The mystery of the Celts
Can they be defined by language or DNA?

Salt sea, wide sky and stone
The brochs, cairns and megaliths of Orkney

It’s wicked witchcraft
What those horrid hags got up to in the Classical world

Pompeii rises phoenix-like
The buried city that has inspired artists down the ages

Underwater Egypt
Antiquities rescued from the sea by Franck Goddio go on show in Paris

Robert Harris, author of Dictator, says Tony Blair and Boris Johnson would be at home in ancient Rome
ROMAN MARBLE MONUMENTAL HEAD OF MARS (ARES), GOD OF WAR, of the so-called Borghese type and based upon a 5th century BC original by Alcamenes. 1st-2nd Century AD. H. 16 in. (40.6 cm.) Ex Sir Francis Sacheverell Darwin, Sydnope Hall, Two Dales, Matlock, Derbyshire, acquired in the 19th century; J. Z. collection, Rumson, New Jersey, acquired from Royal-Athena in 2008.
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Delving much deeper

Scanning the seabed for ancient cities, DNA-testing the Celts, excavating on the Ness of Brodgar and stepping into the magic circle of Classical witches

In this issue we delve deeper in more ways than one. First, we have an interview with renowned marine archaeologist Franck Goddio. Franck and his team have been surveying the sea-bed off Alexandria since 1992. Their finds have been spectacular and you can see a few of them on pages 14 to 18. Not only that but they have located Alexandria’s Eastern Harbour, called the Portus Magnus, and the long-submerged cities of Canopus and Thonis-Heracleion. A splendid exhibition of 250 exhibits (200 found by the underwater team and 50 from the Egyptian Museum in Cairo) go on show in Osiris: Egypt’s Sunken Mysteries at the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris on 8 September. This exhibition is not to be missed.

Another major autumn exhibition, The Celts: Art and Identity, that opens at the British Museum on 24 September, is predicted to be a blockbuster. The Celts have a rather romantic reputation that conjures up images of wild-haired bards emerging on to crags amidst swirling mists – but who were they really? This is a difficult question to answer but, using data from DNA and language studies, historian and genetics expert Jean Manco comes up with some interesting theories. You can read her very thorough analysis of the Celts on pages 20 to 24.

Going further back in time to the Neolithic, a few months ago I finally managed to visit Orkney – something I have wanted to do for over 30 years – and I was not disappointed. While not everyone would relish the idea of crawling into 5000-year-old chambered stone cairns as a holiday highlight, to me, it was absolutely fascinating – and never mind the weather! To be able to see so many sites – ranging in age from the Neolithic to the Second World War – in such a short time and in such a small area was extremely satisfying. One of the most exciting sites we saw was the ongoing excavation on the Ness of Brodgar, which had just opened for its summer season. Here, archaeologists are uncovering a sacred enclave that is surely the most important Neolithic site in Britain – it has literally caused our prehistoric history to be rewritten.

You can read about it and some of the other Orkney sites on pages 38 to 43.

From those wind-swept islands that were never occupied by Romans, we move south to the sunny Mediterranean and to Italy’s most popular site – Pompeii. After his tour of Italy in the 18th century Goethe remarked: ‘No catastrophe has ever yielded so much pleasure to the rest of humanity as that which buried Pompeii and Herculaneum.’ By this he meant that although these ill-fated cities had been buried by the volcanic eruption of AD 79 their influence had not been extinguished. An exhibition in Naples looks at how Pompeii in particular has inspired art and design through the centuries; see pages 26 to 32.

Robert Harris’s first bestselling novel was entitled Pompeii and, as he tells Diana Bentley, he spent weeks on the site researching it. He has since moved on to Cicero, who is the subject of a trilogy of books, the latest of which will be published on 8 October. Harris draws some interesting comparisons between political life in the Roman Senate and in parliament today. You can read about this on pages 34 to 36.

The influence of Rome on different aspects of British society is considerable and not just in the field of politics and law. The influence of Classical sculpture on European artists was, for example, of paramount importance. Rather than drawing from life, all students of art had to make drawings of Greek and Roman sculpture, until at least the 19th century. You can see this brilliantly illustrated in Drawn from the Antique on show at Sir John Soane’s Museum in London – or have a look at pages 8 to 12.

As we are approaching Halloween this is a good time to see how witches (dark, irrational forces) were portrayed by Greek and Roman writers. They have presented us with a pretty grisly picture, which includes some graphic details. This is not a subject for the squeamish – as you will see on pages 44 to 48.

You can find our regular saleroom reports on pages 50 to 54, our book reviews and Classical Comundrums quiz on pages 55 to 57 and, in the news section, there is a brief report of our Greek and Roman Armour study day, which was a sell-out success – see page 5.

CONTRIBUTORS

Dalu Jones is an art historian who studied Islamic art and architecture at SOAS. She has written numerous books and many academic articles and is the former editor of Art and Archaeology Research Papers (AARP-London). She has been a regular contributor to Minerva since 1995.

Jerome Eisenberg co-founded Royal-Athena Galleries in New York in 1942. He founded Minerva in 1990 and served as its Editor-in-Chief and Publisher throughout till 2009. In 2012 he was awarded the Order of the Star of Italy for having made a meaningful contribution to the prestige of Italy with his many publications on Etruscan and Roman art.

Jean Manco is the author of Ancestral Journeys: The Peopling of Europe from the First Venturers to the Vikings. This ground-breaking work made accessible to the general reader the revolution in archaeology, genealogy and historical studies now that theories can be directly tested using the DNA not only of the living, but also of the dead. Her latest book is Blood of the Celts.

Paul Chrystal is a broadcaster and author of over 50 books; his latest is Roman Women – The Women who Influenced the History of Rome, and Roman Military Disasters and In Bed With the Romans, which will be published in October 2015 and January 2016 respectively. He also writes regularly for newspapers and history journals and magazines.
Two years after preventive excavation work was carried out by INRAP at the Couvent des Jacobins in Rennes, Brittany, exciting new discoveries are still being made. Built in 1369, between the 15th and the 18th centuries, this Dominican monastery became an important place of pilgrimage and of burial for the local elite.

Some 800 graves have been excavated by archaeologists and in five of them lead coffins accompanied by heart-shaped reliquaries have been found – something that is unique in Europe. Four of the lead coffins, excavated in the church chancel, contained relatively well-preserved skeletons; some of the skulls and rib cages had been sawed, indicating embalming practices reserved for members of the elite. Each of the five heart-shaped reliquaries contained a heart; some were wrapped in a cloth and embalmed with plants. Four of the reliquaries bear inscriptions giving the identity of the deceased. The fifth coffin was excavated at the base of a wall in the Saint-Joseph chapel. The body, which is in an exceptional state of preservation, has been identified as that of Louise de Quengo, Dame de Brefeillac, who died in 1656.

This was certain because a heart-shaped reliquary containing the heart of her husband, Toussaint de Perrien, Chevalier de Brefeillac (who died in 1649) had been placed in the grave.

In order to limit the loss of information resulting from immediate decomposition of the body, a study of it was quickly made in collaboration with researchers from the CNRS/Toulouse University’s Molecular Anthropology and Computer Imaging Laboratory and the Toulouse University Hospital’s Forensic Department. Being able to remove human tissues that have suffered from no environmental contamination is an extremely rare opportunity for archaeologists.

The study will provide valuable information, not only on the condition of the noble lady’s health, but also on embalming practices in the 17th century, on the evolution of micro-organisms and textiles, and on the history of science and medicine at that time. Indeed, the removal of her heart reveals real mastery in surgical techniques. Where Louise de Quengo’s heart is buried is as yet unknown. Interring various parts of the body in different places is a practise that goes back to the Middle Ages, but they were little known in the ‘modern’ era.

Louise de Quengo’s body was dressed in a complete nun’s habit: a cape, a chasuble, a frock made of homespun brown woollen serge, a coarse cotton chemise, woollen serge leggings and a pair of leather mules with cork soles. A scapular was wound around her right arm and her hands were clasped on a crucifix. Her face was covered with a shroud and her head with two bonnets and a head-dress held by a band. In those days, lay elites were often authorised to wear a religious habit on special occasions. But Louise may have adopted the monastic life after becoming a widow, which was not at all uncommon. The complete outfit is in such a good state of conservation that both the clothes and footwear will be put on display after restoration.

After various scientific studies have been completed on her body, Louise will be re-interred in a cemetery in Rennes.

Nicole Benazeth
Mystery of the gold spirals

A dazzling haul of nearly 2000 small gold spirals is puzzling archaeologists in Denmark. Flemming Kaul, curator at the National Museum of Denmark, and Kirsten Christensen, curator at Museum Vestsjælland, excavated the Bronze Age spirals at Boeslunde on the Danish island of Zealand. Made of flattened gold wire, the spirals are up to 3cm long and have a combined weight of 200g to 300g. Thanks to the discovery of two gilded dress pins, the spirals have been dated to 900-700 BC.

No such gold spirals have been found before in Denmark, so their use is rather uncertain.

‘Maybe the spirals have been attached to cords which have served as a small fringe on a hat or a parasol. Perhaps they have been braided into the hair or been embroidered on the suit. The fact is that we do not know, but I tend to believe they were part of a priest king’s costume or headwear,’ Kaul suggests.

The gold spirals were found in two main concentrations in just a few square metres of field. In one area, they were in rows or in small clusters of three or four spirals. In the other, they were all heaped together with black remnants of pitch underneath. One side of the pitch bears the imprint of wood, and the other of skin, suggesting that the pitch fixed a leather lining to a wooden box where the spirals were kept. The two curators were drawn to the site because gold artefacts had been found at Boeslunde before.

‘A couple of years ago, two local amateur archaeologists made a great discovery. They found four heavy gold arm-rings, so-called oath-rings.

‘This magnificent find prompted us to carry out an excavation proper, in order to find out whether there should be more prehistoric gold hidden in the field,’ explains Christensen.

These oath-rings may have belonged to a priest king along with the gold spirals says Kaul: ‘Maybe the priest-king wore a gold ring on his wrist, and gold spirals on his cloak and his hat, where during ritual sun ceremonies they shone like the sun. The sun was one of the most sacred symbols in the Bronze Age and gold had a special magic. The gold, itself, embodies the sun. Gold has the colour of the sun, it is shining like the sun, and it is indestructible, immortal and eternal. Therefore they sacrificed the priest king’s riches to the sun or hid them away in a wooden box between the ceremonies.’

Before the discovery of the four oath-rings and the spirals, six heavy gold rings were found in the same area. Even as early as the 1800s, local farmers came across six substantial gold bowls just 500 metres away from the site, at Borghøj Banke.

‘The rings weigh together 3.5 kilograms, and the bowls and beakers more than a kilogram, so it is one of the largest gold finds from the Bronze Age in Northern Europe,’ says Christensen. ‘It shows that the place had a special significance for the Bronze Age people when they chose to sacrifice several kilos of gold.’

Boeslunde appears to be an important sacred site so that archaeologists believe still more gold will be discovered there. In the meantime the Museum Vestsjælland will continue to investigate the gold working alongside local metal detectorists. Lucia Marchini

A few of the 2000 gold spirals found in Boeslunde, Denmark.

A remarkable sword

An extraordinary sword discovered in 2011 in one of the last Viking graves in Norway is now on show for the first time. Archaeologists from the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo found it when they were excavating a burial ground in Langeid in Setesdal, southern Norway.

Though the iron blade of the 94cm-long sword has rusted, its ornate handle, covered in silver, with some details in gold and copper alloy, is well preserved. Its rich decorations consist of spirals, cruciform symbols, and combinations of letters (probably Latin) that have yet to be deciphered. The swords of prominent Vikings were decorated with magical runes as a symbol of their status and wealth but this one has some more unusual iconography.

‘At the top of the pommel, we can also clearly see a picture of a hand holding a cross. That is unique and we don’t know of any similar findings on other swords from the Viking Age. Both the hand and the letters indicate that the sword was deliberately decorated with Christian symbolism. But how did such a sword end up in a pagan burial ground in Norway?’

‘The design of the sword, the symbols and the precious metal used all make it perfectly clear that this was a magnificent treasure, probably produced abroad and brought back to Norway by a very prominent man,’ suggests Camilla Cecilie Wenn of the Museum of Cultural History, who led the dig.

The sword was found outside the

Veiled message

Digs at the Sheik Abd el-Qurna necropolis in West Thebes (Luxor) have uncovered a pharaonic gift to the goddess Hathor: a fragment of linen (23cm x 14cm) bearing the cartouche of Ptolemy XII Auletes, father of Cleopatra VII, and the name of Isis in hieroglyphs. Archaeologists think that the pharaoh gave the piece of linen as a velum (a curtain covering the statue of the deity) to the Temple of Hathor at nearby Deir el-Medina.

A team of Polish archaeologists, led by Dr Andrzej Cwiek of the Adam Mickiewicz University and the Archaeological Museum in Poznan, found linen while excavating the 20-metre-deep shaft of the tomb MMA 1152, which belonged to a dignitary from the Middle Kingdom (century 2000 BC). The bottom of the shaft had previously been partially excavated sometime after 1921, but no records of this dig have been found. Since 2003 the site
Arms and the man

1. Lindsay Fulcher, Editor of Minerva (left) and Katia Schorle, Curator of Mougins Museum of Classical Art (right), with Christian Levet, owner of the magazine and the museum.

2. A Roman soldier standing guard. The helmet was left unturned – from the Phrygian and the Corinthian to the later segmented and gilded decorative parade helmets of Bulgaria and Germany.

This was a golden opportunity for all those fascinated by ancient armour to meet and share their obsessions. Christian Levet has the largest private collection of ancient armour in the world, some of which is on show in the Mougins Museum of Classical Art (MACM) in the South of France. (The Greek and Roman Armour Day talks will be made available via: www.romansociety.org and www.hellenicsociety.org.uk).

Lindsay Fulcher

Nearly 400 people packed into Beveridge Hall at Senate House, University of London, for the Greek and Roman Armour Day on 20 July. Organised by the Roman Society and the Hellenic Society and generously sponsored by Christian Levet, owner of Minerva, six world experts in ancient armour, from as far afield as the United States and Israel, spoke on their specialist subjects.

These ranged from the Hoplites (who wore no body armour just a simple pilos), the development of the linothorax, (a 17-layer light linen corselet), the three heavy bronze discs of the South Italian triple cuirass, the bronze cuirass moulded to resemble the musculature of the male chest, Judaean mail and scale armour and Roman body armour, including Lorica plumata.

Minerva September/October 2015

Placement of the sword on the outside of the coffin is due to the intermingling of pagan Viking and new Christian customs. As such, this grave, one of the last pagan burials in Norway, marks a transitional period; it shows how at the end of the Viking Age, Christianity is beginning to gain ground in Norwegian society.

This time of change is also attested by a runic stone, which reads in Old Norse: ‘Arnstein raised this stone in memory of Björ his son. He found death when Canute “went after” England. God is one.’ The stone, from elsewhere in the Setesdal Valley, dates from the same period as the later phase of the burial ground and is the oldest runic stone with a reference to Christianity found in Norway.

On the other side of the coffin, archaeologists found a battle-axe with a shaft coated in brass. This weapon too is an unusual find. The brass coating of the shaft is an exceptionally rare find in Norway. However, it is a feature shared with similar axes found in the River Thames in London, where there were many battles in the late 10th and early 11th centuries.

The Langeid axe has been dated to the same period as the battle-axes from the Thames. The axe, along with the English silver penny, supports the idea that the sword, clearly not Norwegian, was Anglo-Saxon in origin. Its owner could once have fought in King Canute’s campaigns in England.

Since its discovery in 2011, this rare sword had remained unpublished. It is now on display in an exhibition entitled Take it Personally at the Historical Museum in Oslo (http://www.khm.uio.no) until June 2016.

Lucia Marchini

Minerva September/October 2015
Excavations carried out by Arles’ Museum of Antiquity’s archaeological department have revealed a wealth of Roman frescoes. They were found in a rich 1st-century BC *domus* in Arelate (the Roman name for Arles) on the right bank of the River Rhône in southern France.

A first excavation of the ‘Verrerie’ site in 2014 led to the discovery, in one of two adjoining rooms, of rare painted decor in Second Pompeian style, which appeared in Gaul between 70 BC and 20 BC. In what was probably a bedroom, the architectural trompe-l’œil frescoes in sharply contrasting colours seem to define an alcove and an antechamber. In the latter, an imitation marble podium supports massive yellow columns, and the alcove is decorated with faux marbled panels.

On two walls of the next room, which is still being excavated, archaeologists have uncovered decor that is unique in France. Against a plain, bright vermilion background, trompe-l’œil marble columns define areas containing tall figures standing on pedestals. The beautiful manner in which the body contours, clothing and facial expressions are rendered, and the luxury pigments, suggest these paintings were made by extremely skilled artists, probably brought over from Italy.

When pieced together, some of the first fragments revealed a woman playing a string instrument resembling a harp. The identification of the figures in the painted scenes is not yet certain, but suggestions so far include the god Pan and a figure related to Bacchus, both often represented in Roman homes. These indicate that this was a reception room.

