The Art of War

From the decorated sports helmets of the Roman army to the influence of armour in the Wallace Collection on the work of Henry Moore

Sacred sects
Pagans and Christians in Roman Britain

Ruskin rules
The great Victorian polymath 200 years on
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The art of love & war

The striking martial designs of Roman armour and Henry Moore’s Helmet Heads are balanced by the purity of Canova’s sculpture and the aesthetic taste of Ruskin.

It is not only Venus who inspires us to pursue the beautiful. Mars, too, has stirred men to forge arms and armour that can be worn both in battle and also, for display, on parade. Now, you can see some fine examples (many pieces on loan from the Musée Classique de Mougins) in The Roman Army: The Power and the Glory, an exhibition at Arles Museum in southern France; see pages 14 to 20. The design of some of the decorated sports helmets on show is extremely impressive but, as Dr Jonathan Coulston of St Andrew’s University tells us, these were not only worn on special occasions, such as Triumph marches, but also had to be suitable for everyday use.

Another serious array of armour, of a later date, can be seen in the Wallace Collection at Hertford House in London. We asked its Curator, Dr Tobias Capwell, to explain how the impression it made on Henry Moore, as a young sculptor, stayed with him and influenced his work throughout his life. An exhibition at the Wallace Collection explores the link between Moore and armour. To find out more, turn to pages 28 to 33.

Someone who did not admire the power and glory of the Roman army was Boudica, the maltreated queen of the Iceni tribe, who led a rebellion against Rome’s occupying forces in Britannia in AD 60–61. She and her forces burnt the great Roman temple dedicated to Claudius in Camulodunum (Colchester), destroyed the bronze equestrian statue of the emperor that stood outside it and threw its severed head into the River Alde. This not only sent a clear message to Emperor Nero, but back in the Forum the law was argued with great dexterity – notably by Cicero. Unfortunately his keen intelligence and sharp tongue made him many enemies, especially Mark Antony, whose wife Fulvia, as Boudica and her daughters discovered, were not to like it after their cold perfection, the viewer would think they were flesh and blood. The Three Graces is his most famous work but there are many other supreme examples which are to go on show in the National Archaeological Museum of Naples, as Dalu Jones reports on pages 42 to 47.

Moving north to Venice, we find the champion of La Serenissima, John Ruskin. This multi-talented Victorian has long been portrayed as a rather stuffy, prudish fellow – but this is mainly gossip. In his day Ruskin was an academic superstar, a brilliant art critic and historian with a passion for the Gothic; and a talented artist who championed the work of Turner and the Pre-Raphaelites. He thought it was more important that we should learn to draw than to read. He was also a man with a social conscience, who loved nature and promoted conservation. Roger Williams tells us more on pages 34 to 39. As this year is the 200th anniversary of Ruskin’s birth, there are celebrations of his work and ideas in exhibitions, conferences and talks being staged across the world; see page 40.

For an update on other exhibitions and events, turn to our Calendar, on pages 56 to 61, as ever ably compiled by Lucia Marchini. In our News reports, on pages 3 to 6, we cast our net wide: in London, we find Captain Matthew Flinders’ grave near Euston, admire the Baroque ceiling of the Painted Hall in Greenwich, and view the V&A Cast Courts; in Oxford, we see Jeff Koons’ amazing work at the Ashmolean; in Athens, we explore three ancient Cretan cities at the Museum of Cycladic Art; in Wales, we hear about buried treasure.

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Baroque glory restored in Greenwich

The newly restored Baroque ceiling of the Painted Hall in the Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich, one of the largest in Europe, took artist Sir James Thornhill (1675–1734) 19 years to paint, so it is not surprising to learn that it was one of Europe’s biggest conservation projects.

Heritage Lottery Funds contributed £3.1 million to the £8.5 million needed, half a million of which paid for the scaffolding, to create a complete ‘floor’ just below the ceiling where conservators could walk freely within easy arm’s reach of the 4,000sqm painting. ‘The sheer scale and complexity of the project meant that we were constantly seeking innovative solutions – from the carefully developed conservation techniques to the design of the vast internal scaffolding, which had to be fully accessible for the visiting public,’ says Project Director William Palin.

The oil paintings were made directly on to goat-hair plaster, which still proved to be in a remarkably stable condition. Too high to be seen from the ground, the graffiti of some 30 previous restorers was discovered, a reminder of more than three centuries of almost continuous cleaning. In the 1950s, during the last restoration, 15 coats of varnish were removed.

Thornhill was compelled to work 60 feet above ground, standing on a wooden tower that was moved around the Hall. He was paid £3 a square foot for the ceiling painting and £1 for work on the end walls. While he was carrying out the commission he became the first British artist to be knighted.

Stephen Paine of Paine & Stewart, whose company undertook the restoration, says: ‘The close proximity of the paintings to the platform scaffold revealed the immense skill with which Thornhill executed this magnificent scheme and it is to be hoped that, after this conservation programme, his importance as one of the most pre-eminent artists in British art can once again be recognised.’ Completed in 1705, the

Painted Hall was built for naval pensioners by Sir Christopher Wren (1632–1723) – as a companion to Chelsea Hospital for army pensioners. Thornhill was commissioned two years later by George I (r 1714–27) to paint scenes that celebrated England’s naval power and mercantile prosperity, as well as its new Protestant royal lineage, starting with William and Mary in 1688. William II is depicted trampling on the cowering figure of tyranny, a thinly disguised Louis XIV. The Hanoverian kings were famous for ill-treating their wives and, when Thornhill asked George I where he should position his wife, Queen Sophia, in the painting, the king replied, ‘Under the carpet for all I care’. So there, beside the figure of Thornhill himself, is a small royal hand poking out from under a carpet.

The Painted Hall was visited by thousands in 1806 when the body of Admiral Nelson lay in state there after the Battle of Trafalgar; it then became a maritime art gallery before the paintings were moved to the Maritime Museum in the 1930s. The Hall’s original purpose was a mess for the pensioners, but they soon moved to the undercroft, which was warmer and closer to the kitchens. The undercroft, which has also had a makeover, is to open to the public for the first time, with a shop, café and visitor centre.

The Old Royal Naval College is part of Maritime Greenwich, which was designated a Unesco World Heritage Site in 1997.

• The Painted Hall opens to the public on 23 March, 10am to 5pm daily (www.ornc.org).

Roger Williams
Flinders ahoy!

Archaeologists excavating near Euston Station in London prior to the construction of the HS2 rail link have found the grave (right) of Captain Matthew Flinders, the first man to circumnavigate Australia.

The news will be welcomed especially by those in his native county of Lincolnshire and also in Australia – Flinders is the man who gave the continent its name.

Born in Donington in 1774, Flinders joined the Royal Navy at 15, after reading Robinson Crusoe, sailed with Captain Bligh to Tahiti in 1791, and saw action in the battle of the Glorious First of June, 1794, the first between the French and British in the French Revolutionary Wars.

On his first voyage to New South Wales, Flinders explored part of its coast with naval surgeon George Bass in a small open boat. Later, he and Bass established that Tasmania was an island. Supported by his patron, the renowned naturalist Sir Joseph Banks, Flinders returned to Australia again in 1801, on HMS Investigator, charged with charting the coast of the southern land as, although part of it had been explored by the Dutch and by Captain Cook, large areas of it remained unknown.

Flinders’ three-year voyage presented him with huge navigational and personal challenges, but he endured it with great skill and determination. It was Flinders who proved Australia was one great landmass and succeeded in producing a highly accurate map of the country. With him on the HMS Investigator was Bongaree, an Aboriginal whom he admired and who helped ease contact with the local peoples he encountered during the voyage; and his faithful cat, Trim, who survived several falls overboard.

On leaving England to undertake the voyage, Flinders left behind his new bride, Ann. On his return journey he was first shipwrecked, then, unaware that England and France were at war, was suspected of being a spy and detained for six and a half years when he called in at the French colony of Mauritius. He finally landed in England in 1810. On 19 July four years later, aged 40, Flinders died in London, leaving a wife and infant daughter – but not before, his great work, A Voyage to Terra Australis, had been published. The book is a lucid account of high adventure and Flinders’ remarkable achievement in circumnavigating Australia and charting its coastline. The map that he had made of the southern continent bore the name he chose for it – Australia. A decade later, the Admiralty finally accepted his name for the southern continent in place of ‘New Holland’. After this Flinders was largely forgotten in England although his grandson, the famous Egyptologist Flinders Petrie, gained national renown.

In Australia, though, where more than 100 places are named after him, Flinders was always remembered and also revered as an outstanding navigator. Flinders was buried in St James’s Gardens by Euston Station, between Cardington Street and Hampstead Road. The gardens were used as a burial ground for the parish of St James Piccadilly between 1790 and 1853. Most of the monuments and tombstones were removed in 1887 when St James’s Gardens opened to the public. Flinders’ final resting-place was lost.

Knowing his grave lay in the vicinity, a group of Australian and English admirers erected a statue of Flinders and his cat in Euston Station in 2014, to commemorate the 200th anniversary of his death. But, when excavation work for HS2 began, hopes were high that his grave would be found – even though 40,000 people had been buried in St James’s Gardens. Luckily, Flinders’ coffin bore a lead plate bearing his name (above). Now his mortal remains will be reinterred in consecrated ground.

Diana Bentley

Three of Crete’s 100 ancient cities revived

A new exhibition focusing on a trio of ancient cities has opened at the Museum of Cycladic Art in Athens. Entitled Crete: Emerging cities – Aptera, Eleutherna, Knossos – Three ancient cities revived, it focuses on three of Crete’s nekatoriums, the 100 cities on the island cited by Homer, looking at what they have in common: their establishment, acme, decline, destruction, abandonment and demise. Despite centuries-long histories, they were all but forgotten.

This is a multi-faceted show, with rich audio-visual aids, including maps, screens and other innovative technologies, as well as around 500 artefacts, dating from the Neolithic (7th-6th millennium BC) to the Byzantine period (8th century AD), some newly discovered, others unearthed in old excavations, most of them never presented to the public before.

Statues, figurines, inscriptions, weapons, jewellery, coins, vases, reliefs – including an early 2nd-century AD funerary relief from Aptera showing two men (right), and other artefacts, made of limestone, marble, clay, metal (including bronze, iron, silver, gold), faience, glass, ivory and semi-precious stones, are on show.

A few lines of poetry by Professor Nikos Chr. Stampolidis, Director of the Museum of Cycladic Art, sum up the scene: Random and fragmentary, the centuries- old ruins and finds from these apiaries of human life and creation, the cities; ancient cities like those emerging from the pages of time and the layers of dust on their ravaged remains. Antiquities from each of the three lost cities in the northwest of the island speak of their territory, public and private life, religious beliefs, sanctuaries and cemeteries, with fragments of their historical continuum. Artefacts relate to founding myths and to personal stories: Soterios from Eleutherna, who lived and died at Aptera, the young man of Eleutherna who died before knowing love, and the child buried with its toys at Knossos. On show, too, are Renaissance books and maps, including Vincenzo Maria Coronelli’s 1707 map of Crete, with its famous fruit garland inscribed with the names of Homer’s 100 cities.

Videos featuring aerial views of the site, images of excavations, drawings, restoration and conservation work complete the story. Orthi Petra (Necropolis), original music composed by Yiorgos Kaloudis, written for the four-stringed Cretan lyre and cello, is heard in the gallery displaying the artefacts from the cemetery of Eleutherna.

The exhibition concludes with two bull’s heads hovering above the sea surrounding Crete, one is Minoan, the other is by Picasso – which pressages the museum’s next show, Picasso and Antiquity, Line and Clay, and is scheduled to open in June of this year.

• Crete: Emerging cities – Aptera, Eleutherna, Knossos – Three ancient cities revived is at the Museum of Cycladic Art in Athens (www.cycladic.gr) until 30 April 2019. The catalogue is published in Greek and English.

Lindsay Fulcher

Minerva March/April 2019
Casting an eye over the V&A

Little can prepare visitors to London’s Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) for the shock and thrill of being confronted by a life-size replica of Trajan’s Column. This stupendous sight and many other treasures are on show again in the museum’s recently revamped, hugely impressive Cast Courts.

The largest galleries in the V&A, they are also the only galleries there to house the same collection they displayed when the museum opened in 1873 (right). Collecting plaster cast reproductions and electrotypes (models made by electrolytically depositing copper in a mould) had become extremely popular, especially as few people at that time could afford to travel to see the originals. In the V&A, reproductions of a range of the world’s most illustrious works of art and architecture were on show: from Trajan’s Column (AD 113) to many works by Michaelangelo (1475–1574), including David, a bust of Brutus, a colossal statue of Moses and the unfinished Slaves from the tomb of Julius II. The Trajan’s Column cast – now restored (below) – was so vast it had to be cut in two to fit it into the gallery.

Erected in Rome to commemorate the emperor’s two successful campaigns against the Dacians, the original column is famed for its spiralling friezes, which portray in astonishing detail 2300 figures in battle and engaged in an array of other activities, providing us with a clear glimpse into Roman life.

The skill and ingenuity in creating these casts was considerable, and their makers achieved great feats of artistry and engineering. When the art of cast-making fell out of favour in the 20th century, many collections were dispersed or destroyed. But the V&A’s collection was retained and is one of the few remaining in the world. Today, the casts have the additional value of presenting us with accurate copies of originals that have been destroyed or damaged in war or revolution, or severely weathered.

New exhibits include a scaled-down digital reproduction of the 3rd-century triumphal arch of Palmyra, which was destroyed by so-called Islamic State in 2015, and casts from the 16th-century Tuileries Palace, burned down by the Paris Commune in 1871.

The original 19th-century floors and wall-colours of the Cast Courts have been restored and a brand new gallery explores the history, processes and contemporary significance of casts. The V&A’s cast collection is still awe-inspiring and, like our forebears, we can admire these works in the comfort of elegant galleries without having to travel to distant lands.

Diana Bentley

Devotional treasures unearthed in Wales

Some 10 finds from the Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods, made by members of the public between 2014 and 2018, have been declared treasure by HM Coroner for North East Wales. The finds include: two Roman coins; medieval jewellery, with a silver-gilt crucifix; a silver ring; two silver annular brooches and a medieval coin hoard; two post-medieval gold rings and a silver seal matrix.

A late 14th- or early 15th-century silver finger ‘fede’, or fidelity, ring, showing two clasped hands, indicating friendship or love, or betrothal, was found near Wrexham; as was a small silver annular brooch of a four-lobed, or quatrefoil, shape with the inscription AVE MARIA (Hail Mary) on the front in a Lombardic script. The brooch can be dated by its style, and from other similar finds elsewhere, to the 14th century.

