The Great Spectacle

Celebrating 250 years of the Royal Academy of Arts, the work of JRR Tolkien, the leafy bower of enchanted gardens and the world of medieval monsters.
AN IMPORTANT ROMAN MARBLE STATUE OF APHRODITE KALLIPYGOS (APHRODITE OF THE BEAUTIFUL BUTTOCKS)

The goddess of erotic love with her left hand raised over her head, lifting her garment to expose her nude posterior.

A superb sculpture!

1st-2nd Century AD
H. 36 5/8 in. (93.2 cm.)

To the best of our knowledge, this sensual sculpture is one of only five known marble examples of which three are just fragments. The Naples Museum example is heavily restored. Our “Aphrodite of the beautiful buttocks” is by far the most complete example known.
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An art season for all

Summer in the cities: find out more about Tolkien in Oxford, meet monsters in New York, stroll in gardens in Rome and Newcastle and celebrate the RA250 by means of an underground ‘street’. This leads to much more exhibition and event space, and the first show in the new Gabrielle Jungels-Winkler Galleries is work by Tacita Dean; you can read more about her and her talented brother Ptolemy on page 6.

Secondly, the Royal Academy is staging a show called The Great Spectacle that covers 250 years of its ever-popular Summer Exhibition. On our cover you can see a detail of William Powell Frith’s A Private View at the Royal Academy, 1881. Then, as now, these shows attracted a wide variety of celebrities: the man in the top hat in the centre holding a catalogue is Oscar Wilde; just beside him are the top actor and actress of the day, Henry Irving and Ellen Terry; and, to his left, is Lilie Langtry, the king’s mistress, in a cream dress.

In My Autobiography and Reminiscences, published in 1887, Powell Frith later admitted: ‘Beyond the desire of recording for posterity the aesthetic craze as regards dress, I wished to hit the folly of listening to self-elected critics in matters of taste, whether in dress or art. I therefore planned a group, consisting of a well-known apostle of the beautiful, with a herd of eager worshippers surrounding him.’

As well as attracting the fashionable set, the Summer Exhibition has also occasionally courted controversy, as you can read on pages 14 to 21. This year it is curated as you can read on pages 14 to 21. This year it is curated by Grayson Perry so it is bound to be a colourful affair – in every sense of the word.

One of the historical treasures in the Royal Academy of Art’s collection is a cast of the Farnese Hercules, a muscular bronze statue that once stood in the Roman gardens on the Capitoline Hill. Constructed where the emperors built their palaces, the Farnese Gardens have recently been restored. We take a tour of them, both past and present, on pages 22 to 27.

While on the subject of gardens, we look at different how artists, from Simeon Solomon to Stanley Spencer, have portrayed them as places of love, beauty and magic in Enchanted Gardens, an exhibition at the Laing Art Gallery in Newcastle upon Tyne; see pages 28 to 32.

Gardens are usually regarded as peaceful havens but, occasionally, they harbour dangerous inhabitants – as in the story of Beauty and the Beast. The Beast is a monster until Beauty restores him to human form, but some monsters cannot be converted. A bestiary of these have been brought together in Medieval Monsters: Terrors, Aliens, Wonders at the Morgan Library and Museum in New York. You can find a few of them on pages 34 to 39, and it is interesting to note that several of the dragon-slayers, such as St Martha and St Margaret, are female saints of the Catholic church.

One devout Catholic who created monsters of his own – Golum and the Orcs, for example – was JRR Tolkien, whose life and work is being celebrated at the Bodleian Weston Library in Oxford. Professor Tolkien spent his whole life immersed in Anglo-Saxon language, literature and culture. Tolkien expert Tom Shippey has traced the influence of his academic work on The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings, with some interesting results; see pages 40 to 45.

Some monsters can take on human form, while men themselves can become monsters – consumed by mas- sive egoism. Such a man was Alcibiades, a golden boy, who had it all. He was well educated, wealthy, powerful, charismatic and good looking – both sexes found him attractive – but, inevitably, his hubris, or overweening pride, attracted his nemesis, or downfall. This is not surprising when we discover that his role model was the mighty warrior Achilles whose weak spot was his heel. You can read more about him on pages 46 to 50.

If you were a Caledonian in the 3rd century AD you would have thought of a certain Roman emperor as a monster. He was Septimius Severus, who was born in North Africa and died in York in AD 211. According to the Roman historian Cassius Dio, when Severus vowed to conquer Scotland in the last two years of his life, he declared: ‘We are not going to leave a single one of them alive.’ His son Caracalla was even more blood-thirsty – he had his younger brother Geta assassinated.

Turn to pages 8 to 13 for the gory details. Or, for less gory exhibitions and events, have a look at our Calendar on pages 56 to 61.

Lindsay Fulcher

from the editor

Minerva July/August 2018

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2
Stories from the world of art, archaeology and museums

A ‘glass toga’ in Nîmes

The brand new, ultramodern Musée de la Romanité in Nîmes is a striking monument to the glory of Nemausus and a fitting 21st-century showcase for its rich heritage.

Nîmes was built on the site of an earlier oppidum (fortified Iron Age town) surrounded by a wall constructed during the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC. This Celtic centre became a Roman colony by 28 BC and was made capital of the province of Gallia Narbonensis in the reign of Augustus (27 BC–AD 14).

The most famous of Nîmes’ ancient monuments are: the Tour Magne (the high point of the town, a dry-stone Celtic tower built into the 3rd–2nd century BC wall, was incorporated into the masonry of the Roman Tour Magne); the Roman amphitheatre (an impressive, double-tiered arena, dating from circa AD 70, which is still used for concerts and bullfights); and the Maison Carrée, a temple of white limestone completed circa 12 BC. Other evidence of Roman rule is still being excavated on a regular basis and an abundance of artefacts have been collected through the centuries.

The new Musée de la Romanité shows both aspects of Nîmes’ heritage, since it offers a panoramic view of the city and its architectural remains from the roof terrace, and provides an exceptional 9,200-sqm setting for the display of some 5000 artefacts selected from the museum’s collection of 25,000.

The building was designed by the French-Brazilian architect Elizabeth de Portzamparc as ‘a contemporary response to the Roman amphitheatre’.

As a bridge between the 21 centuries of history separating the two buildings, she sought to ‘express the differences between the two architectures through dialogue based on their complementarity. On one side a round volume encircled with the verticals of the Roman stone arches and firmly anchored to the ground, and on the other a large square volume in levitation and entirely draped in a folded glass toga.’

The ‘glass toga’ refers to the museum façade, made of 7000 strips of serigraphed glass that undulates like the folds of a toga and reflects its surroundings. An inner street follows the route of the Roman ramparts and forms a visual link between the square in front of the amphitheatre and an archaeological garden.

On the museum’s transparent ground floor, a fragment of the propylaeum, or gateway, of the Celtic sanctuary of the healing spring of Nemausus forms the centrepiece of a spectacular reconstruction of this sacred site dating back to the founding of the pre-Roman city.

The Iron Age is represented by a reconstruction of the everyday life of the Volcae Arecomics people, the Celtic tribe who founded the settlement, and who surrendered to the Romans in 121 BC. The visitor then follows the milestones of the Via Domitia from Rome to Narbonne, and the Roman city is brought to life through an immersive experience, showing objects from the permanent collections in a lively manner.

The medieval section also highlights the Roman influence in architectural fragments and, finally, the romanitas heritage (the spirit and ideals of ancient Rome) is presented in an interactive section combined with photographs and films.

The opening show in the temporary exhibition area is entitled Gladiators, heroes of the Colosseum and runs until 24 September 2018.

Nicole Benazeth
Lost cities of Iraq

Two long-lost cities in Iraq have started to emerge: one in the Autonomous Region of Kurdistan; the other is thought to be somewhere in the south.

The first suspicions of the existence of a city in the north of the country were aroused when fragment of a bronze statue of the Akkadian sun-king Naram-Sin was found during road building near the village of Bassetki in 1975. Dated from around 2250 BC, it had an inscription on the base indicating that it stood in the doorway of a palace.

In 2016, after five years of field work, archaeologists from the Institute for Ancient Near Eastern Studies (IANES) at the University of Tübingen, under lead researcher Professor Peter Pfälzner, did indeed uncover a large Bronze Age palace here. Then, last year, 92 cuneiform tablets were found stashed inside a vessel covered in clay. Now deciphered, they show that, several centuries after the collapse of the Akkadian empire, this was the royal city of Mardaman, which Babylonian sources date to around 1800 BC when it was a commercial hub and centre of the Assyrian kingdom of Shamshi-Adad I. ‘The clay tablets of Bassetki make an important new contribution to the geography of Mesopotamia,’ explains Assyriologist Betina Faist of Heidelberg University, who translated them. They date from circa 1200 BC, when the palace was destroyed, and show that this was the administrative seat of a previously unknown Assyrian province that once covered large parts of Northern Mesopotamia and Syria in the 13th century BC. The governor, Assur-nasir, is named, along with his tasks and activities. The settlement was established circa 3000 BC and had lasted under various rulers, including Naram-Sin, who was king during the height of the Akkadian empire. ‘The city existed continuously and achieved a final significance as a Middle Assyrian governor’s seat between 1250 and 1200 BC,’ says Professor Pfälzner. ‘Mardaman certainly rose to be an influential city and a regional kingdom, based on its position on the trade routes between Mesopotamia, Anatolia and Syria. At times it was an adversary of the great Mesopotamian powers. So the University of Tübingen’s future excavations in Bassetki are sure to yield many more exciting discoveries.’

Pfälzner believes his team has identified 300 previously unknown sites in the area around Bassetki, extending as far as the Turkish and Syrian borders, and excavations have been continuing this summer, but archaeological work here clearly has to take the region’s conflicts into account. Bassetki was only 45km from territory controlled by IS when the excavations ended last year, as the pushback against the city of Mosul began. The statue of the Akkadian king Naram-Sin was stolen from the National Museum in Baghdad during the 2003 invasion of Iraq, but has now been returned.

Other ancient artefacts looted after the Iraq invasion include around 3800 items amassed by Steve Green for his company Hobby Lobby and exhibited in his Museum of the Bible, which opened in Washington DC last year. Seized by US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), they included around 450 cuneiform tablets from another lost Iraqi city called Irisagrig. After ICE imposed a $3million fine, US experts were allowed to work on the tablets for a short time before they were returned to Iraq in April. But the site of Irisagrig has never been excavated and its location remains unknown. (www.uni-tuebingen.de/en/newsfullview Roger Williams

Heritage captured in 3D

It was while watching the Taliban blow up the 1500-year-old Bamiyan Buddhas in Afghanistan on television in 2001 that Ben Kacyra began to think of a way to digitally preserve the world’s heritage sites.

A pioneer of laser-mapping and creator of the world’s first three-dimensional laser-scanning system, he set up non-profit CyArk to produce 3D images that give detailed views of more than two dozen heritage sites. Among them is the temple city of Bagan in Myanmar (right) where 3D models are proving useful in restoration work after it was damaged by an earthquake.

Now CyArk has teamed up with Google Arts & Culture, Google’s non-profit arts archiving organisation in a project called Open Heritage. ‘With modern technology, we can capture these monuments in fuller detail than ever before, including the colour and texture of surfaces alongside the geometry captured by the laser scanners with millimetre precision in 3D,’ explains Chance Coughenour, a ‘digital archaeologist’ and program manager at Google Arts & Culture.

With working agreements across hundreds of museums and galleries worldwide, including the British Museum and the Met, Google Arts & Culture has more than 2000 ‘Museum Views’ created by Google street-mapping technology but CyArk, is taking them one step further. Google Arts and Culture is headed by Suhair Khan whose main office is in London, while technical developments happen in the Google Cultural Institute in Paris, known as ‘The Lab’. Khan says that it has no plans to monetise programs or work with comercial galleries. (www.cyark.org Roger Williams
The Winfarthing treasure

Nationally significant Anglo-Saxon gold treasures have been saved for the nation after a successful fundraising appeal by Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery. The 7th-century AD gold and garnet jewellery, found by a local student while metal-detecting, will now go on display at the museum. The artefacts, from an Anglo-Saxon grave assemblage unearthed in Winfarthing near Diss, are valued at £145,050. The jewellery was discovered in 2014 by Tom Lucking, then a student at the University of East Anglia.

Realising that he had discovered an undisturbed grave, Lucking left the burial intact until it could be excavated by local archaeologists. He will share the treasure reward equally with the landowner. The excavation showed the grave to have been that of an aristocratic Anglo-Saxon woman who died circa AD 650–75. Her jewellery (right) included a large gold pendant inlaid with hundreds of tiny cloisonné-set garnets, forming interlacing beasts and geometrical shapes. A second necklace string comprised two gold beads, a gold cross pendant inlaid with delicate filigree wire and two pendants made of identical Merovingian coins from the reign of the French king Sigebert (circa AD 630–56). The cross shows she was probably among the earliest Anglo-Saxon converts to Christianity. A bronze bowl had been buried at her feet, along with an imported Continental pottery jar, a knife and a belt-hanger of bronze rings.

Senior Curator of Archaeology at Norwich Castle, Dr Tim Pestell, said: ‘This find is an exceptional example of the type of jewellery restricted to a few women of high status in 7th-century England and is the female counterpart to the sort of male war-gear found in the Staffordshire Hoard and at Sutton Hoo. This burial can be linked with two other rich female graves from the early Kingdom of East Anglia, excavated at Harford Farm, Caistor-by-Norwich and Boss Hall near Ipswich. This raises the intriguing possibility that these ladies all knew one another in life and were quite possibly related.’

Lindsay Fulcher

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Genius in genes

Those Deans are everywhere. Artist Tacita Dean has been having concurrent shows at the National Gallery and the National Portrait Gallery and, now, her work is on show at the redesigned Royal Academy of Arts in Burlington Gardens. Meanwhile her brother, Ptolemy Dean, Westminster Abbey’s current Surveyor of the Fabric (Consultant Architect), has been busy designing a new tower for the Abbey.

The resulting Weston Tower, a five-year project, combines modern elegance and an organic strength, as it blends in perfectly with its august host, the Abbey itself. Its lead-gridded windows with small panes echo those used by Sir Christopher Wren, Surveyor of the Fabric from 1698 to 1723.

The new tower, the first major addition to the abbey since 1745, is outside Poets’ Corner, neatly tucked between the Abbey’s 13th-century Chapter House and the 16th-century Lady Chapel. Its purpose is to house a lift and stairs leading up to the medieval triforium, now housing The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Galleries, 52 feet above floor level. The views up here are breathtaking and have formerly only been seen via television cameras during royal weddings, funerals or other state occasions.

Inside the galleries 300 of the Abbey’s greatest treasures are set out in four themed sections: Building Westminster Abbey; Worship and Daily Life; Westminster Abbey and the Monarchy and The Abbey and National Memory. The exhibits range from a display of sumptuous gold plate to a stuffed African grey parrot from 1702 that belonged to Frances Stuart, Duchess of Richmon and Lennox.

The first section, Building Westminster Abbey, charts the foundations of the first Benedictine monastery in AD 960, its life as Edward the Confessor’s church, and the extensive repair programme overseen by Sir Christopher Wren, who commissioned an intricate scale model of Westminster Abbey around 1715. The model included a massive central spire, which was planned but never built.

In Worship and Daily Life you can see the Westminster retable, circa 1259–69, from Henry III’s abbey, the oldest surviving altarpiece in England, and the Litlington Missal, an illuminated 14th-century service book made for the high altar.

Westminster Abbey and the Monarchy examines the building’s special relationship with the Crown; it has been the Coronation church since 1066. Queen Mary II’s much graffitied Coronation Chair from 1689 is on show, as is the marriage certificate of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge from 2011.

The final section, The Abbey and National Memory, examines how it has served as a place of commemoration. Monarchs apart, many notable Britons, such as Charles Darwin and Sir Isaac Newton are buried or memorialised here. In Poets’ Corner poets and writers, from Lewis Carroll to Sir John Betjeman, from Alfred, Lord Tennyson to TS Eliot, are represented.

Meanwhile at the newly designed Royal Academy of Arts, LANDSCAPE by Tacita Dean is the first exhibition on show in the Gabrielle Jungels-Winkler Galleries. The first room of the exhibition contains The Montafon Letter, 2017, a monumental image of snowy mountains drawn on a blackboard, a series of dreamy cloudscapes on slates, and Majesty, 2006, a portrait of a stupendous oak tree in Fredville Park, Kent; but the real masterpiece on show is one of Tacita Dean’s trademark magical 35mm films. Antigone is a compelling 56-minute, diptych film projection, created especially for the RA, in which a series of images of landscapes, from Bodmin Moor to Wyoming, and a solar eclipse make a dramatic statement. These are much more eloquent than the conversation between actor Stephen Dillane (Stannis Baratheon in Game of Thrones) and Canadian writer/poet Anne Carson, who has translated the work of many Classical writers, such as Sappho, Euripides and Aeschylus.

This quasi-narrative film combines multiple places, geologies and seasons into a spectacular cinematographic frame using the same masking technique first developed by Dean for her Tate Modern Turbine Hall project FILM, 2011. Shown on the hour every hour, its stately pace means that you sit quietly as the images wash over you.

• LANDSCAPE is on show at the Royal Academy of Arts until 12 August 2018; visit www.royalacademy.org.uk.
• To book tickets for The Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Galleries at Westminster Abbey visit www.westminster-abbey.org/galleries.

