, protection and justice. His reputation for meting out supernatural retribution was fearsome. One of his legends tells how, 145 years after his death, Edmund finally exacted revenge on his Viking murderers. Sweyn Forkbeard was king of the Danes and, following his successful invasion, became king of England as well. He visited Bury St Edmunds in 1014, demanding tax from the lands of the abbey, and threatening to burn the town. The townfolk refused to pay, instead beseeching St Edmund to protect them. Then a monk named Ailwin, who daily attended to the saint’s corpse, had a vision in which St Edmund complained about Sweyn’s treatment of his people. Ailwin communicated this message to Sweyn, who responded with a vulgar and insolent reply. The next day, Sweyn was found fatally stabbed by an anonymous assassin using Edmund’s own dagger.

After this, the cult of Edmund gained popularity even among those Danes who settled in the area of Viking control in England known as the Danelaw. Some 2,000 coins were minted in his memory bearing the inscription ‘sce eadmund rex’ (‘O St Edmund the King!’). An
sacred sites and, for a time, its most popular till the shrine of St Thomas Becket (1118-1170) in Canterbury edged ahead. By this time Edmund had been England’s patron saint for 450 years. It was a combination of fashion and politics that persuaded Edward III to replace St Edmund with St George in the early 1350s. Fresh from military victories in France, the king followed a trend among European royalty and established a fraternal order of knights based on Arthurian mythology and conforming to chivalric codes. The purpose of the Most Noble Order of the Garter was to establish close and enduring bonds between the king and his most loyal subjects, bound by oaths of allegiance.

A patron saint was needed for this elite, aristocratic society, and St George, who was already a patron of knights and noble action, was deemed appropriate. But he had no connection with England. St George was a martyred 3rd-century Byzantine soldier popular among Crusaders. He never set foot in Britain. At the time he was also patron saint of Germany, Armenia, Portugal and Ethiopia, and the stories of his life had little basis in fact. It was exactly his non-specific profile that made St George a suitable candidate for patron saint. He united English and French nobles and, his dragon-slaying represented chivalric virtue and the victory of good over evil. His popularity was established as our national saint when Henry V famously invoked St George at the battle of Agincourt (1415) although, ironically, the English army still carried St Edmund’s war banner, which was regarded as a powerful relic.

The campaign to reinstate St Edmund as our patron saint and his saint’s day on 20 November, calls for a 21st-century reassessment of the role of national saints in general, and of St George in particular. From a theological perspective national patrons, like all saints, perform the function of a ‘heavenly advocate’, petitioning the Almighty and mediating between Him and His earthly subjects. The patron should also embody qualities held in high esteem by the nation.

Edmund was a native Englishman, much loved by his people, an exemplar of the office of sacred kingship, a Christian and a martyr – unlike St George in almost every respect. And in contrast to Edward III and his kin, who often acted against the good of their subjects, Edmund united his people in loyalty to both king and country. Edmund’s story represents the continuity of sacred kingship, linking pre-Christian and Celtic practices with Germanic ideas. His relationship with Bury St Edmunds and the East Anglian landscape reveals a fundamental mystery at the heart of those traditions. But these revelations confirm his significance and status as a divine sentinel-king in the style of other national heroes.

So on St George’s Day, 23 April, take a moment to consider whether a foreign saint, who was chosen as the figurehead for a kind of 14th-century Bullingdon Club, truly represents England’s best interests. In these times of rampant corruption, cynicism, austerity, amorality, loss of identity and community, the collapse of institutional authority, and spiritual malaise, St Edmund is needed more than ever: as a beacon of justice for the population, and a salutary reminder to those who rule us of their proper responsibilities.

• Edmund: The Untold Story of the Martyr King and His Kingdom by Mark Taylor is published in paperback by Fordaro at £7.99, £1.53/$2.45 for the Kindle edition.
• For more on St Edmund and the ancient sites in Suffolk connected with him visit www.secretsuffolk.com and www.fordaro.com
It is appropriate that a Viking-age sword from Denmark should summon visitors to the British Museum’s new exhibition and that a Viking warship is positioned centre stage as its ‘connecting icon’. Vikings: Life and Legend, which opens in their brand-new Sainsbury Exhibitions Gallery on 6 March, is the first of its kind at the British Museum since 1980.

It has been developed in collaboration with the National Museum of Denmark (Copenhagen), where it was on display last year, and the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (National Museums in Berlin), to where it will travel in the autumn. So it is that ‘Ships’ and ‘Warfare’ are two of the five main themes of the exhibition; but the ship also provides the links to its other three sections. Ships obviously enough lie behind ‘Contacts & Exchange’, and their ownership is a reflection of ‘Power & Aristocracy’, while they feature, too, as vehicles to transport the dead, in the final section, ‘Belief & Ritual’, which charts the Vikings’ conversion from paganism to Christianity.

Discovered in 1997, the Viking longship at the heart of Vikings: Life and Legend – newly conserved and on display for the first time – is the largest ever found, with a reconstructed length of more than 37 metres. Scientific examination of its oak timbers has established that this warship was built in southeastern Norway around 1025, although it ended its life in Roskilde fjord in Denmark in the mid-11th century – in the harbour of a Viking-age royal town. However, it has also been determined that sometime before then (but after the year 1039), one of its planks had been replaced in a repair at an unknown site in the Baltic area.

In fact, only about 20 per cent of the original vessel survives, but this includes almost all of its 32-metre-long keel, which now sits in a striking metal framework that develops its overall lines, so that the visitor can appreciate its full extent. Nevertheless some imagination is required to recreate the original longship in all its former glory, given that when it was deliberately sunk it had been stripped of its mast, sail, rigging and other fittings. However, some small-scale exhibits, such as a Danish ship-shaped brooch and a ‘dragon-headed’ pin (which might be likened to a decorated ship’s prow), are there to assist the viewer – together with a glittering
weather-vane from Norway. This Roskilde longship would have been propelled by 39 or 40 pairs of oars. It was a military vessel built for one of the great leaders of the Viking Age in Norway or Denmark – an earl or perhaps even the king himself.

This was the period when the Danish king Cnut the Great ruled from England over a North Sea empire (1018-35). By then the Anglo-Saxons had long experience of the Vikings, both as warriors and as settlers, along with the rest of the inhabitants of Britain and Ireland.

No written sources record the Scandinavian settlement of Scotland, although archaeological evidence from the Northern Isles (Orkney and Shetland) suggests that, following a couple of generations of Viking raids from western Norway, it took place towards the middle of the 9th century. The earliest known attack, in 795, was on the famous island monastery of Iona, off the west coast, which would be raided again and again – in 802, 806 and 826.

Excavations in the Northern Isles have demonstrated that land seizure there was undertaken forcibly, resulting in the total renaming of the landscape, an estimated 99 per cent of the place names being of Norse origin. Orkney has good natural resources (other than a lack of timber), and its pivotal position on the western Viking sea routes – to the Irish Sea and across the North Atlantic – resulted in its becoming the seat of a Norse earldom.

Scandinavian settlers spread southwards through the Western Isles (the Hebrides), which provided a protected sailing route to what were to become the Viking kingdoms of Dublin and the Isle of Man. Although the Hebrides were ruled by the Orkney earls, it is not surprising that they later came under the control of the Norse kings of Man, whose overlordship continued until 1266, when the kingdom of Man and the Isles was ceded to Alexander III of Scotland. Orkney and Shetland, however, remained under Norwegian sovereignty for a further two centuries.

The Irish annals record many Viking raids on the island's monasteries, beginning, as in Scotland, in 795. At first, they were concentrated around the coast, but soon Ireland's rivers were being used to access the wealth of its interior. From about 840 Viking fleets began to make use of winter bases instead of returning to their homelands – a development that formed the prelude to permanent settlement.

However, the Irish were mostly successful in preventing large-scale land-taking, so the Vikings were confined to a few centres around its eastern, southern and south-western shores, several of which developed into flourishing manufacturing and trading centres. The most successful of all was Dublin – the capital of a Viking kingdom that lasted until the Anglo-Norman invasion of 1169-70. The main Viking legacy
in Ireland was the development of urbanism, supported by external trade, in contrast to the pattern of Scandinavian settlement in Scotland, which was one of dispersed farmsteads.

The Isle of Man was taken by the Vikings around 900 – at about the same time as the Scandinavian settlement of south-west Scotland and north-west England. The pagan Viking graves in these areas date mainly from the early 10th century, with the invaders soon converting to Christianity, witnessed by the crosses and cross-slabs erected to commemorate their dead.

Elsewhere in Britain, documentary sources indicate that Vikings were already active in the English Channel in the late 9th century, but the first recorded raid on an Anglo-Saxon kingdom was in 793 – on the island monastery of Lindisfarne, off the coast of Northumbria. The raiders who returned the following year were defeated, after which the Anglo-Saxons appear to have been left more or less in peace until 835.

The first overwintering of a Viking force took place in 850-51, when the island of Thanet (off the coast of Kent) was occupied, marking an escalation in the conflict between the English and the Danes. The next turning point came in 865, when ‘a Great Heathen Army’ established itself in the east of England, defeating the East Anglian forces at Thetford in 869 and executing their king, Edmund, who subsequently became a martyr. There followed a series of campaigns involving a new winter base each year, including the Mercian monastery of Repton, in Derbyshire, which they fortified for use in 873-4. This systematic ravaging of the countryside continued until one of the Danish leaders, Halfdan, and his men ‘shared out the land of the Northumbrians, and they proceeded to plough and to support themselves’ in 876.