A second silver annular brooch, from the 13th or 14th century, decorated with an incised zig-zag pattern on one side, and a crudely incised, garbled inscription, also in Lombardic lettering – possibly an attempt to recreate a religious inscription – on the other, was found in Flintshire.

A 15th-century silver gilt crucifix pendant (right), discovered in Denbighshire, has a figure of Christ in a loincloth on one side and a figure of Mary with the Christ Child on the other. It would have been worn as an item of personal adornment for devotional purposes.

A second fede ring, a plain gold band with ‘After consent ever content’ inscribed on the inside, from the 17th to early 18th century, was discovered in Conwy; and a 17th-century oval silver seal matrix engraved with a bird, possibly a dove, facing right and holding an olive branch in its beak, was found in Denbighshire.

In the post-medieval period, personal seals were owned and used by both men and women to authenticate documents. A gold mourning ring, discovered in Wrexham, is engraved with a skull flanked by a pattern of stylised flowers and scrolls, inlaid with black enamel. The inside of the ring is inscribed with the text ‘In remembrance of TA’. Mourning rings, popular in the post-medieval period, were worn to remind grieving friends and relatives of the deceased.

A hoard of English medieval coins, one gold and 10 silver (above left), minted in the reigns of Edward I (1272–1307), II (1307–27) and III (1327–77), and Henry V (1413–22) and VI (1422–61), probably deposited in the 1460s during the Wars of the Roses, was unearthed in 2017.

All the finds mentioned except one will be acquired by accredited local museums in North East Wales.

Lindsay Fulcher

Minerva March/April 2019
Koons’ Classical work at the Ashmolean

A major exhibition of the work of Jeff Koons (b. 1955) is currently on show at the Ashmolean in Oxford. Curated by Koons himself together with guest curator Sir Norman Rosenthal, it features 17 important works, 14 of which have never been exhibited in the UK before. They span the artist’s entire career and include his best-known series Equilibrium, Statuary, Banality, Antiquity and his recent Gazing Ball sculptures and paintings.

Koons was born in York, Pennsylvania in 1955. He studied at the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and now lives and works in New York City. Since his first solo exhibition in 1980, his work has been shown in major galleries and institutions throughout the world.

Dr Xa Sturgis, Director of the Ashmolean, says: ‘In showing Jeff Koons at the Ashmolean, the world’s oldest public museum, where the collections range from prehistory to the present, this exhibition will provoke a conversation between his work and the history of art and ideas with which his work engages. I am sure it will also provoke conversations among those who see it.’

Koons is surrounded by superlatives – since he burst onto the contemporary art scene in the 1980s he has been described as the most famous, important, subversive, controversial and expensive artist in the world. From his earliest works, he has explored the ‘readymade’ and appropriated images – using unadulterated found objects, and creating painstaking replicas of ancient sculptures and Old Master paintings, which almost defy belief in their craftsmanship and precision. Throughout his career he has pushed at the boundaries of contemporary art practice, stretching the limits of what is possible.

The exhibition includes important works from the 1980s with which Koons made his name through the use of the ‘readymade’ and the appropriation of popular imagery. It will also explore his more recent focus on the art of antiquity and the western art canon where layered images of ancient and modern art meet in Koons’ singular vision.

Among the highlights in the show are the spectacular Balloon Venus (Magenta), 2008–12 (right). It is meant to evoke the tiny Ice Age Venus of Willendorf, one of the world’s oldest works of art from around 30,000 BC, and it is made with Koons’ signature motifs: monumental scale; the inflated balloon with its intimations of transience and mortality; and the flawless mirror-polished surface, which positions the viewer in the work.

In his Antiquity paintings of 2009–12, such as Antiquity 1 (above), Koons creates layered collages in which photo-realist reproductions of Classical sculptures (of Venus, Pan and Priapus) are set against broken collages of other artworks or abstract backgrounds, overlaid with graffiti-like marks.

In more recent works, Koons has explored what he calls his ‘cultural DNA’, using sculptures and paintings from world-famous collections that have personal meaning for him.

In the Gazing Ball series of 2012 onwards, perfectly blown reflective glass spheres are placed on casts of ancient sculptures, meticulously painted replicas of European masterpieces, and also museum-style plastercasts of mundane objects, such as mailboxes and birdbaths. They continue Koons’ experiments with the remade ‘readymades’, the meeting of high art and the vernacular, while engaging in a new way with the art of the past.

Shown in the UK for the first time at the Ashmolean will be seven works from the series including Gazing Ball (Belvedere Torso), 2013 (below left), Gazing Ball (Gericault Raft of the Medusa) 2014–15, and Gazing Ball (Titian Diana and Actaeon) 2014–15.

Of the Ashmolean, Koons says: ‘I couldn’t think of a better place to have a dialogue about art today and what it can be.’ While Sir Norman Rosenthal comments: ‘Jeff Koons’ work plays with our memories of childhood and our “educated” cultural experiences as he blends high and low culture, inviting us to challenge the distinction as we gaze at art and at ourselves.

Putting his work in the Ashmolean – the first museum in the very heart of academia, University, we can take his experiment a step further. For those of us willing to share in his visions, Jeff Koons makes art a magical transformation.’

• Jeff Koons at the Ashmolean is on show at the Ashmolean (www.ashmolean.org) until 9 June 2019.

The fully illustrated catalogue costs £20.

Lindsay Fulcher
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In the United States, law is always a post-graduate qualification; its students must first gain a degree in the liberal arts. As the Scottish literary giant Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832), himself no stranger to the legal profession, observed: ‘A lawyer without history or literature is a mechanic, a mere working mason: if he possess some knowledge of these, he may venture to call himself an architect.’

Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 BC) would have agreed; no one understood better the delicate balance the advocate must achieve between art and logic, if he is to succeed. The necessary medium of law being language, eloquence and the ability to persuade are the *sine qua non* of the advocate. The majority of his published speeches were heard in the open air in the Forum. In these great public trials the activities of the advocate and of the politician were often intertwined.

We need to put ourselves in his position on one of these occasions: his regular audience would number over a hundred: the jury (known as *iudices*), the presiding magistrate, usually a *praetor*, prosecutors, the defendant with his counsel and supporters, those assisting counsel on either side, and the witnesses. But this leaves out the crowd of spectators that surrounded the court and expected to hear every word.

On one occasion Cicero was defending a man on a murder charge and the trial had such political significance that the court was surrounded by Pompey’s soldiers. Cicero gave up his defence in the first half hour, unable to cope with the intimidation. So we should think in terms of an arena as much as a court of law.

Cicero was no coward, though. Early in his career he prosecuted one of the most powerful aristocrats in Rome for his corrupt governorship of Sicily, and he won his case. This was all the more impressive as he was himself not part of the inner circle in the Senate but a man from an obscure provincial town, and no one in his family had ever held public office at Rome.

Advocacy at Rome during the late Republic was not, in the modern sense,
a profession. It was not (at least officially) a way of making a living. Unsalaried the advocate may have been, but hardly unrewarded for his services. We know that Cicero once received a substantial loan from a grateful client, which he used to help purchase a house on the exclusive Palatine Hill.

We can, I think, speak of a Roman ‘Bar’. Anyone wishing to practise had to be introduced at the outset of his career by someone who had held the office of consul, and certainly in Cicero’s time the fledgling advocate would have spent some time attached as a ‘pupil’ to a prominent practitioner.

Such a pupil was Marcus Caelius, who learned from Cicero himself and won several cases on the strength of it. Something of a playboy, he chose to end an affair with a married woman from one of the noblest families in Rome. Her revenge was to have Caelius prosecuted for murder on a fabricated charge. Cicero defended him successfully and ruined the woman’s reputation in the process. This famous speech, Pro Caelio, shows how important were the advocate’s own personality and his authority as a means of persuasion. Cicero puts on his best avuncular manner in defending Caelius, at times sounding more like a character witness than an advocate, but getting away with it because of his brilliant performance.

We are used to hearing questions about the morality of advocacy. It is an old complaint going back (at least) to Jonathan Swift’s notorious remark in Gulliver’s Travels that ‘advocates defend the guilty and attack the innocent, according to how they are paid’. This is, of course, the popular caricature and far from the truth. The best riposte by far is that of Dr Johnson: ‘A lawyer has no business with the justice or injustice of the cause which he undertakes, unless his client asks his opinion, and then he is bound to give it honestly. The justice or injustice of the cause is to be decided by the judge.’

The Roman Bar did not lack an ethical basis. Cicero says at one point that a defence advocate should be prepared to offer his services to a guilty client, but he adds the important qualification that the defendant ‘is not an immoral or wicked person’. If he misleads the court, a modern barrister risks disciplinary proceedings; all a Roman advocate risked was exposure as a liar. Cicero is alleged to have said once to friends that he had ‘thrown dust in the eyes of the jury’, which is usually taken to mean he had deliberately misled them into letting his client go free. But, if he did say this, might it not have been a piece of light-hearted self-deprecation, entirely in his manner, after winning a difficult case?

Mainly, it seems that Roman advocates were expected to accept the cases they were offered, though Cicero makes it clear that he believed a defence brief might at times be honourably refused.

Another remark of his rings true. This is that an advocate could perhaps be forgiven for refusing a
brief, but not for showing carelessness in defending a client. My understanding of his position is that it does not differ much from that of modern advocates: they must not lie but rather put forward plausible arguments on the evidence before the court. An independent assessment of the truth is not for the advocate to reach but rather for the judge and jury.

The position is summed up pretty well by Marcus Fabius Quintilianus (circa 35–circa 100 AD), the first professor of rhetoric at Rome, who lived a century after Cicero and regarded him as the greatest of orators. The good advocate, Quintilian says, will not plead causes if he knows them to be unjust: 'He will not open up the safe harbour of his eloquence to pirates'. Sometimes it is as hard a task to defend the innocent as it is to defend the guilty. If he is snowed under with work in a case, the advocate should give priority to those cases in which litigants are persons of good character; he shouldn’t make it a principle to support the powerful against the weak. As to fees and bargaining with clients, ideally these should be avoided, though there is nothing wrong with allowing a client to express his gratitude in some tangible form.

Most of Cicero’s major cases were heard by a panel of jurors under the presidency of a magistrate. These panels ranged in number from about 30 to more than 70. Neither the presiding magistrate nor the jurors were necessarily experts in the law, and in major trials panels were drawn from the aristocracy. However, when Cicero was 36 years old, the principle was established that a third of the jury in a criminal court should be senators, a third equestrian, the property rank below senators, and a third plebeian.

At times Cicero had to plead before an entirely senatorial jury, and he had to allow for what he knew of their inclinations. But, after 70 BC, when this law came into effect, an advocate had to use arguments a layman would understand as well as those trained in the law. Cicero, as a senator himself from 70 BC, would know some of the individual jurors personally and would be able to take account
of their likes and dislikes.

What happened in court could not have been simpler: opening speech or speeches for the prosecution, reply by the defence, then the examination of witnesses on both sides. After this, the court went straight to a vote. There was no time allocated for deliberation, just an immediate vote by the jurors, no doubt influenced by the surrounding crowd of listeners, with a simple majority deciding matters. As in Scottish law, it was possible to reach a third verdict of *non liquet* or ‘not proven’.

I suggested earlier that these trials resembled theatre. Advocates certainly had to play to the crowd as well as convince the jury. Cicero was famous for his wit and ability to make his audience laugh, usually at the expense of his opponent. If you were a defendant you were liable to have your whole life revealed in tabloid detail, and there were no rules against attacks on past character. We never hear of an advocate being interrupted for irrelevance.

Also permitted were shameless appeals to sympathy; a defendant would appear in mourning, unkempt and dirty, along with family and relatives similarly dressed. Some witnesses preferred to give their evidence as a written deposition to avoid being subjected to verbal abuse thinly disguised as questioning by counsel. Advocates on either side could speak virtually without restriction, and it seems that courts were very interested in questions of general character as well as guilt and innocence, not unlike modern jurors, however much they are warned against this by the judge.

Cicero was so successful because he had talent and worked hard. When civil wars disrupted the court system in the 80s BC his legal initiation was delayed a few years, but he used the time to concentrate on his studies, and so to come to the Forum fully trained. From then on he was in constant demand in the courts, unless he was away from Rome, as when a bout of bad health caused him to escape to Greece to recuperate and to refine his rhetorical skills.

Strong lungs and physical fitness were needed by a good orator. Background noise was a constant problem, and delivery (*pronuntiatio*) was of paramount importance, as the great Demosthenes had insisted two centuries earlier.

Cicero continued to appear in court, even in 63 BC, the busy year of his consulship, when he uncovered a conspiracy against the consuls led by the senator Lucius Sergius...
Catilina (Catiline). Denounced in a famous speech by Cicero, Catiline was forced to flee Rome. Cicero saw a connection between his life in the courts and his political career. Few of his contemporaries would have questioned this.

Further weapons in his armoury are worth noting. Cicero had read Aristotle on rhetoric and on what he had to say on ethos and pathos. By ethos he meant the speaker’s presentation of character but, for Cicero, this had to be widened; there was the advocate’s character, as well as that of the client, to consider; also, the opportunity to destroy the credibility of the prose-cutor or of a hostile witness. At this he had no equal. By pathos was meant the appeal to the emotions, which always serves a purpose. But he knew that he had to be far more than a stand-up comic, however much the courts resembled theatre. No one had a better knowledge of the law or of the principles of rhetoric as formulated by the Greeks. Few advocates can have worked harder or learned so well from mistakes. Few can have struck so fine a balance between knowledge and eloquence. The attention he paid to legal argumentation suggests strongly that the Roman lawcourts could assess legal argument intelligently, despite the attractions caused by emotive advocates and the often rowdy environment in which they worked. Cicero had no compunctions about using his powers of rhetoric to entice a jury into seeing things his way. It was the accepted modus operandi of his day and reflected a culture different from that of the modern lawcourt.

The Forum was a battle-ground, often of violence and intimidation, and this was the background to the practice of the law by advocates. Political activity had its own armoury and this included the lawcourts, where in many ways no holds were barred.

Cicero had a strong sense of justice, and from an early time in his career he showed a willingness to put his personal safety at risk to defend a cause if he felt it was right. This was never more in evidence than at the end of his career, when he decided to attack Mark Antony, the friend of Julius Caesar, in a series of political speeches, because he saw him as a threat to Roman decency and liberty.

Cicero had relied upon the support of the young Octavian, the future emperor Augustus, but he miscalculated and found himself at the top of Antony’s proscription list, agreed on by the same Octavian.

