

ASHMOLEAN REVIEW 2017 / 18

ASHMOLEAN

Cover image: Cover: Edward Hopper (1882–1967)
Dawn in Pennsylvania, 1942. (detail)
The lead image for the exhibition *America's Cool
Modernism*, 23 March to 22 July 2018

ASHMOLEAN



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THE ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM

IN NUMBERS 2017/18

391 (UP FROM 277)
OBJECTS LOANED
TO 60 NATIONAL AND
INTERNATIONAL VENUES
(AUGUST 17 TO JULY 18)



114,082
EXHIBITION VISITS



15,314
ADULTS WHO TOOK PART IN
TALKS, WORKSHOP, PUBLIC
PROGRAMMES



35,524
NEW FOLLOWERS
ON SOCIAL MEDIA
(1 AUGUST 2017 TO 31 JULY 2018)



**TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE
TAKING PART IN FAMILY
PROGRAMMES**

12,386



8,634 
FRIENDS MEMBERS

**NUMBER
OF SCHOOL &
FURTHER EDUCATION
VISITORS**
17-18 (ACADEMIC YEAR)
32,294



895,547
VISITORS

1,172,439
**UNIQUE VISITORS
TO THE WEBSITE**



EXHIBITIONS AND DISPLAYS



EXHIBITIONS AT THE ASHMOLEAN

Following on from the success of last year's exhibition programme, and the award-winning Raphael exhibition, this year we reached over 170,000 visitors through an ambitious range of exhibitions and displays. These included a new research project by scholars at the University of Oxford and an important partnership exhibition, which featured masterpieces from the USA never previously seen in the UK.

MAJOR EXHIBITIONS IN THE JOHN SAINSBURY EXHIBITION GALLERIES



Part of a floor mosaic found at Hinton St Mary, Dorset, c. AD 300–400. Stone cubes. DIAM (of central roundel): 100 cm. © The Trustees of the British Museum

IMAGINING THE DIVINE – Art and the rise of world religions

This exhibition, from 19 October 2017 to 18 February 2018, brought to life the results of a five-year research project (*Empires of Faith*) by academics at the British Museum and Oxford University. Funded by the Leverhulme Trust, this research explored the way in which religious imagery in the first millennium developed through a vibrant exchange of ideas and contacts between different societies, rather than developing in isolation from one another.

The exhibition, curated by Professor Jas Elsner and Stefanie Lenk, showcased the culmination of this research by bringing together some of the world's oldest artworks from Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism. It featured stunning treasures such as the *Hinton St Mary Christ* – the oldest depiction of Christ north of the Alps – and the *Nurse's Qur'an*.

As well as 76 objects from the Ashmolean's own cross-cultural collections, the exhibition included loans from 13 lending institutions and private collections – most significantly 20 loans from our partner museum in the research, the British Museum. We saw a particular rise in the number of Oxford University staff and students visiting to learn about this ambitious topic. It was seen by 22,902 visitors, of whom 2,877 were students (1,941 of them Oxford students) and 904 Oxford University staff and alumni.

Aside from the Leverhulme Trust's support of the research, the exhibition itself was generously supported by the Ruddock Foundation for the Arts and the Patrons of the Ashmolean. It received additional support from the Sarikhani family; Richard and Jacqueline Worswick; The British Museum; the Oxford Centre for Byzantine Research; The Soudavar Memorial Foundation and The Lorne Thyssen Research Fund for Ancient World Topics.

Critical responses

'... These exhibitions push us back towards a far more fundamental level of religious imagining, which we cannot understand without a faint glimpse of what it might be to be stopped, looked at and acted on...'

Dr Rowan Williams

'Unmissable ... a fascinating journey through the art of religions from India to Ireland.'

Mary Beard



Leaf from the *Nurse's Qur'an*, Kairouan, Tunisia, AD 1019/20. Ink, watercolour and gold on parchment. H: 44.5 cm. The Sarikhani Collection



© Charles Demuth (1883–1935)
I Saw the Figure 5 in Gold, 1928.
 Oil, graphite, ink and gold leaf on paperboard.
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz
 Collection

artists were, from 17 different lenders. The Terra Foundation for American Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art were particularly generous in lending star pieces, such as *I Saw the Figure 5 in Gold* by Charles Demuth, as well as masterpieces by Georgia O'Keeffe and Edward Hopper.

The exhibition and its publication were made possible with generous support from the Terra Foundation for American Art. Additional support was provided by Mr Barrie and Mrs Deedee Wigmore; Huo Family Foundation (UK) Limited; Marica and Jan Vilcek; the Patrons of the Ashmolean.

Critical responses

★★★★

'Every great show alters or inflects one's sense of art, and so it is with this one a whole new chapter of the story is released.'

Laura Cumming, *The Observer*

★★★★

'There are pictures in this show you will remember forever... [an] impressive, intelligent show.'

Will Gompertz, BBC News

All our exhibitions and loans have been made possible by the provision of insurance through the Government Indemnity Scheme.