This phase of Danish conquest and settlement in England concluded in a treaty drawn up between King Alfred of Wessex and the Danish king Guthrum, soon after 879-80. This settled the boundary between what was left of ‘English’ England and what was later to become known as the Danelaw. The most important of the Danish territories in the north and east of England was the Viking kingdom of York, and this was the last part of the Danelaw to be taken back under English control, when Erik Bloodaxe was driven out and killed in 954.

After this, the previously separate Anglo-Saxon kingdoms were united under one English king, at least until the Danish conquest at the beginning of the 11th century – and the establishment of the North Sea empire of Cnut the Great, who died in 1035. The subsequent return to the throne of an Anglo-Saxon dynasty was short-lived, for it ended with invasion in 1066 by Duke William of Normandy, and the death of King Harold at the Battle of Hastings.

During the late 9th and early 10th centuries, the Danes who had settled in England established their own political and administrative structures, so that the later term Danelaw was one with real meaning. In the process, however, they integrated in other ways. They quite
rapidly converted to Christianity, for example, and adjusted to the prevailing monetary economy, soon striking their own coins.

Major archaeological excavations in York have shown how this important town was reorganised and expanded under Viking rule, and the same applies to the so-called ‘Five Boroughs’ in central England (Lincoln, Stamford, Nottingham, Derby and Leicester), as well as to Thetford and Norwich, in the kingdom of East Anglia. So the Danelaw experienced a period of increased prosperity through manufacturing and trade (both internal and external). Although we cannot determine the scale and intensity of this Danish settlement, numerous Scandinavian place names remain to reflect their presence in the land – just as the English language itself was permanently enriched by the influence of the Danish tongue.

The exhibits in Vikings: Life and Legend relating to the Vikings in Britain and Ireland – from skeletons and silver hoards to ‘berserker’ Lewis chess pieces and a Valkyrie pendant – will doubtless resonate most strongly with many visitors, but they form only a small part of what is on display from the Viking world. Do not go to the exhibition expecting to see evidence for the further westward expansion, such as the Norse exploration of the North Atlantic and their settlement of the Faroe Islands, Iceland and Greenland (or for their forays into North America).

Similarly, the ‘Life’ section concerns not the ordinary daily life of the Vikings at home – that of the farmer and fisherman, the housewife and crafterperson – but rather that of the warrior, raider and trader. Assorted weaponry thus features strongly, and not just

the purely functional – for there are swords, spears and axes with inlaid decoration of precious metal. A chieftain’s weapons, though intended to impress, could still be used to kill someone.

To cut a fine figure was expected of a successful Viking, and this exhibition contains many artefacts containing silver and gold, especially worked into personal ornaments (such as rings) that were used for display by both men and women in their Scandinavian homelands and far beyond.

A particular strength of the show is that its curators have ensured that evidence for the Viking experience in Western Europe is balanced by that for their enterprises east of the Baltic Sea, with numerous loans of material never before seen in the UK, notably from the State Historical Museum of Moscow.

The latter includes a spectacular 10th-century silver hoard from Gnezdovo, a trading centre on the River Dnepr, described by the British Museum as highlighting ‘the combination of Scandinavian, Slavic and Middle Eastern influences which contributed to the development of the early Russian state in the Viking Age’. So, in another way, does a splendid parade axe of distinctive ‘steppe-nomadic’ type, from the Kazan region of the Central Volga area. Its blade is inlaid on one side with a ‘dragon-slaying’ design, in a manner derived from 11th-century Viking art. This is a motif drawn from the Norse legends relating to the hero Sigurd, but on its other side is a ‘tree-of-life’ design, flanked by birds, more usually associated with Byzantine Christian origins.

Vikings: Life and Legend focuses firmly on warfare and the warrior identity – there are books aplenty on their many other achievements – but now is the chance to see important Viking-age objects from Britain and Ireland in the context of finds not only from Scandinavia, but also from the eastern parts of Europe, where the Viking impact rivalled that in the West. These include many new discoveries – some made as recently as last year. ■

- Vikings: Life and Legend at the British Museum (020-7323 8000); www.britishmuseum.org/Vikings) runs from 6 March until 22 June.
- The Viking World by James Graham-Campbell is published by Frances Lincoln at £12.99.

Minerva March/April 2014
Ancient Egypt draws people to it in a way that no other civilisation can. Every reincarnated New-Ager thinks he was an ancient Egyptian, never a Greek or a Viking. In museums, kids head for the Egyptian section with its mummies, hieroglyphs and coffins. Caesar was probably fascinated as much by Egypt as he was by Cleopatra. Emperors were keen to bring obelisks back to Rome, which now has 13, more than any other city in the world, and Egyptian obelisks have also found their way to Paris, London and New York, among other places. Egyptomania has always been with us, but there have been specific events that fanned the flames.

Napoleon Bonaparte’s expedition to Egypt in 1798 gave rise to a major burst of Egyptomania in Europe. Along with his army of 40,000 soldiers, he took 150 scientists, architects, engineers and artists to record every aspect of ancient Egyptian civilisation. When they returned to France in 1801, they began to produce the Description de l’Égypte, one of the world’s great publications. In its 19 volumes, nearly 1,000 large engravings showed what Egypt’s monuments really looked like.
like. As a result furniture, dinner services and jewellery were soon being created in the Egyptian style.

Later events such as the opening of the Suez Canal and the arrival of Egyptian obelisks in London and Paris kept the frenzy going, and when New York received its obelisk in 1881, even distant America succumbed to Egyptomania. New York had been given its obelisk in 1869, but it had never been collected, as it was thought it would cost too much to transport. But when London erected her obelisk in 1878, New York, clearly suffering from obelisk envy, finally swung into action.

The wealthy businessman and philanthropist William H Vanderbilt paid Lieutenant-Commander Henry Honeychurch Gorringe of the US Navy $100,000 to bring the obelisk home. So, Gorringe bought an old Egyptian postal steamer named the Dessoug, planning to open the hull, slide the 250-ton obelisk inside the ship on cannon balls, replace the steel plates, and sail to America. But first he had to lower the monument. The mighty obelisk of Thutmose III (d. 1425 BC) stood in Alexandria, on the shores of the Mediterranean (1), on a 50-ton base that in turn stood on several steps composed of blocks of limestone and granite.

All Gorringe had to do was to remove the obelisk and take it back home, but then something unexpected happened – a metal trowel and a lead plumb bob were discovered within the debris inside the base. This convinced Gorringe, who was a Freemason, that his fellow Masons in ancient Egypt had left these items to be found by brother Masons in the future. So he decided that the base and steps were part of a Masonic monument and that they, too, must be sent to New York.

The belief that Freemasons could trace their origins back to ancient Egypt was widely accepted, and obelisks, Freemasonry and the land of the pharaohs had always been closely related. Many of America’s founding fathers, including George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, John Hancock and Paul Revere, were Masons, which is why there is a pyramid on the back of the dollar bill. In 1836, when Robert Wills designed a monument to commemorate the life of George Washington, it was in the shape of an Egyptian obelisk, symbolising America as an emerging world power while associating it with a great ancient power. On 4 July, 1848 when the cornerstone to the Washington Monument was laid, Freemasons conducted
Cleopatra’s Needle

the ceremony. Thanks to Gorringe’s influence, a similar scene would soon take place in New York.

On 19 July, 1880 the Dessoug (3) arrived with the obelisk, base and steps in its hold and, escorted by a pilot boat, docked at New York’s Fire Island. The ship was escorted to Staten Island Quarantine Station the next day and cleared to land.

When the pedestal was offloaded, it was placed on a specially built truck pulled by 16 pairs of horses (4) and taken to Central Park, where the obelisk was to be erected.

The Masons presided over the ceremony for laying the base on its foundation on 9 October, 1880, when 300 Commanders of the local Masonic lodges formed ranks on 15th Street on both sides of Fifth Avenue. They were followed by thousands of Masons, dressed in top hats, black coats, white gloves and Masonic aprons, marching north, six abreast. When the last row passed 16th Street, more Commanders and their legions joined the ranks, and so it continued until more than 8,500 Masons filled Fifth Avenue for more than a mile. At 82nd Street they turned left, entering Central Park.

On their right was the newly constructed Metropolitan Museum of Art, where a current exhibition is celebrating the arrival of Cleopatra’s Needle in New York. Behind the museum, a large deck had been constructed for the Grand Master, Grand Officers, Masters and Wardens of the lodges. Once they had taken their places on the platform, the other marchers closed ranks around them. To the south, on a grassy knoll, stood the visitors, who swelled the crowd to more than 20,000. In front of the crowd, who stepped forward to address the crowd. In his hand he held a baton specially crafted for the occasion (7). It was made of ivory inlaid with amethysts, and at one end was a beautiful gold miniature of New York’s obelisk, complete with hieroglyphs; it is currently on show in New York’s obelisk, complete with hieroglyphs; it is currently on show in the Metropolitan Museum of Arts.

He stood before the 50-ton base and declared: ‘I, Jesse B Anthony, Grand Master of Masons of the State of New York, do find this obelisk as these three brooches, circa 1880, show. They are meant to be in the form of the Egyptian vulture, but they have clearly been influenced by the American eagle, too.

The transportation of Cleopatra’s Needle to New York inspired manufacturers of sewing goods to use images connected with it to promote their merchandise.

8. J & P Coats’s trade card shows the obelisk being moved using six-cord thread on giant cotton reels.

9. On this trade card cherubs employ Corticelli thread to raise the monument.

10. Here Cleopatra threads her own needle with a needle by John English & Co.

11. Jewellery design was also influenced by the arrival of the obelisk as these three brooches, circa 1880, show. They are meant to be in the form of the Egyptian vulture, but they have clearly been influenced by the American eagle, too.