The excellent artistry and expensive pigments used for these frescoes suggest that houses in this section of Arelate belonged either to rich Romans who had settled in the colony, or to members of local elites who wished to display their complete assimilation into the Roman way of life.

Before now, Second Pompeian-style decor in southern France had only been found in the Narbonnaise Roman province. Furthermore, representations of human figures in this style are rare and, so far, have been limited only to a few fragments, which makes the frescoes uncovered in Arles even more impressive.

For quality of colour and design, they can only be compared to those found in Cubicum 4 of the Villa of the Mysteries in Pompeii and in the Villa of P Fannius Synistor in Boscoreale. Such rare finds are of tremendous scientific and artistic value and will help to clarify various theories about Arles’ urbanisation under Caesar.

After thorough research and restoration, the frescoes will join five pieces of mosaic, including the Annus-Aiôn and the Medusa mosaics, which were also discovered in the Verrerie area, during an excavation between 1988 and 1992. Then, visitors will also be able to admire the latest finds of vibrant two-millennium-old colours that once adorned the walls of a residence in the ‘Rome of the Gauls’.

(The Verrerie is named after an 18th-century glassworks located in the Trinquetaille district of Arles, reached from the city via the Trinquetaille Bridge. During the 1st century BC and the 1st and 2nd centuries AD, it was an active port and an upper-class residential district but archaeological evidence clearly shows that it was abandoned in the 3rd century AD.)

Nicole Benazeth
Art imitating

1. A Painter’s Studio, Michael Sweert, circa 1648-50, oil on canvas, 71cm x 74cm. © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.
For over 500 years Classical antiquity was at the centre of Western artistic tradition. By studying and copying ancient sculpture, young artists could learn about the ideal form and perfect proportions before depicting live models with their natural imperfections. In his *Reflections on the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks*, Johann Joachim Winckelmann, who was one of the most influential voices in art history during the 18th century, wrote: ‘There is but one way for the moderns to become great, and perhaps unequalled; I mean, by imitating the antients.’ This was, and had been, the prevailing attitude for centuries.

The crucial place of Classical statuary can be seen clearly in Nicolas Dorigny’s engraving after Carlo Maratta, currently on show for the first time in an exhibition called *Drawn from the Antique: Artists & the Classical Ideal* at Sir John Soane’s Museum in London. This crowded image depicts Rome’s Accademia di San Luca, where Maratta was *principe* (president), in the late 17th century. There are masters teaching geometry and anatomy, and next to these activities are written the warnings ‘TANTO CHE BASTÀ’ (‘enough to suffice’). Above the Apollo, however, there is a different message: ‘NON MAI ABASTANZA’ (‘never enough’). As Dr Adriano Aymonino, co-curator of the exhibition, explains: ‘You have to learn how to represent space and the anatomy of the human body “enough to suffice” but the antique should always and constantly occupy you. All your life you should carry on studying on the antique.’

While the vast majority of artists honed their skills by sketching ancient sculpture, there were a few exceptions. Dr Aymonino tells me: ‘Only the real mavericks didn’t copy from Classical statues, or at least they promoted themselves as not copying from Classical statues. Carracci entered the workshop of Caravaggio one day and asked “Michelangelo, why don’t you copy after ideal models?” (meaning Classical statues). Caravaggio, already drunk, replied “You see all these people passing in front of my workshop? These are ideal. Nature provides ideal models every day.” That’s because he was deliberately going against the tradition.’

The traditional artistic curriculum with antiquity at its core has its origins in Renaissance Italy, but it soon spread to the north of Europe. The earliest surviving image of an academy (and one of 15 works in the exhibition) is a drawing by Federico Zuccaro (*Taddeo*, easily identifiable by his name on his tunic, drawing in the Belvedere Courtyard, that was built in 1503 to house Pope Julius II’s important collection, which included the famous Apollo Belvedere (rediscovered in 1489) and the Laocoon (excavated in 1506). This was the perfect spot for Bandinelli’s academy, and he depicts himself here surrounded by students copying small models of ancient sculpture by candlelight. As well as studying models in academies, many artists travelled to Rome to sketch ancient sculpture in situ. In his *Prose della volgar lingua* (published in 1525), Pietro Bembo wrote: ‘At all times of day [Rome] witnesses the arrival of artists from near and far, intent on reproducing in the small space of their paper or wax the form of those splendid ancient figures of marble, sometimes bronze, that lie all over Rome, or are publicly and privately kept and treasured… and hence, when they mean to produce some new work, they aim at those examples, striving with their art to resemble them, all the more so since they believe their efforts merit praise by the closeness of resemblance of their new works to ancient ones, being well aware that the ancient ones come closer to the perfection of art than any done afterwards.’

Bembo’s early written account explains an activity we find in a later drawing by Federico Zuccaro (3). His portrayal of his older brother Taddeo, easily identifiable by his name on his tunic, drawing in the Vatican is the first known image of someone studying from sculpture in situ in the Belvedere Courtyard, that cradle of culture. It is also the first known image of the Laocoon, a sculptural group whose influence has lasted even into the 21st century as attested by the Henry Moore Institute’s 2007 exhibition *Towards a New Laocoön*.

Dr Anne Varick Lauder, the exhibition’s other co-curator, elaborates on this drawing: ‘We have a kind of continuous narrative. There is one Taddeo who’s in the foreground...
copying the Laocoön. We have another Taddeo who’s on the ledge of the Vatican Palace, looking inside copying the frescoes by Raphael in the Stanze, which themselves were a 16th-century exemplar of homage to antiquity. And we can see a figure sketching at the foot of Trajan’s column, which is also probably a little Taddeo. Zuccaro creates this great pastiche with just a few pen strokes to evoke a scene of Renaissance Rome which really emphasises the importance of drawing after the antique in situ as one of the most important cornerstones of the education of the artist.’

The Taddeo in the foreground has with him a wine flask and a loaf of bread. As Lauder explains: ‘He’s settled in for a long day of study. It’s a theme that pervades from the 16th century that you do need to sacrifice and give yourself up day in day out, day and night to perfect your trade and to perfect your study of the antique.’

Domenico Bernini’s biography of his father, the great Baroque sculptor Gian Lorenzo Bernini, published in 1713, gives an account of a similarly fervent devotion to Classical statuary: ‘...he travelled on foot to the Vatican Palace at Saint Peter’s. There he remained until sunset, drawing, one by one, those marvellous statues that antiquity has conveyed to us and that time has preserved for us, as both a benefit and dowry for the art of sculpture. He took no refreshment during all those days, except for a little wine and food, saying that the pleasure alone of the lively instruction supplied by those
inanimate statues caused a certain sweetness to pervade his body, and this was sufficient in itself for the maintenance of his strength for days on end.’

Not all artists had direct access to the great ancient marbles in Rome, but most studied from plaster casts in academies and studios. Certain replicas, above all the Gladiator Borghese, the Apollo Belvedere, the Laocoön, the Farnese Hercules and the Medici Venus, were ubiquitous.

Michael Sweerts emphasises the didactic role of casts in A Painter’s Studio (1). Here, we can see an écorché (a painting or sculpture of a human figure with the skin removed to display the musculature) and, in the darkness, a life model, the final phase of an artist’s training as Lauder explains: ‘… not until you were able to perfect anatomy and objects could you move onto the live model’. The focus of the painting is, however, on ‘this cascading jumble of casts that are beautifully illuminated and that have a life of their own’, as Lauder remarks.

As well as drawing directly from casts, artists also borrowed poses from them for their life models. A very common practice in the academies, this allowed the artist in training to compare and contrast the perfection of the ideal form of the plaster cast and the imperfections of real flesh by moving from the life model room to the plaster room.

Rubens, who even wrote of ancient statues that ‘we of this erroneous age, are so far degenerate, that we can produce nothing like them’, drew a boy posed as the Spinario twice on one sheet. One of these red chalk studies (4) based on the Spinario is a more faithful imitation of the sculpture, the other depicts the model with his head turned and, rather than removing a thorn from his foot, he is drying it with a towel. Rubens did later include a foot-drying Spinario-like figure in the Baptism of Christ, and also based Susanna in Susanna and the Elders on the statue. These two studies then offer a glimpse of the influence of antiquity in the creative process of a great artist.

Turner sketched models posed as The Wrestlers (5) as did other art students, which can be seen in Charles-Joseph Natoire’s 18th-century drawing of a life class at the Académie Royale in Paris (2). But as well as the models in the centre of the room, we can see plaster casts of canonical sculptures: the Hercules Farnese, the Laocoön, the Medici Venus, the Gladiator Borghese.

‘It’s a very programmatic image,’ says Aymonino. ‘The copy of the life model should always be balanced by the copy of the ideal otherwise you train only on the real and you don’t become a great history painter. You have to study the antique model, and you have to study the live
model, very often posed as classical antiquity, in order to produce great art, as exemplified by the works of academicians hanging on the wall.'

But, after centuries at the centre of the artistic tradition, the status of ancient sculpture was finally downgraded during the 19th century. As Lauder explains, 'mass reproduction of plaster casts meant that the antique was now available to everyone. All of a sudden the antique was everywhere. But at the same time as it was everywhere it seemed to become rivalled by other movements.'

In *The Connoisseur* (6), a mid-19th-century painting by the little-known (probably Belgian) artist Desflaches, from the Bellinger collection and on public display for the first time, a man examines a painting in a bourgeois room full of art. Antiquity has a place in the form of a model of the Crouching Venus, but above her is a Rembrandt and other paintings. Ancient sculpture must now share the spotlight with other art.

The same change in fortune can be seen in a self-portrait by William Daniels, the so-called ‘Liverpool Rembrandt’, a painting that is usually found on the wall of Bellinger’s sitting-room. ‘Daniels was quite a controversial figure’, says Lauder. ‘He’d show up drunk for sittings and he was always late. He really identified with the lower classes of society and he often fashioned himself as a brigand or a gypsy.’ In *Self-portrait with Casts* (7), we see Daniels as an image-seller. Among his wares are replicas of a bust of Shakespeare and a Staffordshire parrot, yet in his left arm he is cradling a bust of Homer. ‘He is still holding on to the antique in a way, but it’s become a secondary movement as other traditions, such as Impressionism, Realism, become more prominent. The antique just lost its supremacy,’ Lauder points out. As the artist James Northcote said in the 1820s: ‘We are tired of the Antique… The world wants something new, and will have it.’

* * drawn from the Antique: Artists & the Classical Ideal is on show at Sir John Soane’s Museum, London, (www.soane.org) until 26 September. A catalogue by Adriano Aymonino of the University of Buckingham, and Anne Varick Lauder, Curator of the Katrin Bellinger collection, is available in paperback at £25.
ANTIQUITIES AND TRIBAL ART SALE
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Few people’s career changes are as dramatic as that of Franck Goddio. After a highly successful stint in international finance, French-born Goddio changed course in the early 1980s to pursue his private passion – marine archaeology.

Following in the footsteps of his grandfather, the navigator and inventor Eric de Bischop, Goddio soon became a pioneer in the field. His work, which included recovering shipwrecks dating from the 11th to the 18th centuries, soon gained renown and in 1987, he established the Institut Européen d’Archéologie Sous-Marine (IEASM).

But it is Goddio’s work off the coast of Egypt that has truly captivated the public imagination and created international headlines. Working in collaboration with the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities, since 1992 he has mapped the Portus Magnus (Eastern Harbour) of Alexandria and the cities of Thonis-Heracleion and Canopus, in the Bay of Akouk, 30 kilometres to the east. Lost to the sea for centuries, these two ancient cities have yielded up captivating treasures, many of which will go on show in an exhibition entitled Osiris: Egypt’s Sunken Mysteries at the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris on 8 September.

These projects have kept Goddio and his team occupied with an ongoing programme of research and work in the field that has helped them to develop new techniques in marine archaeology. To Goddio, though, this is just the beginning; he believes that the exploration of other parts of the Egyptian coast will keep archaeologists busy for decades to come.

The great marine archaeologist Franck Goddio tells Diana Bentley about his discovery of an ancient port and two cities beneath the sea off the coast of Egypt and the fabulous finds he has brought to the surface, which are about to go on show in Paris.

1. A bronze statue of Osiris stands near the remains of his solar barque under the sea off the Alexandrian coast. Rituals celebrating the Mysteries of Osiris, performed in the Great Temple of Amun-Gereb in Thonis-Heracleion, culminated in a long procession made by boat, that transported Osiris along canals from the temple to his shrine in the city of Canopus.
What prompted your career change to marine archaeology and how did the Egyptian projects come about?

I was always interested in history and archaeology, especially underwater archaeology. So 30 years ago, I decided to study everything that had been done up to that time in the field around the world.

After a year I established that there was a need for an independent private entity in that field which could work on a long-term basis with foreign state agencies and develop with them specific historical programmes for study and research and this is what brought about the founding of the IEASM.

The first programme I established was with the National Museum of the Philippines. It was a long-term research programme that aimed at exploring the maritime history of the archipelago. For this project, my team and I developed a new type of detector for geophysical surveying that could be applied to underwater archaeology. This was done with the co-operation of the French Agency for Atomic Energy (CEA) and we created a dedicated survey vessel for the purpose. When our new methodology was tested and established after several successful missions, I realised we were mastering the necessary expertise and techniques that could enable us to undertake the major project of locating the lost cities of Thonis, Heracleion, Canopus and the site of Alexandria’s Portus Magnus.

What caused the submergence of this coast in the 8th century AD?

There are many reasons for its disappearance that, thanks to a geological survey of the area, we have managed to pick apart. First, there’s the slow subsidence of the land in this part of the eastern Mediterranean and the rise in sea level. The rate at which this took place means that a site built around 2 metres above sea level in the 6th century BC would be at sea level 12 centuries later in 8th century.

Our geological survey found the tell-tale signs of a process known as sedimentary liquefaction, which is where the water-saturated soils on which the cities had been built suddenly collapse. Although we don’t know the exact cause or causes of this sedimentary failure, it is likely that an earthquake, or a tidal wave, or even heavy floods were to blame.

Whether there was one great event that caused the subsidence of all the cities and the surrounding lands, or several, what is certain is that Thonis-Heracleion and Canopus, as well as Alexandria’s Portus Magnus, were all totally submerged by the end of the 8th century.

What have the main challenges of the Alexandrian project been?

The main challenge was that research of a sunken site had never been done on such a large scale before. The area covered by the sunken port structures of the Portus Magnus could have extended to 600 hectares. A study of a site of that scale could only be undertaken using a geophysical survey. Very poor visibility was an additional handicap during our reconnaissance dives. The geophysical survey started in 1992. It was mainly based on a systematic coverage of the area with nuclear resonance magnetometers. The information from this was then used to target archaeological test excavations to characterise the types of magnetic abnormalities with their corresponding archaeological feature. This enabled us to develop an initial hypothetical map of the general area, which we then investigated through precisely targeted excavations to confirm – and also at times to refute – our hypotheses.

How did you and your team locate the Eastern Harbour?

In 1996 we were able to produce a preliminary map of the eastern part of the Portus Harbour, an area that corresponded to the Royal Quarters. A sunken peninsula, an island, port infrastructures, the remains of palaces and sanctuaries were mapped and could sometimes be identified.
thanks to archaeological finds and from comparing the results of the excavation with ancient texts. In 2001 we produced the general map of the Portus Magnus, adding the western part that included the navalia: the shipyard area. Since then we’ve been able to carry out extremely precise excavations as a result of having prior knowledge of the area. The general topography of the Portus Magnus shows that this port was much more important, efficient and even more beautiful than it was thought to be from the study of ancient texts alone.

4. Amid the swirling sands a group of Ancient Egyptian gods sit and stand on the seabed of the Mediterranean.

5. Franck Goddio, who has worked as a marine archaeologist for over 30 years, is the founder of the European Institute for Underwater Archaeology (IEASM), the head of the Far East Foundation for Nautical Archaeology and the co-founder of the Oxford Centre for Maritime Archaeology at the University of Oxford.

6. Gold amulet in the shape of the wedjat-eye of Horus, Ptolemaic Period, 4th-2nd century BC, found in Aboukir Bay in the area that was once the city of Thonis-Heracleion. W. 82cm.

What about Thonis-Heracleion and Canopus – how were they found?

From the very beginning, the project of locating the cities of Thonis, Heracleion and Canopus was presented to the Egyptian authorities along with the proposal for the research in Alexandria’s Portus Magnus. My initial idea was to have a completely comprehensive approach to all the possible sunken sites of the western part of the Nile Delta because those three cities had relationships with each other.

According to the ancient texts, Thonis, at the mouth of the Nile’s Canopic branch, was the emporium of Egypt in the western delta from at least the 7th century BC. Then Alexandria was founded and the trade passing through Thonis was diverted to Egypt’s new capital founded by Alexander the Great.

The name Heracleion is mentioned in the trilingual texts appearing on the steles of the Canopus Decree (238 BC) as the city where the temple of Amon Gereb was situated, which was a sanctuary associated with the rituals of dynasty continuity. The same texts also mention a mystical link between Heracleion and its main temple and the city of Canopus, in the form of an annual procession along the canal to the west of the God Osiris.