On 7 December 43 BC, Cicero was murdered by Antony’s soldiers, who had also been instructed to cut off his head and hands. These were displayed on the speakers’ platform in the Forum as a grisly reminder of the dangers of eloquence. Finally, to make the point, Antony’s wife Fulvia stuck one of her hairpins through Cicero’s tongue, which had insulted her husband so memorably. All Rome was left to ponder on the fate of its most accomplished orator.
Minerva on the move

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The power and the glory

A new exhibition in Arles not only celebrates the Roman Army’s military prowess but also delves into its backstory and shows its ceremonial side in a display of splendidly decorated sports helmets, as Jonathan Coulston reports.
Major exhibitions devoted to the Roman army and featuring military equipment happen very rarely. In Britain readers may recall one show at the Museum of Gloucester in 1987, which was succeeded only 30 years later by the extraordinarily successful, multi-venue Hadrian’s Cavalry exhibitions, which were held simultaneously at museums along Hadrian’s Wall, with local, national and international loan exhibits, lectures, a display of 30 ‘living history’ auxiliary cavalry at Carlisle – and a themed conference.

Now, the Musée Départemental Arles Antique is hosting The Roman Army: The Power and the Glory, curated by Katia Schörle (Brown University, USA). The Arles museum, which opened in 1993, has one of the finest Roman collections in southern France. House in a building designed by the acclaimed Peruvian architect Henri Ciriani, it is intimately connected with the River Rhône, both in its proximity to the water, and in its content, which reflects Roman shipping, transport, bridging and other riverine and sea-going activities. Arles was a major entrepôt for military traffic, and southern Gaul provided many recruits to the Roman legions.

This is an ambitious exhibition which has drawn together a rich and varied collection of exhibits, made possible by the loan of artworks and artefacts from the Louvre and the National Archaeology Museum (MAN, St-Germain-en-Laye) in France, museums and private collections in Switzerland, Sicily and the UK, and, especially, from the Musée d’Art Classique de Mougins in the South of France.

Several striking watercolour reconstructions (three specially created for the exhibition) by the prominent archaeological illustrator, Jean-Claude Golvin, help the public to imagine soldiers and their building projects en masse. They are in Golvin’s signature oblique-aerial style which depict a Triumph processing through the Roman Forum, army road-building and the construction of an amphitheatre outside a legionary fortress. There have been a number of reconstructions of the Triumph but this one is unusual for its perspective, which really emphasises the mass audience of spectators crowded onto the terraces of basilicas, front steps of temples, and bleachers (temporary tiered wooden planks used as seating) lining the canonical route.

The exhibition is divided into themes, which include: the Roman emperor as triumphant general; the infantry legion; the legionary and auxiliary cavalry; the military fleets; the army at war; life in military bases; and the modern phenomenon of military ‘living history’.

Together, they give a well-rounded picture of war and peace, formal display and barrack life. They also convey something of the multicultural nature of the military community, which was not made up exclusively of male soldiers in a quasi-monastic environment, but was inclusive of all peoples within and without the imperial frontiers. Free men, freed men and slaves, soldiers, veterans, women, children, servants, grooms, traders and other service-providers all played a vital part in the Roman military milieu.

Interestingly, the exhibition also includes the fleets (classes) which were the spearhead of oceanic exploration, the suppressors of piracy, the suppliers of armies, the conveyers of emperors’ households, and mobilisers of regional cultures. Recruitment of marines to the fleets drew heavily on the populations of Egypt, Syria and the Balkans. Yet, despite their importance, these forces are often sidelined or omitted altogether from general studies of Roman military affairs.

The Roman emperors were intrinsically military rulers, owing much of their personal security, position within society, governmental power and historical reputation to support by their armies. Soldiers were rewarded with regular pay, special cash gifts, military decorations and accumulated legal privileges.

Their loyalty was concentrated on the emperor as fellow-soldier (commodio) and his image was seen in portrait statuary in army base temples and on military standards, not to mention the heads on the coins with which they were paid. Even the least martial emperors, such as Claudius (AD 41–54) and Antoninus Pius (AD 138–61), felt they had to make some show of campaigning (often in wild Germany or remote Britannia) in order to garner military kudos. The apogee of this process was the traditional Triumph through the streets of Rome with marching soldiers, bound prisoners, war-booty, and victorious emperors (triumphator) in his chariot as the central figure. So heady an honour and achievement was the Triumph, that only emperors were allowed them. The exhibits include marble and bronze representations of war-gods, victorious emperors and private soldiers; infantry and cavalry helmets; swords, daggers and belt-components; personal jewellery; auxiliary discharge diplomas; and ship fittings. Each illustrates one or more of the exhibition themes, but they go further by introducing the visitor to several generally little-known facets of Roman military culture.

The helmets, though, are the real glory of the collection. Many are 2nd- and 3rd-century cavalry
helmets designed to be worn with a metal mask. Highly decorated for display, these may be categorised as ‘sports helmets’, which were owned by the most skilled soldiers in cavalry regiments for use during exercises of horsemanship and marksmanship. These exercises are described by the Hadrianic governor, army commander and historian, Arrian (AD 92–175), and depicted on the gravestones of soldiers who wished to immortalise their own feats. Shooting with javelins or bows was practised at the gallop at targets, or at opposing ‘teams’ of horsemen. The masks present a menacingly unemotional, Classical face, but also had the practical value of protecting the rider’s eyes from the blunt-headed missiles employed in training.

According to Arrian, these manoeuvres were known by Celtic names, reflecting the cultural influence of Iron Age Iberian, northern European and Danubian aristocracies, long recruited into the Roman cavalry. There is a modern assumption that the Romans were not great horsemen, but one particular strength of the empire was that it incorporated regions with a great range of martial cultures and military specialisations.

For waging war against Rome’s equally varied enemies (Britons, Germans, Sarmatians, Parthians and Moors), commanders could mix-and-match different forms...
of cavalry regiments (alae). The European horsemen who were armoured, shielded, and used long swords (spathae), spears and javelins, were ubiquitous along the frontiers, but less numerous in the east. Other auxiliary cavalry regiments (alae sagittariorum) were armed with bows, bow-cases and quivers in the Levantine tradition, but not shields. These formations were present in all frontier armies, but were particularly concentrated in the eastern military provinces. A third type was represented by the shieldless regiments (alae contarianum) which wielded two-handed lances, following the Parthian and Asiatic nomad Sarmatian fighting style. Irregular, unarmoured Moorish cavalry (numeri Maurorum) were raised in North Africa and skirmished at speed purely with javelins. These different cavalry types could be pitched against opposing Moors in Africa, Sarmatians across the Danube, or Parthian horse-archers in the east. The tribal war bands of Germanic enemies were comparatively unarmoured, and thus especially vulnerable to missiles from fast-moving Roman cavalry.

Roman infantry, whether legionaries or non-citizen auxiliaries,
were trained primarily in swordsmanship. Career-long exercise (between 20 and 25 years) built up endurance, strength and a peculiarly specialised musculature, allowing such men to outlast barbarian opponents through sheer stamina. Their fencing style and stance, and the weapons of their enemies, dictated the coverage and design of their armour. Two
This was an army that glittered and flashed, twinkled and blazed in the sun, on the battlefield and in the street, striking fear into the hearts of barbarian enemies and Roman civilians alike.

‘Weisenau type’ infantry helmets in the Arles exhibition demonstrate an emphasis on protection of the neck and shoulders.

The sword and, more importantly, the military belt with its jingling metalwork, were the visual and aural signature of the soldier, symbolic of all the physical power, legal privilege and social position intrinsic to army service. They are prominently displayed on surviving military gravestones; Pliny the Elder describes their silver-plating which was for eye-catching effect.

Overt display of valuable metalwork was part of the bella figura of soldiers, as closely reflected in Roman literature and art. This, and the urge for individual warrior distinction in battle, explains why so much military equipment was heavily decorated. The helmets have embossed griffins, battle scenes, serpents and deities. The scabbards and belt-plates bear figural decoration following martial motifs and triumphal imagery. The wearing of finger-rings, was a special privilege granted to soldiers in the 3rd century. This was an army that glittered and flashed, twinkled and blazed in the sun, on the battlefield and in the street, striking fear into the hearts of barbarian enemies and Roman civilians alike.

Modern studies of Roman equipment have come a long way in dispelling some easy, traditional assumptions about decorative military culture, and thereby imparted a rather different view of Roman soldiers. Decorated equipment was not the preserve of high rank. Many pieces were produced by stamps, not as individual ‘artworks’, in copper alloy and tin, not silver and gold. Decorated items were not just created for ‘parade’ in the modern sense, but were all practical pieces of armour and weaponry. Even the ‘sports’ helmets, worn within a specialised niche of display, were functionally protective. Soldiers did...
in carrying out practical trials of clothing, footwear, armour and weapons. In Germany they have even taken to the water in rebuilt craft of the frontier river fleets. It was fitting that a French ‘living history’ group, L’association légion VIIe Augusta, opened the Arles exhibition with a re-enactment display, and they will present again when it closes.

The exhibition is aptly subtitled The Power and the Glory because it encapsulates themes of imperial triumph and naked, yet highly ornamented, military power. But it does far more than this by opening windows into the cultures, identities, tastes and personal achievements of the individual Roman soldiers who celebrated, lived, loved and died at the height of the Roman empire.

The exhibition is aptly subtitled The Power and the Glory because it encapsulates themes of imperial triumph and naked, yet highly ornamented, military power. But it does far more than this by opening windows into the cultures, identities, tastes and personal achievements of the individual Roman soldiers who celebrated, lived, loved and died at the height of the Roman empire.

This is a very different picture of the military experience: soldiers as artists and culture-bearers, not merely brutish, killing-machine grunts. The richness and variety of decoration also underscores studies of types and development of equipment over time. The firm conclusion is that, while there was a degree of functional and ergonomic conformity for, say, cavalry helmet protection, or infantry sword forms, there were no centrally ordained ‘patterns’ or uniformity. Roman soldiers were identified as ‘military’ by their arms, armour, belts and jewellery, and as belonging to their regiments by standards, inscriptions on equipment, and painted shield-blazons. They had no need of a ‘uniform’, as recognised in modern armies since the late 17th century.

Since the formation of the Ermine Street Guard (UK) in 1972, ‘living history’ for the Roman imperial period has grown into an international phenomenon. Groups now exist all over Europe and the New World, even in countries such as the Irish Republic, Poland and the USA, which never saw an ancient Roman soldier. Their work has been very valuable...
L'ARMÉE DE ROME
LA PUISSANCE ET LA GLOIRE

MUSÉE DÉPARTEMENTAL ARLES ANTIQUE
EXPOSITION DU 15 DÉCEMBRE 2018 AU 22 AVRIL 2019

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In AD 43, the Roman emperor Claudius invaded Britannia. As a reluctant and somewhat unprepossessing wearer of the imperial purple, Claudius needed prestige, and what could be more propitious to his status than to add to the empire an island on the western edges of the known world?

A century earlier, the dictator Julius Caesar had made two short excursions into Britain, and it was these expeditions that had brought Rome and Britannia into close contact. And since Caesar had brought Gaul (France) into the empire in the 50s BC, Britannia was perceived as the last frontier, and as an uncomfortably close free neighbour of the newly subjugated Gallic tribes.

Part of Rome’s suspicion of Britain derived from its separation from the European land-mass by Ocean, the great river perceived by Greeks and Romans as encircling the world, so putting the island of Britain literally outside human habitation. The face of the god Oceanus appears at the centre of the great Romano-British silver dish found in Mildenhall (3) in 1942, and also at the apex of a tombstone to a woman called Bodicacia, of whom more later. The Augustan poet Horace made several references to ‘untouched Britons’ and ‘Britons at the end of the world’.

The religious beliefs and ritual practices of Britannia prior to its absorption into the Roman empire remain enigmatic and elusive. Iron Age Britain was non-literate this means that, in the absence of text records, except for a few somewhat ignorant and biased comments by foreign commentators from the Classical world, the only ‘secure’ evidence for British attitudes to the supernatural world is that of archaeology. One superbly evocative object that points to the presence of a priestly class as early as the 4th century BC is a sacred headdress (2) discovered in a grave at Cerrig-y-Drudion in North Wales. Found in fragments in the 1920s, this piece has been superbly reconstructed by conservators at the National Museum Wales.

Miranda Aldhouse-Green examines the gods and ritual practices of Roman Britain, a mixture of home-grown pagan beliefs and customs, imported Classical deities and exotic Eastern cults, including Christianity.
Museum Wales. Fashioned of bronze and leather, with a long horsehair plume and a pair of bronze wheel-shaped amulets dangling on chains on either side, it was decorated with the incised flowing designs typical of early ‘Celtic’ art. It would have conferred immense gravitas and prestige upon the ritualist who wore it in sacred ceremonies, presided over sacrifices and liaised with the gods.

Iron Age burials can sometimes provide intriguing details about the dead. Such is the tomb of a mature woman interred with her war-chariot at Wetwang, East Yorkshire in the late 4th or early 3rd century BC. One of a group of similar chariot-burials from the region, this one stands out partly on account of its rich tomb-furniture and partly because of the physical idiosyncrasy of the grave’s occupant, and the two elements are linked. Forensic examination of the skeleton revealed that, in life, she had a facial tumour that would have pushed her nose out of shape and, what is more, would have been a bright cherry red, exhibiting a significant and highly visible distinction. But the grave-goods indicated that far from being shunned by her community, her disfigurement might instead have conferred on her a special prestige, for not only was she interred with a high-status war-vehicle and joints of pork for her journey to the otherworld, but many of the objects buried with her, including a mirror, were decorated with bright red coral, imported from the Mediterranean and surely deliberately chosen to reference her physical appearance.

When Claudius’ army arrived in Britain in the mid-1st century AD, it brought with it what have been termed ‘new technologies of worship’, namely the habit of inscribing altars with the names of their gods and their devotees, together with the fashioning of divine images, showing how their worshippers perceived them. So the iconography of Mercury depicted the god with his herald’s staff and his animal familiars (a goat and cockerel); the sky-god Jupiter had his thunderbolt; Minerva had her spear, and so on. But underpinning the initial import of these new gods was the panoply of conquest.

The annexation of Britannia was anything but a peaceful, bloodless affair, at least in its first stages. Claudius needed to project himself as a conquering hero, and one highly evocative image displays this dominance crudely but with disturbing realism: a sculpture (1) from a triumphal arch a long way from Britain, at Aphrodisias in Turkey. It depicts a young man, naked but for a short...
cloak and ‘Phrygian’ cap, straddling a terrified woman, her right breast exposed. She faces away from him, clearly struggling to free herself, while pinned down by the man’s right knee, as he prepares to violate her. The accompanying inscription identifies the man as an idealised, youthful Claudius, the woman as conquered Britannia. The Aphrodisias image paints a grim picture of conquistador-like imperialism that displays colonialist power at its most brutal.