Lindsay Fulcher
Head of Crowned Diana
Early Imperial Roman Period, ca. 50-100 AD, in Carrara marble
21 1/2 inches (55 cm)

Summer Auction Weekend
August 24, 25 & 26, 2018
Asian Art, Fine Art & Antiques
Preview: August 20-23
Simon Elliott describes how Septimius Severus, a ruthless but extremely effective Roman emperor and military commander, dealt with troublesome, warring locals ‘north of the border’ in Britannia.

The first ‘Hammer’
of the Scots’

‘No: we are not going to leave a single one of them alive, down to the babies in their mothers’ wombs – not even they must live. The whole people...’
(Cassius Dio, Roman History, 76/77.15.1-4)

These chilling words (above) mark the climax of the Roman historian’s narrative when describing attempts made by Septimius Severus in AD 209 and AD 210 to conquer Scotland. Cassius Dio has the great Roman warrior emperor quoting the words, spoken by Agamemnon to his brother Menelaus in Homer’s Iliad (Bk 6.57–9) when addressing his massed troops before the second campaign against Troy. His evident ordering of a genocide was driven by acute frustration after the native inhabitants, with whom he had negotiated a peace after the first incursion north, revolted yet again. So how did Severus come to be in this far-flung place at the north-west edge of the Roman Empire at the end of his life – and what happened after he arrived?

Lucius Septimius Severus Augustus was born in the fierce heat of North Africa, in the coastal city of Lepcis Magna (in today’s Libya) in April AD 145. He was 65 when he passed away, on a freezing February day in York in AD 211. The founder of the Severan dynasty, he was one of a number of the leading members of the Punic Septimii family to take full advantage of the integration of North Africa into the Roman Empire.

As a young man he rapidly advanced through the cursus honorum aristocratic career path, and by the early AD 190s had been a governor, a consul and, finally, a senior border-territory governor when the Emperor Commodus placed him in charge of Pannonia Superior on the Danube. This crucial province to the north of the Balkans controlled access to Italy from the east and always featured a significant military force. It was Severus’ role here that placed him in such a powerful position when Commodus was assassinated on New Year’s Eve AD 192. After his immediate successor Pertinax was also murdered, in early AD 193, Severus’ personal legion, legio XIV Gemina Martia Victoria, proclaimed him emperor. He swooped on Rome in a lightning strike, quickly securing power in a highly successful coup and, by the year’s end, was the ultimate victor in the ‘Year of the Five Emperors’. Severus was to spend much of the rest of his life on campaign, twice in the east against the Parthians and others, then in North Africa and ultimately in Britain. He also had to fight to maintain his hold on power, coming closest to defeat against the challenge of British governor Clodius Albinus who usurped him in AD 196.

Severus eventually defeated him at the Battle of Lugdunum (modern-day Lyon) in AD 197, but never forgot how close run this challenge was. Britain was to remain in his thoughts from that time until an opportunity arose for him to visit the recalcitrant province in person towards the end of his life.

Severus was very much a family man. His first wife, Paccia Marciana, died young in AD 186, but the real love of his life was Julia Domna, his second wife whom he married in the later AD 180s and who was the youngest daughter of Gaius Julius Bassianus, the High Priest of the cult of the sun-god Heliogabalus in the Syrian city of Emesa. Her family had enormous wealth, which no doubt aided her husband’s political ambitions and, once she was made Empress she became a renowned patron of philosophy and the arts. They had two sons, Caracalla and Geta, to whom Severus was devoted. On his deathbed in York he famously told them: ‘Be of one mind, enrich the soldiers, and despise the rest’.

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They clearly ignored their father’s advice and, within a year of his death, the eldest son Caracalla had ordered Geta killed, he died in his mother’s arms back in Rome.

Severus was a short but powerfully built man and very single-minded. During his early senatorial career he displayed little martial ardour, following an almost perfect path through the *cursus honorum*. But once he rose to senior positions, he became very close to the military, as ultimately he owed his rapid rise to the imperial throne to the army. Then, and after he became emperor, he made sure he was away on campaign as much as possible; his *expeditio felicissima Britannica* is the ultimate and final example.

This began in Rome in AD 207 when, bored and casting about for a final chance at martial glory, Severus received a desperate letter from the British governor Lucius Alfenus Senecio begging him for help. In it he said the province was in danger of being overrun from the north, requesting Severus’ attendance in person, or reinforcements. He got both, with the emperor leading an enormous military expedition to Britain on a scale that today would be termed ‘shock and awe’.

Severus arrived in York in AD 208 with a huge entourage including his family and the imperial court, treasury and troops, around which he would build what in effect was Rome’s first field army. This included the Praetorian Guard and imperial guard cavalry, the recently formed *legio II Parthica*, vexillations from the legions and auxiliary formations on both the Rhine and the Danube, and the three British legions together with their auxiliaries. In total this created a force of 50,000 men, together with the 7000 men of the *Classis Britannica* regional fleet. To provide context, this is possibly the largest single army ever to have campaigned in the islands of Britain.

Severus’ targets were the Maeatae and Caledonians around whom all of the previous smaller tribal groupings had coalesced. The former were based on either side of the Antonine Wall, and the latter were to their north in the upper Midland Valley and Highlands. These two confederations, which had appeared by the AD 180s, constantly caused trouble along the northern border and had to be bought off with enormous sums during the AD 190s. That must have caused friction among their own elites and it seems probable their leaders, on the look-out for a military distraction to the south, saw the opportunity for a major profit-making raid to keep their warriors occupied after Albinus’ failed revolt had depleted the Roman forces along Hadrian’s Wall.

After establishing the imperial court in York, Severus’ first action was to set up the vital logistics chain to maintain his huge army in hostile territory. First, he expanded the granaries at the forts at Corbridge, south of Hadrian’s Wall, and at South Shields on the south bank of the River Tyne (the latter by an enormous factor of 10). Then, as the campaign progressed, he later rebuilt the forts at Cramond on the Firth of Forth and Carpow on the River Tay for similar use. *Classis Britannica*, the provincial naval fleet, was then employed to take supplies north. These were broken down ashore as they arrived, then sent onwards to the legionary spearheads via the regional river systems.

Severus now turned his attention to the heart of darkness in the far north. In the spring of AD 209 his surge crossed the frontier as one enormous force, smashing through the Scottish Borders along Dere Street. At the end of each day’s march a huge camp, up to 70 hectares in extent, was constructed, making his legions untouchable.

The Scottish Borders subdued, he next reached the Firth of Forth, now following Dere Street west and rebuilding the fort at Cramond. At
This was Roman conquest as robbery with violence writ large.

Some point on the south bank of the Forth, probably South Queensferry near Edinburgh, he built a bridge of 500 boats to allow the army to cross and continue northwards.

Severus then divided his force into two. The larger, which comprised two thirds of the troops, launched a blitzkrieg south-west to north-east along the Highland Boundary Fault under the younger Caracalla, building a sequence of 54-hectare marching camps to seal off the Highlands from the Maetae and Caledonians living in the mid and upper Midland Valley. This shrewd move prevented any Caledonian reinforcements from emerging and moving into the campaign theatre from the north.

After vicious fighting, though with no major battle since the natives favoured guerilla warfare, Kair House was reached. A marching camp was built there on the Bervie Water, 13km south-west of Stonehaven on the coast, with the Highland line visibly converging with the sea. The Highlands were now sealed off, with the Classis Britannica patrolling the coast.

The Maetae and Caledonians were trapped and at their most vulnerable, with the regional economy destroyed. It was at this point that the second force under Severus made its move, crossing the Firth of Forth bridge and hammering directly north through Fife. This region was heavily settled by the Maetae who were quickly subjugated. To do so he built two 25-hectare marching camps at Auchtermuchty and Edinwood. He reached the River Tay at Carpow where he rebuilt the fort, then another bridge of boats was constructed, this time across the Tay, before he slammed into the soft underbelly of native resistance in the upper Midland Valley, brutalising the local population. This was Roman conquest as robbery with violence writ large.

Severus’ vicious operation was inevitably successful given his huge advantage in troop numbers and technology, even taking into account the local knowledge of the Maetae and Caledonians. The Romans were keen to finish things off before the onset of winter and so terms were agreed. This may have been unpopular with his military leadership, however, as there is the tale of a near patricide attempt by the ambitious Caracalla at this point. He is described by Dio (76.14) as drawing his sword behind his father as he approached the native peace delegation. He was only thwarted by the Roman troops riding with them, their cries of alarm prompting Severus to look back at his son, who put the sword back in its scabbard. Ultimately peace was signed, advantageous to Rome as always, with Severus and his two sons earning the title Britannicus. He then garrisoned the north and headed back to York with the majority of his army, which wintered there.

Unfortunately, the terms that satisfied the Romans in AD 209 were not so agreeable to the Maetae, and they revolted again

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early the next year. One reason may have been that one of their main tribal centres was near to the later Pictish capital site at Abernethy, very close to Carpow. This would have been heavily garrisoned, given it was the most northerly Roman supply base, and it may soon have dawned on the native Britons that the Romans in the region were there to stay. One can only guess at the grim fate of the Roman garrisons in the region as the revolt gathered pace, and Severus once more determined to march north, this time to finish the job. Ill health, including chronic gout, got the better of him, however (he had been carried in a sedan-chair for much of the AD 209 campaign) and the new offensive was led by the now apparently forgiven Caracalla.

The emperor was less forgiving to the natives, especially when the Caledonians, predictably, soon joined in, now giving the genocidal order to kill all the Britons north of the border. This seems to have been in response to their brutal treatment of the Romans invaders in their guerilla war. Dio describes the difficulties faced by the Romans in both campaigns (Roman History, 76.13):

‘...as he advanced through the country he experienced countless hardships in cutting down the forests, levelling the heights, filling up the swamps, and bridging the rivers; but he fought no battle and beheld no enemy in battle array. The enemy purposely put sheep and cattle in front of the soldiers for them to seize, in order that they might be lured on still further until they were worn out; for in fact the water caused great suffering to the Romans, and when they became scattered, they would be attacked. Then, unable to walk, they would be slain by their own men, in order to avoid capture, so that 50,000 died [this is clearly a massive exaggeration, but it is indicative of the difficulties faced by the Romans]. But Severus did not desist until he approached the extremity of the island.’

The AD 210 campaign, a direct replica of the first, was again successful from a Roman perspective, with commemorative coins of Caracalla and Geta celebrating victory in Britain being minted in Rome by the early AD 210s. Whatever peace was agreed with the surviving natives would have been particularly punitive given the revolt after the AD 209 agreement. The British legions seem to have performed particularly well in the AD 210 campaign, with York’s...
legio VI Victrix being awarded the commemorative title Britannica Pia Fidelis (based on tile stamps from Carpow), while Chester’s legio XX Valeria Victrix was styled Antoniniana by Caracalla, whose official name was Marcus Aurelius Antoninus; Caracalla was simply a nickname derived from the type of hooded tunic that he often wore.

The north was garrisoned again, with the bulk of the Roman force heading back to York once more. As usual however nothing was to remain as Rome intended in the far north of Britain, because in February AD 211 the emperor died in York, which caused Caracalla and Geta to bolt for Rome in order to build up their individual support for sole imperial rule. As a taste of what was to come, Caracalla had already had many of Severus’ key advisors put to death before he left, especially those his father had tasked with keeping the two brothers together as joint emperors. Within a year he also had Geta killed. So began a particularly brutal reign.

Back in Britain, the provincial troops in the north were gradually evacuated to the line of Hadrian’s Wall once more, with Carpow on the Tay likely being the last fortified withdrawal point. Those from further afield returned to their home bases on the Continent. The Romans never tried to conquer Scotland again, despite numerous punitive incursions that continued until the end of the occupation. For the natives, though, the Roman withdrawal was no cause for celebration given the especially violent (even for the brutal Romans) nature of the AD 210 campaign.

The evident success of the Severan genocide is illustrated by an emerging archaeological record, which seems to show a massive depopulation in the Scottish Lowlands as a result. This includes the abandonment of settlements and renewed regional forest growth. The new data backs up a long-held hypothesis, based on an evident 80 years of peace on the northern border in the historical record afterwards, that few were left alive by Severus in the lowlands of Scotland.

So the final outcome of Severus’ enormous expeditio felicissima Britannica seems to have been a lengthy peace on the northern border, the longest, in fact, in pre-modern history. The reason was simple – there was no one left for the Romans to fight.

In 1768, a group of 36 artists and architects secured a royal warrant from George III to ‘establish a society for promoting the Arts of Design’ in a 30-feet-long rented gallery on Pall Mall. Of the 36, four were Italian, one was French, one Swiss and one American, and two of them were women, Mary Moser and Angelica Kauffman.

The Royal Academy of Arts (RA), as it later became, then moved to Somerset House, and also shared a building with the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square before settling into Burlington House on Piccadilly in 1867.

Britain’s first art school, the RA was also the first institution to ‘mount an annual exhibition open to all artists of distinguished merit’. Its first Summer Exhibition was held in 1769, and it remains a fixture on the social calendar to this day. Graduates of the Royal Academy Schools include: William Blake, JMW Turner, Sir John Soane, John Constable, John Everett Millais, Richard Hamilton, Sandra Blow and Lynette Yiadom Boakye.

From the early 20th century onwards, the RA has held numerous international loan exhibitions. In an average year, these exhibitions draw more than a million people under the arched gate of Burlington House and past the statue of the RA’s first President, Sir Joshua Reynolds, the painter who, because of his immense output and free brushstrokes, earned the nickname ‘Sir Sloshua’. In a familiar progress, visitors then mount James Gibbs’ staircase and enter the exhibition galleries. Now, however, there is another way into the RA and a vastly expanded vision of its past and its potential.

This year, the Royal Academy is celebrating its sestercentennial with RA250, after a transformative £56million redevelopment, designed by architect Sir David Chipperfield. Now, for the first time, Burlington House is linked with the building to its rear, No 6 Burlington Gardens. The combined site covers more than...
As the Royal Academy of Arts celebrates its 250th anniversary, **Dominic Green** interviews its Director Christopher Le Brun and Senior Curator Helen Valentine about the ethos of this august institution and the ways in which it has changed, or not, over time.

Two acres, and its combined display space is 70 per cent larger than that in Burlington House. The RA250 expansion adds several temporary exhibition spaces for contemporary art and new work by the RA’s 80 Academicians, as well as a lecture hall and learning centre; and new spaces for the Academy Schools and the display of students’ work. It also means that the RA is able to display some of its permanent collection, a unique teaching museum deeply rooted in 18th-century Neoclassicism and 19th-century Romanticism.

Furthermore, RA250’s exploration of its historical development from Neoclassical origins to English style and contemporary art will find physical expression in the addition of a new passage between Piccadilly and Mayfair running through one of London’s major museums and art schools.

“The Academy was always a teaching collection, and the Academy was always a school and an exhibition,” explains its President, the painter and sculptor Christopher Le Brun as we sit in his new office.

“To display the collections properly rebalances the Academy towards its academic function. We’re not just an exhibition venue. We’re an academy. The heart of an academy was its school, and...
the RA’s collection was originally founded with pieces for the students to study.’

The founding collection, which was donated by Academicians, was intended to express the Neoclassical and patriotic ideals of Reynolds’ Discourses, a series of lectures he gave at the Royal Academy between 1769 and 1790. He even offered his entire collection to the Academy, but his fellow Academicians turned him down.

‘I’ve always found it curious,’ Christopher Le Brun reflects, ‘but I think that, firstly, they had had enough of Reynolds, great artist that he was. And secondly – and this relates to today – they wanted to be seen as contemporary artists.’

At that time, Neoclassicism was contemporary art. ‘Invention,’ wrote Reynolds in his Discourses, ‘strictly speaking, is little more than a new combination of those images which have been previously gathered and deposited in the memory.’

If the RA had accepted Reynolds’ hoard of drawings and Old Masters, the weight of the Academy’s collection would have tipped too far into retrospection. By placing the teaching collection on permanent display, RA250 reconnects the Neoclassical to the contemporary.

‘What I’ve chosen to do is to look again at the mainstream, canonic work of the mid-18th to the early 19th centuries,’ Le Brun says. ‘The reason for this is to remind us of something we’ve forgotten. There was a clear understanding at that time that the three masters of the High Renaissance – Leonardo, Raphael, Michelangelo – were of such distinction that no young artist should be without a thorough knowledge of them.’

Copying was the foundation of technique, as it had been in the Renaissance workshops. The new Collections display places a large copy of The Last Supper that came out of Leonardo’s workshop, possibly in his lifetime, with copies of Raphael’s tapestry designs by Sir James Thornhill (1675/76–1734). These are juxtaposed next to Michelangelo’s Taddei Tondo (The Virgin and Child with the Infant St John, 1504–05). This tondo, the only marble sculpture by Michelangelo in Britain, was donated to the Academy by John Constable’s patron Sir George Beaumont in 1830.

‘It isn’t an issue to put copies with originals,’ Le Brun explains. ‘The Academy was a place of teaching,
so the question of originality and copying was part of it. Copies are there to show you how to do it.”

The RA’s Senior Curator Helen Valentine adds: ‘The Classical object, which meant casts after the Antique, was completely central to teaching at the Royal Academy. To enter the Schools, students had to submit a drawing of a cast for examination, and it was on that basis that they would be admitted as Probationers. ‘In the Schools, they would draw from casts after Greek and Roman antiquities, with the addition of Michelangelo, who was considered their modern equal.