New York City’s streets. The obelisk would first have to cross the railway tracks, where trains packed with commuters ran frequently. Somehow Gorringe had to move the huge obelisk across the tracks quickly. He had a team of workers lay timbers from the boardwalk, across the tracks, and on to 96th Street. On this he would lay the iron channels that held the cannon balls on which the obelisk would roll. The wooden pathway was designed so that it could rapidly be taken apart and reassembled. For days the workers practised until they knew every timber and its place intimately. Finally, on 25 September, it was show time.

Fortunately Vanderbilt, who was paying for the obelisk to be transported, also owned the railway. His officials were instructed to stop all incoming trains at 11am. Soon after, the workmen frantically assembled the wooden path, laid the iron channels on top of it, and attached the obelisk by an enormous iron chain to one of the pile-driver’s engines that had been repositioned to pull the obelisk over the tracks.

The men had been so well prepared that the entire operation, including disassembling the iron channels and wooden path, took only one hour and 20 minutes. No passenger train was delayed, and only one freight train had to wait for 25 minutes (5).

Throughout the bitter cold of October, November and December of 1880, the obelisk moved at the rate of only one city block per
day towards its final destination in Central Park.

The last leg of the journey through the park to the pedestal was just 890 feet, but required tremendous advance preparation. The obelisk had to be lowered on to the pedestal that rested on the highest point in Central Park. This meant that it had to gain about 50 feet of elevation. Knowing this, Gorringe began in October to construct a railway trestle from Fifth Avenue to the final site of the obelisk. As workers were hauling the obelisk through the park in the freezing weather of November and December, another team was building a massive trestle out of timbers as thick as 17 inches (6).

On 28 December, just as the obelisk was to begin its journey on the trestle, a blizzard hit New York and all work was suspended for several days. When the snows finally let up, the obelisk continued its odyssey, arriving at Greywacke Knoll on 5 January, 1881. The monument was stopped when its centre of gravity was directly above the pedestal. Now all that remained was to turn it to vertical and lower it.

Gorringe had reassembled the same turning mechanism he had used in Alexandria and was confident it would work. A signal to turn the obelisk had been arranged with the workmen, so that when he raised his hand they would begin working the cables to turn the obelisk and would continue turning until he put his hand down. Gorringe raised his hand and, as the massive shaft of granite began to move effortlessly, an unnatural silence fell over the crowd. When the obelisk reached 45 degrees he lowered his hand to allow the photographer, Edward Bierstadt, to record the solemn moment and, after a brief pause, the obelisk continued turning. This broke the spell of silence and the crowd began to cheer until the obelisk was perfectly vertical above its pedestal. On completion the military band played patriotic tunes and New York had its very own obelisk.

During the 1880s merchants frequently gave their customers trade cards, the equivalent of today’s baseball cards. These colourful cards had various pictures on the front – the Taj Mahal, a Japanese pagoda, or perhaps an opera star. When you made a purchase, you were given a card that you could collect and put in an album.

Since, like its counterparts in Paris and London, the New York obelisk was known as Cleopatra’s Needle, so it was natural that companies selling sewing goods would want to create cards to commemorate it. J & P Coats, for example, produced a card showing the obelisk being towed to New York using Coats’ thread (8); on the reverse is a calendar for 1880-81. Another, one of the most inventive, is a card for Corticelli’s Spool Silk showing the obelisk being erected by cherubs using silk threads (9), while a firm which made needles, John England & Co, issued a beautiful card showing Cleopatra threading a needle that is an inverted obelisk (10).

The arrival of Cleopatra’s Needle in New York also inspired jewellery. Some women wore small silver obelisks on chains around their necks; others, brooches in the form of the Egyptian vulture, although these 19th-century pieces often looked more like American eagles (11).

Popular songs and sheet music also fell under the ancient Egyptian spell and they often featured mummies. But the mummies in these songs were not the grisly fiends later created for the cinema, instead they were usually female and the objects of romance. *Mummy Mine* (1918) was a typical example (13). My *Egyptian Mummy* (1923) laments the same concept of love lost over many centuries (14), and *At the Mummies Ball* (1921) portrays mummies as party animals (12). As late as 1959 mummy songs were still appearing, as in *I’m a Mummy* by Bob McFadden, which was recorded on an LP called Songs Our Mummy Taught Us. Bizarrely, a cover version was also released by British punk band The Fall in 1995.

Soon after Tutankhamen’s tomb was discovered in 1922, another wave of Egyptomania hit America, and sheet music appeared entitled *Old King Tut*. But when it was discovered that the ‘old’ pharaoh died as a young man, depicting him with a wrinkled face and smoking a cigar did not seem such a good idea.

Half a century later, Tutmania took America by storm once again when the Treasures of Tutankhamen exhibition toured the United States during the 1970s. Again all kinds of merchandise was produced, including *King Tut* cologne (15). In 1978, when the comedian Steve Martin and the Toot Uncommons recorded a song called *King Tut*, it sold over a million copies. It seems that from high culture to popular media, Egyptomania is hard to shake off.

* Egyptomania: Our Three Thousand Year Obsession with the Land of the Pharaohs by Bob Brier is published in hardback by Palgrave/Macmillan at £17.99
* Cleopatra’s Needle, an exhibition celebrating the obelisk in Central Park New York, is on show at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York until 8 June (www.metmuseum.org/en/exhibitions/listings/2013/cleopatras-needle).
A tour of a fish sauce factory has never been high on my holiday to-do list, but this one in central Portugal proved extremely interesting, and luckily it is some centuries since *garum*, the fish sauce so beloved of the Romans, was made there. This site is to be found on the Tróia peninsula, which is easily reached after a short drive (it is only 25 miles from Lisbon airport) to the port of Setúbal. At the beginning of the 20th century, Setúbal was the most important centre of Portugal’s fishing industry, particularly for sardines. From there we take an even shorter ferry ride, accompanied by a pair of playful bottlenose dolphins, and arrive in Tróia.

As we stroll through pine trees (*pinus pinea* – the kind that produce delicious pine-nuts) past a lagoon so sleepy that most of the boats washed up along its edge have been snoring for years, we see that this is the perfect place to site a *garum* factory. In the first half of the 1st century AD, when the Romans built their fish-salting plant here, this was an island called Alcale (it is mentioned by the Latin writer Avienus), surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean. Fish of all kinds were plentiful, boats could come and go easily, salt was produced for the process of making *garum*, and, last but not least, because the plant was out on an island, the smell of fermenting fish was kept at a distance.

In case you are wondering how to make *garum*, here is the method.

First, you select some small oily fish, remove their intestines and macerate these in salt, then leave them to ferment in the sun for one to three months. The salt, which prevents the fish guts from decaying, draws out the juices, and the *garum* – the clear liquid on top – can then be ladled off. Aromatic herbs were often added to the *garum* according to local taste. It was very nutritious and the Romans used it widely as a condiment. According to *Apicius* (a recipe collection from the late 4th to the early 5th centuries AD), the Romans added it to almost all their food. Mixed with wine, vinegar, oil and black pepper, *garum* was used to flavour a variety of dishes including boiled veal, steamed mussels, even desserts. Seneca, however, was not a fan. In
one of his letters, he writes: ‘Do you not realise that garum sociorum, that expensive bloody mass of decayed fish, consumes the stomach with its salted putrefaction?’ (Epistles 95). The sediment below, known as allec, was used by the poorest classes to flavour their staple porridge or polenta.

Tróia became the largest fish-salting plant of its time, producing garum on an industrial scale. Stored in amphorae, it could be transported by boat to Rome and to other provinces of the empire. The sauce was as popular with the Romans as tomato ketchup is with us now, and the salting plant remained in operation there until the 6th century.

At the site today you can see how the plant developed into several fish-salting factories of different sizes, with rows of vats for macerating the fish guts and – very necessary – bathhouses next door in which the workers could wash themselves and relax. The tepid room (tepidarium) and the hot one (caldarium) were heated by a hypocaust, which consisted of a chamber beneath the rooms and pools connected to a furnace that produced the heat. The hot air was channelled through a system of arches that

Lindsay Fulcher explores some of the Roman sites and standing stones of the central, less visited part of Portugal.
supported the upper floor and left through a chimney. Usually the bather would leave his clothing in a cloakroom, anoint himself with oils, pass through the tepid room and take a steam bath. Next he went on to enjoy a hot bath, then a cold one and, finally, a massage. There are also the remains of houses, a mausoleum with niches for urns, several necropolises and even an early Christian basilica.

Today, those who enjoy a dip in the briny will be glad to hear that the Tróia peninsula is fringed by many lovely sandy beaches.

Next we pay a brief visit to nearby Mírombriga to see the forum, two temples, baths, and the only example of a hippodrome in Portugal. Before driving on, we stop off to have dinner – black pig cheek and strong local red wine – in Grandola. Our overnight ranch-style accommodation is at Herdade das Barradas da Serra, a cork estate run by the same family for many generations. Wild boars are reputed to live in the area but we do not see any. And although there is a full yellow moon, no snorting or snuffling sounds disturb us during the night.

As we head off the next day, we pass plantations of half-stripped cork trees revealing bright orange barkless branches and trunks; it will be nine years before they will be denuded of their cork again.

We drive on to the south-east of Alentejo, to the hill town of Mértola, which is on the edge of the Guadiana National Park and close to the Spanish border.