The Ashmolean Museum would like to thank HM Government for providing Government Indemnity and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Arts Council England for arranging the indemnity.

© Georgia O'Keeffe (1887–1986)
East River from the Shelton Hotel, 1928. Oil on canvas.
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz
 Collection, Bequest of Georgia O'Keeffe



AMERICA'S COOL MODERNISM: O'Keeffe to Hopper

Held from 23 March 2018 to 22 July 2018, this major exhibition brought together some of the greatest works of American artists from the fascinating interwar period. Among them were 35 paintings which had never been seen in the UK before. This was the first time the 'cool' abstraction in these works had been explored in an exhibition, as artists expressed uncertainty during the period of great change following the roaring 20s and the Great Depression in the 1930s.

Achieving a total of 62,178 visitors, the exhibition proved an enormous success with visitors and press alike. A significant proportion of our audiences travelled specially to visit the exhibition, and we achieved our main goal in that almost all visitors (92 per cent of survey respondents) felt that they knew more about American art from the 1920s and 1930s after visiting. Of the overall visitors, 4,880 were students (of whom 2,205 were University of Oxford students) and 1,943 University of Oxford staff and alumni.

FREE EXHIBITIONS AND DISPLAYS ACROSS THE ASHMOLEAN



© Michelangelo
Buonarroti (1475–1564)
Ideal Head, 1520–5. Red
chalk.
© Ashmolean Museum,
University of Oxford.
Presented by a Body
of Subscribers, 1846.
WA1846.61

The Slade display was complemented for just four weeks by 25 of our Michelangelo drawings when they returned from the celebrated blockbuster exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum in New York (6 March to 2 April 2018). During the four week period our celebrated Renaissance drawings were seen by 18,089 visitors.

The spring/ summer exhibition in Gallery 8 was dedicated to Ibrahim El-Salahi. It was the first exhibition to be curated by the Ashmolean's Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, Dr Lena Fritsch, in consultation with Liam McNamara, Lisa and Bernard Selz Curator for Ancient Egypt and Sudan.

Ibrahim El-Salahi (b.1930 in Omdurman, Sudan) is a pioneer of African modernism and one of the most influential figures in Sudanese art today. His paintings and works on paper draw from a vivid imagination rooted in the Islamic traditions of his homeland, which he fuses with a profound knowledge of European art history, African abstraction and inventive forms of calligraphy. The artist has lived and worked in Oxford since 1998, but this is his first solo exhibition in the city. It provides an important opportunity for local audiences to engage with his art.

GALLERY 8 – A NEW EXHIBITION SPACE

In January 2018 we opened **Gallery 8** on the Lower Ground floor as a new temporary exhibition gallery. We began by mounting a small display to accompany the Slade lectures of Prof David Ekserdijan (University of Leicester), entitled *From Drawing to Painting in the Italian Renaissance*. This display ran from 9 January to 2 April 2018.

Professor Ekserdijan's current research examines extensive groups of preparatory drawings for individual projects from the late fifteenth century onwards. He explores the ways in which artists used drawings to make their paintings, and considers issues of form and content in their work.

Professor Ekserdijan selected fourteen drawings from the Ashmolean's Western Art Print Room Collection. These displayed different types of figure studies and compositional drawings for paintings dating from the 1490s until the 1570s by the famous masters of the Renaissance, such as Raphael, Pordenone, del Sarto, Correggio and Barocci.

Featuring large-scale, multi-panel paintings as well as small works on paper from different periods, the display introduces El-Salahi's work and gives an overview of his practice. It includes a selection of paintings from his *Tree* and *Oxford Tree* series, in which he has focused on the motif in abstracted variations, using it metaphorically as a link between heaven and earth, creator and created.

Together with Liam, the artist selected pottery from our ancient Sudanese collections (usually on view in the Egypt and Sudan galleries) to be viewed in conjunction with his work.

The exhibition was generously supported by Christian and Florence Levett, with additional support from Vigo Gallery, and was accompanied by a catalogue.

Held from 19 April to 2 September 2018, the exhibition was seen by 45,500 visitors.



© Ibrahim El-Salahi
(b.1930);
Flamenco Dancers, 2012.
Oil on canvas.
Vigo Gallery



EASTERN ART PAINTINGS GALLERY (29)

Dr Mallica Kumbera-Landrus curated *Old Traditions, New Visions: Art in India and Pakistan after 1947*, from 15 September 2017 to 18 March 2018.