Is it any wonder, then, that less than 20 years after the Claudian invasion, Britannia struck back? A royal British widow, named Boudica (or Boudicca or Boadicea), from the remote East Anglian tribe of the Iceni, enraged by the high-handed confiscation of her late husband’s estate, the rape of her daughters and her (illegal) flogging at the hands of Roman fiscal soldiers, raised an army of rebellion. They sacked three Roman cities: Londinium (London), Camulodunum (Colchester) and Verulamium (St Albans), and cut down a legion, before finally being overcome by the Roman governor Paulinus and his massed forces in AD 60.

Colchester was a particular target for Boudica’s army for it was here, in the former capital of the Trinovantes, the Iceni’s southern tribal neighbours, that the invading army built a gleaming stone temple to the emperor Claudius. Not content with the construction of this monument to Roman imperialism, the Britons were forced to pay both for its erection and for its upkeep through crippling taxation. Boudica burnt the hated temple to the ground, but something else happened too. Outside the entrance to the temple stood a life-size bronze statue of Claudius mounted on horseback. The rebel army decapitated the image, took the head away and deposited it in a local river. So not only was the emperor’s statue destroyed but its bronze head was treated in such a way as to reshape its symbolism and project British ownership.

For the Britons, the human head was sacred, and it was their custom to deposit gifts to the gods in watery places. So what seems to have happened here is that the head of Claudius was re-symbolised to become a British sacred object, effectively robbing it of its Roman power. The head of Boudica (or Boudicea as it is here) appears on an Edwardian stained-glass window (6) in the Moot Hall in Colchester.

According to Classical literature, Boudica died on the battlefield and she has left no direct archaeological legacy. But a recently discovered tombstone (7) from the Roman city of Corinium (Cirencester) has invited speculation concerning a possible link with the warrior-queen. Sometime during the 2nd century AD, a young woman died and was buried in the town: her tombstone gives her name as Bodicacia, a very British name and one that is philologically linked with Boudica. Could she have been a descendant? Or had the name (which alludes to Victory) been preserved and handed down simply because of the memory of freedom-fighting that it evoked? In the triangle at the stone’s apex is the deliberately defaced head of Oceanus with crab claws in his hair. Claudius’s conquering soldiers
introduced foreign deities to Britain from all over the empire, not just Rome. For, by the 1st century AD, the army was recruited from provinces as far apart as Gaul, Asia Minor, Syria and North Africa, and these men brought their own gods to Britannia. Cities like Londinium and the frontier region of Hadrian’s Wall in the north were melting-pots for religions. Rubbing alongside the Roman state deities were those from Gaul, the Rhineland and much further east. Mithras (5) from Persia, Serapis from Egypt and Dolichenus of Syria are just a few of a myriad gods that found their way to Britannia, the remote island on the western edge of the empire.

But, in addition to all these exotic divinities, the Roman habit of epigraphy and iconography seems to have released local British cults from the silence of the pre-Roman Iron Age. Even army personnel adopted some of these. A good example is the local northern god Antenociticus, to whom a temple was built at Benwell on the Wall. The Gaulish horse-goddess Epona was worshipped here, too: she certainly had a following at Maryport, a fort on the Cumbrian coast. And another thing happened in Britain: the twinning or conflation of Roman gods with local spirits.

Striking evidence of this ‘marriage’ can be observed in the great thermal spring sanctuary at Bath (8), which displays a bewildering mixture of foreign and home-grown deities. The presiding goddess was Sulis, local personification of the hot springs; she was twinned with the Roman state goddess Minerva, but it is interesting that Sulis appears to have remained the dominant partner for, on the many votive inscriptions...
here, her name almost always appears first. And yet the great life-size bronze cult statue of the goddess, of which only the head survives, shows her in purely Roman guise, as Minerva. And the weird conflation of British and Roman would have struck pilgrim-visitors to the shrine even before they entered the great temple. For centre-stage on the pediment over the portal was a great bearded human face, with hair that evokes flames or water, and a forbidding stare.

What or who this face represents remains a matter of debate but it bears more than a passing resemblance to Medusa, the fearsome female gorgon of Classical myth, whose glance turned people to stone. But if that was the intention, then the image was tweaked, perhaps for a British arena, for the Bath pediment head is aggressively male. And the artist seems carefully to have woven the spirit of the spring-water into his (or her) symbolism: did the flaming hair and beard reflect the water’s heat or the water itself, or both? Did the head on this pediment represent Sulis and, if so, might this water-spirit have been perceived as dual-gendered?

At some point in antiquity, the great gilded bronze cult-statue of Sulis Minerva erected to preside over the sacred springs at Bath was torn down and decapitated. The head survives but it bears the marks of desecrating hands: someone slashed at the goddess’s cheeks with a fine-bladed knife. Who was responsible? Might it have been the work of the same ‘impious hands’ whose iconoclasm was recorded on an inscription from the sacred city? And could some rival, hostile cult-adherents have been the perpetrators? Maybe the great temple and holy springs at Bath were targets for the new monotheistic Eastern cult of Christianity, the religious movement that began to sweep over the empire soon after Christ’s death and that probably reached Britain by the 2nd or 3rd century AD. A lead defixio (curse-tablet), one of many written to Sulis and tossed into the sacred reservoir for her divine vengeance, records the presence of Christians here.

By the early 4th century, house-churches were being built in Roman villas, such as those at Frampton and Hinton St Mary in Dorset, in both of which mosaics bearing Christian symbolism have been found. Most famous of all these villa-churches was at Lullingstone in Kent, where a room above a pagan domestic shrine was decorated with elaborate Christian frescoes of praying figures and, probably, the image of Christ himself.

But perhaps the most interesting early Christian material was contained in a hoard of church-plate found by chance in 1975 at Water Newton in Cambridgeshire, for it is the earliest known set of Christian liturgical regalia, dating to around AD 314. Silver vessels, including a chalice, were marked with Christian motifs and what is more fascinating still was the presence of silver ‘feather’ plaques, triangular in shape and again adorned with Christian symbols. These plaques are frequently found in pagan shrines, but here the Christianisation of essentially pagan votive objects perhaps represented an attempt by Christian priests to be inclusive, to entice heathens towards the new faith by using cult-objects that wavering pagans would have found rather comfortable and familiar.

So although there may have been militant Christians in late Roman Britain who wished to destroy the symbols of hated paganism, there is alternative evidence that a soft approach to pagans by Christians was perceived as more conducive to conversion.

Sacred Britannia: The Gods and Rituals of Roman Britain by Miranda Aldhouse-Green is published in hardback by Thames & Hudson at £19.95.
In about 1907, a schoolboy named Henry Moore visited the medieval church of St Oswald in Methley, West Yorkshire, for the first time. The profusion of stone carving found throughout this magical place made a profound impression on him. It was the future artist's first experience of sculpture, as he later explained to photographer and writer John Hedgecoe:

'Methley Church... contains the first real sculptures I remember. I was very impressed by these recumbent effigy figures... [it was] the almost Egyptian stillness of the [female] figure that appealed to me, as well as the hands coming away from the body' (from Henry Moore: My Ideas, Inspiration and Life as an Artist, published by Ebury, 1986).

Two of those effigies represent knights – Sir Lionel, Lord Welles, KG (killed at the Battle of Towton in 1461) and Sir Robert Waterton, Constable of Pontefract Castle (d 1424). This was probably the first time Moore encountered life-sized images of warriors in armour, figures armed for eternity in the accoutrements of war worn in life.

As a powerful, monumental work of funerary art, an armoured effigy was intended to express the identity, the prestige, and the power of its subject. Armour augmented its wearer physically, but also changed the way the world saw him. It made him seem superhuman and otherworldly, the glittering steel surfaces reflecting both the light of the sun above and the power of God invested within. When carved in alabaster, armour reinforced the viewer's understanding of and connection to the subject, in order to ask for and spur on prayers for the departed soul.

Even without fully understanding such things, Moore felt the power of these images, human forms which also incorporated other, non-human shapes – almost abstract sculptural extensions of the body inside. Unlike the empty armour that Moore would later contemplate at the Wallace Collection, an effigy is a simultaneous visualisation, of both the impervious armour outside and the vulnerable human being inside. On one level it is a sculpture within a sculpture, while on another, it presents us with the tendency of armour to fuse with the person it protects, creating a living sculpture.

Armour was a process, in which the artist transformed his patron into a work of art. This idea of a form within a form, the kinship between the armour and the wearer, was a constant inhabitant of Moore's thoughts about armour. As he told the documentary filmmaker, John Read in his 1974 BBC television programme, Henry Moore at Home: A Private View of a Personal Collection:

'The armour idea is this hard covering or shell, to something inside it... And it is like, it's the same idea as the shell of a crab or a lobster or a snail, protecting a very vulnerable form inside it. It is a fundamental form idea.'

During his combat service during the First World War, Henry Moore cannot have failed to see how armour, through its form alone, could project deep feelings and messages. The British ‘Brodie'
helmet, which he wore while fighting as a machine-gunner at the Battle of Cambrai in 1917, was in its basic shape almost entirely unlike the fearsome-looking M1916 helmets worn by the Germans. The fact that Moore did indeed observe the visual and expressive qualities of the helmets of his own time is proven by his incorporation of aspects of the German helmet’s design into Helmet Head No. 1, 1950, and his later Helmet Head lithographs, 1974–75. In 1980, during a conversation with David Mitchinson (his long-time assistant and former Head of Collections and Exhibitions at Henry Moore Studios and Gardens) Moore said: ‘The idea of one form inside another form may owe some of its incipient beginnings to my interest at one stage when I discovered armour. I spent many hours in the Wallace Collection, in London, looking at armour’ (from Henry Moore: Writings and Conversations, published by Lund Humphries, 2002).

When he first visited the Wallace Collection during the interwar years, Moore had been well-prepared to see and understand the armour displayed there for the complex thing that it was – utilitarian equipment designed for fighting, which somehow transcended its function to become, at the same time, expressive art. He seems to have sensed this naturally, effortlessly. He could see perfectly well that the form of an Italian Renaissance helmet was determined by the functional demands informing its design, and yet it was clearly much more than an answer to the physical problem of how best to protect the head.

A tool that is designed to function well naturally becomes beautiful. Initially this occurs almost as a side-effect. The makers, however, could perceive this process in action as they worked, and often sought to extend and enhance the aesthetic qualities of their creations beyond the requirements of purely practical application.


The modern mind often has trouble with the idea that an object can be both a functional tool and an expressive, even abstract, work of art. For many visitors to the Wallace Collection armouries, the pure sculptural qualities of armour beyond function and decoration can be difficult to see. But Henry Moore clearly saw them. In fact it is possible to follow him through the galleries, tracing the pieces that captivated him and which made their presence felt in his work. He spent hours studying certain, particular artefacts, while largely ignoring many others. What did these special pieces say to him? What did they make him think about? What did he see in them?

In 1921, Moore moved from Leeds to London attend the Royal College of Art. At this early point...
Moore remarked that ‘there are universal shapes to which everybody is subconsciously conditioned, and to which they can respond, if their conscious control does not shut them off’.

Universal organic forms have subconscious appeal, an effect Moore felt he had to explore in order, as he said, to ‘penetrate our deepest feeling’.

With interests such as these, it is perhaps not surprising to discover that Moore was fascinated by armour, and helmets in particular. He sensed that they were ‘objects of power’, sculptural forms whose vitality flowed from their function – to protect another.

At the same time, armour also appealed to Moore’s awareness of the fundamental importance of anatomy. As he put it: ‘The human body is the basis of all sense of form that all of us have.’

As an artificial exoskeleton, armour is an augmentation of the human anatomy, a sculpted shell accentuating some aspects of the human form while minimising others.

Moore’s numerous visits to the Wallace Collection Armoury during the 1930s and 1940s produced a large number of helmet studies drawings made both during and after trips there. His interest in helmets began to manifest in the mid-1930s and, along with it, his fascination with the relationship between a helmet and its interior contents. Moore’s earliest identifiable helmet forms are found in a sketchbook dating to circa 1935. The sketches were quickly drawn, recording Moore’s fascination by armour, and helmets in particular.

He sensed that they were ‘objects of power’, sculptural forms whose vitality flowed from their function – to protect another vulnerable structure inside...
variations of basic forms and incorporating some early ideas for what would become the ‘Internal/External’ concept.

The earliest signs of Moore’s interest in the relationship between a hard, shell-like structure and a soft, more vulnerable interior can be traced back to the ink, chalk and watercolour drawing *Three-Quarter Figure*, 1928, according to Sebastiano Barassi’s essay, ‘A Master in the Making’, in the catalogue of the *Becoming Henry Moore* exhibition at the Hertfordshire studios in 2017 (Perry Green, Henry Moore Foundation).

Nevertheless, some of Moore’s helmet vocabulary is already evident. The exterior form or helmet is roughly proportional to the length of the human head and neck combined, with a rounded apex or skull and gently recurving sides which narrow below the apex before flaring back out again at the base.

Assuming that his initial experience of armour occurred largely at the Wallace Collection, which is almost certain, a specific group of helmets characterised by these same essential formal attributes can be identified. They are all Italian and are distinguished by their smooth, graceful forms and plain, undecorated surfaces. One is a bascinet, or *barbut*, dating from the late 14th or early 15th century,

‘…whether we know it or not, we are emotionally affected by shape, pure shape, by roundness, squareness, sharpness…’
having a rounded skull brought to a shallow point at its apex and a recurving profile following the contours of the wearer’s head, with the base gently swept out to form a short neck-guard at the back.

Crucially, the sides of the helmet have been extended forward near the base in order to give as much protection to the sides of the wearer’s face and cheeks as possible, without hampering his ability to breath and communicate. Moore appears to have made careful observations of all of this helmet’s qualities – not just its overall form, surface and silhouette, but also the lines traced by its edges and the shape of the face-opening, the negative space where a face ought to be.

Almost all of Moore’s statements about armour cite the Wallace Collection as the place where he encountered it, with one exception. In 1967 he told Michael Chase that the idea for helmet sculptures may have come from ‘the interest I had earlier on in armour, in places like the Victoria and Albert Museum where one used to wander round as a student in the lunch hours’ (Michael Chase, ‘Moore on his Methods’, Christian Science Monitor, 24 March 1967).