Built on a vital trading route, Mértola exhibits traces of many cultures: Phoenician, Carthaginian, Roman, Visigoth, Moorish, and Christian. But it is its Moorish heritage that is especially celebrated – in an Islamic festival held every May and in its small Islamic museum.

Known to the Romans Myrtilis Iulia, Mértola was made a municipium by Emperor Augustus and, high on a hill we find an archaeological site that was indeed an ancient Roman settlement, but it has had 20 houses built on it at a later period, during the rule of the Almohad dynasty (AD 1121-1269). We see the remains of a stone-paved inner courtyard leading to a rare baptistry with mosaics depicting a pair of lions, a deer, an ostrich, a hare and various plants. There is also a mosaic showing a chimera being dispatched by either St Michael or St George – although all that indicates that the archangel or saint was in the picture is the tip of his lance and his horse’s head. In the 1980s an impressive underground cistern was also discovered here.

The following day it is time to travel north to the city of Évora, which has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site – and with good reason. Here, almost every style of architecture is in evidence – Roman, Gothic, Manueline, Renaissance, Baroque, and Neo-Classical. We make for the well-preserved Roman temple of Diana, as it is popularly known (in fact, it was dedicated to Augustus), which dates from the 1st century AD.

We also visit the rather gruesome 16th-century Chapel of Bones, whose walls and ceiling are lined
with hundreds of human skulls and thigh bones. Over the lintel of the entrance to the chapel are the chilling words: ‘We bones that are here, we are waiting for yours’.

But in the region surrounding Evora there is evidence of far more ancient human activity in the shape of dolmens, cromlechs and menhirs, some solitary and others – as at Almendres – clustered spectacularly together. Here, in this impressive megalithic enclosure, around 95 curiously ovoid monoliths cluster together in groups, like portly guests at a cocktail party. Circles and other geometrical shapes have been carved on to some of the stones but no one knows quite why or what they mean. One idea is that they are evidence that an astral cult existed here thousands of years ago, but there is no conclusive proof of this and, as recent excavation has shown that the stones are not in their original positions, it would be difficult to prove such a theory. Portugal’s Neolithic heritage is considerable – there are around 1,500 megalithic sites in Alentejo alone, including the anta-capela (dolmen-chapel) of St Dinis, an example of a pagan monument that has been Christianised.

That night, we dine and stay at the fabulous Hotel Convento do Espinheiro, which retains its gloriously Baroque gilded chapel. Next day we drive to the ‘marble town’ of Vila Viçosa (famous for its pink marble) to visit the Ducal Palace, former home of the Dukes of Braganza, the most powerful aristocratic family in the country. We also enjoy an idyllic lunch surrounded by fruiting orange trees around a gentle fountain in the cool cloister of Pousada Vila Viçosa, before moving on to the dramatic 16th-century fortress town of Elvas (another UNESCO World Heritage Site), whose walls are laid out in the shape of a star.

We spend the night in Estremoz – high up in the historic Pousada de Estremoz, a great castle built for Queen Isabel, who died here in 1336. Furnished with antiques, it is now a luxury hotel with a definite 17th- and 18th-century ambience. On our last day, we return to Lisbon as we must visit the National Archaeology Museum and see its fine collection of Roman mosaics.

FACT FILE
Sunvil Discovery (+44 (0) 20 8758 4722; www.sunvil.co.uk) offers tailor-made holidays across the Alentejo. This itinerary costs from £466pp (two sharing), including return flights from Heathrow to Lisbon with TAP Portugal (www.flytap.com), two nights at the Herdade das Barradas da Serra, one night at the Hotel Convento do Espinheiro and one night at the Pousada de Estremoz, and car hire. (For further information about the Alentejo visit www.visitalentejo.pt/en/).
It was 46 years ago that I first set eyes on the Mediterranean. Having arrived late at night at Israel’s Ben Gurion Airport, I took the bus into Tel Aviv. Someone had told me that you could sleep on the beach there and, as this was my ‘travel on five shekels a day’ period, I headed off in that direction. I did not know at the time that I had arrived in the Mediterranean’s newest city – the first to appear since medieval Tunis had revived the site of ancient Carthage.

Tel Aviv began as a garden suburb, established by Zionists on land north of Jaffa in 1909. Its name is deceptive but revelatory: ‘Tel’, or ‘tell’, the word for an ancient settlement mound in the Middle East, suggests antiquity. This was a deliberate affectation on the part of Tel Aviv’s founders. It was meant to be a reminder of the ancient presence of the Jews in this land. ‘Aviv’ referred to spring shoots in the grain fields. So Tel Aviv reflects hope,
Minerva March/April 2014

affectation, propaganda – any or all, depending on your viewpoint.

In youthful ignorance of such things I fell asleep on the warm sand, only yards from the roiling waves of the Mediterranean. At 2am I awoke, befuddled by the clatter of a helicopter overhead, its searchlight sweeping a sea far darker than wine. Armed police were all around me, peering into the waves, some wading up to their waists. Apparently they were in pursuit of some fugitive who had launched himself into the sea to escape. After about half an hour all was quiet again.

A few hours later I awoke to a very different scene: not Homer’s rosy-fingered dawn but an opalescent grey light above a sea like a still pond of mercury. On the beach I saw isolated bearded figures who rocked themselves in strange rituals; some in vert supine under spindly, iron beach showers spurting water. Israel’s first prime minister, the Polish-born David Ben-Gurion, said that he wanted a ‘Jewish Sea’. I tell this story of my first encounter with the Mediterranean to make a point: we are all accustomed to clichéd, tourism-driven images of the Mediterranean: a place of lotus-eaters and white Classical temples set against an azure sea and sky. Mostly, it’s not like that – unless you are incarcerated in a Club Méditerranée resort or on a cruise ship during the sunny season. Reality is more complicated. The Mediterranean and its coast can be ugly, aggressive, drab and rubbish-strewn, as well as heart-stoppingly beautiful. History is complex, and often confusing.

The shores of the Mediterranean have not been well served by 20th-century architects – or, more accurately, by concrete-pouring developers. Fortunately, writers have served them better. In recent years there has been a particularly active debate among historians, archaeologists, geographers and environmentalists about the Mediterranean’s identity.

The subject was given a slow, though eventually meteoric launch by one of the masterpieces of 20th-century historiography: Fernand Braudel’s The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II (published first in French in 1949, then in English to worldwide attention in 1972). This was the first book to tackle the Mediterranean as a distinctive unity and field of study. As the title implies, Braudel prioritised the land and seascape before human individuals, even one so powerful as Philip II. I remember reading the book with enormous excitement in the 1970s. As an aerial photographer and student of changing landscapes, his panoramic overview of the concept of the longue durée seemed refreshingly new – even if it was over two decades old by then.

More recently, Mediterranean studies have been given a massive boost by another powerful and heavyweight tome, The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History (2000), by medieval historian Peregrine Harden and Classicist Nicholas Purcell. They focus their attention on the thousand years or so before and after Christ, emphasising a Mediterranean triad of factors. The first is the essential fragmentation of the Mediterranean basin and the constant reworking of the multitude of regions by dynamic and adventurous humans. The second is the uncertainty of life in the Mediterranean, thanks to its uncharming deities Poseidon, Zeus and Boreas, responsible for volcanoes, earthquakes, water and wind. Yet uncertainty and risk provide inven-

2. The Classical ruins of Cyrene set amidst the uplands of the Jebel Akdar (‘green mountain’) between Benghazi and Tobruk on the coast of Libya. These ruins largely obscure the remains of the late 7th-century BC southern Aegean foundations.

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The Making of the Middle Sea: A History of the Mediterranean from the Beginning to the Emergence of the Classical World

Cyprian Broodbank

Thames & Hudson, 2013

672pp, 410 illustrations, 52 in colour

Hardback, £34.95
connectivity. Theirs is a Mediterranean of constant movement, of networks of interaction, very different to the more static Classical world, regional and rooted in the soil, presented by Moses Finlay in his influential work *The Ancient Economy* (1985).

Yet another major contribution to the subject appeared in 2011, *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean* by David Abulafia. For the Professor of Mediterranean History at Cambridge the emphasis is on ‘human’. The documented history and ‘swirling changeabilities’ of later centuries dominate the story, that of an inland sea whose greatest contribution to human history has been its intermingling of cultures. If there is a modern tragedy, it is in the leaching away of the ethnic kaleidoscope that previously existed in cities such as Alexandria, Istanbul, Salonika, Dubrovnik, Izmir or Tangier.

Many histories of the Mediterranean, both academic and popular, deal superficially with early human occupation. It is perhaps not surprising that prehistory has made little impact on the work of many historians and travel writers. Prehistory is dominated by the typologies of lithics, ceramics and metalwork; cluttered with the almost incomprehensible complexities of culture-names, bogged down in detail, yet lacking chronological precision. In 2006, when John Julius Norwich’s *The Middle Sea: A History of the Mediterranean* was published, the author put his cards on the table. Prehistory, he said, is boring. Well, it isn’t any longer. Lord Norwich should put aside a few days, as I am sure he will, to read Cyprian Broodbank’s *The Making of the Middle Sea: A History of the Mediterranean from the Beginning to the Emergence of the Classical World* (2013), whose appointment as the new Cambridge University Disney Professor of Archaeology was announced as I was writing this review.

It is worth paying attention to his carefully chosen title – *The Making of the Middle Sea* is a challenge to Braudel’s geographical determinism, where humans were trapped in a destiny in which they played little creative part. For Broodbank humanity actively makes its cultures, landscapes and history. For English readers, the title inevitably echoes W.G. Hoskins’ masterpiece *The Making of the English Landscape* (1955), although it is not mentioned, and Broodbank’s is a much more sophisticated book.