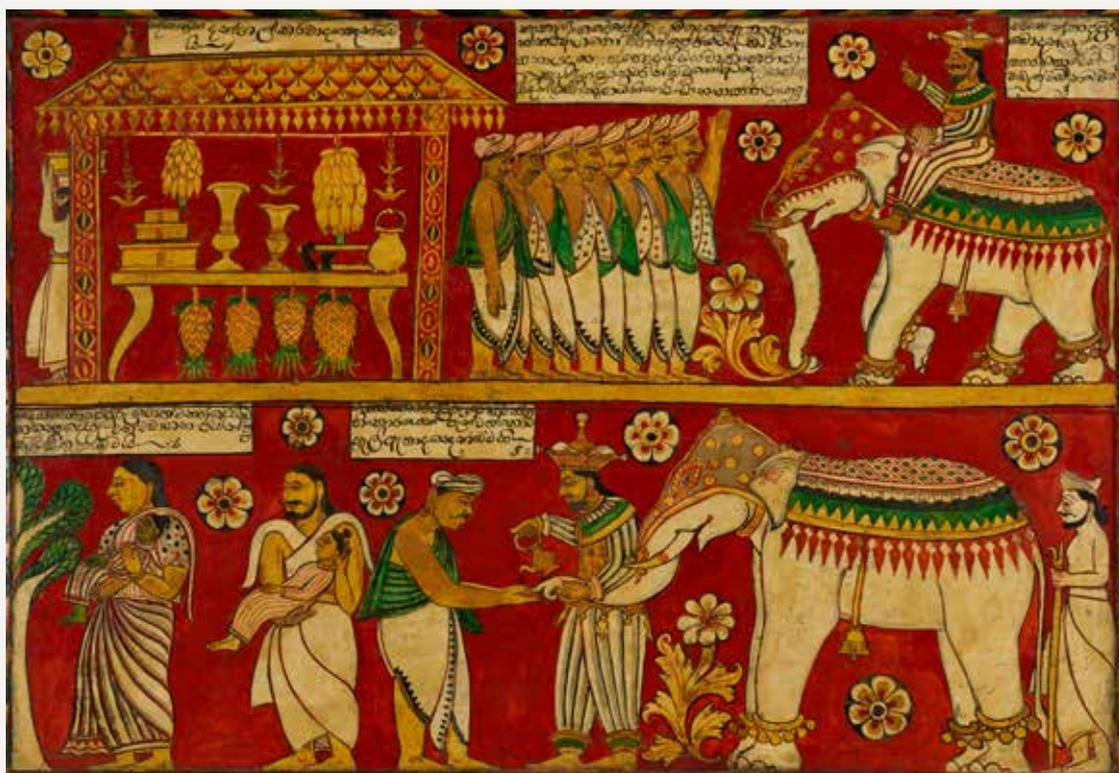
The exhibition looked at how Indian and Pakistani artists resolved the challenge of how to express the new nations' distinctive characters after the countries gained independence in 1947. Artists sought new modes of expression, engaging with the modern European art movements but remaining oriented toward their own traditions.

Selected loans included pictures by M. F. Husain, F. N. Souza and S. H. Raza that reflect their admiration for expressionists as well as the compositional qualities of Rajput and Mughal miniatures. The works on display introduced our audience to the art movements in India and Pakistan after 1947, showing both countries to be places bursting with colour and new creative ideas reflected in the art.

This was followed by the *Tale of Prince Vessantara*, on display from 27 March until 9 September 2018. Curated by Farouk Yahya and drawn from the Ashmolean's own collections, it highlighted a selection of Burmese and Sri Lankan drawings, paintings and woodcarvings of the story dating from the nineteenth century. Showcasing rarely seen Burmese and Sri Lankan drawings, paintings and woodcarvings, all drawn from the Ashmolean Southeast Asian collections, this exhibition was dedicated to the *Vessantara Jataka*, the tale describing the latest and most popular of Buddha's past lives. It relates how the Buddha was born as Prince Vessantara of the Sivi kingdom; he was a very generous man who gave away everything, including his own wife and children, to help others. The prince's actions demonstrate the virtue of generosity, which in Buddhism is one of the 'perfections' required to achieve enlightenment.

In Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka (Ceylon) the *Vessantara Jataka* is often depicted in art. Buddhists can gain merit by making and commissioning these images.

☉ Vessantara gives away his magic rain-bringing elephant to Brahmins, from the *Vessantara Jataka*. Sri Lanka (Ceylon), 1801–1900. Paint (probably gum-bound) and gesso on wood.
© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. EAX.174





KHOAN & MICHAEL SULLIVAN GALLERY (11)

The new exhibition in the Chinese Paintings Gallery, *Qu Leilei: A Chinese Artist in Britain*, featured the contemporary Chinese artist who moved to the UK in 1985. It ran from 7 November 2017 to 15 April 2018.

Curated by Dr Yan Liu, former Christensen Fellow in Chinese Painting in consultation with Qu Leilei, it provided an opportunity to see a variety of his works, from small sketches of life drawing to larger, highly refined figural paintings created between 1985 and the present. The display showed the artist's progression from calligraphic collage to an exploration of a new vocabulary of ink language.

Qu Leilei was born in 1951 in China's northeastern province of Heilongjiang. He came to London over 30 years ago to study Western art at the Central College of Art. He stayed in Britain and formed his unique style of ink painting, blending European techniques with Asian aesthetics. The works featured here were drawn from the Ashmolean's own collection with additional loans from the artist.