Moore never attempted to reproduce the real appearance of any of the helmets he studied. He probably sketched in the Wallace Collection armories, but it is unlikely that he ever drew a realistic helmet or armour study, despite the fact that he was an accomplished draughtsman. Instead, his observations stimulated ideas for abstract forms, which he recorded in rough sketches, sometimes accompanied by written notes. These initial thoughts were then progressed at a later time in more advanced drawings.

This work formed the basis for his Helmet Head sculptures, works created both at the time and in subsequent decades. The earliest sculptural work directly inspired by helmets in the Wallace Collection is The Helmet, 1939–40, which in turn was followed by Helmet Head Nos. 1–7, 1950–75, and by numerous other works, including Small Helmet Head, 1950; Helmet Head and Shoulders, 1952; and Nuclear Energy, 1967.

Remarkably, despite the highly abstracted nature of Moore’s work, he successfully retained the essence of the sculptural identity of the objects that had provided him with such vibrant inspiration. A comparison of Moore’s sculptures and helmets from the Wallace Collection reveals much about the artist’s perceptions, his ways of looking, his interests and his intentions. We can see which aspects of these objects most appealed to him, and we can follow his method as he took certain aspects of the form of one helmet, and combined it with the face-opening of another.

We can sense him pondering the implication that a helmet must have contained something or someone, an inner nature now mysterious and unknowable ‘…whether we know it or not, we are emotionally affected by shape, pure shape, by roundness, squareness, sharpness…’

The crucial role played by specific helmets and armour in the Wallace Collection on the work of Henry Moore has remained almost completely unknown, in part because those objects have never been previously identified. While his general comments about visiting the Wallace Collection are familiar to Moore specialists, no one has ever investigated the identities of the objects which most interested him. So the precise connection between the Wallace Collection and the Helmet Head series and related work has remained obscure – until now.

• Henry Moore: The Helmet Heads is on show at The Wallace Collection (www.wallacecollection.org) from 6 March to 23 June 2019.
• The accompanying catalogue is published in paperback by Philip Wilson Publishers and costs £25.
Although the art critic, philanthropist and social reformer, John Ruskin (1819–1900), was something of a cult figure in his day, he has long since slipped from public awareness. But all that is likely to change this year, the bicentenary of his birth, as he is widely celebrated in exhibitions, events and talks across the world, from Los Angeles to Tokyo. Closer to home, events are being held in venues that include Oxford University, where he taught art; Brantwood, his Lake District home; Lancaster University, which houses a large collection of his work; and with the Guild of St George, which he founded with a museum in Sheffield and established a forest in Worcestershire, created ‘for working people to cultivate land and reconnect with nature’.

Events got off to an early start last year with an exhibition focusing on Ruskin at the Doge’s Palace in Venice. Surprisingly, this was the first time that his work had been shown in Italy where, despite his life-long association, one could say obsession, with the city, no public Italian collection holds any of his works, so loans of his paintings, drawings and notebooks had to be called in from elsewhere.

Ruskin, who first visited La Serenissima returned many times, writing his three-volume The Stones of Venice, which inspired the title of the Venetian 2018 exhibition: John Ruskin: Le Pietre di Venezia. The Doge’s Palace was, he wrote, simply ‘the central building of the world’.

This year is the bicentenary of the birth of the great 19th-century art critic, educator, artist and social thinker John Ruskin – the perfect time to celebrate the achievements of this brilliant Victorian polymath, says Roger Williams.

1. Portrait of John Ruskin, 1875, by Charles Fairfax Murray (1849–1919) gouache and watercolour on paper. 47.6cm x 31.1cm. © Tate Britain.

2. Ca’ d’Oro (Golden House) 1845, John Ruskin, watercolour, graphite, bodycolour on tone paper. 33cm x 47.6cm. © The Ruskin Library, Lancaster University.
he declared, ‘in equally exacting proportions’. And it was here, he concluded, that ‘All European architecture, bad and good, old and new, is derived from Greece through Rome, and coloured and perfected from the East.’

In *The Stones of Venice*, his three-volume work published between 1851–53, Ruskin admitted that he derived a ‘childish pleasure’ when he discovered that one of the architects responsible for the rebuilding of the Doge’s Palace, after a fire in 1577, was Giovanni Rusconi, a name that bore a resemblance to his own. It seemed to confirm his affinity with the city. The books were best-sellers, and spurred on the Gothic revival in Britain, ‘No book of mine has had so much influence on contemporary art,’ he declared in the revised edition of 1872.

In Britain, Ruskin was a powerfully influential critic, with a prodigious output – he wrote 39 volumes, diaries, essays, pamphlets and lectures. He was also a highly...
accomplished draughtsman, never without a sketchbook. Architectural details, some brightened with watercolour, illuminate The Stones of Venice. His mantra was ‘truth to nature’, and he believed that everyone was capable of drawing, which he deemed more important in human communication than learning to read. His instructive book, The Elements of Drawing, has hardly been out of print since it was published in 1857, and his teaching collection of prints and drawings (which can now be accessed online) is held at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, where he was appointed the university’s first Slade Professor of Fine Art in 1869.

Ruskin was born in 1819 and grew up in Denmark Hill, South London, the only child of John James Ruskin, a sherry importer and himself an art collector, and Margaret Cox, an Evangelical Christian. Tutored at home, he had a contented childhood with Bible readings every day. His ability to draw was soon recognised, although the study of geology was his first passion. At Christ Church, Oxford, his talents were put to use when he made drawings for the eccentric William Buckland (1784–1856), the university’s first Reader in Geology, whose rooms were filled with rocks and exotic stuffed animals, that are said to have inspired the anthropomorphic creatures in Lewis Carroll’s Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland, Carroll, whose real name was Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, was a fellow don, and Ruskin taught Alice Liddell, daughter of the Dean of Christ Church and Dodgson’s muse, to draw; the college has some of her drawings in its collection.

One close friend of Ruskin’s at Oxford was Charles Newton (1816–94), who went on to serve as the British Consul in Rome and to become the first Keeper of Greek and Roman Antiquities at the British Museum. Drawing was of immense importance to 19th-century archaeologists in the recording of objects. When Thomas Bruce, 7th Earl of Elgin (1766–1841) travelled to Greece in 1799, his initial intention had been to record the Parthenon, not remove parts of its marble frieze. For this reason he invited Ruskin’s hero, JMW Turner (1775–1851), to join him and his wife on their trip to Athens to make accurate drawings. They could not agree terms, however, and Turner was additionally dissuaded by the stipulation that he gave Lady Elgin art lessons en route.

At Oxford, Newton had asked Ruskin to make a drawing of a Norman door, which was not a great success, so that when the remains of the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World (excavated by Newton) arrived at the British Museum in 1857, he did not ask Ruskin to make the large drawings he needed for his lectures to encourage growing public interest in the subject of archaeology. So, the task fell instead to Mary Severn (1832–66), a portrait painter whose work Ruskin promoted. Born in Rome, she was
the daughter of Joseph Severn, who had cared for the dying John Keats, and who followed Newton as British Consul in Rome. Mary eventually married Newton and, to complete this merry-go-round, her artist brother Arthur married Ruskin’s cousin Joan Agnew, who had been his ward, and who would take care of him at Brantwood in the last decade of his life as his mental health, which had often been a source of trouble, declined.

In 1851, on Ruskin’s second trip to Venice, he and his young wife Effie Gray, were joined by Newton as far as Milan, where he wrote a letter to his mother saying: ‘I learn more from him [Newton] than from any of my other acquaintances old and young, beside getting prime jokes into the bargain… I would give, I don’t know how much, to have Newton with me in Italy. He helps me so infinitely in dates, and in tracing styles; he has gained a marvellous power of rapid judgment of all sculpturesque art, and we never differ about what we are to like in sculpture.’

In a two-volume biography of Ruskin, published in 1912, the journalist, biographer and man of letters Sir Edward Tyas Cook (1857–1915) wrote: ‘One may trace to Newton the lively interest Ruskin took in archaeological excavation in classical lands and the financial aids that he rendered to it.’ Ruskin funded archaeological surveys for the British Museum on Crete and Rhodes and, on one occasion, Newton invited him to accompany him to Greece, but the invitation was not accepted. ‘The Goth and the Greek went their several ways,’ wrote Cook, ‘and the friendship that was at one time close and affectionate was buried beneath the marbles of Halicarnassus.’

Cook’s greatest achievement was to edit, with Alexander Wedderburn, the writings of Ruskin. Published in 39 volumes between 1903 and 1911, they remain the definitive collection of Ruskin’s writings.

Despite the prevailing fashion for the Neo-Classical, Ruskin the Christian had little time for the ‘Heathen’ pillars and pediments rising in Britain in the wake of Elgin’s and Newton’s discoveries. His true love was for the medieval, the Renaissance, the Gothic, which bore the traces of artisans’ hands. ‘It is in that golden stain of time, that we are to look for the real light, and colour, and preciousness of architecture,’ he wrote in The Lamp of Memory, published in 1849, one of his Seven Lamps of Architecture.

Despite his own considerable creative skills, Ruskin did not see himself as an artist, and he seldom finished a work. Instead he saw drawing and painting as a way of looking, of perceiving. He described his efforts as only ‘bits’. Yet his influence on art and its appreciation was far-reaching. It began in 1843 with the first of his six-volume Modern Painters, in which he championed the work of Turner. They met when Ruskin was 21 and Turner was 65; the first volume appeared four years later, the fifth,
17 years after that. It was the young critic’s insistence on Turner’s genius that was responsible, in large part, for the artist’s enduring reputation, just as his subsequent championing of the Pre-Raphaelites rescued them from their early detractors.

‘He made art possible for us,’ declared William Morris (1834–96) to his fellow undergraduates at Oxford, as he read aloud from Modern Painters. With the shared values of a pre-industrial world, Ruskin joined Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828–82) and Ford Madox Brown (1821–93) in supporting the new Working Men’s College in Camden, founded in 1854, where he taught a regular drawing class. The WMC offers adult education courses to this day.

Another of Ruskin’s important legacies is the Guild of St George, an Education Trust he founded in 1871. It owns a number of rural properties, including 100 acres in the Wyre Forest in Worcestershire. ‘The Guild was frankly utopian in conception,’ says poet Clive Wilmer, the current Master of the Guild, ‘and Ruskin soon began proposing ideal social arrangements which the Guild’s workers and their families would need – schools, libraries and galleries of art.’

The only gallery that actually materialised was St George’s Museum in Walkley, at that time a rural village overlooking Sheffield. It was intended for the people Ruskin called ‘the iron workers of Sheffield’, the artisans who produced the city’s famous cutlery. The museum’s original, eclectic collection is now housed in the Yorkshire city’s Millennium Gallery, part of Museums Sheffield.

For the bicentenary, Museums Sheffield and the Guild of St George have mounted a glorious exhibition entitled John Ruskin: The Power of Seeing at Two Temple Place, the handsome Neo-Gothic estate office built on the Embankment in London, in 1895, for the American millionaire William Waldorf Astor. On show there are 190 paintings, drawings and daguerreotypes, as well as metalwork and plaster casts ‘... to illustrate how Ruskin’s attitude to aesthetic beauty shaped his radical views on culture and society’. Ruskin’s work is not often on show in London – the Tate and British Museum have a handful of his drawings and watercolours tucked away – so this is a welcome opportunity for a close look at the wide range of his work. Loans come from The Ashmolean; Calderdale Museums, The Fitzwilliam; Gallery Oldham; The Ruskin Library in Lancaster; Leeds Museums and Art Gallery; Watts Gallery Artists’ Village and also the William Morris Gallery. There are also a few newly commissioned works, including site-specific installations by Timorous Beasts and Grizedale Arts, and a new moving image piece by Dan Holdsworth, while artists Hannah Downing and Emilie Taylor explore Ruskin’s contemporary legacy.

Having been traduced in films such as Mike Leigh’s Mr Turner and Emma Thompson’s Effie Gray, it seems time for a reassessment of John Ruskin who, according to Sir Kenneth Clark, was ‘for 50 years after the publication of Modern Painters, considered one of the great prophets of his time’.

Louise Pullen, Curator of the Ruskin Collection at Museums Sheffield and of the exhibition at Two Temple Place, says: ‘I hope that the exhibition will help raise his profile, as much as restore his reputation. Despite caricatures and some perpetuated myths, Ruskin’s name is not necessarily that well known. The exhibition considers some messages that are so current for today. Ideas of wellbeing, community, co-operation and environmental concern. Ruskin’s work, in word and image, amounts to so much that is pertinent and, of course, beautiful to look at.’

• John Ruskin: The Power of Seeing is on show at Two Temple Place in London until 22 April (www.twotempleplace.org).
Events

Ruskin Today: 1819–2019

Until 7 April: Ruskin’s Good Looking! Absence and presence in John Ruskin’s clothing – Brantwood, Coniston, Cumbria.

Until 22 April: John Ruskin: The Power of Seeing – Two Temple Place, London.

Until 6 May: Parabola of Pre-Raphaelitism: Turner, Ruskin, Rossetti, Morris and Burne-Jones – Mitsubishi Ichigokan Gallery, Tokyo, Japan.

Until 31 May: Radical Victorianism: Progressive Achievements in the Age of Ruskin – Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA.


7 March: 6.30pm Ruskin Tomorrow – A Man for the Future. Lecture by Howard Hull, Director of Brantwood – Two Temple Place, London.


18 March, 6–9pm. John Ruskin: The Argument of the Eye. The Ruskin Art Club’s 20th Annual Ruskin Lecture by Professor Robert Hewson – University of Southern California, Los Angeles, USA.


11 April–4 August: Incandescence: Turner’s Venice – Brantwood, Coniston, Cumbria.

26 April: 4.15pm. The Teaching of Art is the Teaching of all Things: John Ruskin and his School of Drawing. Lecture by Professor Robert Hewson – Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

10–18 May: Ruskin’s England from Oxford to the Lakes – Nine-day tour organised by the Guild of St George.

15 May–5 August: Tea, Mingei & Fors, celebrating the legacy of John Ruskin in Japan – Blue Gallery, Brantwood, Coniston, Cumbria.

26–27 May: Topos (Yan Tan Tethera). Cumbria Youth Dance Company, inspired by Ruskin’s love of mountains – Brantwood, Coniston, Cumbria.


1 June: Lecture, Prize Presentation and AGM of the Ruskin Society – The Art Workers’ Guild, 6 Queen Square, London.


27–29 July: The Ruskin Research Centre for Culture, Landscape and the Environment. Two venues: Ruskin Library, Lancaster University and Brantwood, Coniston, Cumbria.

Terracotta portrait bust of Ruskin, 1887, Benjamin Creswick. H. 30.5cm. W. 21.5cm. D.15cm. © Collection of the Guild of St George/Museums Sheffield.