Another key word in the title is ‘history’ – notably not ‘prehistory’. In recent years the study of the pre-documentary past has been enriched by a stream of new techniques and ideas, notably from genetics and isotopic analysis and from more precise dating. The use of Bayesian statistics now means that burials, monuments, settlements and even events can be dated to within a human generation. With robust, high-precision chronologies we can reasonably claim to remove the ‘pre’ from ‘prehistory’. Another important word in Broodbank’s title is ‘Beginning’. When does the story begin for Mediterranean history? An important recent book, *Deep History: The Architecture of Past and Present*, edited by Andrew Shryock and Daniel Lord Smael (2011), argues for a multidisciplinary approach to the human past, using geology, natural history, anthropology, archaeology and linguistics to explore the huge span of time before the invention of writing. Broodbank does not reference this book, but he has certainly picked up the idea, and quotes the great Braudel, ‘never say that prehistory is not history’.

Broodbank’s Mediterranean begins 1.8 million years ago with the epic, tectonic clash of the continents of Africa and Europe, when the Mediterranean basin was a salt desert and when the Nile and the Rhone carved gorges the size of the Grand Canyon before plummeting 2,000 feet into the inhospitable saline pit.

This literally deep history is relevant, because the rise and fall of sea levels with climatic change influences the movement of plants and animals, including hominins (the group consisting of modern...
humans, extinct human species and all our immediate ancestors – including members of the genera Homo, Paranthropus and Ardipithecus). It explains why, when humans first crossed the hundred miles of sea from Catalonia to the previously isolated Balearics, in the late 3rd millennium BC, they found the unique goat-antelope Myrotagus balearicus. This is the last of the larger island bestiary of the Mediterranean, cut off by the rising sea, to survive. Within two or three centuries of the arrival of humans, Myrotagus was extinct.

This relatively minor episode in Mediterranean history encapsulates Broodbank’s approach: the changing topography and climate of the Mediterranean, the gradual colonisation by humans, first by land, confronted by a large and hostile sea over which they eventually developed some mastery, turning a hazard into a highway.

A great virtue of this book is that it consistently shifts the spotlight, usually focused with dogged persistence on Greece and Rome, Istanbul or Venice, to explore the roots of these later societies. Broodbank’s ‘barbarian’ history refuses to give primacy to the Classical. He searches the nooks and crannies of the Mediterranean, its islands, peninsulas and basins; he follows the rivers inland and the sources to rare minerals and timber. Relatively small, out-of-the-way places like Majorca are included, and Cyprus looms large (at times). Massively exotic Egypt is integrated into the Mediterranean story, when it is so often treated in isolation by its own ‘-ologists’. Broodbank’s account of the Sahara and the Nile Delta is hugely illuminating.

There is a vast amount of new data relating to the Mediterranean’s history. Most of it is hoarded in the domains of academic specialists, shamans who communicate with their own kind. In gathering this stuff together, Broodbank could easily have led us into an incomprehensible intellectual Minoan maze or sucked us into a theoretical Charybdian whirlpool. Instead he has produced a masterly synthesis, but one that leaves open further avenues of exploration and research. This is not an easy book and its 672 pages take some effort to get through but, by God, it’s readable and endlessly fascinating. It tells us about the spread of humans out of Africa, the domestication of plants and animals, the emergence of villages, cities and literacy, the development of boats and ‘those marvellous, distance-eating, bulk-shifting machines known as sailing ships’. We can observe the rise and fall of islands, communities, palaces and empires. This is grand history at its best. Broodbank skilfully navigates both the shoals and deep water. And, as the story of how human beings have been endlessly inventive in the face of huge difficulties, it allows us to feel moderately optimistic.
The aura of Roman gold

Murray Eiland gives thumbnail sketches of the emperors depicted on the stunning gold coins in the Aurora Collection, auctioned in New York earlier this year.

Tiberius, who was married to Augustus’ daughter Julia, his only biological child (39 BC–AD 14), was next on the list. After his adoption, Tiberius (1, 2) took the name Julius. Subsequent emperors continued allegiance to this blended dynasty of the two families for the next 40 years.

1. Tiberius (AD 14-37). Aureus minted in Lugdunum in AD 14-16. Laureate head of Tiberius facing right. Rev. Augustus facing right with a star above. The star clearly indicates that one man of the two is deified. Extremely fine. Sold for (hammer price) $42,500.


It is no surprise that a coin that represents the Julio-Claudian dynasty was one of the stars of the auction. Although Italy has little precious metal ore, the Julio-Claudian dynasty got off to a good start in producing gold by mining in the provinces. When Augustus invaded Hispania Tarraconensis in 25 BC, his target was well chosen, as the inhabitants mined from alluvial deposits. The Romans quickly started to extract gold, and by the 1st century AD, they began large-scale production in Spain. The site of the Roman mines, Las Médulas, near the town of Ponferrada in the region of El Bierzo (modern province of León) is now a cultural landscape protected by UNESCO but it was a bustling mining region under Roman rule.

Claudius (AD 41-54), the nephew of Tiberius, became the first Roman emperor to be born outside Italy. During his life he was under constant threat, and he killed many high-ranking Romans as a consequence. The novels of Robert Graves, 1. Claudius, and Claudius the God, did much to popularise him. His physical infirmity is well known and Graves suggests that this was the result of polio, but recent theories suggest that he had cerebral palsy or Tourette’s syndrome. However, Claudius (3) is described as tall and dignified, as he is portrayed on coins.

Nero (AD 54-68) was adopted by his great-uncle Claudius to become his heir and successor. He was the last Julio-Claudian, and after his death there was turmoil.

The so-called Year of the Four Emperors followed. Galba (AD 69), Otho (AD 69), Vitellius (AD 69) followed in quick succession, until Vespasian (AD 69-79), the emperor who founded the Flavian dynasty. Vespasian came from an equestrian family, members of which became senators during the Julio-Claudian period. He was a venerated military figure, leading the invasion of Britain in AD 43 and subjugating Judea in AD 66. Portraits show him as a powerful, thickset man with a bull neck.

Vespasian (4) was the first Roman emperor to be succeeded by his son, Titus (AD 79-81). Then followed Domitian (AD 81-96), who was the last emperor of the Flavian dynasty.

But, regarding himself as a new Augustus, Domitian became a tyrant. According to Suetonius, he demanded to be addressed as *dominus et deus* (‘master and god’).

However, Domitian is fondly regarded by coin collectors. He increased the silver purity of the *denarius* from 90% to 98% until a crisis forced devaluation to 93.5% silver. Some coins of Domitian (5) and (6) show him looking more like Vespasian, with a thick neck and strong features; while others show him looking slimmer, youthful, and decidedly more ‘August’.


Nerva (7) (AD 96-98), who was elected emperor by the Senate after the death of Domitian, promised to restore liberties suspended by Domitian – so it is no surprise that some of his coins bear rather reassuring messages. During his 15-month reign he was forced by the army to appoint a successor, and he chose a popular general, Trajan (AD 98-117).

Hadrian (8) (AD 117-138) was named emperor shortly before Trajan’s death. He was a well-known *philhellene*, which can be deduced from his portraits.


Nero was also a *philhellene*. Until this point, all the emperors were shown clean-shaven on coins. However, Hadrian started a trend, and most emperors after him (and before Constantine) were portrayed with beards. In AD 136 Hadrian was ailing, and quickly adopted Lucius Aelius (AD 136-138) as his heir, dying suddenly two years later. Coins of Aelius (9) are rare.


According to Dio Cassius, Commodus had the head of the Colossus of Nero near the Colosseum replaced by his own portrait which had a club and lion placed at its feet in a reference to Hercules and a boastful inscription ‘the only left-handed fighter to conquer 12 times 1,000 men’. After this the role of emperor lost credence. The Year of the Five Emperors showed just how weak the Roman Empire had become, for Pertinax, Didius Julianus, Pescennius Niger and Clodius Albinus all ruled in AD 193. They were followed by Septimius Severus, an excellent commander who gave his son Caracalla (AD 198-217) sound advice when he suggested on his deathbed that he and his brother Geta should pay attention to the army and forget everyone else.

12. Caracalla (AD 198-217). *Aureus* minted in Rome and struck in AD 215. Caracalla facing right. Rev. Caracalla wearing military garb sacrificing over an altar before the temple of Vesta. He is accompanied by a Pontifex wearing an apex, and a child, as well as two Vestales. Extremely fine. Sold for $80,000.

In AD 138, Hadrian adopted Antoninus Pius (AD 138-161), who in turn adopted Marcus Aurelius (AD 161-180), and Aelius’ son Lucius Verus (co-emperor with Marcus Aurelius AD 161-169), shown on coin (10). Commodus (AD 180-192) ruled as co-emperor with his father from AD 177, and slipped easily into power. He set a precedent as the only emperor to be ‘born into the purple’ during his father’s lifetime. It was clear that Marcus Aurelius fully intended his son to succeed him, despite what films such as *Gladiator* suggest. Although Commodus (11) was regarded by many as a disastrous ruler, there are few reliable records of his reign. We do know, however, that he liked to compare himself to gods and heroes.
Roman coins

Consequently when Caracalla (12) became emperor he raised the annual pay of an average legionary to 675 denarii. He also ordered that Roman currency should be devalued and the silver content of the denarius was decreased from 56.5 to 51.5%. In AD 215 he introduced the antoninus, which was a ‘double denarius’. He was keen to be seen enduring the hardships of campaign, including marching and preparing food. His portraits convey his fearsome military bearing.