The exhibition was generously supported by the Jiangsu Art Reproduction & Culture Development Co Ltd, China and accompanied by a catalogue.

From 1 May to 14 October 2018 we showed the exhibition *A Century of Women in Chinese Art*. Originally conceived by the previous Christensen Fellow Yan Liu, it was realised by the position's current incumbent Paul Bevan. The display presented artwork from the Ashmolean's collections that illustrated the diverse ways in which women were represented in Chinese art during the twentieth century. It included work by artists, female and male, from the Chinese mainland, Hong Kong and Chinese overseas communities.

Qu Leilei (b.1951)
Danaë, 2016. Ink on paper
© The Artist

Li Xiu (b.1943)
The Return of the Graduate, 1977.
Woodblock printed with oil.
© The Artist. EA2007.43



The exhibits presented a variety of different media: traditional Chinese painting, modern woodblock prints, textiles, contemporary papercuts and ceramics. The many themes depicted provided a glimpse of the different roles played by women in China during the twentieth century.

MONEY GALLERY (7)

To complement *Imagining the Divine – Art and the Rise of World Religions* in the John Sainsbury Exhibition Galleries, the Heberden Coin Room selected coins from Aksum, the earliest Christian empire in Africa (Ethiopia). Entitled *Aksum: a Late Antique Empire of Faith in Africa*, the exhibition ran from 26 September 2017 to 14 January 2018. It explored the religious and ideological history of the Aksumite empire in the light of the coinages emitted from the late third century to c.620, when the kings of Aksum moved from a pagan past to Christianity.

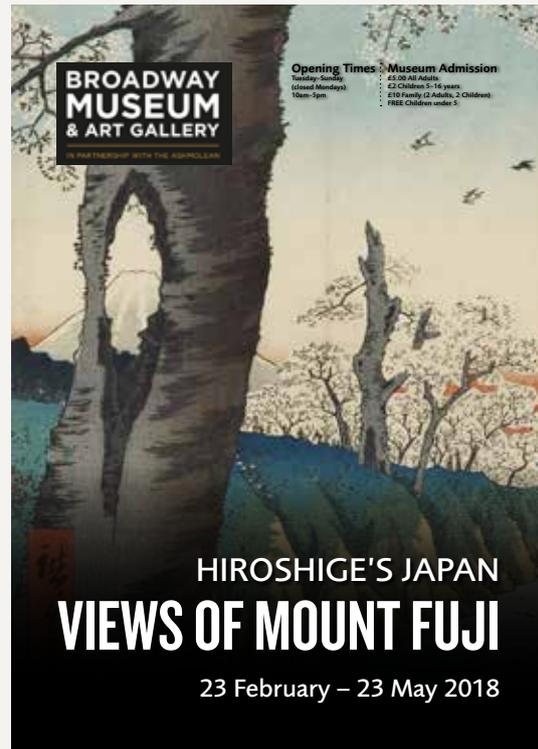


© Aksumite gold coin from the pre-Christian period, c. AD 280–350
© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.
HCR6644

It was followed by a special display curated by Dr John Naylor, *An Ancient Landscape: Iron-Age and Roman Finds from the Berkshire Downs*. On show from 16 January 2018 to 29 July 2018, this told the story of the site through a variety of objects – coins, pottery and metalwork – discovered by metal-detectorists. The display demonstrated the importance of this site to local people for over 500 years, from the late Iron Age to the end of Roman Britain.



© A unique silvered copper-alloy radiate of Allectus, AD 293–6. It portrays Oceanus, with one foot placed on a dolphin and the other on a galley.
© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.
HCR9497



BROADWAY MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY

Hiroshige's Japan: Views of Mount Fuji

Utagawa Hiroshige (1797–1858) is one of the best known of all Japanese woodblock print designers. He is particularly renowned for his landscape prints, which are among the most frequently reproduced of all Japanese works of art. Hugely successful in both Japan and the West, the prints' unusual composition and masterly expression of weather, light and season proved enormously influential for many leading European artists, including Claude Monet and Vincent van Gogh. This touring exhibition, drawn from the Ashmolean Museum's Japanese collections, was held from 23 February to 23 May 2018. It included over twenty views of Mount Fuji from several different Hiroshige series – some devoted entirely to Fuji and others featuring Fuji in views of Edo or as seen from the Tōkaidō Road.

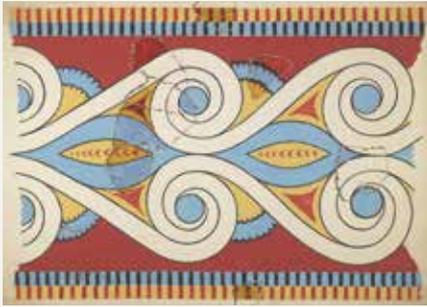
LOANS AND TOURING EXHIBITIONS FROM THE ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM

In addition to making our collection as accessible as possible in the Museum, the Ashmolean shares its collections around the world each year, contributing works to numerous major exhibitions in the UK and around the globe.