8 August–11 November: Treasure from Dust: Ruskin’s Geology – Brantwood, Coniston, Cumbria.


5 September–8 December: Unto this Last: John Ruskin at 200. Exhibition – Yale Centre for British Art, Lecture Hall, New Haven, USA.


7–9 October: A Great Community: John Ruskin’s Europe. Conference – Ca’ Foscari University, Venice, Italy.


• This Calendar of Events is compiled by Ruskin To-Day, an informal network devoted to promoting wider knowledge and understanding of Ruskin’s ideas (www.ruskinto-day.org).

• Ruskinland: How Ruskin Shapes Our World by Andrew Hill is published by Pallas Athene at £19.99.
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By Appointment Only
A passionate public outcry, a momentous call for funds and a complicated legal battle for possession of the world-famous marble sculpture The Three Graces by the Venetian artist Antonio Canova (1757–1822) took place in the United Kingdom in 1994. The prime contenders were the Getty Museum in Malibu, and in Britain the National Heritage Memorial Fund and National Art Collections Fund. The colossal sum of £7.6million was finally raised by institutions and members of the public, and a masterpiece by the most famous sculptor of the 19th-century remained in Britain. It is now permanently on show either in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London or in the National Galleries of Scotland in Edinburgh – it is jointly owned by both institutions.

Canova (2) created the bewitching sculpture of Thalia (youth and beauty), Euphrosyne (mirth) and Aglaia (elegance), the three lovely daughters of Zeus and companions to the Muses, for John Russell, 6th Duke of Bedford (1766–1839).

The Duke had visited him in his studio in Rome in 1814 and had seen there the original marble version of The Three Graces (1) carved for Napoleon Bonaparte’s first wife, the Empress Joséphine (1763–1814). She had died in May of that year, and the Duke offered to buy the group from the sculptor, but her son Eugène de Beauharnais claimed it, and it ended up in the Hermitage in St Peters burg. The Duke then commissioned a second version of The Three Graces. Differing in some details and with a slight variation in size, the new group was installed in 1819 at Woburn Abbey by Canova himself, in a specially constructed Temple of the Graces. It was top-lit under a coffered rotunda set over a rotating plinth, often illuminated by candle-light and rotated to enable the Duke and his guests to fully admire it from every angle.

Later The Three Graces became somewhat neglected until the 14th Duke of Bedford (1940–2003) sold it in 1985 to an investment company based in the Cayman Islands, which, in turn, attempted to sell it to the Getty Museum in Malibu (the Duke had offered it to the British Museum in lieu of taxes and had been refused). The sale...
was only legally possible because the sculpture was not part of the ‘fixtures’ of Woburn Abbey and, therefore, was not subject to listed building protection.

In 1814, Canova’s marble sculptures in Joséphine de Beauharnais’s outstanding art collection at the Château de la Malmaison, just west of Paris, bewitched the Russian tsar, Alexander I (1801–25) when he paid the former empress a visit – a visit that had a dramatic outcome. Joséphine died soon after from a chill brought on by walking in the cold night air of her magnificent gardens wearing a flimsy dress.

Following Joséphine’s demise, the tsar bought many objects from her collection – among them several works by Canova. These were sent to St Petersburg, where they were displayed in the Winter Palace (later the Hermitage Museum). A craze among the Russian aristocracy for Canova’s seductive sculptures with their flawless contours, the quintessence of the fashionable new Neo-classical style, followed the tsar’s acquisition.

The Three Graces and other pieces by Canova from the Hermitage Museum now form the centrepiece of Canova e l’Antico (Canova and Antiquity), a large exhibition at the National Archaeological Museum in Naples opening on 24 March. It focuses on Canova’s relationship with Greek and Roman art as a source of inspiration for his own paintings and sculptures; and on how he came to develop, out of his passionate study of antique models, his own restrained aesthetics based on clear, harmonious forms and calm expression.

Prince Yusupov (best known as the leader of the group of aristocrats who killed Rasputin) who married Tsar Nicholas II’s niece, acquired a copy of Canova’s Psyche Revived by Cupid’s Kiss (5), though this is not in the current exhibition. Another piece from his collection, Winged Cupid, 1797 (4) has, however, travelled to Naples to join Hebe, 1805, Cupid and Psyche Standing, 1793 (6), Paris, 1812, Dancer, 1812 (7) and The Three Graces – all on loan from Russia.

These will be displayed alongside the museum’s magnificent Greek and Roman statues (10), wall paintings (3) and mosaics forming a continuous dialogue between ancient and Neo-classical art.

The Hermitage has also loaned another antique masterpiece from its collections, the supremely elegant 1st-century AD Sleeping Hermaphroditus, and a small bronze copy of Canova’s dramatic and monumental marble group, Hercules and Lichas, originally made to compete with the massive...
Farnese Hercules, from the 3rd century AD. This enlarged copy of a Greek 4th-century BC statue by the famous sculptor Lysippus is in the royal collections in Naples.

In addition, there are clay models, paintings (9) and drawings by Canova, directly inspired by Roman artefacts he had seen during his visits to Naples and to the newly discovered ruins of Pompeii and Herculaneum before he had established himself in Rome in 1781 and opened his own studio there.

Canova was responsible for the original design of his sculptures, which he modelled in clay. His assistants would then roughly block out the marble for the master to complete the final carving, ensuring that the surface was finished in such a way as to suggest the soft flesh of the figures through gradation and tonal depth in the patina.

One of Canova’s early works, Triumphant Perseus, purchased by Pope Pius VII (1800–23) in 1801, was clearly modelled on the Apollo Belvedere in the Vatican’s collection. This large marble 2nd-century AD sculpture is believed to be a copy of an original bronze made by the 4th-century Greek artist Leochares, one of the artists who had worked on the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus in Asia Minor.

The comparison between the two sculptures – ancient and modern – generated heated debates among intellectuals and artists of the time, all of whom were engaged in a serious study of antiquity in the wake of the leading art historian Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–68). He indicated that imitation of the antique was to be a means of discovering ideal beauty and conveying the spirit of the original, as did Canova. The German scholar considered the Apollo Belvedere the most sublime expression of Greek art: ‘...of all the works of antiquity that have escaped destruction, the statue of Apollo represents the highest ideal of art,’ he wrote in his History of the Art of Antiquity, 1764.

It was the Apollo Belvedere that inspired Canova to create an heroic four-metre-high nude statue of Napoleon as Mars Pacificus (Mars the Peacemaker) 1802–06, holding a gilded Victory orb in his right hand and a staff in his left. But, surprisingly, the statue did not please the emperor. Rather than being flattered at his portrayal as a god and a paragon of virile beauty embodying the highest virtues, Napoleon refused to accept the statue, finding it ‘too athletic’, and he banned it from being exhibited in public. Through
an ironic twist of fate the huge statue ended up, in 1817, in the imposing stairwell of Apsley House, the Duke of Wellington’s residence in London, where the Duke is said to have used it as a hat-stand and where it can still be seen today. Using the head of Mars Pacificus as his model, Canova later created an idealised bust of Napoleon in the style of a Roman emperor (11).

Transmuting the antique into the contemporary to enhance his patrons’ status became a standard practice for Canova, who elevated his sitters to the Olympian heights of antique models. This was especially true of the Bonaparte family: Napoleon’s sister, the charming Paolina Borghese (1780–1825), was represented, rather shockingly, as the half-naked Venus Victrix; and their mother, Letizia Ramolino Bonaparte (1750–1836), as an upper-class Roman matron, full of gravitas, mirroring the 1st-century AD Agrippina Farnese in the...
Archaeological Museum in Naples.

Canova went one step further with the Bourbon king Ferdinand I of the Two Sicilies (1816–25): he represented him in the guise of Minerva, the goddess of wisdom and statesmanship and a paragon of virtue (8) but Ferdinand did not seem to object to this twist of gender identity.

Another controversy that arose among contemporary connoisseurs concerned Canova’s use of mixed media and, sometimes, of colour to enliven the facial features of some of his sculptures. In Hebe, for instance, the goddess wears a gilded headband and holds a cup, also gilded, and vase in her hands.

Hebe, the daughter of Zeus and Hera and the embodiment of youth, served cups of nectar, the drink of immortality and eternal youth, to the gods on Mount Olympus. Canova portrays the goddess weightlessly stepping over clouds, hardly touching them with her bare feet, her drapery flowing behind her legs, heightening her dance-like movement. Her skin was waxed to a honey colour and her cheeks and lips were touched with red paint.

Despite increasing archaeological evidence and Latin literary sources suggesting that ancient sculptures were painted, the use of polychromy was then still viewed with suspicion because it would destroy the statues’ noble simplicity and pure moral implications.

In his Discourses (a series of lectures given at the Royal Academy of Arts in London between 1769 and 1790) Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723–92), for example, argued that the admiration of sculpture was rooted in ‘intellectual pleasure’ and the ‘contemplation of perfect beauty’; the addition of colour transformed the art into ‘mere entertainment to the senses’.

And, in his History of the Art of Antiquity, Winckelmann concluded that ‘colour contributes to beauty but is not beauty itself [...] a beautiful body will be all the more beautiful the whiter it is’.

It was generally thought that colour lessened the austerity and seriousness of sculpture: worse, that colour threatened to make the art of sculpture appealing to a new class of common viewers, to ‘amateurs’ who might be pleased, or even be ‘entertained’ by the expedient. Then there would be no difference between the serious work of a great artist and wax-works.

Ideal beauty based on the tenets of Greek Classical art was achieved by eliminating all imperfections in representing female and male bodies, by redesigning them to match the perfect balance of Classical proportions through a process akin to that used nowadays by digital technology for retouching fashion plates.

In our own time of unrest and unrestrained excess, it is consoling and restful to gaze on the well-mannered, calm serenity and cool perfection of Canova’s life-enhancing, white marble sculpture.

Canova e l’antico (Canova and Antiquity) is on show at the National Archaeological Museum (www.museoarcheologiconapoli.it) in Naples from 24 March until 21 July 2019.

The accompanying catalogue (in Italian only) edited by G Pavanello is published by Electa.
All cameos, dating from the Hellenistic period when the craft began until Late Antiquity, were fashioned from hardstones, mostly varieties of chalcedony, such as layered onyx or sardonyx, though other gems were employed. Unlike the familiar cameos carved in Naples and elsewhere from the 18th century onwards, they were never cut from shell. Ironically, the ubiquity of the latter have rendered cameos more familiar to the wider public than the much more common intaglios employed as seals. The carving of tiny pieces of stone into what are in effect miniature sculptures, required considerable skill with the drill and abrasives as well as manual dexterity.

While the largest cameos would have been mounted in frames for display, most were worn as jewels in brooches and pendants or, if small enough, in rings. But, apart from their obvious function as jewels they could serve as badges of loyalty to an emperor or as religious amulets, though many were to their betrothed.

Having published the gems (both intaglios and cameos) from Roman Britain, as well as those in the museum collections of Cambridge and Oxford, I have good reason to know how rare Roman cameos are, both as site finds and in collections of engraved gems, both in museums and privately owned. So when the expert, collector and dealer in ancient gems, Derek J. Content, asked me to publish his family collection, then of some 200 items, in the late 1980s, the resultant catalogue achieved something of the status of a handbook.

Derek has continued to collect with an almost unfailing perspicacity, and three decades later has more than doubled the size of his collection, to produce what is surely the most representative assemblage of ancient cameos outside the

1. Emperor Tiberius, circa AD 14 or shortly afterwards, sardonyx. 16.3mm x 14mm.
2. Psyche in a two-horse chariot, 1st century BC, sardonyx cameo, mounted in a gold ring. 25.3mm x 22.6mm.

Usually made of onyx, sardonyx or other gems, rare Roman cameos can also be carved from amethyst or glass to show Imperial portraits or scenes from Classical myths, and they can be used as propaganda as well as love tokens, as Martin Henig illustrates with some fine examples from the Content Collection.
The vast majority date from between the 1st century BC and the 5th or 6th century AD, but there are small representative groups of hardstone carvings that date from before the cameo series properly begins, as well as of Byzantine and medieval cameos, often drawing on the Classical tradition. In addition, there are cameos from the East, from the Sassanian Empire, India and further East, an interest that Derek Content has done much to develop, adding an engaging and important chapter to the book.

The use of cameos for propaganda originated in Late Hellenistic times, especially in Ptolemaic Alexandria (and one gem in the collection may figure a bust of Cleopatra VII), although the best-known examples are Roman. The largest and most famous cameos depicting the emperors are known as State Cameos and include the Gemma Augustea and the Gemma Claudia, both in Vienna, and the Grand Cammée de France in Paris, all of Julio-Claudian date, as well as the Constantinian Great Cameo now in Leiden, celebrating the emperor's victory over Maxentius at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in AD 312.

The Content Collection contains an important fragment of one such State Cameo, evidently figuring two Tetrarchs (3) of the very end of the 3rd century AD, most probably Diocletian and Maximian, clasping each other's hands in amity, watched by an imperial eagle.

Most are, inevitably, examples of state propaganda on a smaller scale, though these, too, were intended to be handed out to powerful people in order to secure their loyalty and ensure the future of a dynasty, those of Julio-Claudian, Severan and Tetrarchic times being especially noteworthy. The dynastic gems in the collection include: a remarkable double portrait of Julius Caesar (4) carved from the upper dark layers of the stone, with the bust of a female partner behind – although damaged, she recalls the bust of Augustea and the Gemma Claudia.
Venus Genetrix, the goddess from whom he claimed to be descended, and who is depicted on some of his coins; a portrait of Tiberius (1) of a type doubtless distributed in number in order to affirm that, in AD 14, he was the chosen successor of Augustus; and no fewer than two of Nero on cameos produced circa AD 54, when Agrippina II was attempting to secure her son’s accession to the Imperial throne. From a later period, there is a figure of Caracalla sacrificing over an altar, which was presumably carved after the death of his father, Septimius Severus, at York in AD 211.

Most cameos in the Content Collection, however, reflect the more domestic themes of daily life and loves. Some of them are still set in gold rings, pendants and earrings, emphasising their importance as luxury artefacts.

Although there are a few earlier hardstone carvings, the series really begins in Late Ptolemaic Egypt with deities. Among them are a double portrait of Zeus and Hera and a head of Athena, two busts of Eros, one still set in a gold ring, and a cameo of Psyche in her chariot drawn by winged horses, likewise mounted in a gold ring (2). These were surely tokens of love, representing aspects of physical and sensual desire.