His brother Geta (AD 209-212) was briefly co-ruler (13, 14) but he was murdered by Caracalla.


14. Geta (AD 209-212). Aureus minted in Rome struck in AD 210-211. Head of Geta facing right. Rev. congiarium scene with Caracalla and Geta (co-emperors) seated; before them Liberalitas stands facing left, holding a tessera and cornucopia. A small citizen climbs the steps. Distributions (congiarium) were given to citizens following the death of Septimius Severus in York in AD 211. The personification of distribution holds a coin board. Good extremely fine. Formerly owned by the famous tenor Enrico Caruso (1873-1921). Sold for $100,000.

After Caracalla followed a series of emperors all of whom had weaknesses from a Roman point of view. Macrinus (AD 217-218) was a Berber and the first emperor not to come from the senatorial class, while the scandalous sexual activities of the extravagantly named Elagabalus (AD 218-222) alienated his fellow Romans. His cousin Severus Alexander (AD 222-235) marked the end of the Severan dynastic line and the beginning of the crisis of the 3rd century that gave rise to nearly 50 years of civil war.

Trajan Decius (AD 249-251) died fighting the Goths. His wife Herennia Etruscilla (15) is portrayed on coins but very little is known about her.


During the reign of Probus (16) (AD 276-282) the Romans withdrew to the Rhine and Danube frontiers, and formed a more stable frontier with German tribes.


His son, Carus (AD 282-283), had a short reign, but successfully sacked the Sassanian capital, Ctesiphon. Carus’ son Carinus (17) (AD 283-285) was known for his debauchery. Although his name was erased from inscriptions, it has survived on coins, including some that show him as co-ruler with his brother Numerian (18).


Diocletian’s reign (19) (AD 284-305) marked the end of the crisis of the third century. Well known for his persecution of Christians, he was the only Roman emperor who retired – to modern-day Split, where he apparently enjoyed tending vegetables.


Yet it was Constantine (AD 307-337), a Christian convert, who became the next emperor. In AD 308, he introduced the solidus (20), which replaced the aureus as the standard gold coin of the empire.


Licinius I was a rival to Constantine for a time. His son, Licinius II (21) – his mother was Flavia Julia Constantia, half-sister of Constantine I – nominally served as Caesar in the Eastern Empire from AD 317 to 324, during which time, trying to secure his tenuous power, he minted coins.


Constantine’s sons ruled as Christians until the last of their dynasty, Julian the Apostate (AD 361-363), saw the light and became a follower of Helios. After Julian’s
short reign a general took power, then Valentinian I (AD 364 to 375). He is often considered the last great Western emperor. The empire would become more Christian over time, and it would also decisively divide into east and west. Galla Placidia (22) (AD 392-450), daughter of Theodosius I, was the regent for Valentinian III from AD 423 until his majority in AD 437.

Valentinian III’s sister, Justa Gratia Honoria (23), is famous for giving the Huns an excuse to invade. Her brother chose a husband for her, but he was not to her liking, so she wrote a letter to Attila the Hun. It is unclear whether she really proposed to him, but this is how Attila interpreted the letter, demanding half the Western Empire as a dowry. As a result Valentinian III exiled his sister, strenuously denying that she had proposed to the leader of the Huns.

No matter how it ended, Rome’s great empire produced many wonderful gold coins that continue to delight collectors.


* The Aurora Collection was sold on 8 January at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, during the 42nd New York International Numismatic Convention by Baldwin’s, in association with Dmitry Markov Coins and Medals and M&M Numismatics. The 70 gold coins realised $1,700,000, many selling for several times their estimates. (See http://www.baldwin.co.uk/PRNYXXXII).

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Bronze statuette of a falcon
Egypt, Late Period, 664 – 30 BC

www.rheagallery.com
Satyrs, muses, gods and princesses

Dr Jerome M Eisenberg reports on the Sotheby’s and Christie’s Antiquities Sales held in New York in December

The Antiquities Sale held at Sotheby’s New York on 12 December distinguished itself by having sold three works of art over $1,000,000 each. A unique Roman marble figure of a young satyr wearing a huge comedy mask of an elderly, bearded Silenus with his hand poking through its mouth, circa 1st century AD (H. 59.5cm), was probably uncovered in the grounds of the Villa Ludovisi of Cardinal Alessandro Ludovisi (Pope Gregory XV, 1621-23). It was first inventoried in 1623, and restorations were made to it by the prominent sculptor Alessandro Algardi five years later. It can then be traced through 200 years of various owners. By 1922 it had passed through the hands of Jacob Hirsch and has ended up in two private collections since then. The first of many publications on this remarkable sculpture appeared in 1880. The estimate of $3,000,000-$5,000,000 appeared to be a sound one, for it was sold to an anonymous buyer for $3,525,000 (£2,151,227).

A headless Roman marble archaistic caryatid figure of the Muse Melpomene holding a tragic mask, circa 2nd century AD (H. 123.2cm), was sold at the Drouot, Paris, in 1912 and later entered into French and Spanish private collections. This muse of tragedy was probably found at Thyateira, south of Istanbul. Estimated at $250,000-$350,000, it was well contested, selling for $605,000 to an anonymous bidder.

A monumental Late Hellenistic marble head of Hermes-Thoth circa 2nd century BC (H. 43.2cm), (not pictured), brought in $4,645,000 at the sale, then I was told that this sale was cancelled but was not told why.

A Roman marble portrait bust of a woman with hair in the style of Agrippina, reign of Claudius, AD 41-54 (H. 41.9cm), from an early 20th century Scottish collection, estimate $50,000-$80,000, sold for $100,000 to a European collector. However, a well-published Roman marble head of Persephone, estimated at $400,000-$600,000, failed to sell.

A large Attic black-figure amphora and lid by the Antimenes Painter or his Manner, circa 520-510 BC (H. without lid 59.5cm), depicted the Apotheosis of Herakles and on the other side Apollo playing the kithara. It sold at Christie’s London in April 2005 for $78,000 (the writer was the underbidder). It was then offered at Sotheby’s New York in...
December 2009 and sold for $290,500, well over the estimate of $120,000-$180,000. Now, with an estimate of $250,000-$350,000, a European collector purchased it for virtually the same price – $293,000.

A fine monumental (35.5cm) Egyptian diorite head of the goddess Sekhmet (1), 18th Dynasty, reign of Amenhotep III, 1390-1353 BC, originally from a private English collection, was first offered at Christie’s London in July 1977, when it sold for just £13,200. It then sold at Sotheby’s New York as part of the Jack Josephson collection in March 1984, realising $236,500. It was now properly estimated at $800,000-$1,200,000, but after intense competition it sold to the London dealer Danny Katz for a staggering $4,197,000. (Compare this to the price realised when the Cranbrook Academy of Art’s deep bust of Sekhmet was sold at Parke-Bernet in 1938 for $1,878!)

An inner anthropoid polychrome wood sarcophagus of Princess Sopdet-Em-Haawt (3), early 23rd Dynasty, late 8th century BC (H. 186.7cm), probably came from the Theban necropolis at Sheikh Abd-el Qurna and was recorded by Robert Hay between 1824 and 1834. The princess was the daughter of a Libyan king of Herakleopolis Magna. It used to be in a mid-19th-century English collection, then it was in a French one. It was estimated at only $100,000-$150,000, but perhaps the provenance drove the winning bid from an American collector up to a spectacular $1,025,000.

A large 26th Dynasty Egyptian bronze figure of an ichneumon (8), 664-525 BC. L. 22.2cm. (Lot 14: $227,000).

An Egyptian limestone relief fragment, 19th Dynasty, reign of Ramesses II, 1279-1213 BC. H. 34.3cm. L. 51.4cm. (Lot 3: $106,250).

with three figures of a person named Idu carved in sunk relief (2), early 6th Dynasty, circa 2354-2300 BC (25.7 x 66.7cm), was purchased from Mathias Komor in 1962. Estimated at $40,000-$60,000, an American dealer won it for $112,500.

An attractive 19th Dynasty polychrome relief fragment with two ladies holding respectively a bouquet of lotus flowers and a sistrum (9), reign of Ramesses II, 1279-1213 BC (34.3 x 51.4cm) was from the collection of Denys Sutton (1917-1991), editor of Apollo for about 25 years. The present condition of the piece necessitated an estimate of only $20,000-$30,000, but that did not prevent an American collector from paying $106,250 for it.

This sale consisted of only 84 lots but totalled an impressive $11,597,999 with 79.6% sold by number of lots and 95.34% sold by value.

(All prices include the buyer’s premium.)
In the saleroom Christies's New York

Getting a head of the game

The top selling antiquity at the Christie’s New York Antiquities Sale of 13 December was a life-size (H. 34.9cm) Roman basalt portrait head of the emperor Philip I (r. AD 244-249), also known as Philip the Arab (1) due to his southern Syrian birthplace of Bosra. It was consigned by an Austrian collector who had acquired it from Herbert Cahn in 1998. The estimate of $90,000-$120,000 did not deter two determined bidders from driving the winning bid up to $317,000 (£193,370).

An idealised near life-size Roman marble head of Venus (2), circa 1st century BC-1st century AD. H. 26cm. (Lot 130: $221,000).

A charming Roman life-size marble head of a young Pan, circa 1st century BC-early 2nd century AD. H. 27.9cm. (Lot 153: $155,000).

A Cycladic female marble figurine of the Early Spedos type, Early Cycladic II, circa 2600-2500 BC. H. 32.4cm. (Lot 62: $158,000).