‘Only once they were good enough at drawing casts were they permitted to draw from life.’

From the beginning, the Academy built an extraordinary collection of casts. Many were shipped from Rome, and in 1816 almost 100 arrived at once, when the Prince Regent donated casts after statues that had been looted and taken to Paris during the Napoleonic Wars. This unique teaching collection, a cross-section of Neoclassical
aspiration and teaching methods, is newly displayed in the vaults beneath Burlington House, now connected by an underground link to Burlington Gardens.

‘There are excellent examples of figurative casts, including the Venus de Medici and the Venus de Milo,’ Valentine says. ‘There’s also our cast of the Farnese Hercules, which was cast in Rome, shipped back to London in 1780, and arrived intact. When we put the Belvedere Torso next to a Henry Fuseli painting and an unfinished painting by Benjamin West, we see the ideal and its expressions.’

The new displays also show some of the Academy’s outstanding collection of architectural casts. Most were collected by the architect John Saunders (1750–1825) in Rome, and entered the Academy via the collection of Thomas Lawrence.

‘The new installation gives an idea of how they were presented in the Schools,’ Valentine says. ‘There are elements of the Arch of Titus and Temple of Vesta in Rome, and heads from Trajan’s Column. Often, there’s a quarter capital, whose transection gives you all you need to know about the design of the entire piece. They were cast to be hung on the walls, so they’re flat at the back.’

Time has endowed the cast copies with an unexpected authenticity. Since the 18th century, the original heads on Trajan’s Column have been weathered by atmospheric pollution. The Academy’s casts may not be original, but their lineaments are now a more accurate guide to the Roman originals – an accidental fulfillment of the Neoclassical aspiration to bring the past into focus by emulation.

‘We have wonderful cast panels from the Villa Medici with scrolling acanthus leaves, small animals and an abundance of nature,’ Valentine adds. ‘They were restored in 1795, but ours predate that, because ours don’t show the restorations. So again, there’s an historical value to them. They’re also valued more as objects now than they were back in the Sixties, when many art schools simply got rid of their casts. We find that the students at the Schools still respond to them.’

Most 18th-century students discovered the ancient world in fragments and by looking at casts, as Goethe did before he went to Italy. The occasional lucky Academy student won a travelling scholarship to Italy, but these expeditions were suspended by the 1799–1815 Napoleonic Wars. Sir John Soane’s house-museum developed as a teaching simulacrum, combining elements that were historically real in a fictional arrangement.

Students also discovered the ancient world in an English context. There is a strong Classical streak in post-Renaissance English culture, but it rarely dominates the native
Shakespeare reaches for Classicism, and finally touches it in *The Tempest*. Milton attains it, and is, not coincidentally, somewhat out of fashion these days. But the deeper you look for the origins of English Romanticism, the narrower becomes the Classical window between High Renaissance and early Romanticism. And while Turner idolised Reynolds and wished to be buried next to him, William Blake utterly rejected ‘Sir Sloshua’, even publishing a highly critical Annotations to Reynolds’ *Discourses* in 1808.

‘It’s a very curious story,’ says Christopher Le Brun. ‘There’s an Academy, there’s Reynolds’ Neoclassical theory: everything’s set up. But the British are not Academic. Does anyone take notice of Reynolds? They do a bit. Angelica Kauffmann follows quite loosely in a rather poetic version of Neoclassicism. Benjamin West does in a dry sense, but immediately goes off in a separate direction by showing people in contemporary dress with *The Death of Wolfe*.

‘Gainsborough is in a world of touch, and looking in a different direction. Turner, despite his best efforts, is never Neoclassical, though he has reverence – and neither is Constable.’ Nor could Reynolds the theorist control Sir Sloshua the painter. ‘He’s early Romantic,’ Le Brun concludes. ‘Look at the trees in the background, and his application of paint. The materiality in Reynolds prefigured British Romanticism and the choppy style of Constable, which so electrified Delacroix.’

But the Academy has not always been sympathetic to contemporary art and its reluctant response to Modernism caused several high...
profile resignations. Walter Sickert became an Academician in March 1934, but resigned just over a year later in May 1935, in protest against the President’s refusal to support the preservation of Jacob Epstein’s controversial sculptural reliefs on the British Medical Association’s building on the Strand. Also in 1935, Stanley Spencer resigned after the Academy spurned his submissions to that year’s Summer Exhibition. Then three years later the RA’s rejection of Wyndham Lewis’ Vorticist portrait of TS Eliot caused not only Lewis to resign and to damn the RA as ‘a millstone around the neck of English art’, but also Augustus John, who resigned in protest.

The Modernist crisis came to a head in 1949, when Alfred Munnings, the RA’s President, slated Picasso and Matisse as ‘foolish daubers’, and criticised modern sculpture and the way the RA was run. That time, the President forced himself to resign. Since then, the RA has entered the modern age.

The RA250 expansion and exhibition programme restores the Academy’s original teaching paradigm, and on a grand scale. So does inviting pedestrian traffic to pass through the heart of an Academy where 50 students are learning artistic techniques amid the collections.

‘Historically, Mayfair was where people made suits, hats, gloves and shoes,’ Le Brun reminds us. ‘They were artisans of high quality. The idea of having an art school in Mayfair might be unthinkable in terms of property values, but it actually has tremendous symbolic potential. The idea of having a place of learning and making in Mayfair is profound, and we wanted to keep that link free.

‘You don’t have to buy a ticket to come through, you can also see the Collections gallery for free, and there’s also the possibility of a lecture and all sorts of events.’

Reynolds hoped that the Academy would affix Classical standards to British art. Its Schools, however, stimulated a contemporary Romantic tradition. The RA250 reinvention, by emphasising the contemporary principles in the Academy’s founding, offers new perspectives on the origins
of contemporary art, including the persistent Classical presence – and Reynolds might have appreciated that at least one part of the collection that he offered to his own contemporaries can now be seen in the Academy. ‘I found out that a neighbour had a little drawing by Tintoretto of a lost Michelangelo,’ Le Brun recalls. ‘On the back, it says: “From the Collection of Joshua Reynolds”.’

- **The Great Spectacle: 250 Years of the Summer Exhibition** is on show at the Royal Academy of Arts (www.royalacademy.org.uk) until 19 August 2018. The accompanying book to this exhibition, by Mark Hallett and Sarah Victoria Turner, is published by the Royal Academy in paperback at £21.95.

- **Summer Exhibition 2018** is on show at the Royal Academy of Arts (www.royalacademy.org.uk/exhibition/summer-exhibition-2018) until 19 August 2018. In celebration of its 250th anniversary this year’s exhibition is co-ordinated by Grayson Perry RA.

- **THE GREAT SPECTACLE**

  250 years of the Summer Exhibition

  Staged to coincide with the Royal Academy’s 2018 Summer Exhibition, The Great Spectacle tells the story of this popular annual show by featuring highlights from the past 250 years. It includes more than 80 paintings, sculptures, drawings and prints from the first Summer Exhibition through to the present day, by Academicians such as Sir Joshua Reynolds, Angelica Kauffman, Elizabeth Butler, Thomas Gainsborough, Thomas Lawrence, John Constable, JMW Turner, John Everett Millais, Sir Frederic Leighton, John Singer Sargent, Sir Peter Blake, Tracey Emin, Zaha Hadid, Sir Michael Craig-Martin, David Hockney and Wolfgang Tillmans.

  Since 1769, the Summer Exhibition has played a central role in London’s art world. This ‘great spectacle’, dominated by the famously crowded and collage-like arrangement of pictures across the RA’s walls, has attracted millions of visitors. In the 18th and 19th centuries, the exhibition provided the main forum in which artists and architects could showcase their work and compete with their rivals for popular and critical acclaim. Today, it continues to feature works by distinguished painters, sculptors, printmakers, photographers and architects, as well as up-and-coming artists.

  Arranged in chronological sections: A Georgian Parade; The Rise of Genre Painting; The Triumph of Landscape; The Pre-Raphaelites Arrive; Victorian Acclaim; Dealing with the Modern; Exhibiting Architecture; Post-War Visions and New Sensations, The Great Spectacle offers a unique view into the history of the RA. It focuses on moments when the Summer Exhibition made an especially significant impact in the British and European art world, and on pictures that were viewed as a particular success, or failure, within the exhibition space.

  Highlights include: Angelica Kauffman’s Hector Taking Leave of Andromache, shown in the first Summer Exhibition of 1769; Joshua Reynolds’ Joanna Leigh, Mrs Richard Bennett Lloyd Inscribing a Tree (exhibited in 1776); Joseph Wright of Derby’s The Dead Soldier (exhibited in 1789); John Constable’s The Leaping Horse (exhibited in 1825) John Everett Millais’ Isabella (exhibited in 1849); John Singer Sargent’s portrait of the author Henry James which was famously slashed by the suffragette, Mary Wood in the Summer Exhibition 1914; Sir Winston Churchill’s Winter Sunshine, Chartwell, which he submitted in 1947 under the pseudonym David Winter, Pietro Annigoni’s Queen Elizabeth II, which attracted huge crowds when exhibited in 1955; Tracey Emin’s iconic There’s a Lot of Money in Chairs (exhibited in 2001); Michael Craig-Martin’s Reconstructing Seurat (Orange) (exhibited in 2007) and Wolfgang Tillmans’s Greifbar, which was awarded the Wollaston Award in 2014. The exhibition will also feature William Powell Frith’s, A Private View at the Royal Academy, 1881 (exhibited in 1883) depicting the characteristic hang of the Summer Exhibition and the fashionable society crowd that it attracted. Among the architectural drawings on display is Joseph Michael Gandy’s, Public and Private Buildings Executed by Sir John Soane between 1780 and 1815. As well as art works, letters, catalogues and photographs will provide a fascinating insight into the historical context of the Summer Exhibition.

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12. A Private View at the Royal Academy, 1881, William Powell Frith, oil on canvas. 102.9cm x 195.6cm. © a Pope Family Trust, c/o Martin Beisly.

13. **There’s a Lot of Money in Chairs, 1994, Tracey Emin, appliqué armchair. 69cm x 53.5cm x 49.5cm. Private collection © Tracey Emin. All rights reserved, DACS/Artimage 2017. Image courtesy White Cube.**

14. **Reconstructing Seurat (Orange), 2004, Michael Craig-Martin, acrylic on aluminium panel. 187cm x 280cm. © Michael Craig-Martin. Courtesy of the artist and Gagosian.**
In the Farnese
This year in Rome the arrival of spring was marked by the opening to the public of the newly restored Farnese Gardens on the Palatine Hill and by the reopening of Emperor Nero’s Domus Aurea (Golden House) on the Esquiline nearby. Now an exhibition, *The Palatine and its Secret Garden: The Enchantment of the Farnese Gardens*, celebrates the completion of a three-year restoration of what remains of the 16th-century pleasure gardens built by Cardinal Alessandro Farnese (1520–89) over the imposing palace ruins of emperors Tiberius (r AD 14–37) and Nero (r AD 54–68).

The exhibition provides a delightful alternative ‘slow walk’ to the traditional route leading down from the Palatine Hill to the arch of Titus and the Forum below. A series of illustrated panels along the way show the visitor the transformations of the Horti Farnesianorum from the entrance gate of the Via Nova, the restored monumental terraces, grottoes and fountains, to the great former aviaries where some of the Roman statues excavated here are on view in their original Baroque location. Laurels, cypresses, citrus trees and damask roses have been replanted for the occasion to evoke the former luxuriant vegetation and the enchantment of the old gardens.

The Palatine Hill, or Palatium, was the heart and soul of ancient Rome. It was the setting where the city’s most sacred founding myths...

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**Dalu Jones** explores the newly restored monumental terraces, grottoes, frescoes and fountains of the ancient Roman gardens on the Palatine Hill In Rome

‘Going from hence on the right hand till I came to the door of the Farnese garden. This garden stands upon the Mount Palatine, where anciently the Emperors had their Palace; which took up all the upperpart of this hill, but not all the skirts of it… Entering into this garden I found some pretty waterworks and grottoes at the entrance, and fine high walks above overlooking the place where the Circus maximus stood anciently. The scholars of the English College in Rome have a piece of this hill for their vinia [vineyards] and recreation place to breath on upon days of vacancy.’

*The voyage of Italy*, 1670, Richard Lassels (1603–68)

1. The Horti Farnesiani seen from the terrace of the entrance gate, 1786–90, Charles Percier (1764–1838), engraving. 94.5cm x 67.8cm. Bibliothèque de l’Institut de France, Paris © RMN-Réunion des Musées Nationaux.

2. Roman statue of Isis-Fortuna, 1st century AD, white and brown marble, found in the Horti Farnesiani. H.195cm. Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples Photograph © Claudio Sabatino.
occurred, a place of archaic symbols and rituals and of real political power. Here, archaeologists have found traces of 10th-century BC settlements inhabited before the site became the original nucleus of the newly established urbs in the 8th century BC. Here was the Lupercal, the cave where the city’s mythical founders, Romulus and Remus were saved and nurtured by a she-wolf, honoured during the Lupercalia (a yearly religious festival held on 15 February). There was also a reed hut, carefully preserved over the centuries, that was believed to be the house of Romulus, the city’s first king, and a holy place imbued with a special political aura. Wealthy Romans had their mansions built on the slopes of the hill in Republican times and after Rome’s first emperor, Augustus (r 27 BC–AD 14), built his own house near Romulus’ hut, the Palatine became the exclusive property of the emperors.

So present was the illustrious Roman past here that the Farnese, the leading family in 16th-century Rome, bought plots of land on the north-western end of the hill. They used this, in 1550, to build large gardens with tree-lined avenues, flower borders, fountains, aviaries and small summer retreats decorated with frescoes and statues where the fame of the Farnese drew substance from the ancient imperial structures and their former gardens. The new gardens were the creation of the grandson of Pope Paul III Farnese (r 1534–49), Cardinal Alessandro Farnese (1520–89), an enlightened patron of the arts and an antiquarian who assembled the famous Farnese collection, the greatest collection of Roman sculpture in private hands since antiquity.

Pope Paul III styled himself as the new Romulus and Defensor paces and he and his family used the Horti Farnesianorum as a backdrop for self-celebrating events and to impress visiting monarchs and ambassadors. The architects who worked for the Farnese – possibly even Michelangelo (1475–1564) and certainly the Mannerist architect Vignola (1507–73) – reused the substructures and buttresses of the Domus Tiberiana, Emperor Tiberius’ palace, for the ramps, porticoes and staircases leading to the upper terrace, shifting earth from excavations wherever necessary, and for what would become veritable hanging gardens.

The Horti remained the property of the Farnese until being parcelled out, after which they slowly decayed, becoming a picturesque ruin much visited and admired by international travellers making the Grand Tour in Italy. The gardens’ unique location and the lure of buried statuary was inevitably also the reason for their partial destruction.

The French emperor Napoleon III bought the gardens in 1861 with the intention of excavating them under the guidance of the Italian archaeologist Pietro Rosa (1810–91). After the Italian government acquired them in 1870 Giacomo Boni (1859–1925) was appointed director of the archaeological site where he continued excavating but using for the first time properly scientific methods and a sensitive approach to the overlapping layering of the ancient imperial substructures. Boni, a lover of plants and a capable botanist, also

Exhibition

3. The entrance gate of the Horti Farnesiani relocated in front of the present entrance to the archaeological area of the Palatine in Via di San Gregorio. Photograph: Stefano Castellani.


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recreated a garden in the former grounds of the original Farnese ones, and it is here that he is buried, among rose bushes. He also founded the *Viridarium Palatinum* (garden nursery) with a dual purpose: to seed and replant the Palatine species known from Roman wall paintings or mentioned by Latin writers, and to reuse varieties known from the original Farnese gardens, thus linking the newly designed garden to the ancient past of the site – the imperial gardens – and to the former *Horti Farnesiorum* and its exotic varieties. The Fondazione G Boni–Flora Palatina continues this work today.

Botanical gardens were started by Italian universities in the mid-16th century but the *Horti Farnesiorum* were the first private botanical gardens in Europe. They were famous among scholars for the rarity and the variety of their species, which was made possible by the close relationship that members of the Farnese family, especially Cardinal Odoardo Farnese (1573–1626), entertained with the Jesuits who brought back exotic birds, seeds and tubers from their missions in the Americas,
India and the Far East.

A doctor and botanist, Tobia Aldini of Cesena (1570–1662), who was appointed director of the gardens, edited and published in 1625 the *Exactissima descriptio rariorum quarundam plantarum... in Horti Farnesiani*. This famous illustrated catalogue of the exotic plants in the gardens gave an indication of their medicinal and culinary properties.

In its 16 chapters we find descriptions of the *Hyiucca canedana* (yucca), the *Passiflora edulis* (passion fruit), the *Persea indica* (avocado), the *Helleborus niger* (Christmas rose), the *Helianthus tuberosus* (Jerusalem artichoke), the *Polianthes tuberosa* (tuberose) and the *Amaryllis speciosus*. The American agave bloomed for the first time in Rome in 1616, and an acacia, brought from Santo Domingo in 1611, was given the name *Acacia farnesiana*. Few documents give an idea of the rest of the flora but it appears that, in the 16th century, jasmine flowers from the gardens were sold to perfumiers, as were red roses, bitter orange flowers and mulberry leaves. In the plots below the enclosed garden on the summit of the hill were more common plants, such as artichokes, that need little water.