The Psyche gem may be the work of a Greek gem-cutter working in the court of Augustus, after the battle of Actium in 3 BC. Some cameos were made of glass, and a very important example, depicting the love of Aphrodite and Adonis (6), is actually signed by the Augustan gem-cutter Sostratos.

Unsurprisingly, Eros, and indeed Psyche, continue to be popular subjects on cameos right through the Roman period. Eros was punished by his mother Aphrodite for encouraging infidelity and for mistreating Psyche, a theme that is represented by two cameos depicting Eros bound, one of them actually bearing the words, in Greek, ‘I am suffering’. However, a third and very beautiful cameo of Augustan date, depicting Eros contemplating two dead butterflies (9) not only symbolises the way in which carnal desires afflict the soul, but may also allude to the brevity of human life.

A common theme has Eros leaning upon an upturned torch, a clear example of a memento mori. It is hard to get away from the morbidity of the Romans, which is expressed in literature by Trimalchio’s fixation on death at the dinner-party, satirised by Petronius in his famous novel, the Satyricon.

Eros was also associated with the god of wine, Dionysus (Bacchus to the Romans), and a charming cameo
of Augustan date depicts two *erotes* pulling a cart on which sprawls a drunken Silenus, accompanied by a boisterous young satyr (5).

Cameos often possessed a protective function by using images to counter such malignant forces as the Evil Eye. Powerful saviour deities, notably Dionysus, god of wine and the theatre, were popular, as were members of his entourage such as Pan, maenads and satyrs. There is a powerful, grimacing mask of Dionysus’ tutor, Silenus (7) on a cameo, once in the famous Marlborough collection, as well as Dionysus’ varied animal familiars, the panther and Indian parakeet among them.

When Eros is either associated with Silenus or driving a two-horse chariot, pulled by panthers, he is also clearly linked to the world of this saviour god. Two cameos portray Hermes, a god friendly to people, and a bringer of wealth and prosperity. Asklepios, the healing god, is represented with his daughter Hygeia and young son Telesphorus, together regarded
the bald head and exaggerated visage of the mime actor represented by four cameos in the collection. One so-far unique cameo from Lincolnshire depicts a complete figure of this kind.

Another type of cameo, which guards against enchantment, shows animals performing human actions, such as an elephant mounted in a cart pulled by a pair of mice (11). There are some striking animal studies, including a lion, a stag, a rat, cockerels, storks, a parrot and an elephant head. They may well have had a symbolic value for their owners but in every case there was clearly an aesthetic appreciation of the form of each of these creatures.

Two very important categories are portraits of women and inscriptions. These return us to the theme of love tokens. Because the hairstyles of the women depicted on so many of the cameos are the same as those of empresses on 2nd-century and 3rd-century coins, some have thought that they were empresses, too. But, if that is true, it is odd that there are not even more showing emperors. In fact, the answer is given by an inscription on one of the cameos in the Content Collection, which reads ‘to the beautiful girl’.

These cameos vary in quality, but the best are items of jewellery, necklaces and hairnets. One of the finest is set in a lovely gold brooch (14 and 15).

There are a few double portraits emphasising harmony between couples, one of them quite strikingly so, depicting a couple in bed together. As this was worn in all likelihood by a woman, it no doubt

11. An elephant on a cart drawn by mice, 2nd century AD, sardonyx. 12mm x 9.3mm.

12. A hunter on a horse spearing a panther, which has itself caught a hare, or a kid, 4th–5th century AD, sardonyx. 28.9mm x 24mm.
reflects a liberated attitude to love in the personal realm, an attitude that comes to the fore in some of the inscriptions, for example in epigrams. This playful response is from a woman to her admirer: ‘I do not love you; it doesn’t bother me; I know it and I laugh. You love me and that’s best for you.’

The messages inscribed on cameos are often simply prayers for good fortune, good health or prosperity. They sometimes offered warnings to be watchful, accompanied by an image of a sleeping hound. Here, word and image go together: a dolphin is accompanied by ‘eternal friendship’; a standard and weapons are a military metaphor giving an invitation to ‘advance’; a hound chasing a hare (13) under it, in Greek, is the exclamation EAABEC (‘You’ve got me’).

Clasped hands reflected betrothal or marriage and express ‘good fortune and harmony’ for the couple, while a hand pinching an ear was for ‘remembrance’. Almost all the inscriptions were in Greek, only a very few in Latin. And this is reflected by the rare archaeological discoveries of cameos in the north-west provinces of Britain, Gaul and Germany, which show that Greek was the preferred language of love.

In the 4th to the 6th centuries, there were stylistic changes in cameo-cutting as in other art forms. At the same time, images became flatter and there was a greater emphasis on colour contrast and texture. This is seen on the State Cameos of the Constantinian age, such as the Leiden cameo and the Great cameo in Belgrade, but is also apparent in late Roman cameos in this collection portraying Bacchus with his panther, a priestess, Venus with Eros, Apollo and Daphne, and, most spectacularly, the pair of cameos depicting a hunt (12), also a common theme on contemporary silverware and mosaics.

Apart from relief cameos, gemcutters also worked in the round in works like the amethyst figurine depicting Asklepios (16), doubtless kept in some house shrine to protect its owner from ill-health. In addition, the rock crystal head of a barbarian and a tiny theatre mask, with open eyes and mouth, carved on a sardonyx, and a delicate amber ring topped by a figure of Eros teasing a goose, as well as fish, nuts and shells in chalcedony and rock crystal, demonstrate the range of hardstone carving in antiquity.

Helen Molesworth and I were tasked with the production of a new catalogue, covering both the original Content Collection and the very many additions since the 1980s. We hope it will serve as a handbook, both demonstrating the range of these remarkable objects and allowing archaeologists to put into context the occasional finds of cameos from scientifically conducted excavations.

The Complete Content Cameos by Martin Henig and Helen Molesworth is published, in hardback, by Brepols Publishers (available to order online at www.brepols.net) at €150.
As the title states, this amply illustrated book covers the years AD 284–476, a period that started with the accession of Diocletian and ended with the collapse of the western part of the Roman Empire. This was a time when the tactics and, to a lesser extent, the equipment of the Roman Empire in detail, as well as the influence of the ‘barbarian’ peoples on the Roman Army.

Starting with a clear chronology, which will be helpful to those not familiar with the period, the book is then divided into four chapters, two appendices, a bibliography and a small section dealing with re-enactors.

In the first chapter, Esposito gives an overall view of the army of the principate and how it was set up. At this time the Roman army was a complicated organisation but this is covered at only a superficial level. He then goes on to look at the threat to the empire from both east and west, which meant that a change in necessary strategy brought about the wider use of mounted troops. There were also changes in the social structure of society and the distinction between citizens and those in between. His markedly critical view is that the elderly are cowardly, cynical and small-minded. A lifetime of experience, according to Aristotle, makes one distrustful and uncertain. Yet, it is precisely these years of experience that many others value in the elderly. As Cicero comments: ‘... the ineptitude of youth requires the practical wisdom of age to strengthen and direct it’.

It would be unwise to adhere too closely to some Roman writers. For example, Cicero tells us: ‘If a small child dies, the loss must be borne calmly; if a baby in a cradle, one must not even lament’. Not all Romans were quite so severe though and, as the book points out, funerary inscriptions lament the loss of children who died as young as nine days.

Even for the elite who survived into mature adulthood, there was the risk of war, and upsetting those in power, which could result in death. Jones uses ancient accounts to relate some of the most notable cases. During the Civil War, Cato the Younger opted for suicide rather than pleading to the victorious Caesar. He spent an evening reading about the immortality of the soul and Socrates’ death in Plato’s Phaedo before stabbing himself.

Petronius and Seneca both killed themselves on the orders of Nero. Petronius did so in style; after cutting his veins, he bound them together and enjoyed dinner and light-hearted wit, for instance, responds to part of Plato’s Republic, Hellenic views on death and old age are also taken into account.

Aristotle is a particularly fruitful source as he characterises the young, the old, and those in between. His marked criticism is that the elderly are cowardly, cynical and small-minded. A lifetime of experience, according to Aristotle, makes one distrustful and uncertain. Yet, it is precisely these years of experience that many others value in the elderly. As Cicero comments: ‘... the ineptitude of youth requires the practical wisdom of age to strengthen and direct it’.

Today, with life expectancies generally on the rise, death, the great inevitability, seems further and further off, and old age is a considerably more protracted affair. Here, to remind us of our own mortality and what lies ahead, are the long-dead Romans as presented by Peter Jones, writer of popular Classics books, such as Learn Latin and Learn Ancient Greek as well as the ‘Ancient and Modern’ column in the Spectator. ‘All the problems associated with old age that so transfix us today were dealt with two millennia ago,’ writes Jones. So who better to turn to for ancient black pearls of wisdom than the Romans?

Tackling a morbid subject with a touch of wit, Memento Mori brings together comments from great Roman writers such as Pliny, Plautus, Cicero, Quintilian and Seneca, as well as looking at some touching epitaphs. As the Romans were greatly indebted to the Greeks (Cicero’s dialogue On Old Age, for instance, responds to part of Plato’s Republic), Hellenic views on death and old age are also taken into account.

Despite its grim subject matter covering gory suicides, executions and death in the arena, this book turns out to be an enjoyable, engaging and educational book that makes ancient attitudes on mortality accessible to us all.

Lucia Marchini
Magic is in the air and it’s not just thanks to JK Rowling and Philip Pullman. With recent exhibitions on amulets and witchcraft at the Ashmolean, and Smoke and Mirrors, which examines the relationship between magic and psychology, set to open at the Wellcome Collection on 11 April, it is as well to brush up on your spells, omens and oracles – and this compact volume will help you do so.

Dr Philip Matyszak has written many books on ancient history and also one on Greek and Roman myths, so he is well placed to show us how, in the past, casting curses and concocting love potions were an integral part of everyday life. And that is his point: with the constant threat of intervention by capricious gods and goddesses, people interpreted unusual or unexplained natural phenomena as having supernatural significance. Weather, especially thunder or lightning, the sight of a comet or an eclipse, the appearance of birds or beasts, of ill or good omen, could signify a battle to be won or lost. Augury was a skill in which even the great statesman Cicero was qualified.

There were many different ways to divine the future: you could consult an oracle, seer, or soothsayer. Dreams (which Cicero called ‘wild magic’) and visions were viewed as prophetic, but to summon magical power or protection you had to invoke the gods or talk to the dead or, a safer bet, engage the services of a sorcerer or necromancer. The role of magic was to ward off curses or catastrophe, to control or destroy enemies, and to heal the damage inflicted on the victim by gods, or other supernatural agency, man or Nature.

Lindsay Fulcher

ANSWERS

1) laros (Ancient Greek)
   A) a small cavity in a rock
   B) wild, unmanageable, obstinate, perverse
   C) a ravenous seabird

2) hirtus (Latin)
   A) rough, hairy, shaggy
   B) silvery grey approaching white
   C) a tree bare of leaves or twigs

3) oisupe (Ancient Greek)
   A) perpetual grief
   B) a state of voluptuous dreaminess
   C) the grease extracted from sheep’s wool

4) lorica (Latin)
   A) a new-born child’s cry
   B) a leather cuirass
   C) a pimple

5) epagallomenos (Homeric Greek)
   A) exulting in
   B) babbling, chattering
   C) blub-cheeked, wide-mouthed

6) denus (Latin)
   A) an urchin
   B) the tenth
   C) thin and lanky

7) palos (Ancient Greek)
   A) diminutive, puny
   B) a bald head
   C) the lot cast from a shaken helmet

8) incoquo (Latin)
   A) to boil in
   B) to set up camp
   C) to poke around with one’s nose, as dogs do

9) sintes (Homeric Greek)
   A) thirsty
   B) ravenous
   C) the swampy surface of a wet ploughed field

10) conculco (Latin)
    A) to tread upon, to trample
    B) to deliver a blow
    C) to come together, to gather

11) kirkos (Homeric Greek)
    A) a hawk or falcon that flies in circles
    B) a circle
    C) a rainbow

12) occatio (Latin)
    A) a brief respite or interval in the weather
    B) a meeting place
    C) a harrowing

• 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.

Worn on the spine of our great leather cuirass, the Minerva logo was designed by the great graphic artist Michael Channon. His work can be seen on all Minervamagazine.com products, from our beautiful binders, tough, shiny, stylish and practical, to our great range of accessories.

**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?*

1) laros (Ancient Greek)
   - A) a small cavity in a rock
   - B) wild, unmanageable, obstinate, perverse
   - C) a ravenous seabird

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    - A) a brief respite or interval in the weather
    - B) a meeting place
    - C) a harrowing

**ANSWERS**

1) C) a ravenous seabird
2) A) rough, hairy, shaggy
3) C) the grease extracted from sheep’s wool
4) B) a leather cuirass
5) A) exulting in
6) C) thin and lanky
7) A) diminutive, puny
8) C) to poke around with one’s nose, as dogs do
9) B) ravenous
10) B) to deliver a blow
11) C) a rainbow
12) C) a harrowing

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UNITED KINGDOM

BATH

George Shaw: A Corner of a Foreign Field

A council estate in Coventry may be an unconventional subject for a painting, but it is one that George Shaw has embraced in his hyper-realistic works, attentively rendered, not in oil, watercolour, or acrylic, but in Humbrol, a thick, quick-drying enamel paint that is more commonly used for decorating model aeroplanes and cars. Shaw, who grew up on the Tile Hill estate in Coventry in the 1970s–80s, captured overlooked scenes around the estate, abandoned garages and surrounding neglected woodland. Work from 1996 to the present-day is on show in this exhibition that brings together 20 of his paintings, such as Ash Wednesday 8.30am, 2004–05 (above) and 50 of his drawings. Together, these make a compelling case for the presence and significance of urban landscape in contemporary art.

Holburne Museum
+44 (0)1225 388569
(www.holburne.org)

Until 6 May 2019.

The Triumph of Pan

In this year’s National Gallery Masterpiece Tour Poussin’s painting, which explore the relationship between the natural world and human activity in the city, on the coast, in the field and in the garden. Fitzwilliam Museum
+44 (0)1223 332900
(www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk)

From 26 March to 30 June 2019.

Oscar Murillo

In his first solo show at a UK public institution since 2013, the London-based Columbian artist Oscar Murillo (born 1986) is showcasing a new body of work encompassing painting, video, installation and live performance, and extending far beyond the limits of the gallery walls. The range of media and this multifaceted approach enhances the exhibition’s sense of exploration of displacement and other topical themes such as the economic and human impact of globalisation.

Kettle’s Yard
+44 (0)1223 748100
(kettlesyard.co.uk)

From 9 April to 23 June 2019.