This occurred on the 29th of the month of Khoiak (the month when the Nile’s flood was withdrawing and the silt-enriched land became ready for planting) and during the celebration of the Mysteries of Osiris. We know that the Canopic canal linked Alexandria to the city of Canopus in Ptolemaic and Roman times. There would have been great feasts and revelry at this time on the banks of the canal; these were much decried by Roman moralists. The texts reveal strong historical and geographical interdependences between the three cities: the Canopus Decree talks about the procession, Strabo speaks about the feasts on the Canopic canal, and Juvenal, in his VIth Satire, holds Canopus up as an amoral place.

This was further reinforced when, after the rediscovery of Heracleion, we could prove that it was Thonis – they were in fact the same city: Heracleion was its Greek name, Thonis in Egyptian. Further surveys and excavations revealed that a 3.5 kilometres-long canal linked Thonis-Heracleion and Canopus. It appears to have been the extension of this waterway towards Alexandria.
What were the main challenges that you and your team faced here?

There were three kinds of major challenges in rediscovering these sites. First, the area of survey was huge (110 square kilometres, about 11,000 hectares). Secondly, we had no land references in Aboukir Bay, whereas in Alexandria we could rely on fixed and known markers on the coast, such as, for example, the prior position of the obelisks called Cleopatra's Needles. (These obelisks that once stood at the entrance of the Caesarian could be seen on land at the ridge of the ancient Portus Magnus until the end of the 19th century. One is now standing by the River Thames in London; the other is in Central Park in New York.) Third, the accumulation of marine sediment and Nile silt over the whole area buried the remains of the sites and the poor visibility in the water made visual reconnaissance survey impossible.

How big were these ancient cities?

Since the rediscoveries of Canopus in 1997 and Thonis-Heracleion in 2000, we’ve carried out archaeological missions on these sites each year. We now know the topography of the cities and can locate and identify their main temples and secondary sanctuaries. We now have some knowledge of the sacred topography of the city and we’re refining this with each mission. The port infrastructure of Thonis-Heracleion has been mapped. As of today, 69 ancient ships have been located in its port basins, canals and western lake. Through this work, those lost cities come back to life and reveal archaeological treasures that help us understand the history of Egypt and its relationships with the other communities across the sea, and also contribute to the history of art.
What is your most exciting find?
Among thousands of finds I would choose the stele of the Decree of Nectanebo I, which was discovered intact under a wall of the temple of Amun-Gereb. It has solved a 2000-year-old enigma: Thonis and Heracleion are one and the same city, a fact not even known by Strabo when he wrote Geographia though he visited the region when he lived in Alexandria for three years around 26 BC.

Is work continuing in this area and what are you looking for now?
We are carrying out yearly missions in Alexandria and Aboukir Bay. For us the work is still just a beginning. We’re also paving the way for future underwater archaeologists with the team of IEASM working collaboratively with staff and students from the Oxford Centre for Maritime Archaeology (OCMA). We’re constantly deepening our knowledge thanks to the excavations and our research on the finds that enable us to develop a precise programme of investigation for the next missions. Although we’re usually not looking for any remains in particular, questions sometimes arise. For example, we were intrigued by the foundation date of the temple of Amun-Gereb in Thonis-Heracleion, which we could date precisely to the early 4th century BC. So that meant that this monument couldn’t be the sanctuary that Herodotus visited on his trip to Egypt in 450 BC, which he referred to as the great temple of Herakles and which he dated from a time before the legendary Trojan War. Finding the location of this old temple and investigating it then became a priority. The last mission might have brought us an answer...

Who owns the finds and what is their final destination?
All objects found by our missions belong to the Egyptian state – they enrich the patrimony of the country. After this exhibition, they will return to museums in Alexandria and Cairo. There is also a project for the creation of an underwater museum in the Portus Magnus of Alexandria where visitors will be able to admire important remains such as decorative architectural elements, sphinxes and statues that we have left in situ among the foundations of palaces and sanctuaries. After Paris, the exhibition Osiris: Egypt’s Sunken Mysteries will go on tour in Europe and further afield.

How has underwater archaeology developed since you began work?
Since we began the work in the area new techniques have developed that are extremely efficient. In addition to the nuclear resonance magnetometer we’re also using shallow multi-beam bathymetry and a new generation of sediment penetrator (which can render the 3D shape of the remains buried under the sediment) in our surveys. The missions are like a permanent laboratory for the development of new processes in surveying and excavation. This year, for example, we’ve perfected the use of 3D photography to record our underwater sites. It’s a very accurate tool from which it’s possible to make precise archaeological drawings. The photomodels that it produces are also extremely useful in allowing the excavation team to visualise large areas of the site, which is simply not possible in the low visibility conditions underwater. The work carried out during the past years has been extremely rewarding for me and my team.

What are your future plans?
The Canopic region and the Portus Magnus of Alexandria are probably not the only submerged sites on the Egyptian coast, so the work we’ve undertaken is just at its beginning. Many years, if not centuries, will be required to reveal the secrets of this fascinating region so we will continue to work on these three sites.

• Osiris: Egypt’s Sunken Mysteries is on show at L’Institut du Monde Arabe (www.imarabe.org) from 8 September to 31 January 2016.
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Who were the Celts? Readers could be forgiven any amount of confusion. For decades British archaeologists ridiculed the notion that any inhabitants of the British Isles at any time could be Celts. There have even been spirited attempts to shatter the whole concept of Celts in the real world, to portray it as fantasy. The word ‘Celt’ became taboo in many a university archaeology department. Meanwhile scholars of Celtic studies have calmly continued publishing on the Celts. If you are looking for a history, encyclopaedia or historical atlas of the Celts, you will have no problem in finding one. So, what is going on? How can people like myself write books about a supposedly non-existent people?

The simple answer is that there is plenty to say about them. If we define a Celt as someone speaking a Celtic language, then we are treading on solid ground.

So what led Celtosceptics into denial? There are two main charges against the Celtic concept, both of which are true, but not remotely fatal. It is true that the Celts of Britain are sometimes colourfully dramatised. The Scottish folk hero and outlaw Robert Roy MacGregor (1671–1734), popularly known as Rob Roy, has generated a novel, an operetta and three films. Yet this falls far short of the dozens of ballads, novels, plays, films and television series based around the possibly historical English folk hero and outlaw Robin Hood. Does this make the English non-existent? I don’t think so. What we have here is proof that everyone loves a bold tale with a stalwart hero.

The second truth is that the term...
'Celt' was not used in Classical sources in the way that we use it today. A modern history of the Celts will make frequent use of the familiar ethnic label. If other names crop up, such as ‘Picts’ or ‘Gauls’, it will be made clear that these refer to particular Celts. The plethora of tribal names will be slotted under the Celtic umbrella. It is all plain for the reader.

By contrast, ancient authors can be bewildering at first encounter. The same ancient people can be called different names in different languages, or at different periods. A people could have their own name for themselves, meaning ‘us’, while their neighbours in the hills to the west called them ‘the valley people’ and their neighbours in the towns to the east called them ‘the farmers’. Yet all three groups might recognise a commonality when faced with strangers. In that context a more inclusive ‘us’ name would be in order. Today we impose similar layers of identification. The same person could regard himself as a Glaswegian, a Scot, British and European, according to the context.

For the beginner hoping to research his or her ancestors in early sources, the instinct is to check the index for the ethnic name familiar today. It may come as a shock that neither Julius Caesar nor Tacitus, who had plenty to say about the people of Britain, used the word Celts to describe them.

Until Caesar came to Britain in 55 BC and 54 BC, its people could very seldom have encountered anyone who did not speak a Celtic language. So there was no need for a collective name meaning ‘us’ versus non-Celts. A person was identified by parentage and tribe, for example Mandubracios, a prince of the Trinovantes, who sought Caesar’s protection. Their collective names were geographical, meaning British or Irish. By contrast, on the Continent the Gauls had come in contact with Greeks trading along the Mediterranean, who called them Keltoi (‘the tall ones’).

Once linguists began to compare Gaulish with Welsh, Gaelic, Breton and Cornish, it was clear that they all belonged to the same language family, which acquired the label Celtic. Linguists recognised the Germanic family of languages in a similar way. They found a relationship between, for example, Danish, English and the now dead Crimean Gothic. Danes, Goths, Angles and Saxons were not much addicted to calling themselves Germani. This was the collective noun used by the Romans for the inhabitants of ‘Greater Germania’, which included Scandinavia.

The term ‘Celtic art’ has remained geographically elastic regardless of archaeological fashion, for this aesthetic is recognisable wherever it is found. Fluid, curvilinear design characterises the La Tène culture of Iron Age central Europe. This culture has long been identified as Celtic. It was at the right place and time to correspond to the people called Celts by Greek authors of the 5th century BC. La Tène objects also appear in Britain and Ireland. In fact the style continued longest in Ireland and northern Britain, for elsewhere the Celts were swallowed up by the Roman empire. Irish art blossomed in masterpieces of the early Christian era in such craftsmanship as the Tully Lough Cross.

The burning issue is what all this means for ethnicity. Were the Celtic
speakers of the Continent related genetically, as well as culturally, to those in the British Isles? In the days before modern communications, any language had to be spoken face to face, with the people you met day to day. So we would expect languages to move with people.

Here we run up against an archaeological taboo far deeper than Celto scepticism, but which does much to explain it. From the 1970s onwards archaeologists began to revolt against the vision of prehistory as one invasion after another. In the post-imperial age, colonialism was unappealing.

There was a greater pride in indigenous development. ‘Continuity’ became the buzzword. By the end of the century, anti-migrationism was orthodoxy. In this framework Celtic-speakers in the British Isles were descended from hunter-gatherers who had arrived in these islands as the glaciers retreated in the Mesolithic period. Yet the Celtic languages are not of such great age.

Fortunately for those struggling to explain this contradiction, the tide is turning in this new millennium. Migration has returned to the menu of archaeological explanation. The new thinking is partly a consequence of the wealth of scientific techniques that have become available to archaeologists, to supplement the trusty trowel and notebook. Looming large in this change of direction is ancient DNA.

Extracting DNA from the bones and teeth of people who walked the earth thousands of years ago is no easy task. Early attempts were bedevilled with technical problems. Now a new generation of sequencing techniques has made it possible to obtain far more DNA from ancient samples and avoid contamination with the DNA of people handling bones. Getting it right is an expensive business. Yet there is no other way of solidly linking a genetic signature to a specific time and place. Many a study has tested the DNA of living people and attempted to work out how present genetic patterns arose.

These analyses generally rest on the assumption that a modern population descends from people who lived in the same place long ago. DNA from the long dead has
A growing number of people want to trace their ancestry through DNA. They are often excited by claims that a test will show whether they are Celtic or Viking, Saxon or Roman. These may be offered in good faith, but human population genetics is a young and fast-moving science and it is hard for firms to keep pace with sometimes radical changes in thinking. Discoveries in recent years from ancient DNA have overturned many assumptions based solely on the DNA in living people.

What can we really find out from a DNA test? The potential is enormous. In the nucleus of each cell in your body are 23 pairs of chromosomes, which house the DNA code for the creation of you; 22 of them are gender neutral. They are formed from a mixture of the DNA of your parents. Unless you have an identical sibling, that mixture will be unique. Yet you will have enough in common even with distant cousins for relationships to be detected. Some DNA testing companies capitalise on this potential by offering genome-wide tests, which enable customers to find matches even with distant relatives of a man’s ancestors. Fortunately for tracking ancestry, replication errors occur. If a mutation happened in your grandfather, then his sons and his son’s sons will carry it. Your grandfather would also carry mutations that occurred in his ancestors in the direct male line. Put together, all these mutations are called a haplogroup. By comparing many haplogroups, geneticists can determine the sequence of mutations, and fit together a Y-DNA ‘family tree’ or phylogeny. Naturally this only provides clues to one out of the huge number of a man’s ancestors.

A selective Y-DNA phylogeny, showing the relationship of the European haplogroups mentioned in the text.

Inside the nucleus of each cell in your body lies the code that made you. Within the nucleus are 23 pairs of chromosomes, each formed of long spirals of DNA. The code is written in the sequence of just four nitrogenous bases. Also inside the cell, but outside the nucleus are mitochondria, which have their own DNA.
in Germany belonged to haplogroup R1b1a2a1a2 (P312). This is the direct ancestor of the R1b1a2a1a2c (L21) carried by two pre-Roman men from Hinxton in Cambridgeshire. Indeed R1b1a2a1a2 is ancestral to all the most common varieties of R1b found today in territories formerly Celtic speaking.

These discoveries strengthen the hand of those archaeologists who favour the Bell Beaker culture as the vector for Celtic languages. This is not a new notion. It was proposed by the Celtologist Henri Hubert in 1934. It was eclipsed by the clamour to see the Celts as an Iron Age phenomenon, and then sunk by the tide of immobility.

Its revival seems timely. Yet is it really that simple? Bell Beaker and R1b1a2a1a2 appear across the whole territorial range where we later find Celtic spoken, but also in places in Italy where the Italic languages appear in historic times. Early Bell Beaker people could have spoken an ancestor to both language families.

Nor should we imagine people arriving in the British Isles with their bell-shaped pots, followed by a stagnant gene pool until the Roman conquest. Wessex Archaeology found migrants at the Bronze Age site of Cliffs End, Thanet, Kent. Isotope evidence revealed that some buried there had come from the western Mediterranean or Scandinavia.

The flow of objects and styles from Gaul to Britain in the Iron Age seems reflected in linguistic changes. Criss-crossing between Ireland and Britain adds another layer of complications. The story of the Celts is rich and complex.

SPECIAL Minerva Reader Discount Book Offer

Blood of the Celts by Jean Manco is published by Thames & Hudson (rpr £18.95) but readers of Minerva can buy it at the special price of £14.95 including UK mainland delivery (cost of overseas delivery available on request). Please call our distributor Littlehampton Book Services on 01903 828503, quoting “TH267”. This offer is subject to availability and runs until 31 March 2016.

CELTS: Art and Identity

Opening at the British Museum on 24 September is a major exhibition entitled Celts: Art and Identity. A collaboration between the British Museum and the National Museums Scotland, this is the first show to tell this story for 40 years. But exactly who the Celts were and where they came from is still open to debate. One thing is sure though: they are not a single people who can be traced through time till today. The idea of being a Celt, or Celtic, has become embellished by myths and legends and obscured by romantic notions.

Nevertheless the rare beauty of the artworks on show, lent from 16 UK and 10 international institutions and collections, show that whoever the Celts were their metalworking skills are of the highest order. Visitors will be stunned by their intricately wrought jewellery, such as the Hunterston brooch from Scotland, their decorated weapons, like the Battersea or Wandsworth Shield, dredged from the River Thames in 1849, and highly stylised religious objects, such as the Tully Cross from Ireland – all of which display a high degree of technological skill and sophistication of design. Some of the works, such as the magnificent decorated silver Gundestrup Cauldron on loan from the National Museum of Denmark in Copenhagen, will be familiar to visitors but other exhibits will be less well-known. These include a hoard of stunning gold torcs found at Blair Drummond in Stirling in 2009 by a metal detectorist on his first outing.

The name ‘Celts’ fell out of use after the Roman period only to be rediscovered during the Renaissance. From the 16th century onwards it became a catch-all phrase used when referring to practically any of the pre-Roman peoples of Western Europe. In the early 18th century the languages of Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Cornwall, Brittany and the Isle of Man were all labelled Celtic, a word that went on to be adopted by many minority groups seeking political or cultural autonomy.

First used by the ancient Greeks as a way of referring to outsiders, the word ‘Celtic’ was now proudly embraced when expressing a sense of shared ancestry and heritage.

Interwoven with this, during the 19th and 20th centuries, the Celtic Revival movement re-imagined, reinvented and romanticised the Celts, their culture and religion. The best-known manifestation of this was the Irish Literary Revival, known as the Celtic Twilight, in which WB Yeats, Lady Gregory and AE Russell featured. In art and design interwoven, snaking patterns and spiral motifs evoked the Celtic mood and Druids clutching bunches of mistletoe emerged from groves of oak trees. But this is a long way from who the Celts really were.

• Celts: Art and Identity is on show at the British Museum (+44 (0) 20 7323 8181; britishmuseum.org/celts) from 24 September until 31 January 2016. Booking is strongly recommended. After that Celts: Art and Identity will move to the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh (www.nms.ac.uk) where it will be on show from 10 March to 25 September 2016. The accompanying catalogue, edited by Julia Farley and Fraser Hunter, is published by British Museum Press at £40 (hardback), £25 (paperback).

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A Chalcidian type bronze helmet, 4th cent. B.C.

A Roman marble portrait of Alexander the Great, 2nd/3rd cent.

A tombstone of a Roman Venator, 3rd cent.

A Hellenistic gold medalion with Nike, 3rd-2nd cent. B.C.

An ancient Egyptian granite statue, 2nd millennium B.C.