The tall brick arches added to the *Domus Tiberiana* by Emperor Hadrian sheltered cows, goats and sheep to be sold in the Campo Vaccino nearby. Altogether the gardens were a mixture of formal geometric parterres, thickets of elm trees, orchards, cultivated fields and pergolas supporting vines, which all together created an oasis of peace, a place devoted to cultural pursuits and the enjoyment of life, combining practicality and artistic gratification.

The gardens were also filled with statues, as were those of the Roman emperors they imitated. The Farnese collection of statues was continuously and conveniently augmented by excavations *in loco*. Exceptionally important sculptures made in precious marble of different colours – *pavonazzetto* for the clothing, and white or black marble for the limbs – have returned for the first time to their original home and are displayed in the Aviaries. These are: a *Kneeling Barbarian*, previously used to support a plant-pot holding aloes; a statue of *IJs Fortuna* that once decorated one of the niches on the staircase at the sides of the Great Fountain; and a large statue of a Dacian prisoner which, in the 17th century, decorated the cryptoporticus giving access to the Nymphaeum of the Rain. The latter fountain has finally been restored to its original appearance whereby the composition of superimposed basins leads the water to flow again along a series of cascades ending in a large multi-lobed basin.

The finest statues in the Horti and all the magnificent Farnese collections were moved from Rome to Naples by a succession of monarchs: the king of Naples and Sicily (later also king of Spain); Charles III of Bourbon (1716–88); the son of Elizabeth Farnese Duchess of Parma (1692–1766) and Philip V Spain (r 1700–46). These art works are all now in Naples’ Archaeological Museum.

Gardens are again the mainstay of the projects concerning the
reopening and restoration of the Domus Aurea, Emperor Nero’s fabled palace facing the Palatine. The great fire of AD 64 destroyed Nero’s Domus Transitoria palace on the Palatine, but he had replaced it by AD 69 with the even larger and more lavish Domus Aurea over a vast area that included a lake now covered by the huge mass of the Colosseum. The Domus Aurea is now underground, buried beneath the ruins of Emperor Trajan’s baths built in AD 104–09, and set in a modern garden. The seepage from the garden is destroying the brick structures and the wall paintings of the former magnificent palace.

An extraordinary restoration project is now underway involving the complete reclamation of this area and of its garden. Meanwhile sections of the Domus Aurea have been reopened to small groups of visitors who can admire the wall paintings and gilded stuccoes of the palace’s great halls that have already been restored. What survives of sumptuous former imperial abodes elicits a question rarely answered: what is the point of no return when unrestrained decay begins and, slowly or abruptly, hallowed halls are tarnished, furnishings stolen, the water stops flowing into baths, pools and fountains, and men and animals roam freely inside the most private and exclusive quarters of forgotten rulers and courtiers? Was it a sudden fire, the wanton wreckage by invading enemies, the steady trickling of theft by disloyal servants, or just the passage of time? After centuries of neglect and transformation enough remains of Rome’s magnificent palaces and gardens to evoke their past glory. Through the work of archaeologists, visitors can now see the elegant wall paintings in the study of Emperor Augustus as he saw them 2000 years ago. Over the centuries awe and enchantment are lost and regained time and time again.

Pronounce who can; for all that Learning reap’d From her research hath been, that these are walls – Behold the Imperial Mount! ’tis thus the mighty falls.

Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage. Canto IV, CVII. Lord Byron (1788–1824)
Inside secret
In his dreamy watercolour, Sappho and Erinna in a Garden at Mytilene, Simeon Solomon depicts Sappho embracing her fellow poet Erinna on a marble seat in a serene and secluded Classical garden. They are surrounded by sweet foliage, perched birds and a fawn. Roses are strewn at their feet and an abandoned lyre is propped up close by. An associate of the Pre-Raphaelites and member of the Aesthetic Movement, Solomon (1840–1905) chose to set his scene of love in an idyllic enclosed space in Mytilene, capital of the island of Lesbos, founded during the 11th-century BC, an exotic place bounded by the Aegean Sea. Solomon uses architectural features to frame the picture: a curved stone bench encircles the women, setting them in a place apart, bounded by their passion, and, on the wall above, a pair of doves symbolises their love. It is a thoroughly composed picture, of beauty, joy, lesbian desire – enchantment – and is full of symbolism, not least the lyre and the lines of poetry set to one side that attest to Sappho’s life – her lyric poetry was written to be sung accompanied by music. A statue of the goddess of love, on the right, alludes to Sappho’s Ode to Aphrodite, in which she entreats the goddess to help her win over a reluctant lover. Born on the island of Lesbos about 612 BC, Sappho wrote nine books of poetry, of which only fragments survive, Ode to Aphrodite being the most complete.

Sappho and Erinna in a Garden at Mytilene was painted in 1864 for a wealthy Newcastle businessman, James Leathart (1820–95), who owned a number of works by Solomon and who was a patron of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.

The 90 paintings, works on paper and books in this summer’s show, which is the first of two at the Laing on the theme of enchantment, explore ‘the garden as a “stage” for the extraordinary, the magical, the atmospheric and the nostalgic’. In an exhibition next year they will turn their gaze indoors.

‘For generations artists have used gardens to frame their scenes,’ the curator, Amy Barker, tells me. ‘From the Pre-Raphaelites and French Impressionists to the Bloomsbury Group, and on to 20th-century abstraction, they have taken inspiration directly from the gardens around them – whether small or large, manicured or wild. These secret, enveloping and sometimes mysterious spaces are seen through windows and in panoramas, and are often repeated in different lights and seasons. It’s a less constrained space to set human dramas.’

Key works from the Laing’s own collection provide the show’s initial themes – above all, Stanley Spencer’s The Dustman or The Lovers (1934), Thomas Saunders Nash’s Christ Before the People (1928), Duncan Grant’s The Hammock (1921–23), and William Gear’s abstract work Composition Printanier (1950). Major loans add to the mix, among them: Monet’s Water-Lilies, Setting Sun, from the National Gallery; Figures in a Garden, a lesser-known work from Tate by Francis Bacon; and Edward Burne-Jones’ The Pilgrim and the Heart of the Rose from the William Morris Gallery.

Britain has been called ‘a nation of gardeners’ and the exhibition begins with a section called A Very British Love Affair. As Barker explains, ‘Our intention in this section is to introduce the idea that artists were recreating idyllic scenes of country life – thatched cottages, roses at the door, the village postman, and the like – at a time when large numbers of people had moved away from the countryside into cities.’ Helen Allingham (1848–1926) is a key figure. An eminent watercolourist and illustrator, her country cottage paintings, such as the Laing’s Cottage with Figures, were highly popular. ‘The British

Exhibition
were fond of country pictures like these sweet, nostalgic scenes, from the late Victorian era into the early 20th century,” says Barker.

Not that all the works on show exude sweetness and light. While Derbyshire-born Allingham painted her meticulous cottage pictures for the nostalgic pleasure of a rapidly industrialising London society, she also wanted to memorialise the thatched houses that had stood in the English countryside unchanged for centuries and were fast being modernised or cleared away.

The idea of the English garden as an idyll is beautifully evoked in A Floral Fantasy in an Old English Garden, written and illustrated by Walter Crane (1845–1915), whose illustrations for children are included in the exhibition. Another illustrator represented is Charles Robinson (1870–1937), whose 1913 watercolour, The rich making merry in their beautiful houses while the beggars were sitting at the gates, was drawn for Oscar Wilde’s The Happy Prince in order to emphasise the story’s moral message: love and charity can overcome some of the worst aspects of modern society.

Such illustrations created the idea of the garden as an element of fairytale, says Barker, and this continues today. So, a substantial part of the show she has curated looks at the magical, the enchanting and the fictional.

It is here that Solomon’s Sappho and Erinna in a Garden at Mytilene and The Pilgrim and the Heart of the Rose, 1872-74, designed by Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris and embroidered on linen by Margaret Bell, can be found anchoring a selection of works from the 1860s to 1930.

Flowers and fairies grace the gallery walls in the work of another first-rate children’s illustrator. Cicely Mary Barker produced botanically accurate drawings for her popular Flower Fairies series of books published in the 1920s. Beatrix Potter illustrated her own Peter Rabbit books, while Arthur Rackham’s name became associated with another English children’s classic, Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll. Even Lucien Pisarro, son of the French Impressionist Camille, settled in England in 1890, and caught the pervading fascination in his painting The Fairy, produced four years later, in which an otherworldly atmosphere infuses a garden inhabited by an ethereal girl. Lavishly draped women in Classical settings enrich the mythological enchantment of many gardens painted by English Aesthetic artists, such as Thomas Armstrong in Woman with Lilies (1876) and Albert Joseph Moore’s A Footpath (1883) and The Idyll (1893), also in Psyche Entering Cupid’s Garden (1904) by John William Waterhouse. Although he
was active several decades after the break-up of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, Waterhouse has been dubbed the 'last Pre-Raphaelite' and is known for his romantic depictions of women from ancient Greek mythology and Arthurian legend, such as his well-known The Lady of Shalott at Tate Britain.

Monet's Water-Lilies, Setting Sun provides an iconic example of the Impressionists' use of gardens and nature in paintings, and their handling of light and shade to create drama and atmosphere. The work skilfully conveys the sense of shimmering water reflecting the pink and gold colours of sunset.

Dappled sunshine is captured in Harold Knight's 1908 oil painting, In the Spring, illuminating a happy couple taking tea in the garden. This was during the long Edwardian summers when taking tea under a blossom-laden tree was an ideal.

Dark days seem to be implied by Thomas Gotch's Study for The Birthday Party, from around 1930, which at first glance has a mysterious air. But this garden scene is a night-time study of illumination in which red light from Chinese lanterns washes over the faces and white dresses of children gathering for a party.

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, communities of artists formed around villages and houses where gardens played an important role. The gardens of William Morris at Red House in Bexleyheath, Kent, designed by Philip Webb, and at Kelmscott Manor in Oxfordshire, inspired several works that are in the exhibition. Morris' Trellis (1862) was his first wallpaper design, based on the rose trellises in the garden at Red House. Barker points out that this was a joint enterprise, as Webb drew the birds, which proved too difficult for Morris. His daughter May Morris' watercolour View of Kelmscott Manor from the Old Barn, from the 1880s, is an affectionate view of the family's country home. For May, who lived there after her father died in 1896, it was 'the only house in England worth inhabiting'.

Another home where all kinds of creativity flourished was Charleston Farmhouse in Sussex, which was a source of endless inspiration for the Bloomsbury and Omega Workshop artists, writers and thinkers who gathered there and enjoyed the walled garden. Duncan Grant's The Hammock captures a summertime idyll in which his fellow artist and sometime lover, Vanessa Bell, is shown dozing in the sultry heat, while her children play around her.

At the heart of a further section of the exhibition, The Ordinary made Extraordinary, are the paintings of Stanley Spencer (1891–1959). Inherently a mystic, Spencer takes ordinary scenes and places in them extraordinary events. The modest gardens of Cookham, his beloved Thameside village, are the 'stage' for his sacred scenes. In The Dustman or The Lovers he conveys an almost religious ecstasy of a man and wife reunited in the front garden of their home. They are surrounded by their neighbours and such everyday possessions as a teapot and a cabbage, but for Spencer that garden is a stage for both reverence.
and physical love. He is attempting, pictorially, to reconcile innocence and experience, the sacred and the profane in the ‘earthly paradise’ that was Cookham. For Spencer, every garden was a vision of heaven, so when he depicts a flower, as in *Red Magnolia* (1938), he paints it with an intensity close to reverence. In this, Spencer follows a tradition from medieval and Renaissance times when the depiction of gardens were idealised or symbolic, and often featured religious figures imagined within a walled garden.

One much earlier work in the exhibition is *Noli me tangere*, painted in tempera on a panel. It was previously thought to be by Giotto but it is now attributed simply to a mid-14th-century Italian artist. Barker explains that the inclusion of this ‘Giottoesque’ painting serves to introduce the notion of the early Renaissance paintings before Raphael, that strongly inspired both the Pre-Raphaelites and Spencer. Giotto painted his figures wearing the costumes of his day in towns he knew. Likewise, the Pre-Raphaelites and, in turn, Spencer took what was around them and used it as settings for spiritual scenes. Another example is *Christ Before the People* by Thomas Saunders Nash, which shows an event in the life of Christ set in a cosy suburban scene. Nash was a fellow student of Spencer’s at the Slade, and his figures are similarly stylised. ‘He was clearly much influenced by Spencer, who wryly commented that Nash walked with the Bible in one hand and “my ideas” in the other,’ says Barker.

In the 20th century, landscape and narrative gave way to abstraction yet, despite this, works by artists, such as Francis Bacon, William Gear, Patrick Heron, Frances Hodgkins and Newcastle University Fine Art lecturer Victor Pasmore (1908–98), are all on show here.

A semblance of figuration remains in Bacon’s early work, *Figures in a Garden*, painted around 1936 and a rare survivor of a period when he destroyed most of his work. Here, darkly distorted shapes lurk in a space suggestive of a garden.

Some other 20th-century artists moved instead towards minimalism. Pasmore’s *The Hanging Gardens of Hammersmith, No 2* is a loosely impressionistic view, which he painted, between 1942 and 1947, from his Thames-side house in London. This is one of a series of four paintings demonstrating Pasmore’s gradual progression towards abstraction.

With its linear trees, touches of pointillism and its sense of floating between sky and water, it has an ethereal quality. Amy Barker describes this work as an ‘exercise in abstraction’. It is also an example of the magic that a garden can bring.

- *The Enchanted Garden* is at the Laing Art Gallery in Newcastle upon Tyne (www.laingartgallery.org.uk) until 7 October 2018.
The History Behind Local Gardens

There are more than one hundred different roses in the gardens at Dalemain Mansion in Cumbria.

Rosa moschata climbs through a tree at the end of the terrace; Cooper's Burmese, Adelaide d'Orleans, Rosa hollandica, Easlea's Golden Rambler, Ballerina, Vanity and Little Rambler make a display along the edge of the ha-ha: a perfect photograph.

These roses represent three British breeders: Walter Easlea, the Reverend Joseph Pemberton and Charles Warner, two French breeders: Jacques-Louis Descemet and Henri-Antoine Jacques and the Dutchman Jan Spek, while Roland Cooper, former Head Gardener of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Edinburgh discovered the rose named after him. The story of these roses is celebrated in the book *The Tale of 100 Dalemain Roses* and there was the first of several events at the house on 21 June 2018 (see [www.dalemain.com](http://www.dalemain.com)).

The history behind several rose gardens in Derbyshire: Chatsworth House, Hopton Hall, Locko Park and Melbourne Hall in 2018 is told in a series of tours, events and talks.

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The early 13th-century English theologian Thomas of Chobham wrote: ‘The Lord created different creatures with different natures not only for the sustenance of men, but also for their instruction, so that through the same creature we may contemplate not only what may be useful to the body, but also what may be useful to the soul.’ All creatures, he said, had properties that might ‘lead us to imitate God’, or ‘move us to flee from the Devil’.

And, Thomas might have added, this included creatures that emerged not from the mind of God, but from the minds of men. The allegorical fauna of the medieval bestiary ran from the prosaic to the fantastical. While the busy Bee was the model artisan and the cunning Fox the emblem of the heretic in the animal world, the Siren, the embodiment of harlotry, and the Phoenix, the winged incarnation of eternal life, were fabulous fictions.

Allegory itself drives naturalism and the imaginary image of the unnatural alike away from the natural and social world. An ‘allegory’ – the word entered English from the Greek allegoria around the time that Thomas of Chobham reflected on the theological value of animals – connotes a translation of meaning from the evident to the invisible. The allegory emerges from the centre of authority, from the church or the town square; the etymology of allegoria stems from the union of allos (‘different’) and agoreuo (‘to speak in the agora’). But this different path of allegory leads away to the margins of society, morality and imagination.

The creatures of the allegory carry burdens of theological and social morality, as well as private hopes and desires. Thus monstrosity (ugliness, oddity, hybridity) retained its powerful, theological charge, as the negative image of natural order. The Papal Bull, Unam Sanctum, of 1302 insisted on the natural unity of Christendom under the Papacy, just as it insisted that the message of the allegory remained consonant with its natural image: ‘Therefore of this one and only Church there is one body and one head – not two heads, as if it were a monster.’

Drawing on the Morgan Library & Museum’s extensive medieval collections, and loans from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Medieval Monsters: Terrors, Aliens, Wonders reveals the complex, strange and contradictory beasts, real and imaginary, that emerged in medieval Europe.

‘In the medieval world, the idea of the monstrous permeated every level of society, from rulers, the nobility and the clergy, to agrarian and urban dwellers,’ explains Colin B Bailey, Director of the Morgan Library & Museum. ‘While medieval life was a ‘world lit only by fire’, low levels of literacy ensured that the medieval imagination was usually visual.

The Middle English monstre derives from the Latin noun monstrum, which means ‘portent’. The verb monere means ‘to warn’; but its form monstro suggests the gamut of visual education: ‘I show, I ordain, I denounce, I teach’.

Medieval Monsters expounds the uses of medieval monstrosity through more than 70 works, spanning 300 years from the 6th to the 9th centuries, and including illustrated manuscripts, tapestries, metalwork and ivories.

The guest curators, Asa Mittman of California State University,
Chico, and Sherry Lindquist of Western Illinois University, have organised their materials into a triple-headed typology: Terrors, Aliens and Wonders.