EDINBURGH

Ancient Egypt Rediscovered

After undergoing a major, 15-year-long transformation, the National

Minerva March/April 2019
Museum of Scotland has opened three new permanent galleries displaying more than 1500 objects, many on view for the first time.

This coincides with the 200th anniversary of the first Ancient Egyptian artefacts entering the museum’s collections. The Ancient Egypt Rediscovered gallery offers visitors the chance to delve into 3000 years of Ancient Egyptian history and also to learn about the work of Scottish archaeologists, such as Alexander Henry Rhind (1833–63). Highlights include: a well-preserved painted, sycamore-fig wood funerary canopy from circa 5 BC (above), which was excavated by Rhind; a gold ring bearing the name of Nefertiti, and the only double coffin found in Egypt. The second new gallery, Exploring East Asia, displays objects from the diverse cultures, traditions and histories of China, Japan and Korea. Among the varied exhibits are: Chinese oracle bones from 1200 BC; an 18th-century headdress made of falcon feathers; rare military outfits and Japanese woodblock prints. The third new gallery, Art of Ceramics, looks at Ancient Greek pottery, royal tableware and contemporary sculpture, as well as the use of ceramics beyond the studio in 19th-century false teeth and, during the 20th century, heat-protective coatings for rockets.

重大新聞

National Museum of Scotland
+44 (0)300 123 6789
(nms.ac.uk)
Ongoing.

Andy Warhol and Eduardo Paolozzi: I want to be a machine
In a 1963 interview the Pop Artist Andy Warhol (1928–87) stated, ‘I want to be a machine’ signalling his interest in automation, mechanical processes, and machines, which was shared by his contemporary Eduardo Paolozzi (1924–2005) – as this exhibition shows. Working on either side of the Atlantic, both artists drew inspiration from the mass-produced images of popular and consumer culture, and both embraced the potential of screen-printing from photographs as a more mechanised means of producing works of art. Paolozzi’s work reflects his fascination with the relationship between people and machines, and the beauty within machine forms.

Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art
+44 (0)131 624 6200
(www.nationalgalleries.org)
Until 2 June 2019.

LONDON
Edvard Munch: love and angst
The work of the Norwegian artist Edvard Munch (1863–1944) can be recognised by most – especially his iconic 1895 painting The Scream, which is even today referenced in the design of an emoji as a short-hand expression of fear. This expression can be seen elsewhere in the artist’s work, including a rare black-and-white lithograph version (left). The large selection of prints charts his mastery of this artform and his acute rendering of a broad spectrum of feelings. Many of the works are on loan from Norway’s Munch Museum, and – for the first time in the UK – Munch’s original matrices used to transfer ink on to paper are on show. These are normally discarded, but Munch kept all of his: three are shown next to their corresponding prints. Among them is Head by Head, 1905, which reflects the complexity of human relationships.

British Museum
+44 (0)20 7323 8000
(britishmuseum.org)
From 11 April until 21 July 2019.

Reimagining Captain Cook: Pacific Perspectives
Contemporary art and historic artefacts have been brought together to re-examine Captain Cook’s relationship with the people of the Pacific and the legacy of his voyages, some 250 years after he first set sail. The various ways Cook is remembered in Australia, Aotearoa (New Zealand), New Caledonia, Hawaii, Vanuatu and Tahiti, as well as attitudes towards the explorer in Britain, are explored through a range of objects. From Hawaii, an 18th-century feathered cloak (below) is on display along with a colourful 1970s’ shirt featuring images made by artists travelling with Cook. Acquired especially for this exhibition, it is the first Hawaiian shirt to enter the British Museum’s collection. Other highlights include: contemporary works by Māori artists such as Lisa Reihana, whose TakWhen Possession, Lono, is inspired by 19th-century French wallpaper and reimagines early encounters between Pacific Islanders and Europeans.

British Museum
+44 (0)20 7323 8000
(britishmuseum.org)
Until 4 August 2019.

Harald Sollberg: Painting Norway
To mark the 150th anniversary of his birth, Dulwich Picture Gallery is presenting the first exhibition devoted to landscape painter Harald Sollberg (1869–1935) outside his native Norway. More than 90 works and archival material span the entirety of his career from his earliest output as a 20-year-old to the last year of his life, showing his enduring love of the Nordic landscape, particularly the Rondane mountains, the significance of colour and symbolism in his work, and other influences such as Norwegian Naturalism and...
Sorolla: Spanish master of light
Portraits, landscapes, seascapes, garden views and other works by Spanish painter Joaquín Sorolla y Bastida (1863–1923) have been brought together for the most complete exhibition of his paintings outside Spain. As there are few works by Sorolla in UK public collections, this is a rare chance to see his evocative images of his native country. This is the first show in the UK dedicated to Valencia-born Sorolla since 1908, when he mounted his own show of work in London’s Grafton Galleries. In the previous decade he had sent his vast canvases exploring social themes to major exhibitions around the world. They are now on show along with his sunny depictions of bathers and historic Spanish sites, such as Burgos cathedral under Snow, 1910 (below), and Monastery of San Juan de los Reyes. Both bear witness to his careful use of light.

National Gallery
+44 (0)20 7747 2885
(www.nationalgallery.org.uk)
From 18 March to 7 July 2019.

Only Human: Photographs by Martin Parr
Photographer Martin Parr is best known for his colourful images of the public that offer a snapshot of everyday life and leisure activities at home and abroad. This exhibition also addresses the complicated issue of national identity. Britishness, particularly in the time of Brexit, is examined through the images that show the British abroad, including soldiers in army camps. The rituals, ceremonies and traditions of the British establishment are recorded and famous figures, such as Tracey Emin, Vivienne Westwood, Pelé, and The Perry Family – Grayson, Philippa and daughter Florence, 2012 (above) are pictured. The exhibition also features intriguing self-portraits of Photo Escultura. Not seen in the UK before, this is a group of shrine-like carved photo-sculptures, based on Parr’s likenesses and commissioned from the last remaining traditional maker in Mexico City.

National Portrait Gallery
+44 (0)20 7306 0055
(www.npg.org.uk)
From 7 March to 27 May 2019.

Anish Kapoor
Pitzhanger Manor, the country home of the Regency architect and collector Sir John Soane, set in what was once rural Ealing, re-opens on 16 March after a three-year-long £12-million conservation and restoration project. The house has been returned to Soane’s original design, with later architectural additions and extensions removed, and key sculptural and decorative elements reinstated. Built between 1800 and 1804, the manor has an adjoining gallery, added in the 1930s, which will now house a programme of exhibitions that showcase contemporary artists, architects and designers, and offer a fresh look at Soane’s legacy. The inaugural exhibition presents the work of Anish Kapoor in a series of his sculptures that invite viewers to reconsider their perceptions of form and space, reflecting Soane’s use of mirrors and light to manipulate space, which he did so successfully in his Lincoln’s Inn home (now Sir John Soane’s Museum).

Pitzhanger Manor
(0)20 8825 9808
(www.pitzhanger.org.uk)
From 16 March to 18 August 2019.

‘He has been here and fired a gun’: Turner, Constable and the Royal Academy
On Varnishing Day, all the artists exhibiting at the Royal Academy’s Summer Exhibition were given the opportunity to make last-minute adjustments to their works. In 1832, it was a particularly momentous occasion because Turner’s seascape Helvoetsluys – the City of Utrecht, circa 1520 (below) which is an
Wakefield

Magdalene Odundo: The Journey of Things

For her burnished ceramics, Magdalene Odundo has drawn inspiration from artistic traditions across the world, stretching back some 3000 years. In her quest to learn more about ceramic arts and crafts, she travelled widely, in Africa, in Kenya, Uganda and Nigeria, and in Asia, Central America and Europe. These journeys have made their mark on Odundo’s own visual language. Her large, often asymmetrical vessels, with striking silhouettes that evoke human forms, are often glazed in dense black – as in Untitled, 1989 (below) – and bright orange. Her distinctive pieces are on show alongside objects chosen by the artist for the role they played in inspiring her work. They include Ancient Egyptian and Greek pots, ritual sculpture from Africa, and British studio pottery by Lucy Rie. The show also explores the artist’s interest in diasporic identity, the human body and the role of objects in intercultural relationships – all of which inform and influence her work.

The Hepworth Wakefield
+44 (0)1924 247360
(www.hepworthwakefield.org.uk)
Until 2 June 2019.

Wincanton

Elizabeth Blackadder: From the Artist’s Studio

As the first woman to be elected to both the Royal Scottish Academy and the Royal Academy of Arts, and holder of the title of Her Majesty’s Painter and Limner in Scotland, Dame Elizabeth Blackadder, who was born in Falkirk in 1931, has enjoyed a distinguished career. This exhibition, organised by Hampshire Cultural Trust, presents her varied works by covering the entirety of her career from its roots in the 1950s. Early drawings are on display along with more recent experiments in colour and space. Still lifes in oil, prints of cats, etchings – based on her travels in Italy and Japan – and botanical watercolours reflect the artist’s interests over the decades. One of the highlights is a tapestry from the Fleming-Wyfold Art Foundation featuring Elizabeth Blackadder’s beautiful irises (above) from 1987.

The Gallery, Winchester Discovery Centre, Winchester until 20 March.
(www.hampshireculture.org.uk)

United States

Boston, Massachusetts
Graciela Iturbide’s Mexico

Born the oldest of 13 children in Mexico City in 1942, photographer Graciela Iturbide has spent the decades since the late 1970s capturing scenes of her country through her lens. The photographs highlight the beauty and deep complexities of her homeland, showing both the diversity and inequality of Mexican society. Nearly 140 photographs explore rich rituals and the relationship between human activity and the natural world, life in town and country, and indigenous and Spanish cultures. One of her striking images is a gelatin silver print, Birds on the Post, Highway/ Pájaros en el poste, Carretera, Guanajuato, México, 1990 (below),

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston +1 617 267 9300
(www.mfa.org)
Until 12 May 2019.

Los Angeles, California

Spectacular Mysteries: Renaissance Drawings Revealed

Despite the proliferation and sheer sophistication of Italian Renaissance drawings, many of them retain an element of mystery, with questions remaining about their purpose, their subjects, and even the artists behind them. Detailing the research into these questions, this exhibition investigates some stunning drawings selected from the Getty’s own and from private collections, that were made at a time when increasing patronage of paintings, sculpture and architecture led to the spread of artists’ studios and the development of robust production processes for drawings. To help in the attribution
of works, some drawings can be compared stylistically to others. This was the case for Michelangelo’s Study of a Mourning Woman, circa 1500–05 (below), acquired by the Getty in 2016, which exhibits his characteristic penwork and his handling of drapery. Inscriptions may offer clues, too, but, as the exhibition cautions, inaccurate attributions might have been made by optimistic past owners. Linking a drawing to a completed painting, sculpture or print can also shed some light on the sitter or subject and the work’s purpose.

**J Paul Getty Museum**

+1 310 440 7300

(www.getty.edu/museum/)

Until 28 April 2019.

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**NEW YORK, New York**

Monumental Journey: The Daguerreotypes of Girault de Prangé

Since the 19th century many sites in the Eastern Mediterranean have undergone great changes due to climate change, urbanisation and human conflict. The innovative work of French photographer Joseph-Philibert Girault de Prangé (1804–92) offers much more than a snapshot of how they appeared, when he travelled throughout the region in 1842–45, producing more than 1000 daguerreotypes. A true pioneer, Girault used an oversize, than 1000 daguerreotypes. 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UNITED KINGDOM

LONDON

Accordia Lectures
Moving bodies and making place: rethinking pilgrimage in early Roman Latium
Emma-Jayne Graham
12 March
Joint Lecture with the Institute of Classical Studies
Room 349, Senate House, Malet Street

New perspectives from old data: a century of archaeology and museum history of Villanovan Tarquinia
Judith Toms
7 May
Joint Lecture with the UCL Institute of Archaeology
Room 612, Gordon Square
The Accordia Research Institute's Italy Lectures are held on Tuesdays at 5.30pm.
www.ucl.ac.uk/accordia

Blowing up the Parthenon: Greek Antiquity as a Burden and as a Rival on the Modern Greek Stage
The inaugural Niki Marangou Lecture will be delivered by Professor Vayos Liapis from the Open University of Cyprus. In it he will discuss recent iconoclastic attacks on Greek Antiquity and how they relate to a century of Greek history.
Wednesday 6 March, 1pm
Museum of London

Gresham's bequest to Samuel Pepys and John Evelyn
Margaret Willes
Monday 11 March, 1pm
Barnard's Inn Hall

The Natural Environment of Tudor London
Carolyn Roberts
Wednesday 10 April, 6pm
Museum of London

500 Years of Mathematics: Are We Living in a New Golden Age?
Chris Budd
Tuesday 30 April, 1pm
Museum of London

Gresham's Exchange
Stephen Alford
Wednesday 8 May, 6pm
Museum of London

Sir Thomas Gresham, 1519–2019
John Guy
Thursday 13 June, 6pm
Guildhall Old Library
www.gresham.ac.uk/series/gresham-500-celebrations/

SPAIN

BILBAO

Architecture Effects
The Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao is a classic example of how the power of architecture and art can transform a city, which makes it a fitting venue for this exhibition which explores architecture, art and storytelling in the 21st century. It asks What makes architecture more than just buildings and considers the use of digital technology in design and construction, with sculpture, prototypes and models, examples of artificial intelligence, archival material, videos and animation. A slide projection by Mikel Eskuaira entitled Bilbao, circa 1997 (below left) shows Frank Gehry's shining building emerging in this grey industrial port city.
Guggenheim Museum
+34 944 35 90 80 (www.guggenheim-bilbao.eus)
Until 28 April 2019.

NETHERLANDS

MAASTRICHT: TEFAF Maastricht

Presenting 7000 years of art history, 276 dealers and experts in ancient art, design, paintings, works on paper, tribal art, fine jewellery and more will be exhibiting at this, the 32nd edition of TEFAF Maastricht. After a recent and extensive review of the fair's selection processes, 38 new exhibitors will be joining this event and, with the likes of Pace Gallery, Simon Lee Gallery and Galerie Gmurzynska now on board, strengthening its representation of modern art.

At the other end of the timeline the new exhibitors in the ancient art section are: Galerie Eberwein from France, specialists in Egyptian antiquities; Galerie David Ghezelbash also from France, specialists in Greek, Roman, Egyptian and Asian archaeological art from around the Mediterranean basin; and Kallos Gallery from the UK, specialists in Greek, Roman, Egyptian, Western Asiatic and European antiquities, who will exhibit a striking Attic black figure eye-cup, attributed to the Nikosthenic Workshop, circa 550–510 BC (right).
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