A bronze sword, Nordic Bronze Age, 9th cent. B.C.

A pre-Columbian tumbaga figurine, Quimbaya culture, 4th - 9th cent.
Dalu Jones traces the phoenix-like effect that the discovery of two ancient Roman cities, buried in volcanic ash in AD 79, has had on artists and designers down the centuries.
The effect that the discovery of the buried cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum had on the development of the arts in Europe from the late 18th century onwards was profound and extremely varied. This can be clearly seen in over 200 sculptures, paintings, drawings, prints, photographs, objects and books included in an exhibition called *Pompeii and Europe: 1748-1943* currently on show at the Archaeological Museum in Naples. These objects bear witness to the fascination exerted by these ancient cities, especially Pompeii, and the influence they had on neo-Classical style, the Romantic period and modern art and architecture.

Housed inside a specially designed wooden pyramid at the centre of the amphitheatre in Pompeii itself, is a separate section of the exhibition, entitled *Rapiti alla morte* (Stolen from Death). Here, in this apty named display, 20 of the recently restored casts of the bodies of victims of the eruption – there are 86 in all – are indeed ‘Stolen from Death’. This amphitheatre was the setting for the famous concert and documentary film, *Pink Floyd: Live at Pompeii*, recorded in 1971.

The discovery of perfectly preserved bodies in the buildings and streets of the city during the 1860s was a gruesome sight that both enthralled 19th-century Romantic sightseers and inspired popular books, such as *The Last Days of Pompeii* by Edward Bulwer-Lytton (1803-1873).

The Italian nationalist and writer Luigi Settembrini (1813-1877) recorded the impression made on him by the casts: ‘They have been dead for 18 centuries, yet they are humans seen in their death throes. This is not art, not imitation; but their bones, the remains of their flesh and their garments mingled with plaster: it is the pain of death that has regained a body and a figure... You have discovered human suffering, and all who are human feel it.’

These casts were admired not only as exceptional archaeological documents but also as true works of art. So much so that, in 1888, when Kaiser Wilhelm II visited the site, the sculptor Achille d’Orsi was commissioned to make copies of the casts on a small scale to be presented as a gift to the illustrious guest. It was a long-standing tradition of the Grand Tour to take home copies, often reduced in size, of the most famous ancient statues.

Herculaneum was discovered in 1738 and Pompeii a decade later, when Mount Vesuvius was temporarily fully active, affording cosmopolitan travellers making the Grand Tour of Italy a spectacular display of volcanic activity, which was especially compelling at night.

Mercifully by then those fiery rumblings were harmless to people and goods, unlike those that were the harbingers of the famously fatal eruption in AD 79, when the two cities were buried under volcanic lava and ash. Led by expert guides, visitors could now safely ascend the mountain and later admire artefacts dug up by the amateur archaeologists who were excavating the ruined cities.

These objects were displayed in the Herculaneum Museum created by Charles III, king of Naples and Sicily (1716-88) and later king of Spain, inside his palace at Portici on the seashore of the Neapolitan Gulf. According to Goethe this was ‘... the alpha and omega of collections’. It was later moved to the Archaeological Museum of Naples where it can be viewed today.

The finds were drawn and published in a series of volumes and soon became the models for countless works of art fashioned in the new neo-Classical style that rapidly pervaded the whole of Europe. Furniture and furnishings, porcelain, clothes and hairstyles inspired by the wall paintings of these buried Roman cities became extremely fashionable. Many books, paintings, plays and operas, including

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**Goethe (1749-1832)**

*No catastrophe has ever yielded so much pleasure to the rest of humanity as that which buried Pompeii and Herculaneum.*

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*Minerva* September/October 2015
Mozart’s *The Magic Flute* (which made reference to the Temple of Isis), used Pompeii as a setting. Wealthy aristocratic collectors and patrons flocked to Pompeii, with artists in tow who recorded their impressions on paper and canvas. These visits followed tried and tested rituals, which might include a déjeuner and even a thrilling overnight stay among the ruins. In September 1821, the Prince of Denmark asked to spend the night there among the excavations in ‘respectable company… with the pleasure of a magnificent dinner’ and, it was reported, fireworks. On 27 February 1829, Ludwig I of Bavaria (1786-1868) returned to Pompeii for a second time and reported how he ‘...wanted to wield the hoe and pick-axe... and the earth... yielded to his heaviest blows...' [Italienische Reise (1989, p.68), GC Ascione] for objects that were then ‘graciously donated’ to him by the King of Naples. A few days later it was the turn of Grand Duchess Elena of Russia, who is enjoyed a ‘magnificent luncheon’ in the Gladiators’ Barracks of the ancient site.

When they returned home many of these distinguished visitors wanted to build replicas of what they had seen and enjoyed so much. Ludwig I of Bavaria had a Pompejanum built, in Aschaffenburg, on the River Main, to house his collection of antique sculptures and objects from Pompeii and Herculaneum. The building is a copy of the House of the Dioscuri in Pompeii, complete with wall paintings and a garden filled with Mediterranean plants.

The cousin of Napoléon III, Prince Napoléon Bonaparte (1822-1891), had his own trend-setting *Maison Pompéienne*, which inspired various neo-Pompeian buildings and interiors in Paris. Here, too, plays inspired by Pompeii, such as *La femme de Diomede* written by the Romantic poet and playwright Théophile Gautier (1822-1891), were staged.

Equally influential was the Pompeian Court built for the Great Exhibition in London in 1854. This
again was a reproduction of one of the ancient city’s houses, complete with all its furnishings, a three-dimensional rendering of the Pompeian-inspired settings made popular in England by painters such as Alma Tadema (1836-1912).

The ruins of Pompeii have continued to lure and fascinate visitors through the following centuries right down to the present day; artists especially have been drawn here to seek inspiration for their work.

In 1881, when Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841-1919) visited Pompeii, he was particularly struck by the frescoes. They provided him with valuable guidance about ways to move on beyond Impressionism. ‘I love painting that gives an appearance of eternity [to what it represents], an eternity forever caught on the street corner outside the home, intimate and mundane,’ he wrote. ‘So in Pompeii the domestic servant can become Juno in Olympus and for a moment at least cease to scour pots and pans.’

When Paul Klee (1879-1940) made a journey to Italy in 1901-1902 to extend his knowledge of antiquity and the Renaissance, he noticed the continuity between ancient and modern ways of drawing and painting in Pompeii and Herculaneum. Contrary to the pompous Secessionist Classicism, then in vogue in Munich where he had studied painting, he stated: ‘In Pompeii antiquity lives anew.’ Of one of the wall paintings he said: ‘The outline has a wonderful fluidity, and colour manifests itself with full independence.’

In the spring of 1917, having come to Italy as part of the entourage of Diaghilev’s Ballets Russes, Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) visited Pompeii with Léonide Massine and Jean Cocteau. Like Klee before him, Picasso was struck by the luminous colours of the frescoes and the use of tempera, together with the subtle interplay between light and shadow. Picasso’s ‘neo-classical’ breakthrough led him to interpret humanity and nature through mythology. So it is that his drawings and paintings from the early 1920s contain many...
Pompeian references, for example, in his monumental painting *The Pipes of Pan* of 1923.

In 1911 the Swiss-French architect Le Corbusier visited the Casa del Noce in Pompeii which became the inspiration for his ground-breaking Villa Savoye at Poissy. Built between 1928 and 1931 for a wealthy insurer, this building embodies the manifesto of Rationalist architecture, where modern life and materials mesh harmoniously within the proportions of an ancient domus.

Some of the Italian sculptors of the period between the two World Wars, such as Arturo Martini and Marino Marini, looked at Pompeii as a place of renewed formal influences, for the sake of ‘eroded’ form or ‘pictorial’ patina.

Years later the critic Leo Steinberg equally evoked Pompeii when in 1962 he paid homage to Jasper Johns (b 1930), the American artist whose small sculptures ‘... seem to emerge from the sediment of millennia amid dust and lava to announce an imminent apocalypse. They are gloomy forebodings of dead cities, without men any more.’

The landscapes in de Chirico’s (1888-1978) metaphysical paintings abound with heavily Classical influences, and also feature in the great cycle of his *Gladiators*. But it was the Futurist Gino Severini who really took up the challenge of reinventing techniques and styles peculiar to Graeco-Roman art, by moving beyond mere pastiches of antiquity.

*Pompeii and Europe: 1748-1943* closes with a section showing the damage inflicted on the archaeological site during the summer of 1943, when it was heavily bombed by the Allies, and it risked being totally destroyed for the second time. In July of that year the site’s chief archaeologist Amedeo Maiuri (1886-1963) warned that ‘In Pompeii there is no time to lose. The danger to be feared is both the first shock of the invasion and the gangs of thieves and bandits who will roam about plundering abandoned or ruined buildings. Statues and reliefs will have to be removed... But who will save the monuments, houses and paintings from the fury of bombardment?... All my efforts to make Pompeii a neutral zone, safe from war damage, were in vain.’

The first air-raid struck Pompeii on the night of 24 August, 1943. After dropping flares, the Allies succeeded in hitting the south-west area of the archaeological site. All the objects suffered damage and around 1500 were completely destroyed.

For the Germans fleeing northward, Pompeii was only a compulsory point of passage, not a place to be defended at all costs. The Allied Military Command, however, saw Pompeii as a German holdout, an entrenched camp. In mid-September even more serious devastation was unleashed on Pompeii. Maiuri described the pounding attacks with bombers flying in low in daytime and at night, when flares created the terrifying impression that the ruins were ablaze.

On 14 September he urged the Germans to remove their batteries from the Villa of the Mysteries, to avoid Allied reprisals that might cause the destruction of Pompeii’s most valuable and fragile monument. But even a petition to Colonel
Walter Schöll, the German commander in Naples, was disregarded. Mercifully the Villa of the Mysteries, although surrounded by explosions, escaped destruction. Later, in 1944, Maiuri was grateful for the help he received from the American Major Paul Gardner, one of the Monuments Men team, and head of the Division of Education and Fine Arts, who ensured that the thousands of pieces of painted plaster and mosaic tiles scattered on the
ground did not become war souvenirs – a strong possibility, as at least half a million soldiers of the Anglo-French-American forces visited the surviving ruins.

In Pompeii, as later at Monte Cassino, war struck a piece of historical and cultural heritage that should have been preserved at all costs. This is a timely and powerful reminder of the need for international regulations to be put in place in order to stop the ongoing wanton destruction of priceless sites worldwide – not to mention the millions of people who are the innocent victims of those who love war and relish the destruction it brings.

Pompeii and Europe: 1748-1943 is on show at Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Naples and at the Amphitheatre in Pompeii (www.mostrapompeieuropa.it) until 3 November 2015. The catalogue, edited by M Osanna, L Gallo and MT Caracciolo, is published (in Italian, French and English) by Electa at €34.
The sale will take place at the Hotel Baur au Lac, Zurich

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When Robert Harris set out to explore the tumultuous and intrigue-filled world of ancient Rome, he was rather surprised by how utterly absorbing he found it, and he went on to make it the setting for four of his novels.

Ancient history, however, has not always been his first love. After studying English and politics at Cambridge, where he was President of the Union and Editor of *Varsity*, he joined the ranks of the BBC, working on current affairs programmes, such as *Panorama* and *Newsnight*, before becoming political editor of the *Observer*. At the same time Harris wrote several volumes of non-fiction before, in 1992, creating a sensation with his first fictional work, *Fatherland*, an account of an imagined world in which Germany has won the Second World War.

Other books focusing on the war followed but then, the ancient world captured his imagination. *Pompeii*, published in 2003, is a gripping account of the last days of the doomed city, consumed by the apocalyptic eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79. He then turned his attention to Cicero, the famous orator and politician, who played a central role in the dying days of the Republic. *Imperium* (2006) traces Cicero's epic rise to power, *Lustrum* (2009) portrays him in his heyday, while the soon-to-be-published *Dictator*, the final work in the trilogy, chronicles the last, dramatic death throes of the Republic.

To Harris, once a close ally of Tony Blair (the main character of his novel *The Ghost* is clearly based on Blair), our national political scene bears an uncanny resemblance to that of ancient Rome – so it is little wonder that he has managed to bring the convoluted and treacherous world of Cicero so vividly and compellingly to life. He also insists that there are lessons to be learnt from the Roman world that we ignore at our peril.

**How did your books on Rome come about?**
I've always had a general interest in history but it was no more than that. I studied English and Politics at university. In 2000 I was trying to write a novel about modern America and the constant threats to an idyllic society but found it didn't work. Then I thought about writing an historical novel, using Pompeii as an allegory to make a parallel with the modern situation in America. So, in 2003, I decided to switch to Pompeii, which rather alarmed my publisher! Later I read Tom Holland's book *Rubicon* [on the decline and fall of the Roman Empire] and I thought that I could write a political novel about ancient Rome, which was the superpower of its day.

**Which writers of historical fiction do you read and admire?**
I've read the novels of Robert Graves and like his work. I also admire Marguerite Yourcenar [the Belgian-born French novelist, 1903-1987] who wrote *Memoirs of Hadrian*. But I tend to read more non-fiction than fiction. I like going to the original sources of ancient history – I'm very keen on diaries and letters.

**How did the story of Pompeii develop? Did you do much work on the ground? And was, as I have heard, the book inspired by the film Chinatown?**
I'd been to Pompeii but when I decided I might write a novel about the place, I went out there for a visit then followed that up with quite a few more and got really fascinated by the city. You can still find the place where the water comes into the town up in the north near the Vesuvius Gate. We know that one of the warning signs of a possible volcanic eruption is that the water supply gets upset. So it occurred to me that the first person to notice that something was amiss would be the person responsible for it, and it also struck me that no one had written about water-engineers – people are more inclined to write about gladiators or soldiers. Then I
Robert Harris among the ruins of the ancient city of Pompeii where he did the groundwork for his best-selling novel

Interview

did some research at home. I went to the Bodleian Library in Oxford where I found a book on Roman aqueducts and studied it. Over the few years when I was writing the book I really came to know the streets of Pompeii, its layout and architecture; the whole novel depended on the terrain and the geography. Often I would go in the winter when it was quiet but sunny and I could soak it all up. The water system that served Pompeii was quite long and complex. It fed around the Bay of Naples and ended up in Misenum. I visited the Piscina Mirabilis – the great cistern that lies where the aqueduct ended near Misenum, which is also where the Roman fleet was based. There were no other visitors and it was very haunting to walk around it on my own. And, yes, I did have the film *Chinatown* in mind, too. Those who control water in hot landscapes can become powerful and there are opportunities for corruption. Writing *Pompeii* was a very happy, very rewarding experience. Much to my surprise, the ancient world really struck a chord with me.

What drew you to Cicero? What kind of man do you think he was and how did you research him?

Of all the ancient Romans, Cicero is the most accessible to us, and he appeals to us in a number of ways. He wasn’t a soldier and wasn’t from a rich or noble family. He rose to prominence because of his brains and ambition. He was a bit of an insider/outside, a self-made man, and this is a modern concept. He was rational and we know that he was quite sympathetic and not cruel – a humanist, really. But he certainly had his flaws. He was obviously vain, trimmed his sail to the prevailing wind and could tell outright lies. He was also rather nervous and fearful but that’s quite attractive as it makes him vulnerable, although he also had the ability to pull himself together and go on regardless. He was at the centre of things in those times and I wanted to write about the Roman political system and how it is like our modern politics – their world was the great forerunner of our modern political world.

I did a lot of work on the ground for *Pompeii* but I couldn’t really do that for the novels on Cicero. Modern Rome can be rather misleading – much of the world of the Republican times was destroyed and rebuilt by Augustus so it’s hard to discern the city of Cicero today. For these three novels I’ve relied more on written sources.

What is it that particularly interests you about the Roman world?

I think it’s quite similar to our own world and to quite an extent through studying ancient Rome you can see how the modern world was formed. You don’t get such a sense of that from the ancient Greeks or Egyptians, or even from the Tudors or the medieval period. We share a lot of things with the ancient Romans – politics, the rule of law, philosophy – these things are all very much part of our world. So the first thing is the sense of continuity. Then there’s the fact that the Romans were so dominant and then that power fell away and that has lessons for our own time.

There’s a quotation I have included in *Dictator* from the Classical scholar Professor DR Shackleton Bailey [1907-2005]: ‘Alive, Cicero enhanced life. So can his letters do, if only for a student here and there, taking time away from belittling despairs to live among Virgil’s Togaed People, desperate masters of a larger world.’ I really feel that about Rome. It’s an existential thing. The Romans lived extraordinary lives. They lived on the edge and anything was possible. They were an amazingly intelligent and powerful race.

**What do we have in common with the ancient Romans and what sets us apart from them?**

We have quite a lot in common, as I said before – the rule of law, philosophy, the idea of the state. We derive a lot of our political terms (canvass, candidate) from ancient Rome. We can see their influence in our world in the organisation of their army, their interest in and use of technology, science, art and architecture. The idea of conquering nature – diverting water, for example – all that feels familiar to us.