‘In Terrors, we explore how the vocabulary of images was used to establish power,’ explains Sherry Lindquist. ‘Often, monsters embellish and protect the sacred word of God. They have a certain mystique, because anything that can subdue a monster must be even more potent. When the Church and the King have monstrous emblems, they’re absorbing the power of these dangerous and frightening beings.’

The physical image of St George slaying the Dragon is carved into the curled head of a bishop’s crozier, a symbol of authority. ‘The bishop associates himself with the power of the saint, and the saint’s power demonstrates the defeat of the monster,’ she tells me.

In The Taming of the Tarrasque (from the Hours of Henry VIII, circa 1500, Tours, France. 25.6cm x 18cm. Photograph: Graham S Haber, 2013.

4. Initial V, detail with Obadiah (St Abdias) and a dragon, from Twelve Minor Prophets with Gloss, AD 1131–65, north-east France. 33.6cm x 22.8cm. Photograph: Janny Chiu, 2017.

5. A Wild Man, woman and child, from a Book of Hours, circa 1490, Belgium. 9.3cm x 6.6cm. Photograph: Graham S Haber, 2017.

6. Tapestry with Wild Men and Moors, circa 1440, detail, linen and wool slit tapestry, Strasbourg. 100cm x 490cm. © Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
Magdalene and Lazarus, defending a Provençal village from the monster. The Golden Legend of Jacobus de Voragine records that this rotund dragon, dwelling in a marsh between Arles and Avignon, had a lion’s head, six short bear-like legs, an ox’s body beneath a turtle’s shell, all finished off with a scaly tail with a scorpion’s sting.

‘Martha is carrying her holy bucket and an aspergillum for the sprinkling of holy water,’ says Lindquist. ‘She’s leading the Tarrasque out into the open, even as it’s still gulping down its last victim, so that the townspeople can kill it.

‘Killing monsters is usually masculine work: even angelic military saints like St Michael are shown dressed in the latest armour. But Martha is one of several female dragon-slayers, and can kill the monster through being filled with the holiness of God. As she is so holy, she is able to convert the entire town.’

The legend of another female dragon-slayer, St Margaret, takes us from one image of monstrous absorption to another. The Golden Legend reports that Olybrius, the Roman governor of her home town of Antioch, imprisoned her for refusing to apostatise from Christianity and marry him.

‘In prison, she is visited by a dragon, who is probably Satan in disguise,’ Lindquist tells me. ‘He
swallows her whole but she is so holy that the body of the dragon cannot retain her holiness. Even as she is still being swallowed and her gown is visible at the throat, she is bursting out of the back of the dragon.'

By surviving this passage through the body of the dragon, St Margaret became an object of prayer for mothers in childbirth – but not the only object of psychological identification. 'It’s the baby who has the safe passage,' Lindquist points out, ‘if you are the mother in labour, you are in the role of the dragon.' The monstrous, as an object of prayer and identification, allows us to approach and overcome otherwise horrifying or inadmissible elements of our bodies and identities.

‘Terrors lead to Aliens,' Lindqvist observes. In the Tapestry with Wild Men and Moors, circa 1440, we see a similar ambivalence. The tapestry presents the contention of undifferentiated Nature, in the form of the pagan Wild Men, and Nature that is refined and monotheistic, but also politically hostile and theologically alien: the differentiation of Islam.

Who is the alien here, and who is at home? The Wild Men are white-skinned, like the Alsatian nobleman who probably owned the tapestry. The Moors are dark-skinned – two African women of the harem watch the battle from their tower – but as technically sophisticated in dress and weaponry as European Christians. The Wild Men’s robes are ripples of greens, whites, browns and black. It is as though they are emerging from the wild forests, wearing a medieval anticipation of modern military camouflage as they wave branches as clubs. While the Moors, wearing the robes of medieval townsmen, sally forth with bows and arrows from their castle.

‘The term Moor is vague and abstract. The Wild Men are even more fictionalised and monstrous. They go back to Ancient Greece and Rome – to Pliny,’ explains Lindquist. ‘We are curious about the world, and we want to learn about other people, but we’re also afraid of them. We are afraid they are not like us, we’re afraid they’re too much like us.’

The tapestry also suggests the barbarity at the heart of even the most sophisticated forms of violence. ‘We have met the enemy, and they are ours,’ boasted Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry during the British-American War of 1812. In 1953, cartoonist Walt Kelly changed that to rueful self-knowledge when he
‘We have met the enemy and he is us’

wrote: ‘We have met the enemy and he is us’. During the Vietnam War, this phrase became popular among American critics of the conflict. In a 1970 poster for Earth Day, Kelly’s recurrent characters, Porkypine and Pogo, try to immerse themselves in the ‘beauty of the forest primeval’, but the rough going hurts their bare feet. ‘We have met the enemy and he is us,’ Porkypine rues.

‘We’re attracted to the Other, we desire the Other, we’re afraid of the Other,’ Lindquist reflects. The narrative frames the image, and can shift the image from Terror to Alien to Wonder. A giant is a mythological Terror, and a physical Alien, but the image of St Christopher Carries Christ Child, from a Book of Hours from Bruges, circa 1520, transmutes the terrifying alien into a religious wonder.

‘St Augustine believed that miracles, marvels and things contrary to Nature are God’s way of showing that He is not bound by natural laws. If he wants to put a dog’s head on a human body, He has his reasons. St Christopher is traditionally a giant and a saint but, in some representations, he is also a cynocephalus, a dog-headed being.’

This attribution derived from a Byzantine error, which confused St Christopher’s hypothetical origins as Cananeus (‘a Canaanite’) with canineus (‘dog-like’). Meanwhile, medieval Europeans counted the race of dog-men as one of the numerous hybrid human species that dwelt over the horizon of the known world.

Incorporating these ideas into theology, the German bishop Walter of Speyer (967–1027) portrayed St Christopher as a dog-headed, barking cannibal, rewarded with human appearance by his conversion to Christianity. The impossible body and its miraculous transformation elucidates the mystery of faith.

In The Annunciation as an Allegorical Unicorn Hunt from an Eichstätt Book of Hours, circa 1500, the imaginary animal is a living metaphor, but also a social one. Unicorns were associated with Christ, and the unicorn hunt, in which hunters seek to sacrifice the fabulous creature, was associated with the Passion of Christ. But the unicorn is a miraculous beast, and could not be caught unless it was lured and tamed by a virgin. Only when it was curled up in her lap could the hunters strike.

At the centre of The Annunciation as an Allegorical Unicorn Hunt is the Virgin Mary, but the images of the enclosed garden, the gate, her privileged union with her intimate beast also affirm virginity not only as a theological principle but also as a social value and an asset in the marriage market.

‘The vocabulary of the monster is powerful, and can be used in art for good or ill,’ Lindquist concludes. ‘We have a Greek Sphinx, meeting with Oedipus. He is dressed like a medieval knight. In the Classical source, Oedipus answers the riddle, and the Sphinx is so distraught at this that she throws herself off a cliff and kills herself. But in the medieval story Oedipus kills her, just as if he’s slaying a dragon. This is a much harsher condemnation of the female monster.’

Monsters emerge at the borders of imagination, between the known and unknown, the intolerably strange and the intolerably familiar. ‘For the world is full of different creatures,’ reflected Thomas of Chobham, ‘like a manuscript full of different letters and sentences, in which we can read whatever we ought to imitate or flee from.’
Throughout his working life Tolkien taught Anglo-Saxon literature and language to generations of students. Even after he had retired in 1959, Oxford University asked him back to lecture on ‘The Fight at Finnsburg’, an event in the far past described allusively in a section of the Anglo-Saxon epic Beowulf, and in another Anglo-Saxon poem preserved only as a fragment. It is characteristic of Tolkien that he worried away at what lay behind the two poems until he had worked out

Lord of

As the Tolkien: Maker of Middle-earth exhibition attracts crowds of visitors to the Bodleian Library, Tom Shippey explains how the Oxford professor’s lifelong research into the Anglo-Saxon language and literature helped inspire his world-famous works, notably The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings.
provoking Smaug this time to fly off and attack Laketown, destroying it by dragon-fire, though Smaug himself is shot down by the hero Bard. In the same way, in Beowulf an unnamed thief steals a cup from a sleeping dragon and takes it to his lord, Beowulf. When the dragon wakes and discovers the theft, he flies off to burn down Beowulf’s ‘bright halls’, and then the thief returns as guide to the dragon’s den, setting up the final battle. In both works, we have theft, cup, burning, second visit, thief and hero sharply distinguished.

The end of Beowulf had moreover been in Tolkien’s mind from the start of The Hobbit. In Beowulf the thief is mentioned as ‘the 13th man’ when Beowulf returns with his 11 companions to settle matters with the dragon. In The Hobbit, by contrast, Bilbo is very carefully selected to be the dwarves’ ‘burglar’, but not to be the 13th man. The expedition that sets out to regain the dwarves’ treasure from Smaug consists of Thorin, the leader, and 12 other dwarves, with Bilbo added by Gandalf as ‘the 14th man’, or as Bilbo says himself, ‘Mr Lucky Number’. Tolkien must always have intended a happier ending for The Hobbit than the one in Beowulf.

There is another entrant from the Anglo-Saxon world in between the start and end of The Hobbit, and that is the gruff and dangerous figure of Beorn – an Anglo-Saxon word glossed over in dictionaries as ‘warrior’. Tolkien knew, though, that in the far past it had meant ‘bear’, a meaning that survived in Old Norse björn. He also knew that the name of Beowulf himself could be decoded as beo-wulf, ‘the wolf’ or ‘enemy of the bees’, in other words ‘the honey-eating bear’. In fairytale, Beowulf must have been a bear, or a bear’s son, in The Hobbit, Beorn the bee-keeper is clearly a werebear, who can take human or ursine shape at will. That is what makes him so dangerous.

Tolkien, one can see, was never satisfied with the surface level of Anglo-Saxon legend. He always wanted to probe further back, to what underlay our scattered and enigmatic fragments, whether it was the history behind ‘The Fight at Finnsburg’ or the fairytale behind Beowulf – a fairytale which, in the end, he wrote himself and which was finally published as Sellic Spell (Anglo-Saxon for ‘wonder-tale’), along with his translation and incomplete commentary on Beowulf in 2014. That same urge to wonder what words really meant helped him to create orcs and ents, woses and balrogs, all of them mentioned or hinted at in one Early English work or another, but never brought into focus – until Tolkien did so.

The same might even be true of hobbits, Tolkien’s decisive stroke of imagination. By his own account, the word ‘hobbit’ just popped into his head one day, without him knowing what it meant. But word-creation for someone like Tolkien – a man steeped in etymology, the study of the history of words – was not the
Exhibition

Conversation with Smaug
random process it would be for the rest of us. It is striking that ‘hobbit’ could easily be the descendant of an (unrecorded) Anglo-Saxon word, hol-bytla, ‘hole-builder’ – which of course is exactly what hobbits are, and is also what King Théoden calls hobbits the first time he sees one. Very likely Tolkien, unconsciously, knew that all along.

It is Théoden and the Riders who nevertheless are the heart of Anglo-Saxondom in Tolkien’s work. Théoden itself is an Anglo-Saxon word for ‘ruler’ or ‘king’, and so are the names of all Théoden’s ancestors – Thengel, Fengel, Folcwine and all the others carefully listed in Appendix A (II) to The Lord of the Rings, all the way back to Eorl the Young, whose name, Anglo-Saxon for ‘earl’, reminds us of a time before kings were invented. The Riders of the Riddermark are indeed Anglo-Saxons in almost every way. Their names are Anglo-Saxon; sometimes phrases in Anglo-Saxon come up in their speech; their poems follow the strict rules of Anglo-Saxon metric (no-one has ever been as good as Tolkien at doing this); and they call their land ‘the Mark’, which is what Anglo-Saxons called Tolkien’s own homeland of the English midlands – Latinised as Mercia, which is what historians call it. But to them, the Mearc was divided into scire, or ‘shires’, which is what the hobbits call their small homeland: ‘The Shire’. Even the Riders’ manners are Anglo-Saxon. When Gandalf and his companions arrive at Théoden’s hall – Gandalf riding Shadowfax, Anglo-Saxon sceadu-feax, ‘Shadow-hair’ – their reception follows the reception of Beowulf and his companions at the Danish king’s hall in detail once again. First, they are met by an outer guard, who passes them on to the door-ward, who greets them courteously – Tolkien very much disliked the French notion that the Anglo-Saxons were vulgar people, and invites them to stack their weapons, which they do: Théoden’s hall, Théoden’s rules. There is doubt whether Gandalf’s wizard-staff counts as a weapon but Hama the warden settles that by quoting an Anglo-Saxon proverb, which says in effect, ‘Sensible people use their own judgement’, and allows it. They pass on to Théoden’s hall Meduseld (Anglo-Saxon for ‘mead-hall’), within the precincts of Edoras, another Anglo-Saxon word, meaning just that, ‘precincts’.

The strikingly non-Anglo-Saxon feature of the Riders, however, is that they are riders. Anglo-Saxons used horses, naturally, and wrote appreciatively of them in their poems, but they never became cavalrymen. ‘Stirrup’ is an Anglo-Saxon word, but stig-rap means, literally, ‘mounting-rope’. They do not seem to have got the idea that stirrups are there to hold you firmly in your saddle so you can use lance and sword from horseback. This fatal flaw was what brought Anglo-Saxondom to an end in 1066, when King Harold’s infantry lost to William the Norman’s mailed cavalry. If only they had updated their weapon-system, then Anglo-Saxon tradition would not have been forced underground by centuries of French rule, and England (in Tolkien’s mind) would have had a happier history.

Could history not have been different? After all, Eomer, who...
succeeds Théoden as king of the Mark, bears a name (as does Frodo) from the dim and legendary Anglo-Saxon past, and the first element in it is *eoh*, Anglo-Saxon for ‘horse’. So once upon a time Anglo-Saxons had used horse-names for themselves – like Hengest, a name which means ‘stallion’, legendary founder of England with his brother Horsa, and a major figure in the ‘Fight at Finnsburg’, which Tolkien spent so much time and effort in explaining. If only they had kept up that tradition. Now, Tolkien must have asked himself, how to imagine that happier history where the Anglo-Saxons did turn into Riders? In *The Lord of the Rings* he solved that problem by grafting on to the Riders his image of the Goths, close relatives of the Anglo-Saxons, who back in the Dark Ages had turned east, not west, become cavalrymen out on the Steppes, and eventually overrun much of the Roman Empire. The Goths were Tolkien’s second-favourite people and, in his *Appendices*, he constructed a kind of alternative history for them, in which they too were part of the Riders’ ancestry. Some of their forebears, even back before the time of Eorl, are given Gothic names like Vidugavia, Vidumavi, Vinitharya, and he added others that suggest slow linguistic changes towards very early Anglo-Saxon, as if the Goths (if history had been different) could have turned into Anglo-Saxons.

Even more than Hastings, the great disaster of European history,
Aragorn, at once rightful king of The Lord of the Rings, have got together – as they do in both cultures have their virtues unfavourable to neither. Clearly Éomer, where the comparison is Their successors are Faramir and other ignominiously by suicide. die, one gloriously in battle, the who have lost their sons, and who Gondorians in a literate one wood, the other stone. The Riders hall and Denethor’s palace, the one inferior. We hear about Théoden’s sation and barbarism – except that Tolkien carefully presented the two parallels between Gondor and the Riders, which we might call civilisation and barbarism – except that Tolkien carefully presented the two sides as different, not superior and inferior. We hear about Théoden’s hall and Denethor’s palace, the one wood, the other stone. The Riders live in an oral culture of poems, the Gondorians in a literate one of books and archives. Théoden and Denethor are both old men who have lost their sons, and who die, one gloriously in battle, the other ignominiously by suicide. Their successors are Faramir and Éomer, where the comparison is unfavourable to neither. Clearly both cultures have their virtues and their vices. If only they could have got together – as they do in The Lord of the Rings, united by Aragorn, at once rightful king of

Gondor and one who has ridden in the host of the Riddermark under Théoden’s father Thengel.

The Mark, then, is a kind of might-have-been Anglo-Saxondom, which is also a kind of might-have-been image of Tolkien’s own homeland in the English midlands. Even their banner, white horse on green field, sounds much like the famous prehistoric white horse cut into the chalk at Uffington, not far from where Tolkien lived and taught. The hobbits’ Shire, too, is a kind of alternative history. After Hastings, when almost all Anglo-Saxon landowners were dispossessed and replaced by foreigners, and Anglo-Saxon ceased to exist as a literary language, replaced by Latin and French, there was one area which (as Tolkien showed in one of his early academic works) managed to hold out. There, Anglo-Saxon tradition continued, changing over the centuries but never quite dying out, and eventually reviving, long after it had seemed extinct.

That area was the western shire of Hereford, nextdoor to Tolkien’s own home county of Worcester, and the hobbits, with their Thane and their Shirriffs, their Earths and folklands, form an image of what Anglo-Saxons might have been like if left to develop into modern English people on their own, without interference: peaceful, unambitious, as unaffected by Rings of Power as it was possible to be, but as Gandalf says, full of surprises, capable of rising even to heroic stature. But most of all, as the dying Thorin says to Bilbo, ‘child[ren] of the kindly West’. The Shire and the Mark, then, form contrasting images of Anglo-Saxon survival, one modern, one archaic.