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A large Egyptian pyriform alabaster jar, 18th Dynasty, bearing the cartouche of Tuthmosis III (r.1479-1425BC). H. 20.9cm. (Lot 7: $131,000).

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of Amun or a member of his family. It was originally owned by a 19th-century Dutch jeweller living in Cairo. Most of his collection was sold at the Drouot in Paris in May 1883, but this sarcophagus was inherited by his great-grandson RA Posno and sold by Piasa at the Drouot in September 2004 for a hammer price of €93,000. Now, following repairs, including a long split through the body of the lid, and estimated at $200,000-$300,000, it went for $221,000 to an American collector.

An 18th Dynasty pyriform alabaster jar (6) (H. 20.9cm) with the cartouche of Thutmose III (r. 1479-1425 BC) was said to be from the Tomb of Three Foreign Wives at Qurna and originally owned by the archaeologist AR Callender, who worked with Howard Carter in Luxor in 1919. He gave it to Edward S Harkness who donated it to the Minneapolis Institute of Arts in 1927. They de-accessioned it and sold it at Parke-Bernet Galleries in New York in May 1958, where it brought in just $120. Next it was sold at Sotheby Park Bernet in May 1979 for $5,060. Finally, at the Charles Pankow sale at Sotheby's New York in December 2004, it escalated to $48,000. Now, with an estimate of $60,000-$90,000, it was knocked down to a European collector with a commission bid of $131,000.

An unusually large (H. 14.6cm), rare 25th Dynasty Egyptian rock crystal alabastron (10), 712-664 BC, once owned by Wilhelm Henrich of Frankfurt in 1960, was exhibited and published in the Villa Hügel, Essen exhibition, 5000 Jahre Aegyptische Kunst, in 1961. Estimated at a mere $6,000-$8,000, probably due to its reworking in possibly the late Roman period, it was actively contested for, finally reaching a sky-high $137,000 from an American dealer.

A very rare Mesopotamian copper cuneiform tablet of the Isin-Larsa period, reign of Rim-Sin I (1822-1763 BC) (11), L. 12.1cm. (Lot 35: $900,000). With an estimate of only $40,000-$60,000, it realised $137,000 with an American telephone bid.

A large, very rare Western Asiatic inlaid chlorite feline (not pictured), estimated at $600,000-$900,000, was bought in.

In the Ancient Jewelry sale a striking and elaborate Hellenistic gold bracelet, circa 300BC (W.12.3cm), the cover piece of the separate jewellery catalogue, featured a running lion within a large openwork Herakles knot; a small seated Pan playing the pipes to its left. It was originally with Nadia Kapamadji of Florange and Ciani in 1972. It sold for $149,000, just below its estimate of $150,000-$250,000 to a European dealer.

The two sales of 319 lots realised a total of $5,811,188, with 74% sold by number of lots and just 65% sold by value. (All prices include the buyer’s premium.)
UNITED KINGDOM

BRISTOL
Jeremy Deller: English Magic
Following its critical acclaim at the British Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale last year, Jeremy Deller: English Magic reflects the artist’s interest in the diverse nature of British society and its rich cultural and political history. The exhibition interprets particular events or moments from the past, present and imagined future, and Deller weaves a narrative thread through the exhibition, which draws on such diverse elements as politics, tax evasion, the Iraq war and Ziggy Stardust. Installations include large-scale mural paintings, drawings, photographs and film, alongside historical materials and artefacts. In addition to the exhibits on display in Venice, Deller has created installations especially for this exciting new exhibition.
Bristol Museum and Art Gallery
+44 (0) 117 922 3571
(www.nms.ac.uk)
From 11 April until 22 September.

EDINBURGH
Mammoths of the Ice Age
Travelling from the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, this major exhibition explores the mysteries of the Ice Age, revealing what life was like for the iconic mammals of this era, the mammoth and the mastodon. It also explores the controversies surrounding the causes of their extinction. Expect to see exhibits such as an enormous mammoth tusk (above), which scientists have used to discover how old the animal was at the time of its death, in a similar way to rings on trees.
National Museum of Scotland
+44 (0) 30 01 23 67 89
(www.nms.ac.uk)
Until 20 April.

UNITED STATES

CHICAGO, Illinois
Nilima Sheikh: Each Night Put Kashmir in Your Dreams
This is the first solo museum exhibition of the work of one of India’s most treasured artists, Nilima Sheikh. Nine banner-like paintings focus on both the magical history and the contentious present-day state of Kashmir. While the rich and colourful paintings reveal the
cosmopolitanism of the ancient Silk Road, which linked Kashmir to Central Asia and China, they are also imbued with a contemporary perspective to encourage viewers to reflect on this contested territory.

**Art Institute of Chicago**
+1 31 24 43 36 90
(www.artic.edu)
From 8 March until 18 May.

**CLEVELAND, Ohio**

Luxuriance: Silks from Islamic Lands, 1250-1900
To mark the opening of the new Textile Gallery, this exhibition presents an exemplary collection of Islamic silks. As the textile of choice for sultans and diplomats of the Ottoman Empire, silk was a symbol of imperial status, and its history is beautifully told in this show.
The Cleveland Museum of Art
+1 21 64 21 73 50
(www.clevelandart.org)
Until 27 April.

**NEW YORK, New York**

Antonio Canova: The Seven Last Works
This show reveals a less familiar side of the revered Neo-Classical sculptor Antonio Canova (1757-1822). He is famous for his elegant nude mythological subjects carved in marble, but visitors now have the chance to see a series of full-scale plaster models that he made, showing episodes from the Old and New Testaments. They were part of a project for 32 reliefs designed to adorn the church he built he built for his home-town of Possagno in the Veneto. Sadly he completed only seven of the models (one is shown above) before his death (the church became his mausoleum) – but these, his last works, are still profoundly moving masterpieces.
The Metropolitan Museum of Art
+1 21 25 35 77 10
(www.metmuseum.org)
Until 13 April.

**WASHINGTON DC**

In Focus: Ara Güler’s Anatolia
Drawing on an archive of more than 800,000 photographs, this exhibition not only presents Ara Güler’s iconic images of Istanbul during the 1950s and 1960s, but also sheds light on lesser-known work by the renowned photographer. Travelling around Anatolia, the photographer known as ‘the eye of Istanbul’ captured medieval Seljuk and Armenian buildings such as the dreamy ruined summer palace, Ishak Pasha Palace (below left) near Dogubeyazit in Eastern Turkey. Images such as these illustrate and underline Turkey’s rich cultural history.
The Freer and Sackler Galleries
+1 20 26 94 95 00
(www.asia.si.edu)
Until 4 May.

**AUSTRALIA**

HOBART

The Red Queen
‘Now, here, you see, it takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!’ This is how the Red Queen explained to Alice how things worked in Looking-Glass land. Drawing inspiration from Lewis Carroll’s Through the Looking-Glass, this exhibition explores the impulses that drive humans to create art. The Red Queen is running in order to keep pace with the world around her, although she never actually moves from the spot where she started. This, say the curators of the show, is similar to life in the 20th century, arguing that progress is an imaginary process – as evolution has no such agenda. The exhibits, that are grouped into chapters as in the book, refer to the motivation to generate human play, language, pattern and memory.
Museum of Old and New Art
+61 03 62 77 99 99
(www.mona.net.au)
Until 21 April.

**VIENNA**

Fabergé
The work of Carl Fabergé (1846-1920), Russia’s most famous jeweller and goldsmith, is being celebrated as part of the Russian-Austrian Cultural Season at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. Fabergé was appointed court jeweller to the last tsar of Russia, Nicholas II, in 1885. With more than 160 precious objets d’art on loan from the Kremlin Museums and Moscow’s Fersman Mineralogical Museum, this exhibition displays Fabergé’s extraordinary virtuosity, while placing him in the context of the work of contemporary Russian goldsmiths. It also explores his role within the Imperial Family. Four imperial Easter eggs commissioned by the Russian royal family form the centrepiece of this glittering show.
**BELGIUM**

**BRUSSELS**

*Nautilus: Navigating Greece*

This exhibition examines the Greeks’ intimate and vital relationship with the Mediterranean through the ages. With the sea as a connecting thread, it highlights the interplay between nature, culture, identity, adventure, politics, religion and, most of all, mobility in all its forms – immigration, travel, trade, etc. A hundred ancient artefacts of different periods – from the Cycladic (3000 BC), the Minoan and Mycenaean, the Classical and Hellenic to the Graeco-Roman world (AD 200). The show features bronze and marble sculptures, coins and ceramic vessels, as well as 23 contemporary works of art including photographs, paintings and video.

**Palais des Beaux-Arts**

+32 (0) 2 507 82 11

(www.bozar.be)

Until 27 April.

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**CZECH REPUBLIC**

**PRAGUE**

*Alfons Mucha: Slav Epic*

Although the Czech artist Alfons Mucha is best known for his Art Nouveau advertisements and illustrations, this exhibition focuses on a lesser-known side of his work. *The Slav Epic (Slovanská epopej),* a series of 20 monumental canvases (the largest measuring over six by eight metres), depicts the history of the Slav people and their culture. Mucha had the idea for the work in 1899, while designing the interior of the Pavilion of Bosnia-Hercegovina, commissioned by the Austro-Hungarian government for the Paris Exhibition of 1900. Mucha travelled through the Balkans, researching their history and customs as well as observing the lives of the Southern Slavs in regions annexed by Austria-Hungary two decades earlier. Pictured (above right) is one of the 20 enchanting canvases on show.