But then we are separated by huge gaps too. Their slavery, a tremendous cruelty and savagery and vast array of gods and superstition is quite alien to us – though, mind
you, we can be superstitious too. However, I think there are more things that unite us than divide us. So they are very interesting and they provide a kind of mirror that can be held up to our own society. I can see ourselves in them more than I can in Druids or Saxons.

You can also definitely feel traces of ancient Rome in the modern world of Italy too – its clannishness and sense of blood honour, and how its life is lived in the streets. You look around you when you’re there and think, this is what life in ancient Rome must have been like.

Would you like to have lived during the Roman era? If not then, which period would you prefer?

No, probably not. If you could drop in and out of that life it would be interesting – but I still don’t like the thought of living in a world without anaesthetics! It was a pretty savage, tough life. If you were one of the elite it would have been easier but, even so, they had to play a part in public life. A lot was expected of ancient Romans. It was a demanding life. Young people were subjected to a lot of discipline and military service and it was generally a dangerous life.

As to any other period, my last novel, *An Officer and a Spy*, was set in France in the 1890s and I think to be in Paris at that time might have been good.

Do you find echoes and parallels of the world of ancient Rome in today’s politics? Who would have made the better emperor, Tony Blair or Boris Johnson?

There are parallels today. One, which I have explored in *Dictator*, was the notion that a democracy in one era can’t necessarily survive in another era. The Romans developed a sophisticated democracy, though you have to bear in mind that it was weighted towards the wealthy and women weren’t included in the system. But, then, when Rome became a wealthy superpower, democracy collapsed.

I think there are parallels today in America. You have to ask can the system carry the weight of its empire and money and can you retain a form of democracy developed several centuries before? Money corrupts the political system and an elite develops. Today, in America, you can see the rise of the political family and how power is handed on through a family. Now we’ve got the Kennedys, the Clintons and the Bushes. They are like the political families of ancient Rome. As for Blair and Johnson, I think Blair would be similar to Octavian. Boris seems more traditionally Roman.

Do you have plans for more historical novels and what people or periods of time would interest you?

I will probably move on from ancient Rome now. I have written four novels set there now. All rights for Pompeii have been bought by Sony for a television mini-series – but your guess is as good as mine as to whether that will happen. I’m quite interested in the 20th-century period of between the wars but I have no immediate plans for any books on that yet.

What has writing about the ancient world brought to your life?

It has been very enriching to try to understand a civilisation that has been such a strong influence on the formation of our own. We are almost a shadow of ancient Rome – and it puts one’s life in context. In *Dictator* I quote Cicero when he said: ‘To be ignorant of what occurred before you were born is to remain always a child. For what is the worth of human life unless it is woven into the life of our ancestors by the records of history?’ That is a good motto to have and, for me, this sums it up. We can’t understand the modern world unless we know and understand the one we come from. It’s still in us in the present. As our world whirls around us and communication becomes ever more rapid, more people are hankering after an understanding of the past to get a purchase on the present. So it’s not surprising that there is a terrific interest in history now.

*Dictator* by Robert Harris is published by Hutchinson, in hardback and ebook on 8 October 2015, at £20.

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Córdoba, the Mezquita, steel engraving c. 1850.

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Halfway up a plumply rounded grass-covered hillock is what can only be described as a large hole, and it is with some trepidation that I prepare to enter it by donning a hard hat, sturdy knee-pads and thick rubber gloves. I then find myself crawling on all fours through a narrow, wet, stone-lined passage into my first chambered cairn. Cut into the bedrock and named Cuween Hill Cairn when it was excavated in 1901, it was found to contain not only human remains but also the skulls of 24 dogs, who are clearly Man’s oldest friend.

This is the first of several chambered cairns in Orkney that can be accessed by various means and in different postures: crawling, stooping or even, the most difficult, lying face downwards on a kind of skateboard on which you propel yourself into the tomb. Other tombs can be entered by climbing down narrow precipitous stone steps or a modern, metal-runged ladder. Once inside, you can usually stand up and admire the workmanship of the...
cairn-builder whose drystone walls have lasted thousands of years.

Visits can also be made to 'earth houses', or souterrains. These are subterranean Iron Age structures constructed about two metres underground and originally entered through a curving passageway. This leads to a round or oval chamber in which four upright stones support the flagstone or corbelled roof. One was discovered by chance at a farm in 1926 when the roof of its chamber collapsed in on itself due to the weight of a threshing machine. Inside Rennibister Earth House, as it is known, were the remains of at least 18 people, including 12 children.

But by far the most exciting archaeological site in Orkney to date is to be found on the Ness of Brodgar on Mainland, the largest of the islands. As I stand on this long spit of land, to the north-west I see a large (100-metre) stone circle on the horizon, the Ring of Brodgar; and to the south-east, are the imposing Stones of Stenness and, beyond them, is a mound that is the large chambered cairn, Maeshowe. On either side of the Ness are, on one side, the freshwater Harris loch and, on the other, the saltwater Stenness loch. It is quite likely that I am at the centre of the most important site in
Neolithic Britain, a temple precinct dating back to 3600 BC – some 500 years older than Stonehenge. Anyone who saw Neil Oliver's BBC2 television series, A History of Ancient Britain, or read the cover story in National Geographic magazine last year, will already know quite a lot about the Ness of Brodgar. These, and other media coverage, have had an extraordinary impact on the number of visitors coming to Orkney. One tour company is fully booked over a year in advance, with good reason, as it provides the rare opportunity to visit a plethora of extremely early stone monuments and other archaeological sites in close proximity and in a short time. You can’t see every single one in a week but you can visit all the major monuments, traversing thousands of years of history in only a few square miles. When we visit the site on the Ness of Brodgar the atmosphere amongst the archaeologists digging there is positively fizzing. The site director, Nick Card, has described it as ‘an archaeologist’s dream site… a one-off’. Never mind the lowering mist, horizontal rain and blustering winds that afflict this part of the world, Nick and his team (members of which come from all over the world) know they are on to something big and that their continuing patient, thorough, painstaking investigation is revealing more and more about a sacred enclosure of such importance that it has changed the map of Neolithic Britain.

The buildings the archaeologists are uncovering were purely for ritual, rather than domestic use, and are oddly configured, each one differently, suggesting that they were designed for separate kinds, or parts, of a religious celebration. Structure 10, which is larger than the rest, has acquired the nickname of the ‘temple’ or ‘cathedral’. The shin-bones of hundreds of cattle, dated circa 2300 BC, were found covering the pathway surrounded this building. This was about the time when Structure 10 was decommissioned and suggests that a huge feast was held to mark its end.

The interiors of two of the structures were in part painted. Lumps of pigment, red and yellow ochre, haematite, limonite and galena (lead sulphite), have been found, as well as stone grinding dishes, a spatula and what may have been an artist’s palette made of clay. Other finds include decorated pottery sherds, polished mace- and axe-heads (‘weapons of power’) that have been deliberately broken for ritual purposes, and carved stone balls. How the latter were used is unclear. One of these balls may have been passed round at meetings and, whoever held it could speak – the ball was then, as it were, in your court.

Around the buildings were two walls, the Great Wall and the Lesser Wall, meaning that this was a fiercely protected, private, sacred enclave. These walls are far too big to be domestic or defensive. Charcoal

5. Dating to circa 3000-2700 BC, Maeshowe is a prominent feature in Orkney’s Neolithic landscape. This grassy mound conceals a 3.8-metre-high inner chamber, with cells to the left and right of the centrally placed 7-metre-long entrance passage. Long after its use in Neolithic times it was used by Orkney’s Norse inhabitants, evidence of which is the runic graffiti on its wall.

6. One of several Iron Age settlements, the Broch of Gurness was built during the first millennium. It centres around a stone tower, or broch, which was about 10 metres high. It was occupied up until Pictish and even Norse times, as late as the 9th century AD.
found under the foundation of the Lesser Wall, which is two metres wide and three metres high, has been dated to at least 3000 BC.

With exciting sites like these there are, of course, theories – a-plenty. One has designated the Ring of Brodgar as the realm of the dead, while the Stones of Stenness were a place where the living held large gatherings. The two are linked by the Ness of Brodgar with its sacred enclave. It is a neat explanation and could well be true but another interpretation may yet emerge as future excavation – and there is plenty of it (up to 100 buildings) waiting to be done – reveals new evidence. As Nick Card put it so poignantly: ‘Life is never simple when you are dealing with the Neolithic.’

The well-known large chambered cairn, Maeshowe, is nearby, and here there are also conflicting views as to who did what, when and why. This is not helped by the fact that it is such a popular site that you can only visit it in groups of around 20 with site guides who are not archaeologists. So it is that certain myths are passed on. Nevertheless, this is an impressive structure made more human by later Viking graffiti scratched in runes on the stone walls of the interior. There is also a Norse drawing, from around AD 1150, of a lion/dragon, that now serves as a handy logo for tourist wares.

Moving on from the land of the dead to that of the living, we go to another of Orkney’s most famous sites, Scara Brae, a cluster of 10 circular single-room Neolithic houses on Mainland’s west coast. Today they sit next to a small white-sand beach but when they were built, 5000 years ago, they were by a lagoon fringed by dunes. Everything inside them is made from the flat plates of red sandstone that we can see piled up along the shore. There are stone shelves, a stone ‘dresser’, stone bed partitions, a stone hearth and watertight stone troughs. Occupied for 600 years, between 3100 BC and 2500 BC, Scara Brae is the ultimate prototype eco-village whose houses were built with double stone walls with midden (refuse) packed into the cavity between them. This provided both stability and insulation. As there were few trees in the area, driftwood and dried sheep or goat dung were used as fuel and their fleeces or skins could have been used as clothing or bedding. Examination of the midden shows that the diet of the people who lived here included fish, seabirds, deer and shellfish.

Scara Brae had remained hidden

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under sand for thousands of years until a great storm uncovered one of the houses in 1850. Even so, it was not until the 1920s that the site received professional attention from the Australian archaeologist V Gordon Childe.

The laird, who owned the land on which Scara Brae was discovered, lived in nearby Skaill House, which has its own historically interesting backstory, with curious connections to Captain Cook and Sir John Franklin, and Norse links that were confirmed when a Viking burial-ground was unearthed while a garden terrace was being made.

When the Vikings arrived in Orkney in the 9th century AD, they made the formerly Pictish settlement of the Brough of Birsay on the Atlantic coast their headquarters. Off Mainland’s northwest coast, it can only be reached via a causeway when the tide is out. On the day we visit, the sea may have retreated but sea-mist has rolled in giving everything the eerie quality of being somewhere on the murky borders between a dream and reality. After a short walk we lie flat on a sheer cliff-top and look down on an array of nesting puffins, fulmars and razorbills.

Back at the site we see the remains of Viking houses and a 12th-century church in which the altar, made of red sandstone blocks, is still in situ. The same red sandstone was used to construct the magnificent cathedral dedicated to St Magnus and the Earl’s and Bishop’s Palaces in Kirkwall, Orkney’s capital.

When St Magnus was martyred in AD 1117, his body was taken first to Birsay, then to St Olaf’s kirk, before he was interred in the cathedral built in his honour. Among remains found in a box during early 20th-century restoration was a scull that had been split by an axe-blow, suggesting a violent end. This was claimed to belong to St Magnus although scholars have subsequently questioned this conclusion.

Kirkwall Museum, which is almost opposite the cathedral, chronicles the long history of these islands with fossils from Devonian period to artefacts from the Second World War.

The Romans may not have settled on Orkney but some Italians were forced to stay here – as prisoners-of-war. The more artistic of them left behind a charming and beautifully painted chapel built and decorated in their spare time in 1942 while they were constructing the Churchill Barriers (built to protect the Fleet). A few sunken German hulks jut out above the waves but more than 60 wrecks remain hidden beneath them. The work on decorating the Italian chapel, which was constructed from two Nissen huts, was guided by an artist called Domenico Chiocchetti, who even managed to make light fittings out of bully beef tins. The Italian Chapel is appropriately dedicated to the Queen of Peace.

Moving back into the deep past, on the island of Rousay, we cannot resist stopping at two more chambered cairns. The first is an unusual two-storey tomb called Taversoe Tuick. Its top section held no human remains, but the lower
The level contained three crouched burials and evidence of later cremations. The second is a long chambered tomb, Blackhammer Cairn, which has stone stalls at either end.

While driving round the island we see a peculiar turbulence in the sea, a kind of maelstrom, which the guide tells us is Eynhallow Röst, the point where the North Sea meets the powerful currents of the Atlantic. Further on we come to Midhowe Cairn, a large (100 feet x 33 feet) Neolithic tomb with many stalls, protected by a modern structure with viewing walkways. Excavated in the 1930s, it dates to circa 3500 BC. Looking down along the beach outside, once again we see piles of the local, naturally occurring building material of flat, sandstone slabs that were used to build both Midhowe Cairn and Broch.

Nearby Midhowe Broch is an Iron Age settlement, where the houses circle a central tower, or broch. Although much later, these houses contain the same kind of stone "fittings" as those at Scara Brae, including a central stone fire-pit. The difference is that they were once two to three storeys high, with stone steps, and their walls are thicker. Across Eynhallow Sound is Gurness Broch, a similar settlement.

A short walk takes us to Swandro dig where archaeologists are excavating a site on the beach which will eventually by destroyed by the sea. There, we meet Sam Dollman, an undergraduate from the University of Bradford, who tells me this is his third season at this dig. Tall, sporting a ponytail and blue nail varnish, he seems to be channeling the Orkney's Neolithic henge-builders — if only his name was Dolmen!

**ORKNEY FACT FILE**

- For further information on Orkney archaeology and the Ness of Brodgar dig, or to sponsor it, visit: Orkney Archaeology Society (www.orkneyarchaeologysociety.org.uk); Ness of Brodgar Dig (www.orkneyjar.com/nessofbrodgar); Ness of Brodgar Trust (www.nessofbrodgar.co.uk).
- Various companies offer group and private tours of Orkney. They include: Explore Orkney (www.exploreorkney.com); Orkney Archaeology Tours (www.orkneyarchaeologytours.co.uk); Orkney Uncovered (www.orkneyuncovered.co.uk); Peedie Orkney Tours (www.peedieorkneytours.com); See Orkney (www.seeorkney.co.uk); Wild About Orkney (www.wildaboutorkney.com).
- Book a hire-car well in advance to drive to the sites on Mainland and to take ferries on day-trips to the other islands. Most of the major sites can also fairly easily be reached by public transport.
Season of the Witch

As Hallowe’en approaches, Paul Chrystal reveals the unspeakable practices that were commonplace among the horrid hags of the Classical world.
In the ancient world witches were viewed as repellent creatures. In mythology and literature, they were portrayed as magical, dangerous, scheming individuals who could be seductive but who could also plumb uncharted depths of obscene atrocity. These foul, repugnant hags scuttled around in the deepest pits of depravity, behaving in a totally immoral manner. Such stereotypes shaped the witch throughout history and were taken up by Western artists.

In an engraving (3), dated circa 1500, by Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528), a witch rides backwards on a goat (signifying the Devil and lust) accompanied by four putti. In a scene taken from an ancient Bacchic sarcophagus, Veneziano (circa 1490-circa 1540) shows a witch astride a skeleton (4) in The Witches’ Root (The Carcass) circa 1520. In They Spin Finely (Hilan Delgado) (5) from his Los Caprichos series of 1799, Goya (1746-1828) depicts dead babies strung up by witches in a deeply ironic depiction of ‘spinning’, which was a symbol of chastity in the ancient world. In another witchcraft scene, once attributed to Goya (1), the bone of a skeleton is being used as a wand.

Yet, as a profession, witchcraft attracted quite a lot of practitioners. In Roman times witches fulfilled a real social and psychological need, responding to the citizens’ obsession with superstition. Inside the Villa Cicerone at Pompeii (2) is a mosaic in which a witch provides infernal advice to two eager customers. So although generally loathed, they were also valued and, occasionally, they were useful agents at the highest level of government. For example, witches were complicit in the death of two possible contenders to the imperial throne, Germanicus (15 BC-AD 19) and Britannicus (AD 41-AD 55), and in the fungal assassination of the Emperor Claudius (r AD 41-54) by a friend of his wife, Locusta the Sorceress.

So what were a witch’s qualifications? He or, more usually, she had to be nothing less than a world-changer, skilful in nighting day and dawning night, eclipsing the moon, drawing it down, rolling rocks and reversing rivers, communing with the dead through the mouth of a corpse. Witches also had to be proficient in dubious forms of pharmacology, to practise cannibalism and serial child murder, to perform impromptu abortions and to have a working knowledge of all things eschatological. They went against the natural order – even defying the laws of gravity by flying, as in Jan de Bisschop’s Witch Riding through the Air on a Dragon (1628-1671) (6).