It was one of Tolkien’s deepest beliefs, however, that tradition never dies. Like the White Tree of Gondor, it can come back to life and, as Legolas says to Gimli, ‘spring up again in times and places unlooked-for’ – as the lost world of the Anglo-Saxons has in Tolkien’s two affectionate portrayals. •

Tolkien, Maker of Middle-earth: An exhibition at the Bodleian Libraries is on show at the Weston Library, Bodleian Libraries, Oxford (www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/weston) until 28 October. The catalogue by Catherine McIlwaine is published by the Bodleian Library at £40 hardback, £25 paperback. © The Tolkien Trust

7. An intricate design made by Tolkien on the back of an agenda for a Merton College meeting on 26 November, 1957. Parma mittarion (Book of Enterings) in Elvish at the bottom seems to indicate that it was intended as a book cover. To the right is another phrase kalma hendas (light in the eye). This design has never been published or exhibited before. © The Tolkien Trust 2018.

8. JRR Tolkien, aged 19, photographed in Birmingham shortly before leaving King Edward VI School. He was an able student and enjoyed his time there at the centre of a group of close male friends. He excelled in languages and in debates and performed with gusto both on the rugby pitch and in theatrical productions. On his second attempt, he won an exhibition to study Classics at Exeter College, Oxford. © The Tolkien Trust 1977.

Exhibition

TIMELINE OF JRR TOLKIEN

1892: John Ronald Reuel Tolkien born 3 January in Bloemfontein, Orange Free State (modern-day South Africa)
1903–11: attends King Edward’s School, Birmingham
1911–15: studies first Classics, then English Language and Literature, at Exeter College, Oxford, and is awarded a First Class degree
1915–18: serves as a second lieutenant with the Lancashire Fusiliers during the First World War
1916: marries Edith Bratt (d 1971)
1918: joins the staff of the Oxford English Dictionary
1920: appointed Reader in English Language at Leeds University
1924: appointed Professor at Leeds University
1925–45: Rawlinson and Bosworth Professor of Anglo-Saxon at Oxford
1937: The Hobbit is published
1945–59: Merton Professor of English Language and Literature at Oxford
1954: The Lord of the Rings is published
1972: appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire
1973: JRR Tolkien dies, aged 81 in Bournemouth on 2 September

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The 5th century BC is still sometimes called the ‘Golden Age’ of Athens. Yet this was a time of tension and dichotomy, when Athens’ much-vaunted democracy ruled an increasingly reluctant empire with ever-greater ruthlessness, occasionally clamping down on philosophers whose ideas seemed to threaten traditional values, relying on slaves (and booty) for economic prosperity, and telling its distinctly unequal womenfolk that the best any of them could strive for was not to be spoken of for good or ill. By the 420s BC tensions emerged, too, between generations, as sophists taught smart young men how best to manipulate arguments to win lawsuits or debates (‘alternative truths’ are nothing new), while privileged politicians, sons of wealthy aristocrats or self-made businessmen, sought to turn the constitution to their own advantage, and some spoke quite openly of overthrowing democracy.

Perhaps the most notorious of these ambitious politicians was Alcibiades. Like every well-educated Athenian he was brought up on a diet of Homeric epic, and the advice given to the Iliad’s hero, Achilles, ‘always to be best, and to surpass all others’, fired Alcibiades’ ambition. Even as a child he was determined to win at all costs. Once, in a wrestling school, he sank his teeth so hard into his opponent’s arm that he almost bit right through it. When the other boy accused him of fighting like a woman, Alcibiades replied: ‘Me? No! I fight like a lion.’ (He subsequently declined to take part in contact sports, ostensibly because it meant competing with social inferiors, but in reality...)

David Stuttard surveys the life of Alcibiades, the golden boy educated by Socrates, who amassed vast wealth and gained extensive power but who, like his fiery Homeric role model, suffered from the fatal flaw of hubris and fell from grace.
because he could not bear the thought of them defeating him.) On another occasion, he was playing knucklebones (a game somewhat like dice) with friends in the street, when a wagon came lumbering towards them. His friends scattered in panic – but not Alcibiades. Convinced that his was the winning throw, he lay down in front of the vehicle, stopping it in its tracks, so that his victory might be revealed.

His determination to win at all cost made Alcibiades choose his battles carefully: he refused to learn the aulos (a reed instrument), claiming that it made his cheeks puff out and spoil his looks (which, since he was the handsomest youth in all Athens, was unconscionable). In fact, he probably was simply no good at playing the instrument – and, besides, Achilles his hero played not the aulos but the lyre.

While the mythological Achilles was educated by the centaur, Chiron, Alcibiades learned from the wisest (if most controversial) man of his day: Socrates. Alcibiades even served on his first military campaign with the philosopher, when international enmities led to an Athenian campaign against the northern Greek town of Potidaea. Tradition tells that Socrates saved his pupil’s life – but such was Alcibiades courage that the army awarded him the coveted prize for bravery, the aristeia (quite literally translated as ‘the best’). Already in his first battle Alcibiades had achieved his hero Achilles’ goal, but he was not content to rest on his laurels.

In the 420s BC the Peloponnesian War between Athens’ empire and a coalition of states led by Sparta raged throughout mainland Greece. However, just as Alcibiades turned 30 (when he became eligible to hold command) a peace treaty was signed. For Alcibiades this seemed disastrous. Determined to dominate both the domestic and international stage, he had been relying on the opportunities that war provided.

His military record, persuasive leadership skills and charismatic personality gave him every chance of being elected general, a position to which (at least in the field) normal democratic rules did not apply, and which would potentially enable him to build a loyal support base. So, although he could not annul the treaty, he did all he could to undermine it, including spearheading proxy wars that threatened Sparta’s stability. At the same time, Alcibiades worked shamelessly to increase his personal kudos, carefully enhancing his standing in Athens, while tirelessly building an enviable network of international allies.

His greatest triumph came in 416 BC at the Olympic Games, a gathering that attracted competitors and spectators from across the Greek world (from Marseilles to Byzantium). Even before the first event people were talking of Alcibiades’ spectacular tent, a gift from friends at Ephesus, part residence, part reception room, a lavish headquarters twice the size of that of Athens’ official delegation, from which he could direct his well-planned charm offensive.

It was in the chariot race (where his ancestors already had an enviable track record) that Alcibiades meant to win his reputation for ‘being best’. Homeric Achilles owned horses that were immortal and endowed with human speech, and, although Alcibiades’ team was not quite in the same league, he did own enviable stud farms, and personally tracked down the best drivers and most streamlined chariots. Now he entered not just one but seven teams into the four-horse chariot race. Being able to enter one chariot was the sign of being a member of the super-rich; to enter seven...
was unheard of. The outcome was inevitable: first, second, third place – they all belonged to Alcibiades, while the other four chariots were no doubt put to good use obstructing his opponents. That evening, in an equally astonishing ‘first’, sponsored by eastern-Aegean friends and allies, Alcibiades entertained every single athlete and spectator (many thousand men) to a lavish banquet. There was no-one whose star blazed as brightly.

However, just as Homer’s Achilles earned his fellow generals’ opprobrium at Troy, so Alcibiades met stiff opposition in Athens. Chief among his enemies was Nicias, the man who engineered peace with Sparta, and soon the two were trading insults like Homeric heroes. The atmosphere in Athens became febrile. Somehow both men avoided ostracism but when, in the next year, 415 BC, Alcibiades proposed a military expedition to Sicily, Nicias did all he could to stop it, calling it a scheme dreamt up by ‘a young man in a hurry’ to acquire enough booty to pay off his racing debts. But Nicias’ hostility backfired. The Assembly voted to double the expedition’s size and appointed Nicias as Alcibiades’ co-commander. Then, just before they sailed, two scandals erupted.

One morning every herm (statue of Hermes) positioned at strategic sites throughout the city was found to have been smashed. Since Hermes, god of travellers, would protect the expedition as it sailed, this was profoundly distressing. A committee of enquiry was set up offering immunity from prosecution and rewards for information not just about this act of vandalism but any other sacrilege committed in the city. At a stroke, anyone wishing to make accusations of the most malicious kind had effectively been granted carte blanche. Alcibiades’ enemies jumped at the opportunity, accusing him of also having desecrated arguably the most sacred religious ceremony in all Attica, the Eleusinian Mysteries, a ritual
promising life after death. The atmosphere became incandescent, but rather than being allowed to stand trial and demonstrate his innocence (as he requested), Alcibiades was forced to sail to Sicily with the charge still hanging over him. When, weeks later, he was recalled, Alcibiades knew that his enemies would rig his trial and he would almost certainly face execution.

Unfairly treated, Alcibiades may have remembered the example of Achilles. Most of the Iliad concerns what happens when this hero is slighted by Agamemnon, his commander-in-chief. Concerned for his honour, and nursing his wrath, Achilles withdraws to his tent and asks his mother, the sea-nymph Thetis, to persuade Zeus to help the enemy, but: ‘hem in the Greeks by their ships’ sterns, by the salty sea, and there let them be slaughtered, so that they might all appreciate their king, and the son of Atreus, wide-ruling Agamemnon, might realise his folly in refusing to give honour to the best of all the Greeks.’ (There’s that idea again: ‘the best of all the Greeks’.)

So, perhaps Alcibiades’ response was unsurprising. Turning his back on his fellow generals, his army and his city, for four years he courted Athens’ enemies – the Spartans, and the Persians – while by their ships’ sterns and the salty sea the Athenians were slaughtered, first in Sicily (where the bungling, disease-ridden Nicias allowed the expedition to stagnate into disaster), then in Ionia (where Alcibiades helped lead a joint force of Persians and Spartans to a string of victories). In many ways these are years of romance and adventure, perhaps the most compelling in all Alcibiades’ career, his personal Iliad. In Achilles’ absence, the Greek camp was almost overrun by Hector and his Trojans; in Alcibiades’ absence, Athens was brought almost to her knees. With many men killed, an entire fleet lost in Sicily, and her democracy in such a tattered state that for troubled months an oligarchy was imposed in its place, she should have been easily defeated. But the reason
Athens survived and prospered for seven more years was in part thanks to Alcibiades. Just as the Greeks at Troy were forced to acknowledge their error and woo Achilles, the remaining Athenian fleet, worn down by defeat and alienated by the newly installed oligarchic government in the city, recalled Alcibiades. And at once their fortunes turned.

Whether it was because of his brilliant leadership or his morale-boosting charisma, Alcibiades almost immediately led his men to victory over the Spartans and their Persian allies, and for the next five years he blazed in glory through the Hellespont and Bosporus and Sea of Marmara. At last he returned to Athens in triumph, all charges dropped, where he was appointed strategos autocrator: Commander in Chief.

But even now the shadow of Achilles haunted him. In the Iliad, Achilles and the Greeks reach a compromise: rather than do battle himself, Achilles allows his friend, Patroclus, to don his armour and go out to fight. But Patroclus is killed, Achilles is consumed by self-reproach, and so begins the sequence of events that leads to his destruction.

When he returned east to confront the Spartans at Ephesus, Alcibiades, forced to raise funds for the continuing war effort, left his own close friend, Antiochus, in charge of the fleet. It was disastrous. Somehow at Ephesus Antiochus with a handful of ships managed to be intercepted by the Spartans. Antiochus was killed, and a significant number of his vessels were either holed or captured. Alcibiades’ enemies had a field day.

Again it seemed likely he would be recalled to stand trial. Again he chose to escape, this time to Thrace, where he already had a private army and considerable estates. But with the fall of Athens in 404 BC, even Thrace became unsafe. Alcibiades fled back to Persia, but, as he waited for paperwork to let him travel on the Royal Road east to Susa, his house was surrounded and set on fire. While comrades tried to douse the flames, Alcibiades wrapped a cloak around his left arm and, clutching a dagger, ran into the night to face a hail of missiles, falling in the dust of Anatolia even as Achilles fell at Troy, an arrow lodged deep in his heel.

Today Alcibiades can seem an anomaly, an aristocrat with Homeric pretensions living in an age of people power, for some a roguish hero, for others an unscrupulous traitor. Yet he was both the product and (in part) the personification of his times. After his death Athens rose again, in some respects a different city (albeit one whose people could still choose to expunge painful memories by executing Alcibiades’ great mentor, Socrates).

Not everything was changed, though. A generation or so later, far to the north in Macedon, another young man would drink deep from the potent Homeric dream-pool, sleep with the Iliad beneath his pillow, and vow ‘always to be best’.

Indeed, Alexander the Great’s court sculptors constantly portrayed him with his head slightly angled to one side in the stance they knew that Alcibiades once made his own. And when, shortly after Alexander’s death, the Romans were instructed by the Delphic oracle to erect a statue in their Forum of the bravest Greek, they did not choose the Macedonian; they chose Alcibiades.

**Nemesis: Alcibiades and the Fall of Athens** by David Stuttard is published by Harvard University Press, in hardback, at £21.95.
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BOOKREVIEWS

Civilisations: How Do We Look/The Eye of Faith
Mary Beard
Profile Books
240pp, 94 colour illustrations
Hardback, £15

Nearly 50 years since it was first broadcast, Kenneth Clark’s 1969 exploration of the greats of western European art, Civilisation, still stands out as an exemplary television arts documentary and still provokes debate. Picking up the mantle, Mary Beard has joined Simon Schama and David Olusoga in the BBC’s recent follow-up Civilisations, and her two episodes form the basis of this engaging companion book on the human and divine in the art of diverse cultures around the world from prehistory to the present.

A Classicist, Cambridge don and now the presenter of BBC Two’s Front Row Late, Beard combines her learned spirit with her usual lively style as she delivers into some big questions in what is both a light read and a book chock full of interesting examples.

The first part of the splendidly illustrated book – How do we look? – tackles the human form in art, starting and ending with the Olmec civilisation in Mexico. Truly colossal stones heads carved some 3000 years ago and weighing up to 20 tons are, argues Beard, evidence that art has always ‘been about us’. With no written records left by the Olmec, works like these are what we have to go on to establish a sense of their civilisation, though in this case there has been plenty of debate over whether the Olmec style represents a group of people with a shared identity.

How we look at their creations is, here in western Europe, ultimately influenced by our familiarity with or even reliance on Graeco-Roman art. The basalt figure known as the Olmec ‘wrestler’, for instance, is widely praised for its naturalism in its depiction of the human form in varied works. This can participation in the religious experience. For example, the modern-day, award-winning Sancaklar mosque in Istanbul blends into its landscape and evokes the cave of Hira near Mecca, where Muhammed received the first revelation. To the untrained eye, the Buddhist paintings at the Ajanta caves, India, lack order, but this apparent muddle involves viewers in a more active religious engagement as they focus on and interpret the images, seeking their own truths.

With discussions of myriad sacred works in mind, when it comes to the overarching question of what civilisation is, Beard’s answer is: ‘little more than an act of faith’. 

Lucia Marchini

A Little History of Archaeology
Brian Fagan
Yale University Press
277pp, black & white illustrations by Joe McLaren
Hardback, £14.99

In 1935 a 26-year-old Viennese scholar of art history was asked to write a short history of the world for younger readers. Ernst Gombrich was hard-up and so accepted the challenge. In a mere six weeks he completed his book. It is now available in 25 languages, though it did not appear in English until 2005, revised and published as A Little History of the World.

Yale University Press realised that they were onto a winner: straightforward, well-written introductions to important subjects in an attractive format, a bold cover and an evocative, engraved cartouche heading each of the 40 brief chapters. If ‘younger readers’ have an increasingly short attention span (which I doubt; my three young grandchidren are capable of obsessing endlessly about the Titanic, dinosaurs and Harry Potter) then delivering the subject in a digestible short story format is a great idea.

Thus far Yale University Press has delivered ‘Little Histories’ of Philosophy, Science, Literature, Religion and Economics, all by authors who, like Gombrich, know how to deliver big subjects, tread lightly and write like human beings for other human beings – not to impress their fellow academics.

So, for the latest contribution, A Little History of Archaeology, Brian Fagan is the ideal author. An Anglo-American emeritus professor at the University of California, he is perhaps the most prolific writer of archaeological books in the world. Fagan’s books are always up-to-date syntheses for a general audience, which of course includes many archaeologists. He has enormous breadth of knowledge. The world is his site. And this shows in the scope of his A Little History of Archaeology.

Inevitably he begins with the heroic days of ‘backward-looking curiosity’ from the Rosetta Stone dug up by Napoleon’s soldiers while constructing defences in the Nile Delta in 1799 to circus strongman and tomb-raider Giovanni Belzoni who shifted the huge statue of Rameses II from the banks of the River Nile. It joined the Rosetta Stone in the British Museum, thanks to British imperial superiority after the defeat of Napoleon. Nevertheless, it was the Frenchman Jean-François Champollion who, using brains rather than brawn, unlocked the code to Egyptian hieroglyphs and illuminated a lost civilisation.

Archaeologists need a lot of determination, persistence and good powers of observation. They also need luck. Austen Henry Layard had it in spades. He discovered two palaces

Minerva
in one day at Nimrud. Their spectacular carved friezes now occupy my favourite gallery in the British Museum, where Assyrian bowmen mounted in chariots can be seen swept along by powerful horses. Lions and human victims are dust beneath their chariot wheels. These Assyrians wore the most terrifying beards in the whole of human history.

Of course ‘new’ civilisations also appeared in the New World, as Fagan explains: the Maya were rescued from historical oblivion and sophisticated societies, such as the Mississippi Mound Builders and the Pueblo people, exposed the racist attitudes of Europeans to the native peoples of the Americas as ignorant nonsense.