**Narodni galerie**

+42 (0) 22 43 01 12 2

(www.ngprague.cz)

Until 31 December 2015.

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**FRANCE**

**LENS**

*Galerie du Temps*

Continuing for the next three years, this is a rotating exhibition that will offer a rare opportunity of viewing masterpieces from the Louvre in Paris spanning the last six millennia. From 3500 BC until the mid-19th century, all civilisations and artistic techniques are represented, illustrating the chronological and geographical scope of the Louvre’s Paris collections, from which all of the works have been loaned. The display has been organised into three major periods: 70 works are from antiquity (pictured below), 45 are from the Middle Ages and 90 are modern works. Until 21 April 2014, the exhibition ends with an additional display entitled *Seeing the Sacred,* in which two works from each of the periods are explored in relation to the theme.

**Musée du Louvre-Lens**

+33 (0) 32 11 86 321

(www.louvre-lens.fr)

Until 2017.

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**ITALY**

**FLORENCE**

*Pontormo and Rosso Fiorentino: Diverging Paths of Mannerism*

This exhibition devoted to the work of Pontormo and Rosso Fiorentino offers a broad and multifaceted overview of these two cinquecento masters by bringing together a selection of works from Italian and foreign collections. The two
artists were without doubt the most original and unconventional of their time, painting in what Giorgio Vasari described as the ‘modern manner’.

**Palazzo Strozzi**
+39 (0) 5 52 64 51 55
(www.palazzostrozzi.org)
Until 20 July.

**ROME**
**Modigliani, Soutine and the Cursed Artists:**
The Netter Collection
This exhibition displays over 120 of the extraordinary works produced by Modigliani, Soutine, Utrillo and other artists who lived and worked in Montparnasse at the beginning of the 20th century, when Paris was the centre of the avant-garde. All the works are from the Netter Collection, which was built to preserve such masterpieces for future generations. This is a touring exhibition that has had successful showings at the Pinacothèque, Paris, and the Palazzo Reale, Milan.

**Palazzo Cipolla**
+39 (0) 6 69 38 03 06
(www.mostramodigliani.it)
Until 6 April.

**POSSAGNO**
The Three Graces
Celebrated in Classical literature and in art, the three Graces – Thalia (youth and beauty), Euphrosyne (mirth) and Aglaia (elegance) – were the daughters of Zeus in Greek mythology, and companions to the Muses. Renowned for his Neo-Classical style and delicate rendering of the female nude, the Italian sculptor Antonio Canova (1757-1822) produced two very similar marble sculptures of The Three Graces (above). The first one, now in the Hermitage in St Petersburg, was commissioned by Joséphine de Beauharnais, Napoleon’s wife. The second, which was commissioned by the Duke of Bedford, now resides in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. The two sculptures have now been reunited for display at the Museo Canova in Possagno, Treviso, the town where the artist was born.

**Museo Canova**
+39 (0) 4 23 54 43 23
(www.museocanova.it)
Until 4 May.

**MEXICO**
**PUEBLA, nr Mexico City**
The Dawn of Forms
Pre-Hispanic art is removed from its typical anthropological context and instead presented so as to facilitate appreciation of its artistic form. Curator Pablo Escalante Gonzalbo stresses that there is an aesthetic imagination at work in designing ceramics, in inventing methods of abstraction to represent the body. Visitors will see that the human figure and its movements were closely examined and explored in Mesoamerica, and were integral to the emergence of later art forms in the region.

**Museo Amparo**
+52 (222) 229 3850
(www.museoamparo.com)
Until 28 April.

**NETHERLANDS**
**AMSTERDAM**
Art Is Therapy
Emotional instinct rather than academic appraisal takes centre stage in this exhibition curated by the British writers and philosophers Alain de Botton and John Armstrong. Going beyond the parameters of art history, it focuses on the therapeutic effect that art can have on visitors. De Botton and Armstrong comment on 150 artworks on display in the Rijksmuseum galleries, from the Middle Ages through to the 20th century. New text-boards sit alongside the original captions with the aim of shedding light on the collection, by encouraging visitors
to think differently about the works in question. The exhibition marks the first time that these two philosophers have put their theories (from their book Art as Therapy) into practice. De Botton and Armstrong believe that by providing the name of the artist, the material he or she used, and the period in which the object was made, traditional museum captions suggest what the visitor should think about a certain object. These two men have set out to question the purpose of art and to highlight the therapeutic effect it has on visitors who look at it simply in order to enjoy it.

Rijksmuseum
+31 20 67 47 00 0
(www rijksmuseum nl)
From 25 April to 7 September

SPAIN
MADRID
The ‘Furias’: From Titian to Ribera
In Classical myth, the Furies were female figures who personified vengeance and ensured that those in Hades endured their punishments. But in Spain from the 16th century the name was used for four male figures – Tityus, Tantalus, Sisyphus and Ixion – who defied the gods and suffered extreme punishments. By extension the term came to be connected with political rebellion and violent suffering in general. The emergence, evolution and demise of the theme in Western art from 1500 to 1700 is illustrated by the works of Italian, Flemish, Dutch and Spanish artists. Ixion by the Venetian artist Giovanni Battista Langetti (above) show Ixion who is condemned to turn on a wheel forever. His crime was attempting to seduce Hera. Museo Nacional del Prado
+34 91 33 02 80 0
(www museodelprado es)
Until 4 May.

EVENTS
ITALY
Re-opening of the Camera Picta (The Bridal Chamber) in Palazzo Ducale
A Renaissance masterpiece, the Camera Picta in the ducal palace in Mantua was painted by Mantegna between 1465 and 1474. Combining reality and fiction, the room has an outdoor feel that makes it look like a loggia. After extensive restoration, its re-opening is greatly anticipated.
Palazzo Ducale, Mantua
+39 041 241 1897
(www ducalemantova org)
From 21 March.

UNITED KINGDOM
Power and Politics on the Acropolis
Drawing on his book of the same title, David Stuttard tells the story of the conception and creation of the Parthenon and its hidden meanings.
Oxford Literary Festival
(www oxfordliteraryfestival org)
Tickets £11
6pm, 27 March.

Field Walking and Map Analysis at Sittingbourne in Kent
This weekend course is concerned with recognising and recording artefacts found within the plough soil. These will include prehistoric flint tools and Roman pottery.
Kent Archaeological Field School
(www kafs co uk)
Members, free; non-members, £50
From 29 to 30 March.

Excavation of and investigation of a newly discovered Roman villa at Tenterden, west of Maidstone, Kent
A recent geophysical survey has indicated a large and important Roman villa complex overlooking the river which has not been previously investigated. The investigations will include an additional geophysical survey to see how many other Roman buildings remain to be discovered.
Kent Archaeological Field School
(www kafs co uk)
Members £20 per day; member for 5 years + £10 per day; non-members £25 per day. From 18 to 27 April.

Roman Archaeology Conference: New Approaches to the Roman-British Countryside
When the University of Reading, in association with the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, hosts the Biennial International Roman Archaeology Conference, it will bring together the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, the Study Group for Roman Pottery, the Roman Finds Group and the Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference, presenting results from their projects and new research.
(www cotswoldarchaeology co uk)
+44 (0) 12 85 77 10 22
The University of Reading
From 28 to 30 March.

Seeking Solomon: Maritime evidence from the bottom of the sea
This lecture will be given by Dr Sean Kingsley, former editor of Minerva. The Anglo-Israeli Archaeological Society
www aias org uk
+44 (0) 20 93 49 57 54
Institute of Archaeology, University College London, Lecture Theatre G6, Admission free, ticket not required. 6pm on 7 April.

Minerva March/April 2014

NETHERLANDS
TEFAF: The European Fine Art Fair, Maastricht
One of the world’s leading annual fine art fairs returns with the usual impressive range of international exhibitors. Some 25 dealers from 20 countries will be bringing their rare works of art, masterpieces both ancient and modern. The highlights this year will include this ancient Egyptian (Ptolemaic, 4th-3rd century BC) gilded and painted cartonnage mummy mask (right) from Rupert Wace Ancient Art, and a very early (11th-century) Tibetan mandala (below) from Rossi & Rossi, who are experts in both classical and contemporary Asian art.
The 2013 fair concluded with impressive sales figures, and this year is tipped to be just as good. Many noted that the quality of the paintings offered for sale last year was particularly high, contradicting the popular belief that the Old Master market is in decline. TEFAF will also host a series of lectures and panel discussions on the theme of Trends in 20th-century Design. Moderated by Ian Phillips, author and design expert, the daily symposium will discuss both current trends in the market and the best investments for the future. Select designers will share their insights into the differing American, Scandinavian and French design ‘addictions’, showing the fair’s wide-ranging international interests.
TEFAF will be held at the Maastricht Exhibition & Congress Centre.
+31 43 16 45 00 0
(www tefaf com)
From 14 to 23 March 2014

Winchester Archaeology and Memory Conference
In this, the biggest archaeological conference held in the city, the speakers will include Professor Martin Biddle, Professor Barbara Yorke, Dr John Cook and Dr Alex Langland, who has appeared on Time Team. They will cover many aspects of the city’s archaeological past – from King Alfred in myth and history to demographic change from the Middle Ages to the 19th century.
The University of Winchester
(www eventbrite co uk e winchester archaeology-and-memory-tickets)
Conference fee £62; Friends of Winchester Studies, £50. 9am, 26 April to 3.30pm, 27 April.

Minerva March/April 2014
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Artifact: 4303
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- Subject: Appliqués
- Size: 3 ½” high x 3 5/8” wide

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