We meet our first witch in Book 10 of the Odyssey when Odysseus encounters Circe, who changes his crew into pigs (and back again) with the wave of a magic crook, and with a spell and a potion. Odysseus himself is not enchanted because the god Mercury has given him molu (a kind of snowdrop with protective and mystical properties) and although he does not succumb to this porcine transformation, he falls for Circe’s abundant physical charms. And so the pair begin a torrid affair during which she reveals his future and arranges Odysseus’s appointment with the dead, not least with the prophet Teiresias, who rise up from the Underworld. Circe is a spellmaker. She also uses potions and is the perfect example of the triadic association between drugs, spells and medicine, which prevailed throughout the ancient world. She can render herself invisible, fly through the air and has the power to emasculate her lovers, a fate that Odysseus manages to avoid.

Closely associated with witches, and just as malevolent, were the hagewomen of childhood. In Laws (7.808d-e) Plato observed: ‘...of all wild things, the child is most unmanageable... the most unruly animal there is. That’s why he has to be curbed by a great many bridles.’ One of these ‘bridles’, endorsed by flustered wet nurses, was the introduction of the hagewoman into
children’s impressionable imaginations. Bogeywomen often appeared as the ancient equivalent of big bad wolves, gobbling up naughty boys and girls. In ancient Greece the bogeywoman took on the shape of Mormo, a horrifying child-biting donkey with the legs of a woman. She is depicted either as a queen of the Lystraegones, a tribe of giant man-eating cannibals, or as a child-eating Corinthian. Mormo had lost her own children, and she vengefully murdered those of others. Another bogeywoman was Empusa, who appeared either as a cannibalistic cow, donkey or, rather confusingly, a beautiful woman. A third was Gello, an evil female spirit and a child-snatcher. The Roman equivalent of Mormo was Lamia, a sexy Libyan woman whose children, by Zeus, were murdered by his jealous wife Hera. Like Mormo, Lamia was a cannibal who exacted revenge by stealing other women’s babies and eating them alive. In the late 2nd century AD Flavius Philostratus describes Lamia and Empusa as phasma (‘ghosts’ or ‘nightmares’) in his *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* (4.25 ff). Lucretius was sufficiently concerned about such irrational fears and their effect on over-active imaginations that, in *De Rerum Natura* (3.978ff), he tries to explain them away. Horace includes the fear of bad dreams, the terrors of magic, miracles and nocturnal ghosts in his list of things that rational people should avoid. In *Epodes* 5 and 17, he describes Canidia and her cronies, a gruesome cabal of witches, who are intent on performing a live hepatectomy on a terrified little boy in order to concoct a love potion from his liver and marrow. Canidia, who has serpentine hair, brings eggs dipped in the blood of filthy frogs, and the teeth of a ravenous bitch dog. The cronies Sagana, Vera and Folia are painted as equally odious and repellent. Sagana, whose hair stands on end like a sea urchin or a bristling boar, sprinkles water from Hell. Vera digs the boy’s grave in which he is to be buried up to his neck, tantalised by an endless succession of banquets until his eyeballs melt, and Folia lusts after him like a man. The boy retaliates with the threat of a curse against them, deploying his own brand of black magic by swearing that he will haunt them as a Fury from Hell. Literally speaking, frogs’ blood and the use of a human liver are unique to Horace although, as they both feature in the Greek Magical Papyri (a collection of manuscripts from Graeco-Roman Egypt, containing spells, magical formulae and rituals, dating from the 2nd century BC to the 5th century AD) their ubiquity in the Roman demi-monde is confirmed. Evidence for the kidnapping of real children comes from an early 1st-century AD epitaph that describes how the three-year-old child of Iucundus ‘was snatched by a witch’s hand’. The parents send a warning to others telling them to ‘look after their children well’ lest they suffer a similar calamity. Horace reprises the hags Canidia and Sagana in the *Satires* (1. 8) where Priapus, the phallus with a face and narrator of the piece, ridicules them. He is erected in Rome as a wooden statue in a park on the Esquiline, which was once a p augers’ cemetery infested by witches. They still frequent the area and Priapus describes them as ‘those who turn mankind’s minds with their spells and potions’ (1.8.19-20). They are horrendae aspectu (‘horrible to look at’), as they perform a necromancy using the blood of a lamb that they have ripped to shreds. The repugnant scene is ended prematurely, however, when Priapus breaks wind, sending the two witches running, with hilarious consequences: Canidia’s false teeth fall out, Sagana loses her wig, and they drop all their herbs and enchanted love-chains. But witchcraft was not all murder and mayhem, it also involved dabbling in pseudo-medicine. In Petronius’s *Satyricon* (125-141), Circe’s servant Chrysis brings in Proselenus, an old woman with magical powers, to cure Encolpius of his impotence. His erectile dysfunction had presented when he was consort ing with Circe. Proselenus asks if he
was emasculated by witches (obviously not uncommon), then subjects him to a bout of flagellation in the room of Oenothea, priestess of the ithyphallic god Priapus. Oenothea enters, is told by Proselenus that Encolpius is flaccid and she begins an elaborate magical process to make him ‘as rigid as horn’. She, too, displays distinctive, witch-like powers that confound and control nature: seas, rivers and winds obey her; tigers and snakes submit; she can draw down the moon and reverse the sun’s course. She is indeed callens artibus (‘cunning in such arts’). Oenothea tears open the breast of a sacred goose and uses its liver to foretell Encolpius’s future. After much farce, Oenothea penetrates Encolpius anally with a leather phallus dipped in oil, pepper and nettles, while Proselenus whips him with a bunch of nettles. Eventually, Encolpius is cured.

Lucan’s Erichtho (4), who features in the Pharsalia, is the queen of witches, surpassing even Seneca’s Medea in her repulsiveness. Sextus Pompey wants to know the future but he eschews conventional forms of divination, electing instead to use ‘the mysteries of the furious enchantress’. Living in Thessaly he is in the realm of some of the world’s most dreadful witches and their herbae nocentes (‘pernicious herbs’). Lucan describes their noxia pocula (‘noxious potions’), their theft of bippomanes, a powerful aphrodisiac used to pervert the natural course of love, and their venena (‘poisons’). They can cause physical, astronomical and meteorological calamities. Lions, tigers and snakes are cowed by their power.

Wild Erichtho takes their evil excesses to new extremes. She communes with the dead and is expert in all things eschatological. Where she goes contagion follows. She buries the living and re-animates the dead. She snatches burning babies from their pyres for occult research and experimentation, and she assaults the bodies of the dead, scooping out their eyeballs and gnawing at their nails. She tears flesh from crucified corpses, harvests the black concealed gore suppurating from the limbs of the decaying. She steals the meat ripped from putrefying bodies by wolves, and she is a serial murderer who performs crude Caesarean sections on pregnant women whenever a baby is required for the pyre. She rips the faces from young boys, and at funerals she opens the mouths of the dead with her teeth, bites their tongues and thereby communicates with Hell.

Sextus Pompey seeks out Erichtho (Pharsalia 6.610ff) and, with the help of her squalid necromancy, duly learns what fate awaits him at the battle of Pharsalia. In her horrific re-animation, Erichtho may have inspired Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein (8), some 1,750 years later. Mary would have been familiar with the episode because her husband, the poet Shelley, was a great admirer of Lucan. Erichtho also adds a vile flavour to Dante’s Inferno and Goethe’s Faust.

In Ovid’s Metamorphoses (1.2-20), Apuleius introduces us to two witches: Meroe, an aging but vivacious innkeeper with magical powers, and her sister Panthia. When one of Meroe’s lovers is unfaithful to her she turns him into a beaver because, when hunted, these animals were said to bite off their own genitals and leave them lying on the ground to act as a decoy, putting hunters off the scent. Self-castration is to be his fate. She also changes rival innkeepers...
into frogs, morphs prosecuting lawyers into rams and condemns the wife of one of her lovers to endure perpetual pregnancy. What she does to take revenge on her lover Socrates and his friend Aristomenes is exceptionally gory and sadistic.

In his 3rd-century AD Aethiopica, Heliodorus of Emesa describes necromancy practised by an old woman of Bessa. In the aftermath of a battle between the Persians and the Egyptians, Calasiris, a priest of Isis, and Charicleia, the heroine of the novel, come across a battlefield strewn with corpses. The only living soul is an elderly Egyptian woman mourning her dead son. She invites the couple to spend the night there.

Charicleia and Calasiris then witness a shocking necromantic scene: the old woman digs a trench, lights two pyres on either side and places the body of her son between them. She pours libations into the trench and throws in a male effigy made of dough. Shaking and in a trance, the old woman gashes her arm with a sword and lets her blood drip into the trench while uttering wild and exotic prayers to the moon. After some more magic she chants into her dead son’s ear and makes him stand up; she then questions him about the fate of her other son, his brother. At first, the corpse says nothing but, because his mother persists, he rebukes her for sinning against nature and breaking the law when she should have been busy organising his burial. He reveals not only that his brother is dead but that his mother will die violently because of her unlawful practice. Before collapsing again, the corpse reveals the awful truth that her necromancy has been witnessed not only by a priest ‘beloved by the gods’, but also by a young girl who has dutifully travelled to the ends of the earth looking for her lover. A happy outcome is promised for Calasiris and Charicleia when the old mother, outraged by this intrusion, pursues them and is fatally impaled on a discarded spear.

This gives you some idea of the disgusting practices and heinous crimes perpetrated by the horrid hags of the Classical world who have provided the template for witches through the ages and who make Macbeth’s three weird sisters look tame by comparison.

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The Basel Ancient Art Fair has drawn top international dealers in classical, Egyptian and Near Eastern antiquities to Basel for more than a decade. The fair in the baroque Reithalle Wenkenhof, has become an autumn diary fixture in the world of ancient art. The combination of this elegant location with an abundance of fine ancient art creates the unique atmosphere that attracts interested people from all over the world to BAAF every year.


For more information: www.baaf.ch
Elias S David (1891-1969) was an important dealer in Near Eastern art in New York from the 1940s to the 1960s. He first started dealing in Paris but moved to New York in 1914. After his death many of his objects were placed in storage and remained there for more than 40 years.

Christie’s New York presented a large selection of this stock in their 4 June sale including an extensive series of 46 Sumerian and Babylonian cylinders, cones, and tablets. Of the six Neo-Babylonian clay cuneiform cylinders from the reign of the famed king, Nebuchadnezzar II (r 604-562 BC), the most impressive was a large (H. 20.2cm) tapering example (1), recording his many building activities. Though estimated at $250,000-$350,000, the bidding was intense and it was finally sold by telephone to an American private collector for a record price of $941,000 (£611,650).

A large (H. 23cm), barrel-shaped cylinder of Nebuchadnezzar II (2) recording his rebuilding of the temple of the goddess Ninkarrak in Sippar, also estimated at $250,000-$350,000, brought $293,000 from a private buyer.

The other four small cylinders each sold for between $11,250 and $47,500.

A striking, large (40cm) Hellenistic bronze statue of Zeus Keraunios (Zeus the Thunderer), circa 150-50 BC, was procured by a collector in Bremen from Heinz Herzer in 1970. Estimated at $200,000-$300,000, it attracted $365,000 from a European collector.

An Attic black-figure eye-amphora by the Painter of Louvre F6 (4), circa 560-550 BC (H. 34.9cm), with Pegasus between two men on both sides, came from the William Randolph Hearst (1863-1951) collection and was purchased by Countess d’Escayrac of Vaud, Switzerland, in the Hearst sale of Parke-Bernet, New York, in April 1963 for just $1100 (!). Now estimated at $150,000-$250,000, it was purchased by an American collector for $185,000.

Also attributed to the Antimenes Painter, an Attic black-figure hydria, featuring a warrior driving a quadriga, was acquired in the 1960s-70s. Estimated at just $30,000-$50,000, it sold for $118,250 to a European dealer.

IN THE SALEROOM CHRISTIE’S NEW YORK

From cylinder seals to the Book of the Dead

Dr Jerome M Eisenberg reports on the summer antiquities sales held in June at Christie’s and Sotheby’s in New York
an Attic black-figure hydria featuring a warrior driving a quadriga (6), circa 520 BC (H. 39.6cm), from the same collection, went for $118,250, also to a European dealer, again over the $50,000-$70,000 estimate. An archaic Corinthian bronze helmet (7), circa 600-550 BC (H. 26.8cm), estimate $80,000-$120,000, brought in $100,000 from a US collector. An over-lifesize Roman marble bust of a bearded deity (8), probably a river god, late 1st-early 2nd century AD (H. 44.7cm), from the Dutch painter and illustrator Evert Musch (1918-2007), acquired by him in the early 1960s, sold for $341,000 from a US collector. An over-lifesize Roman marble bust of a bearded deity (8), probably a river god, late 1st-early 2nd century AD (H. 44.7cm), from the Dutch painter and illustrator Evert Musch (1918-2007), acquired by him in the early 1960s, sold for $341,000 from a US collector. An Egyptian black granite bust of an official, 30th Dynasty-Early Ptolemaic Period (H. 34.2cm), Lot 17: $245,000). A Roman marble torso of Asclepius, 1st century BC-1st century AD. H. 67.3cm. (Lot 84: $341,000). A monumental (H. 45.8cm), idealised Roman marble head of Apollo (9), circa 1st century BC-1st century AD. H. 45.8cm. (Lot 86: $437,000). A Roman marble head of Apollo, circa 1st century BC-1st century AD. H. 45.8cm. (Lot 86: $437,000). A Roman marble torso of Dionysos, 1st century BC-1st century AD. H. 60.7cm. (Lot 83: $185,000). Another Roman marble torso, that of Dionysos (11), also 1st century BC-1st century AD (H. 60.7cm), again estimated at $150,000-$250,000, was won by a private collector for $185,000. A Roman marble torso of Dionysos, 1st century BC-1st century AD. H. 60.7cm. (Lot 83: $185,000). Another Roman marble torso, that of Dionysos (11), also 1st century BC-1st century AD (H. 60.7cm), again estimated at $150,000-$250,000, was won by a private collector for $185,000. A Roman marble torso of Asclepius (10), god of medicine and healing, 1st century BC-1st century AD (H. 67.3cm) from the Gianni Versace (1946-1997) collection was bought by Versace in Milan, circa 1987. Estimated at $150,000-$250,000, it was purchased by an American private client for $209,000. A Roman marble torso of Asclepius (10), god of medicine and healing, 1st century BC-1st century AD (H. 67.3cm) from the Gianni Versace (1946-1997) collection was bought by Versace in Milan, circa 1987. Estimated at $150,000-$250,000, it was purchased by an American private client for $209,000. Another Roman marble torso, that of Dionysos (11), also 1st century BC-1st century AD (H. 60.7cm), again estimated at $150,000-$250,000, was won by a private collector for $185,000. Another Roman marble torso, that of Dionysos (11), also 1st century BC-1st century AD (H. 60.7cm), again estimated at $150,000-$250,000, was won by a private collector for $185,000. A monumental (H. 45.8cm), idealised Roman marble head of Apollo (9), circa 1st century BC-1st century AD, sold for £117,600 at the Sadler Collection sale at Sotheby’s London in October 2003. Now estimated at $300,000-$500,000, it realised $341,000 from a US collector. A monumental (H. 45.8cm), idealised Roman marble head of Apollo (9), circa 1st century BC-1st century AD, sold for £117,600 at the Sadler Collection sale at Sotheby’s London in October 2003. Now estimated at $300,000-$500,000, it realised $341,000 from a US collector. A Roman marble torso of Asclepius (10), god of medicine and healing, 1st century BC-1st century AD (H. 67.3cm) from the Gianni Versace (1946-1997) collection was bought by Versace in Milan, circa 1987. Estimated at $150,000-$250,000, it was purchased by an American private client for $209,000. A Roman marble torso of Asclepius (10), god of medicine and healing, 1st century BC-1st century AD (H. 67.3cm) from the Gianni Versace (1946-1997) collection was bought by Versace in Milan, circa 1987. Estimated at $150,000-$250,000, it was purchased by an American private client for $209,000. Another Roman marble torso, that of Dionysos (11), also 1st century BC-1st century AD (H. 60.7cm), again estimated at $150,000-$250,000, was won by a private collector for $185,000. Another Roman marble torso, that of Dionysos (11), also 1st century BC-1st century AD (H. 60.7cm), again estimated at $150,000-$250,000, was won by a private collector for $185,000.
CHRISTIE’S NEW YORK

14. Egyptian bronze seated figure of the goddess Neith, circa 664-332 BC. H. 25.4cm. (Lot 13: $173,000)

15. Egyptian papyrus fragment, Chapter 17 of the Book of the Dead (detail), 21st Dynasty, 1069-945 BC. L. 118.1cm. (Lot 5: $125,000).

SOTHEBY’S NEW YORK

2. Roman marble head of Herakles, circa late 1st century AD, mounted on a Roman marble bust, mid-2nd century AD. Total H. 58.4cm. (Lot 33: $175,000).

1. Monumental marble head of Zeus, or Asclepius, 2nd century AD, after a 5th-century BC Greek bronze original, mounted on a bust and socle, circa 1780s. Head: H. 72.4cm. (Lot 34: $3,130,000).