In the mid-19th century archaeologists broke the time barrier, discovering the stone tools of early humans alongside the remains of extinct animals. Then the humans and their early cave art appeared. Via the wonders of Crete, Babylon, Zimbabwe, Mohenjo-daro and Teotihuacan Fagan takes his reader through archaeology’s advances – the scientific study of chronology, the systematic surveys of landscapes, the anthropological observation of peoples such as the Shoshone – survivors in a harsh environment. Thanks to much more precise chronologies, an appreciation of the capabilities of pre-industrial communities, and changing environments, archaeologists now provide a clearer understanding of how humans have coped with the world – for better or worse.

This little book shows us that we are an energetic, creative and imaginative species – but we also need to be constantly on guard for the unintended consequences of our actions. A Little History of Archaeology, which takes us a long way, is ideal for time-travellers of all ages.

David Miles

**Rome: A History in Seven Sackings**

**Matthew Kneale**

Atlantic Books

417pp, 39 colour and 21 black & white illustrations, 7 maps

Hardback, £20

The history of Rome is a lengthy affair and not without incident – so tackling it can be a challenge for author and reader alike. Long-time Roman resident Matthew Kneale has adopted an imaginative approach to the subject in his new book by focusing on seven invasions of the city, from its sacking by the Goths in 387 BC through to the Nazi occupation of 1943–44. This strategy enables Kneale to present the history of the city in a variety of epochs and at the terrible and dramatic moments in its long life. As an award-winning novelist, he brings all his narrative power to the task and succeeds in providing a pacy, enthralling work that carries the reader along on a tide of local and European history and captivating anecdotes.

For each episode, Kneale presents the political environment that provided the backdrop and cause of the city’s woes. A colourful cast of popes, politicians and greedy emperors populate the pages, and the account of their vaulting ambitions and frequent treachery is often astounding. He handles all this with aplomb but in each episode he also chronicles the appearance and social life of Rome at the time. Here, the city comes to life – a vivid, pulsating mix of its elite and its vagrants, its cardinals, prostitutes and pilgrims, all crowding in upon one another and enduring the fate thrust upon them. The tales of the invasions themselves – some more terrible than others – which he then relates are at times numbing. In the worst of them we see babies being thrown from windows and priests being butchered on church altars. Little wonder that Michelangelo, who long made Rome his home and who escaped the awful sacking of 1597, presented us with such an arresting spectre of human suffering in his *Last Judgment* in the Sistine Chapel, painted after his return.

But there is also much gallantry to be admired, too, from Garibaldi marching through the streets at the head of his defending army, to the tales of the many local people who hid Roman Jews from the Nazis when they arrived in 1943.

Each chapter has its own flavour: Rome was a very distant city each time it is examined, from the primitive town of 387 BC to Mussolini’s grandly refashioned city, much of which survives today. While there is a considerable amount history in the interim periods that we do not encounter, what we are given is more than thrilling.

The endurance of the Romans is to be admired. It is truly their spirit of survival that seems eternal. Encapsulating it nicely is their response to the latest threat – that of ISIS who, in 2015, darkly announced its intention to invade the city. ‘Let us know when you’ll get here and how many you’ll be so we can put the pasta on,’ the Romans replied.

Diana Bentley

**Greek Sanctuaries and Temple Architecture: An Introduction**

**Mary Emerson**

Bloomsbury

296pp, 113 black & white illustrations

Paperback, £18.99

With its neat columns and striking pediments, the temple is an icon of Greek civilisation and one that continues to influence buildings around the world. Drawing upon an ample body of evidence, including standing remains, museum collections and ancient accounts, as well as recent scholarship, Mary Emerson guides the reader through the various features that make up these ancient architectural gems and the broader sanctuaries in which they sit. We are introduced to the graceful curve of the columns (the *entasis*), and other refinements employed to avoid straight lines; to the different types of marble used; and – with an all-important eye on function as well as form – to the various activities that went on in these special spaces.

Now in its second edition, this book presents some of the most important Greek sanctuaries not merely as ruins, but as they were in their heyday. A new feature is Emerson’s discussion of architectural sculpture, particularly as it relates to a building as a whole and not as a separate artefact. Although these works today appear to be made of unadulterated pale stone, it is important to remember they were once painted in vivid colour, enhancing their visibility at long range. Certain trends, such as the balanced
BOOKREVIEWS

but dramatic composition of a pediment that makes political allusions and has been designed to be seen from afar, are evident in early sites, such as the archaic temple of Artemis on Corfu.

Emerson goes through some of the most well-known sanctuaries in Greece, bringing them to life through explanations of their structures. At Olympia, home to the famous games, we tour the early archaic temple of Hera (outdated even when it was built), Onomaoa’s pillar, the ash altar and the Classical temple of Zeus, with a sculptural programme covering the whole sanctuary and proclaiming the importance of the site. At Delphi, the seat of the celebrated oracle, the landscape plays an important part in the special, sacred nature of the place.

The lofty, striking setting of the acropolis in the centre of Athens similarly gives added prominence to the temples there. Much attention is, of course, given to the majestic Parthenon and its surroundings and, although there are a number of similarities between Greek temples, their differences are part of what make them so interesting, as Emerson’s comparison of the Parthenon and the temple of Zeus in Olympia clearly illustrates. One altogether different building on the acropolis is the enigmatic Erechtheion with its unique caryatid porch and this, too, is well described.

Further sections in this edition examine temples at Poseidonia (Paestum, Italy) and Akragas (Agrigento, Sicily), which were constructed around the same time as the Greek mainland masterpieces. They offer a chance to see what local innovations took place on distant shores, as well as touching on an aspect important to understanding the Greek world: colonisation.

This book is a substantial and effective introduction for those wishing to study Greek temples for the first time; it leaves the reader well placed to pursue more in-depth scholarship and provides a cornerstone for understanding Neoclassical and subsequent architectural styles.

Lucia Marchini

Cleopatra: Fact and Fiction

Barbara Watterson

Amberley Publishing

304 pp, 33 colour and 9 black & white illustrations

Hardback, £20

Cleopatra was a legend even in her own time, and the drama of her life and tragic end have proved irresistibly fascinating for successive generations and provided an endless source of inspiration for artists, writers and film-makers.

Cleopatra VII was the last member of the Ptolemaic dynasty, founded by Ptolemy I Soter, the friend and general of Alexander the Great, which ruled Egypt for nearly three centuries. Following Alexander’s directions, Ptolemy began the construction of Alexandria on the western reaches of the Nile Delta and it soon became one of the greatest cities of antiquity. A centre of learning and culture, it was where Cleopatra’s tumultuous life was largely played out and it was a fitting home for the most mesmerising of queens.

Barbara Watterson, author and freelance lecturer in Egyptology, provides us with a concise history of the Ptolemies, their often murderous ambitions and troubling inclinations, including a penchant for marrying their close relatives and dispatching those who threatened them. A sure sense of self and a ruthless streak were required to survive in the family, and from a young age Cleopatra displayed both in large measure. But the menace of her siblings was not her only challenge. By the time of her birth in about 69 BC, Egypt was under the shadow of Rome and her life was spent attempting to retain her power and navigate her way through Rome’s deadly political upheavals until the wily Octavian triumphed.

Cleopatra’s story, which is simply and clearly told here, never ceases to amaze. Her allure is said to have resided in her acute wit and intelligence – she spoke many languages – and her charm rather than in her physical appearance. This certainly rings true considering that the central drama of her life was her relationships with two of the mightiest Romans – Julius Caesar and Mark Antony – both of whom she held in her thrall. Caesar took her to Rome where she held court in his villa and shocked the locals; Mark Antony gambled everything to remain with her.

Little wonder, then, that the Romans feared and denigrated her as a dangerous, decadent seducer. Little wonder, too, that her life has prompted such a wealth of creative work, from her dazzling portrayal by Shakespeare to Michelangelo’s haunting portrait of her, wreathed in a serpent.

Watterson chronicles the depictions of Cleopatra in art and drama that have helped shape our perceptions of her, and she provides plenty of entertaining material. The movie industry also mined her story, from the first film about her in 1910, to the legendary 1963 film, starring Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton, and the 1964 comedy Carry on Cleo. So, what is her allure?

In the words of her maid Charmian in Shakespeare’s play, she is ‘a lass unparalleled’, a woman who threw herself headlong into the mighty frays that surrounded her, and she lived life on a grand scale in every sense. She entertained many people in her brief, fiery life, choosing suicide at the age of 39. And she continues to entertains us.

Diana Bentley

Empowering Communities through Archaeology and Heritage: The Role of Local Governance in Economic Development

Peter G Gould

Bloomsbury

182pp, 16 black & white illustrations

Hardback, £70

This is a long title for quite a small book, which is based on a PhD thesis—and it shows. First, PhD students demonstrate their academic credentials by citing everything they have ever read. This means that the unfortunate reader is faced with a path rocky with references. In fact, if you are interested in the subject matter (and why else would you tackle this book?) then the bibliography is useful. But there are better ways to deliver it than the hiccuping Harvard System.

Secondly, PhD students show they have climbed the peaks of intellectual achievement by giving us a summary of their theoretical gurus. In this case the introduction covers economics and governance. Inevitably, perhaps, it includes sentences such as ‘... some scholars have proposed that multilevel, or polycentric, governance systems be viewed as highly interactive complex adaptive systems (CAS)’. If your brain has gone numb at this point, then this book is not for you.

So who is it for? As the text is littered with acronyms (a prize to whoever can translate LCCD or RCT), it suggests that its target audience includes consultants, bureaucrats and experts. But such creatures get quite short shrift from the author who claims that ‘expert-led, top-down models (of heritage management) fail with regularity’. Instead he seems to prefer a bottom-up grass-roots approach. ‘A successful heritage project depends upon local knowledge, involving local people

Minerva July/August 2018
who understand their environment and culture’. Well no one could disagree with that, could they? However, both approaches can deliver successes and failures. In practice, projects need to be approached from both directions and, in spite of the author’s respect for local people, he does not seem to be writing for them.

Peter Gould illustrates success with four projects: Raqchi, Peru, the Maya Centre Women’s Group, Belize, the Burren Centre, Ireland and a cluster of heritage sites in the Val di Cornia Region on the Etruscan coast of Italy, which he says is ‘on the Atlantic coastline’... I am sure he knows better.

The case studies are the most interesting part of the book. The problem is that they are relatively small projects scattered across four countries. The local conditions are so varied that it is difficult to generalise from them. The devil is in the detail. I have worked on projects in four continents – some rich and highly developed. In others there were obstacles: dreadful communications, corrupt officials, lack of security, widespread illiteracy and undrinkable water. It was certainly true that everywhere I learned more from the locals than they learned from me.

Often we employed an economist who would accumulate and analyse data from dozens of comparable projects – that means those in similar political, cultural and environmental conditions. Four cases spread across the world really does not hack it. The main causes of failure are over-optimistic visitor estimates and the unreliability of long-term funding. Witness some Lottery projects in the UK.

There are the makings of an interesting book here, but we need to hear the voices of the people involved – in other words, more inspiration and experience and less jargon. PhD theses are an academic hurdle but they rarely make good reading.

David Miles

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**CLASSICAL CONUNDRUMS**

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

Can you guess the correct definition from the following three options for:

1) kerdos (Homeric Greek)
   A) proud, defiant
   B) a swarm of bees
   C) good counsel

2) sacellum (Latin)
   A) a precious stone, an ornament, a jewel
   B) a gift given to a guest
   C) a small, unroofed sanctuary, a chapel

3) probasanidzo (Ancient Greek)
   A) to torture before
   B) to prefer, to give advantage to
   C) to proceed, to go forwards

4) sabulo (Latin)
   A) to cry in a whining or whimpering fashion
   B) to amuse oneself
   C) coarse sand, ballast

5) kolokunthias (Ancient Greek)
   A) made from pumpkins
   B) when moulting (of a fowl)
   C) uncomfortable, bothered, uneasy

6) terebra (Latin)
   A) a freckle, a pimple
   B) darkness
   C) a borer, a gimlet

7) notophoros (Ancient Greek)
   A) pregnant
   B) carrying on the back
   C) a pathway up to a steep hill

8) pyropolis (Latin)
   A) a metallic mixture, gold-bronze, gold
   B) fiery
   C) a swallow

9) mekades (Homeric Greek)
   A) lacking energy
   B) rough, blunt, unceremonious
   C) bleating (of she-goats)

10) tragula (Latin)
    A) a small cavity in a rock
    B) a kind of javelin or dart
    C) a baby goat

11) koloboo (Ancient Greek)
    A) to exclaim
    B) to dock, curtail, shorten
    C) to settle (of a bird)

12) putator (Latin)
    A) a pruner, a dresser
    B) an assessor
    C) a questioner

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**ANSWERS**

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.
UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
EDINBURGH
Emil Nolde: Colour is Life
The German Expressionist Emil Nolde (1867–1956) was the single figure most heavily featured in the Degenerate Art exhibition of 1937 in Munich, where 33 of his works were displayed. Although he had joined the Nazi party, they still confiscated more than 1000 of his paintings. So, unable to work as a professional artist, he created his 'unpainted pictures', in the form of vibrant watercolours. This show surveys Nolde’s career through these watercolours. This exhibition – part of a programme of research and exhibitions that will run until 2020, it explores the influence of Sickert on him and Bomberg's interest in reworking portraits, and also his graphic art for 'little magazines' reveal both the role as a war artist. Landscapes and portraits, and also his graphic art for 'little magazines' reveal both the influence of Sickert on him and Bomberg's interest in reworking compositions.
Ben Uri Gallery
+44 (0)20 7604 3991
(www.benuri.org.uk)
From 21 June to 16 September 2018.

LONDON
Bomberg
One of the Whitechapel Boys and a pupil of Walter Sickert, David Bomberg (1890–1957) explored his Polish-Jewish heritage and Yiddish culture in his work. This exhibition looks at Bomberg's contribution to pre-war British Modernism and his role as a war artist. Landscapes and portraits, and also his graphic art for 'little magazines' reveal both the influence of Sickert on him and Bomberg's interest in reworking compositions.
Ben Uri Gallery
+44 (0)20 7604 3991
(www.benuri.org.uk)
From 21 June to 16 September 2018.

UNITED KINGDOM
GRASMERE, Cumbria
In Search of Mary Shelley: The Girl who wrote Frankenstein
In celebration of 100 years of votes for women and the bicentenary of the publication of Frankenstein, this exhibition – part of a programme named 'Women Behind the Words' – takes a closer look at the young author, Mary Shelley, whose novel was published when she was only 20. Curated by poet and Shelley biographer Fiona Sampson, the exhibition delves into the world of radical new ideas that framed the writer’s upbringing and thinking.
Wordsworth Trust
+44(0)15394 35544
(www.wordsworth.org.uk)
Until 27 August 2018.

LIVERPOOL
Beautiful world, where are you?
In the 10th Liverpool Biennial, over 40 artists from 22 countries grapple with social, environmental and political uncertainty in the world today – as evoked by the words of the 18th-century German poet Friedrich Schiller: ‘Beautiful world, where are you?’ Artist Mohamed Bourouissa showcases an Algerian-inspired ‘healing’ garden, while Dale Harding, a descendant of the Bidjara, Ghungalu and Garingbal peoples of Australia, uses wall paintings to engage with the untold histories of his communities, as in Ngaya boonda yiinda nayi jooldgoogoog I carry you in my heart, 2016 (below).
Venues across Liverpool
+44 (0)151 709 7444
(www.biennial.com)
From 14 July to 28 October 2018.

SUPER STATION E17
Asterix in Britain: The Life and Work of René Goscinny
The best-loved fictional Gaul has graced comic-books since 1959. Through original scripts, sketches, storyboards and photographs this exhibition tells the story of René
Minervu July/August 2018
challenging period are on show by artists such as William Orpen, Otto Dix, Stanley Spencer, Winifred Knights and Hannah Höch.

Tate Britain +44 (0)20 7887 8888
(www.tate.org.uk)
Until 16 September 2018.

Shape of Light: 100 Years of Photography and Abstract Art

In 1960, MoMA hosted a milestone photography exhibition titled The Sense of Abstraction. Now, nearly 60 years on, Tate Modern picks up the thread and examines the role of photography in abstract art from the 1910s through to the present, featuring a series by Man Ray (1890–1976) on display for the first time since the MoMA show. The varied works exhibited reflect how techniques in both painting and photography have developed over the decades. Among them are works by the American Imogen Cunningham (1883–1976), who sought abstraction from the human body in Triangle, 1928 (above), and Marta Hoepfner (1912–2000),

Goscinny, the writer who co-created the supremely witty Asterix series with the illustrator Albert Uderzo.

The Jewish Museum +44 (0)20 7284 7384
(www.jewishmuseum.org.uk)
Until 30 September 2018.

Michael Jackson: On the Wall
With more than a billion records sold and still rising, nearly a decade after his death, the American superstar Michael Jackson has gained iconic status. His videos, choreography and individual style have all helped secure his legacy, shown in this exhibition. Many artists were drawn to Jackson including: Andy Warhol, who made a portrait of Jackson in 1984 (below), Grayson Perry, David LaChapelle, Rita Ackermann, Louise Lawler and Catherine Opie, whose works are featured in this show.

National Portrait Gallery +44 (0)20 7306 0055
(www.npg.org.uk)
Until 21 October 2018.