Between August 2017 and July 2018 the Ashmolean loaned 391 objects to 60 venues nationally and internationally.

The Ashmolean has made some key loans internationally this year, including a group of 26 drawings by Michelangelo which were loaned to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. These drawings formed a significant part of the exhibition *Michelangelo: Divine Draftsman & Designer* (13 November 2017–12 February 2018).





© Sir Arthur Evans (1851–1941)
Fresco drawing T/11d.
Paper and colour pigment.
© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.
Bequeathed by Sir Arthur Evans

Another major loan made in this period was to the Institute of the Study of the Ancient World. The Ashmolean loaned seven objects from the Antiquities collection along with 37 works on paper to the exhibition *Restoring the Minoans* (5 October 2017–7 January 2018). In Los Angeles the Getty Center displayed the exhibition *Beyond the Nile: Egypt and the Classical World* (27 March–9 September 2018). The Ashmolean loaned twenty objects from the Antiquities collections to the exhibition.

Within Europe, the Ashmolean has loaned 238 works. Larger loans within this figure included sixteen objects to the *Nineveh* exhibition held at the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden in Leiden (20 October 2017–25 March 2018), thirteen drawings loaned to the Musée du Louvre in Paris for the exhibition *François Ier et l'art des Pays-Bas* (18 October 2017–15 January 2018) and thirteen watercolours to the *John Ruskin. Le pietre di Venezia* exhibition, displayed at the Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia, Venice (10 March–10 June 2018).



© Relief depicting Babylonian campaign, 704 BC–681 BC. A captive woman and child, seated on a mule, are escorted along the edge of a river by Assyrian soldiers. Fragmentary mosul marble.
© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. Presented by Mr Michael Sadler with the assistance of the National Arts Collections Fund, 1933. AN1933.1575



© A German roundel depicting a youth in a doublet, arms raised and outspread, looking up at a girl on a rock. Sixteenth century. Pen and black ink on paper.
© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. Bequeathed by Francis Douce, 1834. WA1863.133.622

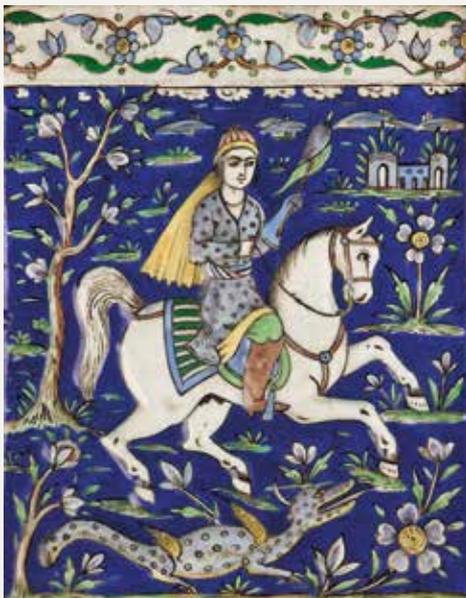
© John Ruskin (1819–1900)
Study of the Marble Inlaying on the Front of the Casa Loredan, Venice, 1845.
Watercolour, bodycolour and pen and ink over graphite on pale grey wove paper.
© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. WA.RS.RUD.022



© Bridge-spouted decorated pottery jar and classical Kamares ware.
© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. AN1896-1908.E.3295–3301

In Hong Kong we loaned sixteen works from the Eastern Art collection, including textiles and works on paper, to the exhibition *The Blue Road*, displayed at the Liang Yi Museum (20 March–24 June 2018).

© Tile depicting a rider holding a falcon. Fritware, with moulded decoration and polychrome underglaze painting
© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. Bequeathed by Christopher T. Gandy, 2012. EA2012.96



☞ Scythian bronze plaque in the shape of an elk's head, 500–401 BC. Copper alloy. © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. AN1885.466



The Ashmolean has also contributed substantially to loans made within the UK. Particular highlights are the loan of thirteen objects to the *Scythians: Warriors of Ancient Serbia* exhibition at the British Museum, London (14 September 2017–14 January 2018), the loan of nine drawings by May Morris to *May Morris: Art and Life* at the William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow (7 October 2017–28 January 2018) and the loan of 23 works, including objects and archival material, to the exhibition *Codebreakers and Groundbreakers* displayed at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge (24 October 2017–4 February 2018).