Zeus and Herakles meet a Pitt Rivers’ Egyptian mummy mask

A superb monumental (H. 40.6cm) marble head of Zeus or Asclepius (1), 2nd century AD, after a Greek bronze original of the 5th century BC and copied in the late Hellenistic period, was the star of Sotheby’s New York antiquities sale held on 3 June. The ancient head was mounted on a bust and socle (total H. 72.4cm), circa 1780s, attributed to Vincenzo Pacetti (1746-1820), who made reproductions of it in marble, terracotta and plaster. Many other 18th- and 19th-century copies followed, a number of which were illustrated in the sale catalogue, but this was the only known original ancient copy. The existence of the original sculpture remained unknown until it was seen in the possession of the English art dealer Louis Meier during the 1940s. This original marble was first published in 1982. The estimate of $800,000-$1,200,000 did not prevent spirited bidding, finally resulting in a surprising top bid of $3,130,000 (£2,037,628).

A Roman marble head of Herakles (2), circa late 1st century AD, mounted on a Roman marble bust, mid-2nd century AD (total H. 58.4cm), was composed and restored by Lambert Sigisbert Adam (1700-1759). After a Greek original of the 4th century BC copied in the Hellenistic Period, it was excavated in Rome between 1723 and 1732 by Cardinal Melchior de Polignac (1661-1742) and published by Adam in 1755 as Commodus.

collection, acquired before 1969, estimated at $80,000-$120,000, was sold for $173,000 to a European collector.

An Egyptian papyrus fragment from Chapter 17 of the Book of the Dead (1) showing the deceased, Nes-Khonsu, offering incense to the enthroned Osiris adjoining five columns of hieratic, 21st Dynasty, 1069-945 BC (L. 118.1cm), was acquired by the Cattaui family in London in 1976. The winning bid of $125,000 from an American collector was considerably over the estimate of $40,000-$60,000.

The auction of 178 lots brought $6,951,750, with 79% of the lots sold by number and 81% sold by value. Among the better unsold lots were a realistic Roman portrait bust of an older woman of the period of Domitian and a fine Greek marble lidded cinerary urn.

Minerva September/October 2015
Now coming from a private French collection in Versailles, with the modest estimate of $70,000-$100,000, it sold for $175,000.

A Roman marble male portrait head (3), first half of the 1st century AD (H. 39.1cm), originally in the possession of Stefano Bardini (1836-1922), a Florentine art dealer, and sold in an Ars Antiqua sale in Lucerne in 1962 to Nils Astruo (1901-1972) of Oslo. Estimated at $60,000-$90,000, it brought in $118,750.

A Roman marble candelabrum (4), circa 1st century AD (H. 156.2cm), has a triangular base with depictions of Herakles with the golden apples of the Hesperides, Eros, and a dancing satyr. It sold for $143,750 against an estimate of $50,000-$80,000.

A small Hellenistic marble torso of Aphrodite Anadyomene (rising from the sea) (5), circa 2nd century BC (H. 33 cm), came from the famed collection of Mrs Henry Walters and was sold at Parke-Bernet in 1941. With an estimate of $100,000-$150,000, it was bought for $175,000.

An Attic red-figure panel amphora by the Leningrad Painter, circa 470-460 BC (H. 51.1cm), showing a youth greeted by a bearded elder, from an old English collection, sold at Christie's London in October 2011 for only £45,750 and was bought in at a Bonham's London sale last October. Now estimated at $125,000-$175,000, it attracted $162,500.

A large Egyptian bronze Isis nursing Horus (9), 664-525 BC (H. 31cm), was from a Japanese collection acquired in the 1970s or earlier. Estimated at $40,000-$60,000, it was bought for a surprising $150,000.

A striking Egyptian polychrome and gilt cartonnage mummy mask (10), circa 100-30 BC (H. 45.8cm), was once owned by the Belgian collector Henry Hayes who acquired it prior to 1968. The other three canopic jars of the princess are in museums. With an estimate of $100,000-$150,000, it brought in $212,500.
100-30 BC (H. 45.8cm), was purchased by Augustus Pitt-Rivers (1827-1900) from Sir William Matthew Flinders Petrie (1853-1942), who excavated it at Hawara in the late 19th-early 20th century. It was offered at Sotheby's London in July 1975 where, before restoration, it remained unsold. With an estimate of $40,000-$60,000, it quickly rose to $175,000, no doubt due in part to its illustrious provenance.

A surprising $218,750 was finally bid for an unusual Egyptian anhydrite ('blue marble') double kohl vessel ($1) from the late 12th-early 13th Dynasty, circa 1800-1700 BC (H. 10.2cm), estimated at only $20,000-$30,000. It had belonged to the archaeologist and curator Garrett Chatfield Pier (1875-1943).

Finally, came a rare Neolithic steatopygous stone goddess, circa 6th millennium BC (H. 7.9cm) (11). It had been acquired by Royal-Athena Galleries in the Marion Schuster sale at Sotheby's London in December 2001, and then sold to a New York collector. Inexplicably estimated at only $15,000-$25,000, it brought in $118,750.

The sale of only 64 lots, with excellent research and cataloguing by Florent Yves Laurent (1936-2008) and Pierre Karpidus. Estimated at £150,000-£250,000, it sold for £194,500. The sale of only 64 lots, with excellent research and cataloguing by Florent Yves Laurent (1936-2008) and Pierre Karpidus. Estimated at £150,000-£250,000, it sold for £194,500.

SOTHEBY’S NEW YORK

Castle Howard’s Romano-Egyptian vase

Ponsonby, the 2nd Earl of Bessborough (1704-1793). Following his death it was purchased for 110 guineas at Christie’s sale of the Bessborough Collection, in 1801, by Frederick Howard, the 5th Earl of Carlisle (1748-1825) of Castle Howard, Yorkshire, thence by descent.

Estimated at between £400,000 and £600,000, it attracted a stunning £1,085,000.

The impressive sales catalogue presents a six-page history of the Howards of Castle Howard, together with four pages on the vase and its fascinating history.

This vase was one of nine works of art from Castle Howard in this sale. (All the prices in these reports include the buyer’s premium.)

CHRISTIE’S LONDON

Yves Saint Laurent’s marble athlete and couple

One of the two antiquities included in Christie’s London ‘Exceptional’ Sale of 9 July was an over-lifesize Roman marble torso of an athlete, circa 1st-2nd century AD (H. 94cm), after Polykletos, from the collection of Yves Saint Laurent (1936-2008) and Pierre Bergé, acquired prior to 1974.

It was sold at Christie’s Paris Saint Laurent sale in February 2009 for €1,297,000 with buyer’s premium, well over the pre-sale estimate of €300,000-€500,000. It was then re-offered at Christie’s London sale of 24 October 2013 when it was hammered down for slightly less, at £962,500 with buyer’s premium, within the estimate of £800,000-£1,200,000. Once again, now from ‘a distinguished private collection’ and estimated at £1,000,000-£1,500,000, it brought in £1,082,500.

Also from the same collection was a charming Roman marble Cupid and Psyche, circa 1st-2nd century AD (Cupid: H. 89cm. Psyche: H. 96cm), after a marble Hellenistic original from the 2nd century BC. Psyche lacks her head and the lower limbs of both are missing. From the collection of Joseph Sayag, sold in Paris in 1961, the statue was acquired by Alexander Iolas (1907-1987), the New York art dealer, before 1963. It then entered the famed Opicius collection of the Greek shipping magnate Constantine Karpidus. Estimated at £150,000-£250,000, it sold for £194,500. (All the prices in these reports include the buyer’s premium.)

The only antiquity that was offered at Sotheby’s London ‘Treasures’ sale of 8 July was a magnificent monumental quartz granite vase, circa 1st century BC (H. 68.5cm), probably from Alexandria.

Excavated in ‘Augustus’s Bath’ on the Palatine Hill in Rome in 1721, the so-called ‘bath’ was actually a nymphaeum, a fountain with an attached indoor garden.

It was acquired by William Ponsonby, the 2nd Earl of Bessborough (1704-1793). Following his death it was purchased for 110 guineas at Christie’s sale of the Bessborough Collection, in 1801, by Frederick Howard, the 5th Earl of Carlisle (1748-1825) of Castle Howard, Yorkshire, thence by descent.

Estimated at between £400,000 and £600,000, it attracted a stunning £1,085,000.

The impressive sales catalogue presents a six-page history of the Howards of Castle Howard, together with four pages on the vase and its fascinating history.

This vase was one of nine works of art from Castle Howard in this sale. (All the prices in these reports include the buyer’s premium.)
of an archer, thought to be an import from Gaul or Italy.

A considerable number of the pieces featured have found a home in the Museum of London, and numerous others are now in the British Museum, but this catalogue also lists items in much smaller institutions, such as the Maison Dieu in the Kentish village of Ospringe, and the Ashwell Village Museum in Hertfordshire.

With its handy indexes, clear glossaries, high-quality plates, robust entries, and ample bibliography, Roman Sculpture from London and the South-East is a superb research tool for those investigating either Roman art or Roman Britain.

Lucia Marchini

Great Tales from British History: The Britons Challenge Rome
Patricia Southern
Amberley
128pp
Paperback, £6.99

It may be difficult for us to see Britain as an exotic place but, for the Romans in the 1st century BC, it was ‘remote, mysterious, even romantic’, according to Patricia Southern, who explains why Julius Caesar considered a trip to the island a worthwhile venture and one that would keep him in the limelight in Rome. But this glory-seeking expedition, not intended as an invasion, turned out to be the start of the long conflict between the Britons and Rome.

The Britons Challenge Rome, a recent edition in Amberley’s Great Tales from British History series, presents a succinct and accessible history of the interactions between the Romans and the British tribes during the 1st centuries BC and AD, from Caesar’s initial contact to the invasion and conquest under Claudius, Boudicca’s revolt, and Agricola’s governorship. Given the size of the book, however, it would have been preferable to include extracts from ancient sources. For instance, Southern gives a brief summary of the differing accounts by Tacitus and Dio of the speeches of Boudicca and the general Suetonius Paulinus to their armies. It would have been preferable to include extracts from the texts at this point to give the reader more of a flavour of the imagined rhetoric. Nevertheless, entering an ancient mind is certainly a tantalising prospect and one that will realise their potential unreliability. The book could, however, benefit from more quotations from ancient sources. For instance, Southern gives a brief summary of the differing accounts by Tacitus and Dio of the speeches of Boudicca and the general Suetonius Paulinus to their armies. It would have been preferable to include extracts from the texts at this point to give the reader more of a flavour of the imagined rhetoric. Nevertheless, entering an ancient mind is certainly a tantalising prospect and one that offers a thoroughly humanising touch to history. This is particularly so with the much-admired Alexander the Great.

The Madness of Alexander the Great and the Myth of Military Genius
Richard A Gabriel
Pen and Sword
224pp
Hardback, £19.99

A psychological profile of someone long dead can be a risky endeavour when all we have to base it on are a few written texts. Nevertheless, entering an ancient mind is certainly a tantalising prospect and one that offers a thoroughly humanising touch to history. This is particularly so with the much-admired Alexander the Great.

Richard A Gabriel, a professor of History and War Studies in Canada, brings
his extensive research experience of combat psychiatry to bear, providing a fresh approach to the Macedonian leader who in little more than a decade created an empire that stretched from Egypt to India before dying, undefeated, in Babylon at the age of 32.

Using his knowledge of modern military psychology, Gabriel paints a bleak picture of the terrible damage war inflicts on a soldier’s mind today, as in antiquity. Battle-related stress and trauma are not new, and Gabriel often links the present with the past through his use of modern wars, from Vietnam to Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as using familiar reference points such as the Iliad.

Throughout The Madness of Alexander, Gabriel’s expertise shines through. In the chapter on Alexander’s wounds, he gives a thorough analysis of the injuries the great leader suffered according to ancient accounts. The most serious was a blow, either to the head or to the neck inflicted on Alexander at the siege of Cyropolis in 328 BC. It left him with temporary trouble with either to the head or the neck inflicted on him by a spear and a sword. The most serious was a blow, either to the head or to the neck inflicted on Alexander at the siege of Cyropolis in 328 BC. It left him with temporary trouble with his balance, speech, and ability to walk, all indicating brain damage. Gabriel explains in a clear way exactly how such a blow would damage the frontal lobe and what effects this would have.

As well as physical injuries, Alexander’s long exposure to war led to clear signs of post-traumatic stress disorder. He was paranoid (he even read his soldiers’ letters), had suicidal episodes, and experienced violent outbursts. Much attention is given to his anger. One chapter is a well-discussed catalogue of the atrocities he carried out, including the slaughter of the Branchidae and his burning of Persepolis, which, as Gabriel tells us, is the first indication of alcohol affecting his mental health. Gabriel tells us that the young Alexander was an insecure teenager living in the shadow of his critical father, evoking sympathy.

Firmly rooted in ancient texts and in his own comprehensive knowledge of modern psychiatry, Gabriel’s analysis of Alexander paints a new, insightful picture of this much-studied figure. The Madness of Alexander is a lively, impressive book and, whatever our opinion of the greatness of Alexander, it reminds us just how close psychologically we are to our forbearers.

Lucia Marchini

Mastering the West: Rome and Carthage at War

Dexter Hoyos

Oxford University Press, 2015
337pp, 19 b/w illustrations, 10 maps
Hardback, £18.99

Professor Hoyos, a retired Associate Professor at the University of Sydney, is the author of many books and an acknowledged expert on the Punic Wars. These are the three wars fought between Rome and Carthage in the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC. Both states came into existence at the same period in history but, if legend is to be believed, Carthage was founded a few decades before Rome. The two powers had a number of things in common: they were republics at a time when large powers were monarchies, particularly in the East; both were major powers in the Mediterranean and had been on peaceful terms for generations. For several centuries they had been linked by trade, and in some families by ties of marriage.

There is a multitude of reasons why wars start, but when two large powers exist in the same area, conflict is almost inevitable. When the wars finally came, they were not quick affairs: they were spread over two centuries. Rome eventually won, Carthage was destroyed and Rome emerged as the major power in the Mediterranean basin.

The wars produced some notable heroes on both sides, but it is perhaps ironic that the best-known of them, Hannibal, was a general on the losing side.

This book gives a detailed account of the wars. It starts with an excellent description of the social, political and military structure of both sides and shows how similar they were. During the course of the book, the author stresses that the wars were not fought for ideological or religious reasons, but that they started almost by accident. He describes how many other towns and states were engulfed by the wars, and the terrible destruction that they suffered as a result of them. Indeed many who became embroiled in these conflicts never recovered, or were assimilated into the Roman world. The suffering of people unwillingly dragged into wars is usually ignored and its inclusion in this book throws a light on how much misery wars cause to bystanders.

Mastering the West contains well-drawn maps, showing where the wars were fought, and the position of the combatants during some of the conflicts, which help us to understand the disposition of troops. There is also a useful time-line enabling us to keep a sharp focus on the progression of each war, as well as events that happened between them.

Wars come to an end, but as we know only too well the aftermath can continue for decades. The author tells us who did well from them, and who lost everything.

Hoyos often uses Latin words and terms but does not translate them, which would have been useful, especially when they occur in the middle of a sentence. The narrative is also so filled with details, many of which seem superfluous, that it makes it a difficult book to read at times. In spite of this, however, he provides accurate descriptions of a series of wars that changed the course of history and gave rise to an empire, the effects of which are still being felt in many parts of the civilised world today.

David Sim

Minerva September/October 2015
In his introduction Peter Spring clearly sets out how his book came into being, stating that although famous great walls have been written about no systematic work had been carried out concerning linear barriers.

Linear barriers were constructed as a way of tackling the threat posed by nomadic peoples who were seen as parasites, because they produced nothing and took from those who had settled. The author states that even before they rode horses, they posed a threat that had to be halted. The use of the horse and the composite bow made them almost unstoppable and they remained so for centuries, until military technology developed that could effectively stop them.

The construction of walls may seem like a poor solution to this problem but to their builders, the construction of linear barriers was an entirely rational solution at the time. He says: ‘If a wall’s success is measured by the life-time of its constructor, then some walls are a success.’

Walls and linear barriers were not only made to prevent passage from one open area to another but fulfilled many other functions. They were and indeed are, a statement of power. They say: you will not pass, what is behind these walls is protected. Walls were also erected to keep both domestic and wild animals away from fertile land on which crops were being grown.

This is a book that has been well researched and is presented in a clear and readable manner, with diagrams and photographs that make it a pleasure to read. Peter Spring is a many talented man who not only has an MA in Medieval Art History but has served as an intelligence officer in the Territorial Army. This is his first book – I look forward to his next.

David Sim

Adam Jacot de Boinod poses a vocabulary quiz from Latin and Ancient Greek

Can you guess the correct definition for each word from the following three options?