First Women UK
For the centenary of the Representation of the People Act, key pioneering women take centre stage in this photographic exhibition. Portraits of 100 contemporary women show their achievements in politics, music, sport and the military, including Olympic boxer Nicola Adams, musician Suzi Quatro, and poker player and presenter Victoria Coren-Mitchell.

Royal College of Arts
(www.1stwomenuk.co.uk)
From 20 July to 22 August 2018.

The Return of the Past:
Postmodernism in British Architecture
Rejecting Modernism and with a playful take on past styles, early Post-modernism was an inventive moment in British architecture. Drawings, models, replicas and fragments of buildings showcase the works of Post-modernist architects such as Terry Farrell, Jeremy Dixon and John Outram.

Sir John Soane's Museum + 44 (0)20 7405 2107
(www.soane.org)
Until 27 August 2018.

Prince and Patron
As the Prince of Wales will soon turn 70, the summer opening of the State Rooms at Buckingham Palace will feature a celebratory display of more than 100 works chosen by him. This varied selection includes his favourites from among the Royal Collection – such as Johan Joseph Zoffany’s painting The Tribuna of the Uffizi, 1772–77, and Napoleon’s felt and silk cloak (left). There are also pieces from his personal collection, such as a portrait of the Queen by Michael Noakes, as well as works by young artists from The Royal Drawing School and The Prince’s School of Traditional Arts, and also Turquoise Mountain, an organisation that promotes sustainable urban regeneration and the revival of traditional crafts in Afghanistan, Myanmar and the Middle East.

State Rooms, Buckingham Palace +44 (0)20 7766 7300
(www.royalcollection.org.uk)
From 21 July to 30 September 2018.

Aftermath: Art in the Wake of World War One
When the First World War ended, 100 years ago, it left its mark on art in Britain, Germany and France. Works created between 1916 and 1932 reflect how artists reacted to the physical and psychological scars of the conflict across European society, and how they engaged with themes such as remembrance and rebuilding, as in Christopher Nevinson’s Ypres After the First Bombardment, 1916 (below). More than 150 works from this
from Germany, who responded
directly to the abstract painter in
Homage to Kandinsky, 1937 (above).

Tate Modern
+44 (0)20 7887 8888
(www.tate.org.uk)
Until 14 October 2018.

The Future Starts Here
This exhibition delves into the
emerging technologies and
pioneering designs that will
transform our homes, cities and the
environment of the future. The
projects include: a global seed-bank
to preserve plant species in case of
an ecological or other disaster; a
shirt that can charge a smartphone
and Protei (below) which is an
autonomous sailing ship that helps
in the cleaning up of oil spills.

V&A
+44 (0)20 7942 2000
(www.vam.ac.uk)
Until 4 November 2018.

the artist. Spanning El-Salahi’s
career, this exhibition features his
paintings, such as The Tree, 2008
(above), drawings, and recent
sculptural works that bear a strong
connection to the artistic traditions
of Sudan.

Ashmolean Museum
+44 (0)1865 278000
(www.ashmolean.org)
Until 2 September 2018.

WADDESDON
Michael Eden: Form & Transform
Historical objects from Waddesdon's
remarkable collection are given a
new lease of life by Michael Eden
as he reinterprets them using digital
technology. His 25 new works
address the relationship between
different styles over time, and the
practice of imitating materials that
he demonstrates in a quasi-Classical
manner in After Le Lorrain, 2018
detail, below)

Coach House Gallery
Waddesdon Manor
+44 (0)1296 820414
(www.waddesdon.org.uk/michael-eden)
Until 21 October 2018.

WOODSTOCK
Yves Klein
Known for inventing the
wonderful ultramarine
pigment International
Klein Blue, work by
Yves Klein (1928–1962)
is always eye-catching, as
this exhibition of more
than 50 pieces shows. The
French artist embraced
experimentation, and
his influence is felt on
minimalism, conceptual
and performance art.

Blenheim Palace
+44 (0)1993 810530
(www.blenheimpalace.com)
From 18 July to 7 October 2018.

UNITED STATES
CINCINNATI, Ohio
Terracotta Army: Legacy of the
First Emperor of China
In 1974 farmers digging a well in
Shaanxi province, China, uncovered
bronze arrows and fragments of
pottery that led the way to one of
archaeology's greatest discoveries:
the so-called Terracotta Army,
8000 life-size figures of soldiers,
courtiers, acrobats and horses
buried in an enormous mausoleum
complex. Stunning works from
collections in China tell the story
of the remarkable tomb of Qin Shi
Huang (259–210 BC), the First
Emperor, and his legacy, and
explore the relationship between
the Qin dynasty and other groups
in the region

Cincinnati Art Museum
+1 277 472-4226
(www.cincinnati.org)
Until 12 August 2018.

LOS ANGELES, California
In Focus: Expressions
In the early days of photography,
lengthy exposure times meant

© ESTATE MARTA HOEPFFNER
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15/06/2018   11:22
that smiling was not the norm when posing for the camera. This all changed in the 1880s when faster film and hand-held cameras came into use, and a beaming smile was soon championed by advertisers as a clear sign of customer satisfaction. As well as tracing how photography can capture human expressions, be they staged, candidly caught in the moment or sometimes open to (mis)interpretation, this exhibition considers the role of the mask in images and physiognomy.

J Paul Getty Museum
+1 310 440 7300
(www.getty.edu)
Until 7 October 2018.

MINNEAPOLIS, Minnesota
Horse Nation of the Očhéthi Sakowin
Horses have played an important role in societies across the world, and they continue to be revered by the Dakhota, Nakota, and Lakota people – known as the Očhéthi Sakowin (Seven Council Fires) – who regard them as relatives and an essential part of the community, as well as their allies in battle or in hunting. Paintings, textiles, film and beadwork by leading contemporary Native American artists, such as Preston Neal’s Horse with Yankton Sioux Mask, 2016 (below), show how this noble animal can influence history, spirituality and culture.

Minneapolis Institute of Art
+1 888 642 2787
(new.arts mia.org)
Until 3 February 2019.

NEW YORK, New York
With a focus on how the female body can be used powerfully and creatively to express political and social criticism in Latin America at a time when many women artists were working under harsh conditions, paintings, sculpture, photography, video and performance pieces have been brought together to bear witness to these remarkable women and their contributions to a period of conceptual and aesthetic experimentation. The diverse range of art on display includes work by Colombian sculptor Feliza Bursztyn (1933–82), Cuban-born abstract painter Zilia Sánchez (b 1926), Peruvian composer and choreographer Victoria Santa Cruz (1922–2014), and Chicana graphic artist Ester Hernández (b 1944).

Brooklyn Museum
+1 718 638 5000
(www.brooklynmuseum.org)
Until 22 July 2018.

Devotion to Drawing: The Karen B Cohen Collection of Eugène Delacroix
Eugène Delacroix (1798–1863) is best known for his large-scale French Romantic paintings that recreate historic scenes, but his skill and output as a draughtsman is also a significant part of his work. More than 100 works on paper – selected from the Karen B Cohen collection that was gifted to the Met – include finished watercolours, sketchbooks, copies after Old Master prints and preparatory drawings for his celebrated paintings, such as Crouching Tiger, 1839 (below). All these are evidence of his commitment to reaching the full expressive potential of his craft.

Metropolitan Museum of Art
+1 212 535 7710
(www.met museum.org)
From 17 July to 12 November 2018.

SAN FRANCISCO, California
Truth and Beauty: The Pre-Raphaelites and the Old Masters
Edward Burne-Jones, who designed the tapestry Pomona (above), joined Dante Gabriel Rosetti, William Holman Hunt and John Everett Millais to form the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in 1848. This was a rebellion against the aesthetic values of the Royal Academy and its first president Sir Joshua Reynolds. As the name suggests the Pre-Raphaelites looked for inspiration before the time of Raphael, in the masterpieces of medieval and Renaissance art for inspiration. Work by Italian Old Masters such as Fra Angelico, Botticelli (who was ‘rediscovered’ in England in the 19th century), as well as Raphael, and Veronese will be displayed alongside the sumptuous 19th-century works they influenced. The angular postures, symbolic detail and rich colour palettes of the Pre-Raphaelites also evoke early Netherlandish art, including panels by Van Eyck and Hans Memling, which Rossetti and Holman Hunt admired in Bruges in 1849.

Legion of Honor
+1 415 750 3600
(legionofhonor.famsf.org)
Until 30 September 2018.

WASHINGTON DC
The Prince and the Shah: Royal Portraits from Qajar Iran
Portraiture has long been used by the ruling elite to convey power, wealth and taste. In Persia (Iran) from 1779–1925, the Qajar dynasty commissioned images of themselves in monumental oil paintings, photographs and scaled lacquer works. These 19th- and early 20th-century portraits reveal a confluence of traditional Persian conventions and European elements during a period when the country was undergoing major political, social, and cultural transformations.

Arthur M Sackler Gallery
+1 202 633 1000
(www.freersackler.si.edu)
Until 5 August 2018.

FRANCE

NICE
Matisse and Picasso: The Comedy of the Model
As part of Picasso-Méditerranée (an international programme of events, running from 2017 to 2019, to show...
CALENDAR

Picasso’s Mediterranean works) the Musée Matisse in Nice is staging an exhibition that explores the dialogue between these two rival artists, who were both drawn to the city’s sunny coastal setting and the landscape around it in the 1940s. With a focus on the relationship between the artists and their models, through paintings, sculptures and their graphic works, together with letters, photographs of their studios and other archival material, this show draws attention to both the similarities and differences between Picasso and Matisse and their creative competitiveness.

Musée Matisse de Nice
+33 4 93 81 08 08
(www.musee-matisse-nice.org)
Until 29 September 2018.

PARIS
Le Monde vu d’Asie
Beautiful Asian cartographical works offer a different perspective of the world through the centuries. Paintings, prints, manuscripts, porcelian, jewellery and ivory from the 15th to the 20th centuries invite visitors to consider a geography that is not Eurocentric. Cosmographies, pilgrimages and spiritual images include such mythical places as Mount Meru, the sacred mountain at the centre of the Hindu universe, the Anavatapta Lake, which is the heart of the Buddhist world, and the Kanlun Mountains, where Chinese gods reside. These works reveal exchanges between the regions in Asia, and with Europe, and different attitudes towards colonisation, trade and globalisation.

Musée National des Arts Asiatiques – Guimet
+33 1 56 52 53 00
(www.guimet.fr)
Until 10 September 2018.

In Society: Pastels in the Louvre from the 17th and 18th centuries
A long-term project has restored and researched the Louvre’s collection of exceptionally fragile pastel works from the 17th and 18th centuries. Acknowledging this research, more than 120 of the pastels, mainly from the heyday of the medium in the 18th century, will be on display. Some of the pieces have an interesting history – they were plundered during the Second World War, for example, and then entrusted to the Louvre in 1949. These pastels are not merely colourfull preparatory studies, but finished art works in their own right, many still with their original frame and glass. Highlights from France include Maurice Quentin de La Tour’s 1748 portrait of the Marquise de Pompadour and Simon Bernard Lenoir’s 1767 portrait of the actor Henri Louis Cain, known as Lekain (above). Reflecting the international aspect of the medium, works by Rosalba Carriera in Venice, as Jean-Etienne Liotard in Geneva and John Russell in London are on show.

Louvre
+33 1 40 20 50 50
(www.louvre.fr)
Until 10 September 2018.

Diego Giacometti at the Musée Picasso
When the Musée National Picasso -Paris opened its doors at the Hôtel Salé in October 1985, as well as masterpieces by Picasso, it also presented a special commission by Giacometti. The last before his death in July 1985, it encompasses some 50 exclusively created pieces of furniture: benches, chairs, tables and lamps. The exhibition tells the story of the bronze and resin objects, and how they reflect the Swiss artist’s interest in botany and ancient Greek and Etruscan sources, with which, he said, he aimed to create ‘a geometry in the air’.

Musée National Picasso-Paris
+33 1 85 56 00 36
(www.museePicasso-paris.fr)
Until 4 November 2018.

NETHERLANDS
Leiden
200 Years Young
In 1818, Caspar Reuven was appointed the world’s first Professor of Archaeology at the University of Leiden. As well as doing research, he was asked by William I to put together an ‘archaeological cabinet’ and so it was that the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden (National Museum of Antiquities) was born. Now celebrating its 200th year, this jubilee exhibition presents a vast and varied selection of objects from the museum’s collection, as well as those that have now moved on to other museums. These artefacts come from Ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome and the Near East, including a 6th-century BC kouros from Cyprus (above right) and from archaeological finds in the Netherlands from digs, conducted by the museum since 1827, such as the prehistoric Ommerzansche Sword, named after the town near which it was found.

Rijksmuseum van Oudheden
+31 071 5163 163
(www.rmo.nl)
Until 2 September 2018.

SPAN
Bilbao
Chagall: The Breakthrough Years, 1911–1919
Like many artists, Marc Chagall (1887–1995) was drawn to Paris, where he experimented with colour, abstract and geometric form, and movement. He left Russia, arrived in the French capital in 1911 and stayed for three years. It had a lasting impact on him and he went on to combine traditional aspects of Russian folk art with progressive stylistic elements from the Parisian avant-garde, as more than 80 of his early paintings and drawings here reveal. His Paris sojourn was cut short when war broke out, preventing his return, when he was in Russia attending his sister’s wedding. His frustration is symbolised in The Clock, 1914 (below). Subsequent works show him soul-searching, through self-portraits, the horrors of war and the new Soviet Union ushered in by the October Revolution.

Guggenheim Museum
+34 944 35 90 80
(www.guggenheim-bilbao.eus)
Until 2 September 2018.

Minerva
July/August 2018
EVENTS

UNITED KINGDOM
CRANBORNE
The Fate We Bring Ourselves: Greek Myths Unleashed
Ancient Greek myths are full of personality clashes, plots, jealousies, intriguing liaisons, scheming and power struggles. Their stories have an enduring appeal but, in this Crick Crack Club event at the Earthouse, three familiar legends are cast in a new light, as renowned storyteller Ben Haggarty presents remixed, expanded and explicit versions based on his extensive research.

18 August
Cranborne Earthouse
crickcrackclub.com/
earthousecranborne

LONDON
Displaying Egypt
Since the British Museum first opened in 1759, its displays of Egyptian artefacts have attracted numerous visitors. But how should Egypt, of all periods, be represented in the museum in the future and at other institutions across the world? This year, the British Museum’s annual Egyptological colloquium brings together international experts, including curators, archaeologists, museologists and historians, who will present papers on themes related to displaying Egyptian art. These include the influence of collecting, acquisition histories, the relationship with research and with artefacts in store, and also the impact of visual and design trends.

19–20 July
British Museum
www.britishmuseum.org/whats_on/events_calendar/events

Festival of Ideas
The Royal Academy of Arts is holding its first Festival of Ideas, with 10 days of talks and other events addressing creativity, culture and critical thinking planned for September. Many of the talks will take place in the Benjamin West Lecture Theatre, a new addition to the RA’s complex, with family workshops running in the new Clore Learning Centre. The inaugural programme features speakers from the fields of art, architecture, design, dance, music and literature. They include: Goldie, Tamara Rojo, Amanda Levete, Es Devlin, Howard Jacobson, and Gilbert & George.

7–16 September
Royal Academy of Arts
roy.ac/festivalofideas

Work in focus: Portrait of TS Eliot by Wyndham Lewis
In this talk, Dr Nathan Waddell, Senior Lecturer in the Department of English Literature at the University of Birmingham and Chairperson of the Wyndham Lewis Society, delves into the controversy behind the artist, writer, and critic Wyndham Lewis and his relationship with his friend, the modernist poet TS Eliot. He examines why Lewis’ 1938 portrait of Eliot – one of his key paintings of the inter-war period, highly rated not only by the sitter but by other high-profile artists, such as Augustus John – was rejected by the RA’s Summer Exhibition judging panel that year.

Friday 13 July, 11am–12pm
Benjamin West Lecture Theatre,
Royal Academy of Arts
www.royalacademy.org.uk/event/work-in-focus-portrait-of-t-s-eliot-by-wyndham-lewis

London Art Week
London celebrates its place in the art world this summer as London Art Week returns, with leading galleries, dealers and auction houses around Mayfair and St James’s hosting exhibitions, talks and events. There will be new discoveries, as well as works on the market for the first time in decades. The exhibitions will feature Classical antiquities, Old Masters, post-Impressionist paintings, and more. Among art dealers taking part are Gallery Desmet, with a Roman relief of Dionysos; Forge and Lynch, with an Attic black figure amphora (below left); and Didier Aaron, with Hubert Robert’s drawing, Two figures conversing before the Temple of the Sybil, circa 1759 (above left).

Multiple venues
Until 6 July
www.londonartweek.com

OXFORD
Ancient Britain and Classical Art
The 2018 instalment of the annual Classical Art Research Centre workshop investigates the complex relationship between Classical Graeco-Roman artistic traditions around the Mediterranean and continental Europe, and the visual culture of ancient Britain. Examples from the pre-Roman Iron Age, via the Roman province of Britannia – such as the 4th-century AD, Romano-British mosaic from Littlecote Roman villa, Berkshire, (below left) – to the early Anglo-Saxon period will be examined.

Places at the workshop are free but pre-booking is essential at: carc@classics.ox.ac.uk.
27–28 September
Ioannou Centre
www.carc.ox.ac.uk/events

ONLINE
HENI Talks
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Minerva July/August 2018
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