☞ May Morris (1862–1938) *Design for an ecclesiastical glove*, 1899–1900. Pen and black ink with watercolour and bodycolour on buff paper. © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. WA.OA1285

DETAILS OF ASHMOLEAN TOURING EXHIBITIONS

The touring exhibitions programme has continued to grow in 2017/18 with *Great British Drawings* touring to the Princeton University Art Museum. We have focused on growing the programme of exhibitions sent to regional museums within the UK and we have toured six exhibitions to various venues:

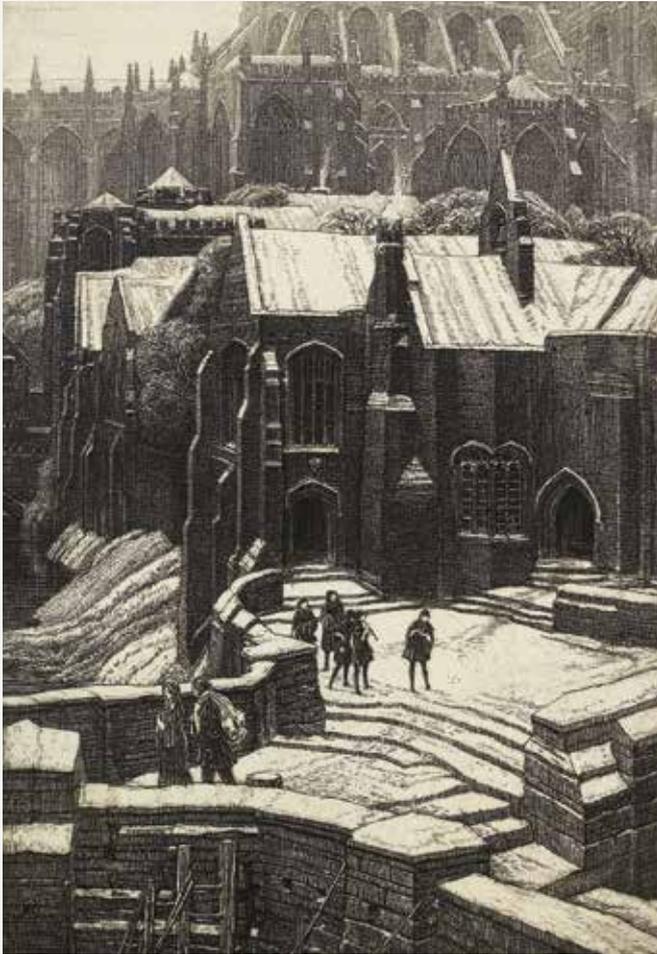
Japanese Ghosts and Demons: Woodblock Prints from the Ashmolean Museum, displayed at the Brading Roman Villa, Isle of Wight.



☞ Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797–1861) *The Young Nobleman Ushiwakamaru*, 1852. Woodblock print. © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. EA1971.92

☞ Linear B tablet recording grain rations for women workers at Knossos, c.1400–c.1375 BC. Burnt clay. © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. Presented by Sir Arthur Evans, 1910. AN1910.214





Frederick Landseer
Maur Griggs (1876–1938)
The Almonry, 1925.
Etching.
© Ashmolean Museum,
University of Oxford.
WA1962.54.107

Utagawa Hiroshige I
(1797–1858)
*The Sukiya Embankment in
the Eastern Capital*, 1858.
Woodblock print.
© Ashmolean Museum,
University of Oxford.
EAX4379

Hiroshige: Views of Mount Fuji, displayed at the Broadway Museum and Art Gallery.

F. L. Griggs: Visions of England, displayed at the North Hertfordshire Museum, Hitchin and the Chippenham Museum & Heritage Centre.

Artists under Fire: Remembering the Great War 1914–18, displayed at the North Hertfordshire Museum, Hitchin and Banbury Museum.

Skyscape: Dürer. Rembrandt. Palmer. Nash, displayed at the Broadway Museum and Art Gallery

In the Groove: Gertrude Hermes and the Natural World, displayed at Gunnersbury Park Museum, London.



Sir Frank Brangwyn (1867–1956)
Soldiers under airburst fire: 'Shell', c. 1919.
Black and red chalk.
© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. WA1944.50



Gertrude Hermes (1901–83)
Jonah in the Whale, 1933.
Wood engraving.
© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. WA1984.66



NEW GALLERIES & PROJECTS

In October 2017 a new permanent gallery, 'The Ashmolean Story', was opened to mark the 400th anniversary of the birth of Elias Ashmole (1617–92), the founder of the Ashmolean Museum. Ashmole gave his collections to the University of Oxford in 1677, specifying that they were to be housed in a new building designed to promote scientific practice and the advancement of knowledge. The Ashmolean Museum opened to the public in 1683.

The new gallery has been designed to evoke the museum in the 1680s–90s. It tells the story of Elias Ashmole and of the founding and early years of the institution. Full use has been made of the gallery's height, and an engraved view of the entrance to the original museum dominates the space. A series of near-transparent display cases creates a 'room within a room' scene that provides a striking and atmospheric yet contemporary setting for the exhibition. This series of cases surrounds a bespoke central case containing Powhatan's Mantle, one of the most important and iconic objects in the Museum's care today.

The gallery was generously supported by grants from the DCMS Wolfson Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund and the Linbury Trust, and by a donation from Mr Stephen Stow. The state-of-the-art display case for Powhatan's Mantle was made possible by everyone who contributed to the Museum's annual appeal. The lead curators were Alison Roberts and Eleanor Standley (Antiquities) and the designer was Clare Flynn. The project was managed by Harry Phythian-Adams.