1) sortes (Latin)
   A) a mole
   B) ill at ease; not at leisure
   C) the seeking of guidance by the chance selection of a passage in a book

2) cercurus (Latin)
   A) the pendulous skin under the throat of cattle, dogs, etc.
   B) a light vessel
   C) being chubby and somewhat squat

3) kallisphuros (Homeric Greek)
   A) with beautiful ankles
   B) having good deportment
   C) eminently embraceable

4) lolligo (Latin)
   A) a cuttlefish
   B) a street brawl
   C) a hedgehog

5) mammothreptos (Ancient Greek)
   A) having a deep cleavage
   B) brought up by one’s grandmother
   C) wheened

6) pugiunculus (Latin)
   A) foolish, silly
   B) aggressive
   C) a small dagger

7) bomolochos (Ancient Greek)
   A) exposed to harm
   B) one that lurked about the altars for the scraps that could be got there
   C) an urchin

8) sarcinula (Latin)
   A) a little pack, small bundle
   B) a facial wrinkle
   C) a dungeon

9) ionthados (Homeric Greek)
   A) of a horse: apt to shy
   B) a villain
   C) shaggy

10) pempastes (Ancient Greek)
    A) courageous, brave
    B) silvery grey approaching white
    C) one who counts in fives

11) morum (Latin)
    A) a gift given to a guest
    B) a blackberry
    C) a delay, postponement

12) himasthles (Homeric Greek)
    A) having a pearly lustre
    B) a lash or whip
    C) fighting with a shadow or with an imaginary enemy

* Adam Jacot de Boinod has worked as a researcher on the BBC television quiz programme QI. He is the author of The Meaning of Tingo and creator of the iPhone App Tingo.

**CLASSICAL CONUNDRUMS**

1. **sortes** (Latin)
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   B) ill at ease; not at leisure
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**QUESTIONS**

**1) What class of words does the term **sortes** belong to?**
   A) Nouns
   B) Verbs
   C) Adjectives

**2) What does **cercurus** refer to?**
   A) A body part
   B) A tool or instrument
   C) A vegetable

**3) What does **kallisphuros** mean?**
   A) Having beautiful feet
   B) Having good manners
   C) Extremely kissable

**4) What is **lolligo**?**
   A) A type of fish
   B) A kind of animal
   C) A specific breed

**5) What does **mammothreptos** mean?**
   A) Deeply grooved
   B) Old fashion
   C) Wheeled

**6) What does **pugiunculus** mean?**
   A) Foolish
   B) Aggressive
   C) Small

**7) What does **bomolochos** mean?**
   A) Harmful
   B) Scavenger
   C) Grandmother

**8) What does **sarcinula** mean?**
   A) Small pack
   B) Wrinkle
   C) Dungeon

**9) What does **ionthados** mean?**
   A) Young horse
   B) Deformed
   C) Shaggy

**10) What does **pempastes** mean?**
    A) Valiant
    B) Grey
    C) Counting in fives

**11) What does **morum** mean?**
    A) Gift
    B) Fruit
    C) Delay

**12) What does **himasthles** mean?**
    A) Lustrous
    B) Lashed
    C) Shadow fighter
UNITED KINGDOM

CAMBRIDGE

Watercolour: Elements of Nature
The Fitzwilliam Museum’s rarely exhibited watercolour collection illustrates the diversity of the medium, as well as its ability to brilliantly capture the beauty and details of nature. From the earliest examples to 20th-century works, this show includes watercolours that range from 16th-century portrait miniatures, painted by limners, to Romantic 19th-century landscapes by artists such as John Ruskin. A small section displays the materials used by artists through the centuries, including the revolutionary soluble watercolour block.
Fitzwilliam Museum
+44 (0) 1223 332 900
(www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk)
Until 27 September 2015.

COMPTON, Surrey

The Art of Bedlam: Richard Dadd
Bedlam, the colloquial term that we use to describe madness and chaos, derives from Bethlem, a shortening of Bethlehem Hospital – Britain’s first asylum. Artist Richard Dadd (1817–1886), a student at the Royal Academy of Arts who admired the Parthenon marbles in Athens, travelled extensively during the 1840s. At first his paintings gained recognition for their detailed and fantastical visual interpretations of scenes from Shakespeare and other literature, but his promising career stalled when he became mentally ill in his 20s. He was detained at Bethlehem Hospital in Lambeth, then in Broadmoor, and although he was no longer able to work in a professional capacity, his art flourished during his time in these two institutions. Drawing on sketches he made while touring the Middle East and showing his great love of Shakespeare, Dadd made many paintings and watercolours while he was in hospital. This ambitious show of his fantastical work includes a number of significant loans such as Bacchanalian Scene, 1862 (pictured right).
+44 (0) 1483 810235
(www.wattsgallery.org.uk)
Until 1 November 2015.

EDINBURGH, Scotland

The Olympian Gods: European Prints of the Renaissance
Grouped under three themes, prints from the Scottish National Gallery’s own collection map the evolution of how Greek and Roman gods were portrayed in the 16th century. Artists made engravings, etchings and woodcuts portraying the myths and legends of the pantheon of gods. Focusing on pagan deities meant they were free from the dogmas and traditions that constrained Christian religious imagery. As a result, these rich, detailed works are dominated by humour, eroticism and such violent scenes as Hendrick Goltzius’ Hercules and Cacus (1588) in which Hercules is shown ferociously clubbing Cacus to death. As well as these dramatic subjects, Renaissance printmakers also made images of everyday human behaviour, the cosmos and natural phenomena.
Scottish National Gallery
+44 (0) 131 624 6200
(www.nationalgalleries.org)
Until 18 October 2015.

The Amazing World of MC Escher
The surreal, graphic, mathematically inspired work of this unique Dutch artist is instantly recognisable, yet in popular art history he has been dwarfed by contemporaries, such as Salvador Dalí. Escher’s impossible, infinite constructions, notably the stairways in Relativity (1953) or his impeccable fusion of 2D and 3D in Drawing Hands (1948) are playful optical illusions that never fail to delight. Launched in collaboration with Gemeentemuseum and Escher in Het Paleis, both in The Hague, this show offers the rare opportunity to see a major retrospective of Escher’s work in the UK.
Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art
+44 (0) 131 624 6200
(www.nationalgalleries.org)
Until 27 September 2015.

LEEDS

Paul Neagu: Palpable Sculpture
Key sculptures, drawings, films and texts by Paul Neagu (1938–2004) provide insight into this Romanian artist’s fascinating approach and the ideas that inspired it. For Neagu, sculpture had to engage with all five senses. As he said: ‘the eye is fatigued, perverted, shallow, its culture is degenerate, degraded and obsolete, seduced by photography, film, television’. Consequently much of his work demands some physical engagement and is scaled to the human body. Amongst 120 works on display are edible sculptures and tactile boxes designed to be handled. Made of wood, glass, cardboard, textile and canvas, his Great Tactile Table (1970) is shown left. Neagu studied in Bucharest but came to England in 1970 and lived here in London in 1970 and lived here.
until his death 34 years later. He had solo exhibitions at the ICA and the Serpentine Gallery in London and at Modern Art Oxford. Neagu is an important, yet unusual, but overlooked figure in British sculpture – perhaps this show will restore him to his rightful place.

Henry Moore Institute
+ 44 (0) 113 246 7467
(www.henry-moore.org)
Until 8 November 2015.

LONDON

Triumph and Disaster: Medals of the Sun King
A series of medals commemorating the triumphs of Louis XIV, the Sun King who ruled France for over 70 years, were commissioned by his minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert in 1662. This exhibition examines the history and production of these medals. Visitors will be introduced to key figures involved in the medals’ design and creation, including artist and sculptor Jean Warin. The Louis XIV medals are presented alongside others from this period, which is an interesting way of learning about the dominant European regime.

British Museum
+44 (0) 20 7323 8299
(www.britishmuseum.org)
Until 15 November 2015.

Ai Wei Wei
The world-famous Chinese political dissident and Honorary Royal Academician, Ai Wei Wei is about to receive his first major show in the UK. This follows his solo exhibition at Blenheim Palace earlier in the year. The exhibition begins in 1993, the year that Ai Wei Wei returned to China following more than a decade in New York. Four years ago his passport was confiscated by the Chinese authorities; when it was returned in July the British government initially granted him only a month’s visa but this has now been extended to a full six months. One of the central installations of his show is Straight (2008–2012), part of a wider body of work relating to the Sichuan earthquake of 2008. Created from 90 tonnes of bent and twisted rebar (steel rods used in the construction of reinforced concrete buildings) collected by the artist and straightened by hand, this is a poignant monument to the victims of the earthquake.

Royal Academy of Arts
+44 (0) 20 7300 8000
(www.royalacademy.org.uk)
From 19 September until 13 December 2015.

Captain Linnaeus Tripe: Photographer of India and Burma, 1852–1860
The photographs taken by Captain Linnaeus Tripe during his time with the East India Company, between 1852 and 1860, capture the striking beauty of Indian and Burmese architecture, monuments and landscapes. A selection of more than 60 works not only demonstrates Tripe’s extraordinary contribution to the visual historical records. He was the first to document previously un-photographed sights, and these hauntingly charming images pay homage to his skill as an artist and master of this new medium.

Victoria & Albert Museum
+44 (0) 20 7942 2000
(www.vam.ac.uk)
Until 25 October 2015.

LYMINGTON, Hampshire
Shorelines: Artists on the South Coast
Through the centuries Britain’s coastline has acted as the nation’s first line of defence, has welcomed trade and treasure from overseas and has seen many a holidaymaker enjoying fresh air and seaside fun. This exhibition bears witness to the enduring appeal of the South Coast to many generations of artists. They range from the early marine painter Charles Brooking (1723–1759) to Paul Nash (1889–1946) with his abstract vision of Dymchurch in Kent and [MW Turner (circa 1800–1851) whose ‘Brighton stone’ (Brighton) is shown above.

St Barbe Museum & Art Gallery
+44 (0) 1590 676969
(www.stbarbe-museum.org.uk)
From 19 September 2015 until 9 January 2016.

Minerva September/October 2015
is regarded as the trademark of the Tawaraya, or Sōtatsu workshop. His own work – more than 70 of his masterpieces are on show – is instantly recognised by its bold, abstracted style, lavish swathes of gold and silver, and rich jewel tones. Much of the artist’s life, however, remains a mystery. How the working-class owner of a Kyoto fan-shop became a sophisticated designer with a network of aristocratic collaborators is still an enigma.

Freer Gallery and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery
+1 20 26 33 10 00
(www.asia.si.edu/soatsu/)
24 October 2015 until 31 January 2016.

CYPRUS

NICOSIA
To celebrate the past 50 years of the Polish archaeological mission in Paphos on the west coast of Cyprus, this exhibition has been put on to show the fruits of their work. Beginning with the University of Warsaw’s excavations at the site of ancient Nea Paphos (Kato Paphos) in 1965, it continues on through the excavations of luxurious villas, such as the House of Theseus and the House of Aion, and various public buildings. The finds, which include vessels, coins, sculpture and figurines, show that Paphos was, indeed, a major player in the economic, commercial and military world of the ancient eastern Mediterranean.

Cyprus Museum
+35 72 28 65 85 4
(www.mcw.gov.cy)
Until 30 November 2015.

DENMARK

COPENHAGEN
Man Ray – Human Equations: A Journey from Mathematics to Shakespeare
Man Ray’s Shakespearean Equations is a series of paintings he created whilst living in Hollywood in the 1940s. The paintings were based on his drawings and photographs of 19th-century mathematical models that he built in the 1930s. The original models were made from plaster, wood, paper-mâché, and string and used at Institut Henri Poincaré in Paris. Now 25 of these models, 70 photographs (below left: Toro, 1936) and eight assemblages or modified ‘readymades’ are shown alongside the paintings exploring the Shakespearean Equations within the larger context of the role of the object in the artist’s work. Man Ray considered the series to be the apex of his creative vision, telling of his preoccupation with the merging of art and science, the real and surreal.

Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek
+45 33 41 81 41
(www.glyptoteket.com)
Until 20 September 2015.

FRANCE

MARSEILLE
Divine Migrations
A collection of some 200 works of art and archaeological objects dating from the 3rd-2nd millennium BC to the 3rd century AD, offer a new perspective on the polytheistic religions of ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome. The dominant faiths in these regions were interconnected and dynamic. Military conquests and trade advanced the exchange of ritual objects and theological ideas seeing the adoption of deities from elsewhere or the formation of new composite divine forms.

Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilisations
+33 48 43 51 31 3
(www.mucem.org)
Did he instigate change, or was it a establishment of Christian ideology. Emperor Constantine played in the battle of Milvian Bridge from persecution and catacombs world. Looking at events of both the 4th century AD show how a Roman art, architecture and artefacts Rome and Di Nieuwe Kerk have all

Minerva September/October 2015

Buddhist Art in Europe led by the Institute of International Studies, Japanese Hosei University (Tokyo) and the Asian-East Institute of the University of Zurich. Musée d’ethnographie de Genève +41 22 418 45 50 (wwwville-ge.ch) From 9 September 2015 until 10 January 2016.

EVENTS

UNITED KINGDOM, Various
Spotlight tour: Reflecting on the Celts
As part of the National Programme around The Celts: Art and Identity, the major exhibition at the British Museum this autumn, two Iron Age mirrors (including the bronze Desborough mirror, dating from 50 BC–AD 50, shown below) will go on a Spotlight tour to venues including: Lichfield Cathedral, Littlehampton Museum, Old Gala House, Inverness Museum and Art Gallery and Dunedin’s McManus. After the British Museum, The Celts: Art and Identity (see pages 20 to 24) will go to the National Museum of Scotland where titwill be on show from 10 March to 23 September 2016. (www.nms.ac.uk)

POLAND

KRAKOWN

Ottomania: The Ottoman Orient in Renaissance Art
Shown below, Paolo Veronese’s portrait of Sultan Bayezid I (circa 1575) sums up the 16th-century Ottoman Empire through the eyes of a Renaissance master. Veronese had been seduced by the wealth and glamour of the courtly life of the sultans. This is typical of European painters of the time, such as Bellini, Durer, Memling and Tintoretto – all were attracted to the excesses of the all-conquering empire. Portraits by these artists, as well as manuscripts, engravings, armour and textiles, tell this story, with a particular focus on central Europe and Poland.


SWITZERLAND

GENEVA

Madame Butterfly Buddhism: The Buddhist Japonisme
Japonisme, a word first used in 1872, refers to a movement formed after the West’s discovery of Japanese art and religion in the late 19th century. It had a profound impact on the practice of European artists, in particular on the Impressionists. Japonisme also inspired Puccini’s popular opera Madam Butterfly. At the same time travellers bringing back statues of the Buddha became enamoured with the ideas that formed the basis of this faith. Many of these objects and paintings now belong to this museum’s permanent collection and form the centre of the exhibition, which is part of the wider project Japanese

UNITED KINGDOM, London
FRIEZE MASTERS
The popular Frieze Masters fair will open alongside Frieze London, the contemporary art fair, in Regents Park between 14 and 18 October. The expertly vetted artworks that will be on show include: antiquities, Asian art, illuminated manuscripts, ethnographic art, medieval, modern, post-war and 19th-century art, Old Masters, photography, sculpture and Wunderkammer (‘cabinet of curiosities’). Antiquities dealers taking part in Frieze Masters this year include: Rupert Wace Ancient Art (London), Galerie Chenel (Paris) and Symecon Ancient Art (Geneva), who will exhibit this large Ancient Egyptian wooden statue of a high-ranking official, dating from Old Kingdom, end of 5th Dynasty, circa 2500-2400 BC, (H: 1.08m with base), shown above. (www.friezemasters.com) From 14 to 18 October.

SWITZERLAND, Riehen
BAAF 2015
It is time to book your ticket for the 12th Basel Ancient Art Fair (BAAF) which will open its doors in Rottihalle Wekenhof in Riehen, near Basel, from 13 to 18 November. Specialising in objects from Classical antiquity, Ancient Egypt and the early civilisations of the Near East, this is the world’s leading and largest antiquities fair in these fields. BAAF is a high point for all art-lovers, collectors, museum experts and interior designers. Exhibiting this year are 18 leading specialists, from England, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the USA; all are members of the International Association of Dealers in Ancient Art (IADAA). Exhibitors include: Charles Ede Ltd (London), Galerie Jean-David Cahn AG (Basel), Galerie Chenel (Paris), Royal-Athena Galleries (New York). Also from New York is The Merrin Gallery who will exhibit this striking ancient Greek bronze goat, circa 400 BC (H. 14 cm). (www.baafl.ch) From 13 to 18 November.

NETHERLANDS

AMSTERDAM

Rome: Emperor Constantine’s Dream
The Vatican Museums, Capitoline Museums, the National Museum of Rome and Di Nieuwe Kerk have all come together to stage this exhibition on Rome’s conversion to Christianity. Roman art, architecture and artefacts from the 4th century AD show how a peripheral religion became a leading faith that would shape the modern world. Looking at events of both individual and national significance, from persecution and catacombs to the battle of Milvian Bridge across the Tiber, it asks what role Emperor Constantine played in the establishment of Christian ideology. Did he instigate change, or was it a grass roots evolution? Above, Gemma Constantinia, a white-blue, layered agate cameo set in a modern gold frame with semi-precious stones, (21.1cm x 29.7cm), was made in honour of Constantine’s victory over his rival Maxentius in AD 312.

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