While the gallery was being developed, the Department of Conservation also undertook a careful research programme on Powhatan's Mantle. The aim of the research was to understand more about the mantle's manufacture and history, and to ensure its optimal care in the future. Work included a photogrammetric recording of the front of the mantle in close detail. This was carried out by the Factum Arte Foundation, of a team of artists, technicians and conservators dedicated to digital mediation, who have also provided an open-access browser interface for the data (<http://www.factumfoundation.org/pag/1087/>). The progress of all the work on the mantle was presented to a wider audience by Giovanna Vitelli through the mantle's Facebook page (<http://bit.ly/2u7ylzy>).





REDISPLAYS

JAPAN FROM 1850: The way of tea – a dynamic artistic tradition

This display of contemporary Japanese tea wares by leading Japanese artists within the Japanese Galleries formed part of the international AREThé Festival 2017. Organised in collaboration with the Oxford University Anagama Kiln Project, and supported by the Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation and the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation, this project involved a series of events to spotlight the dynamic world of contemporary Japanese tea and the arts that it inspires. As well as the exhibition, a special tea demonstration was performed by AREThé-invited Japanese tea masters using tea utensils made by the artists whose work was being exhibited

in the gallery. A 'Clay Live' day of talks and activities related to Japanese ceramics and the arts of tea also took place. It included a demonstration of traditional throwing techniques by visiting Kyushu ceramic artist Onimaru Hekimaru II, as well as a visit to the University's new wood-fired *anagama* kiln.

ISLAMIC MIDDLE EAST: Fake and Forgeries Case

One of the largest lustre bowls in the Islamic collection, and the object of an extensive research project conducted in collaboration with Cranfield University and members of the University of Oxford, was reinstalled in the autumn in the Fake and Forgeries case. The research activities concluded that about half of the bowl is, in fact, an early twentieth-century fired restoration; it provides the first documented evidence of this method in relation to lustreware, a notoriously elusive technique. The results of this project are about to be published in a peer-reviewed journal.



🕒 Bowl with seated figures, Iran, AD 1201–20. Fritware, with overglaze painting in lustre. Presented by Sir Alan Barlow, 1956. © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. EA1956.88

🔍 Close-up view of the Fake and Forgeries Case in the Islamic Middle East Gallery.



COLLECTIONS & RESEARCH

CARE OF THE COLLECTIONS

The Conservation Department, with a skilled and professionally trained staff, preserves, conserves, investigates and prepares the Ashmolean collections for display. It ensures the collections can travel safely to exhibitions over the world and advises on all activities that involve the collections – from study visits and handling sessions to LiveFriday and private events. For new displays and exhibitions the conservators and conservation technicians are part of the process, from the first idea to installation and opening of exhibitions. This last year was especially exciting for the Conservation Department as some of the Museum's most stunning and interesting treasures came through the studios in preparation for loans, exhibitions and the new Ashmolean Story Gallery.



◉ Cleaning a decorated leather horse saddle ahead of installation in the new Ashmolean Story gallery.

The Department processed a formidable number of objects for loan from across the Museum's collections. Once again the heaviest area of demand continues to be for works of art on paper. A total of 183 works on paper went out on loan, among them 36 works by Raphael,



◉ Michelangelo's *Head of a Bearded Man Shouting* under transmitted light showing chain and laid lines, and watermark. Lighter areas indicate how thin the original paper sheet has become.

© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. WA1846.68

which travelled to Vienna following the Ashmolean summer exhibition and a lengthy conservation research and rehousing programme. As with all the Museum's loans, each work is meticulously examined, assessed, recorded and prepared for travel; it is then accompanied by experienced couriers who check and make sure the conditions are suitable for their long-term preservation.

This year also saw 26 works on paper by Michelangelo make their way abroad, this time travelling to the Metropolitan Museum in New York. Examination ahead of their journey also increased our understanding of the history and preservation of these extraordinary works, revealing past treatment and their full condition. A special lighting regime was developed to allow the Michelangelo works to be put on display in the new Gallery 8 space on return, allowing the Museum's visitors a rare opportunity to see these works displayed together.

Over the summer of 2017 a careful programme of examination and recording was carried out on Powhatan's Mantle, part of the



◉ The reverse of Powhatan's Mantle. This is one image brought together from thousands of individual scans using a flatbed scanner through a perspex sheet.
© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. AN1685.B.205



◉ Image of Powhatan's Mantle by Factum Arte assembled from over 1,300 individual photographs.
© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. AN1685.B.205



◉ Detail of Powhatan's Mantle, examined and recorded in detail as part of the preparations for the new permanent gallery.
© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. AN1685.B.205



📍 Installing a complex work in the exhibition *Qu Leilei: A Chinese Artist in Britain*

founding collection and one of the Museum's most important and iconic pieces. The Factum Arte Foundation recorded the front of the mantle using an advanced photogrammetry technique; the reverse was then recorded from below, the mantle being too fragile to turn over. Visiting researchers from North America and others contributed to this work, which lays the foundation for further research on the North American parts of the founding collections. Progress of the recording and research was presented to a wider audience through a public Facebook page that attracted comments from many groups and individuals. The mantle, as well as other pieces from the early collections, were then displayed in purpose-built, state-of-the-art showcases in the Ashmolean Story Gallery.

Other major Ashmolean exhibitions during this period included *Imagining the Divine* and *America's Cool Modernism*. Another notable exhibition, *Qu Leilei: A Chinese Artist in Britain*, took place in the Chinese Paintings Gallery.

A number of techniques were used over 2017/18 to identify and map colours on the large sandstone shrine of King Taharqa (690–664 BC). Colleagues in the Bodleian Library, Durham University, The Courtauld Institute of Art and Appleton Rutherford laboratories participated in this project, which builds on information gathered during a major conservation campaign on the shrine in 1990, but uses techniques since developed further, such as hyperspectral imaging, x-ray fluorescence spectroscopy, photogrammetry and Raman spectroscopy. Other areas of research have included Raphael's techniques, a Kashan lustreware bowl and the technology of Egyptian mummy portraits. The conservation studios have also been visited by various researchers over the year. Their studies include, for example, the painting techniques and manufacture of work by artists such as Anthony Van Dyck, Leonardo da Vinci and Jacob Jordeans, as well as other national and international scientific research projects accessing the Museum's collections.



📍 Analysis of pigments on the Shrine of King Taharqa (690–664 BC).





◉ A cast of Antinous being prepared in the studios for the forthcoming exhibition *Antinous: boy made god*

In January the Department welcomed a new junior research fellow to the team. Specialising in the history of conservation, the junior research fellowship through Worcester College is a remarkable opportunity for the Department and the Museum to uncover the rich conservation history of the Ashmolean's collections. This not only informs our understanding of past treatments and the people involved, but is also vital in planning future preservation.

Two new positions of Collections and Exhibitions Technicians were created in the Department in autumn 2017 following a restructure of the Museum Services team. Supported by a much needed administrative position and the creation of Studio Manager posts, the Department is now well set to improve further the care it gives to the Museum's collections into the future.

In 2017 came the sad news of the death, at the age of 99, of Anna Cecilia 'Cecil' Western, Head of Antiquities Conservation in the Museum between 1957 and 1982. Western worked on many of the highlights of the Museum's Antiquities collections and was a key figure in Jericho in the 1950s. We are very grateful that she generously left the Department funding for the conservation of antiquities. This will be spent to support conservation in the lead up to the forthcoming exhibition *Last Supper in Pompeii*, and to provide seed funding towards a much needed x-ray machine.

The conservation team also undertook a wide variety of treatments over this period. Cleaning and stabilising the Watlington hoard revealed intriguing fine details, such as notches made by nicking the silver with a knife to test for purity during the Viking period. Other treated objects include Stephen Farthing's very large painting, *School in Rome* (c.1983), painted on canvas in oil paint mixed with beeswax and damar resin, and two challenging plaster casts, cleaned for the exhibition *Antinous: boy made god*. The casts were treated using a variety of methods, including a gelatinous substance made with Agar (from the Rhodophyceae class of red seaweed) and distilled water.

DIGITAL COLLECTIONS

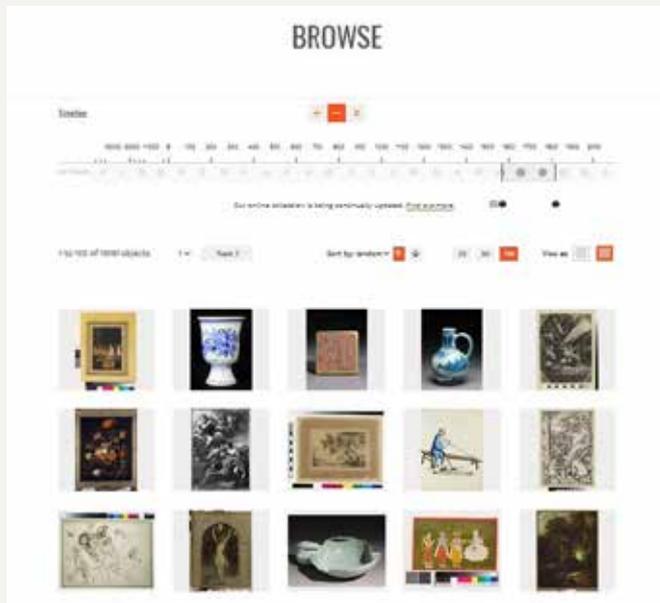
This year saw the long-awaited launch of Collections Online, providing worldwide access to the Ashmolean's collection via the Museum's website: <http://collections.ashmolean.org>.

The new platform provides an integrated, cross-searchable database presented through an intuitive interface for general browsing sessions as well as specific searches. It is linked to the Museum's internal systems, meaning that the most up-to-date information and the best images relating to each individual object are published online as soon as they become available. Other features include image zooming technology, an interactive timeline and a responsive interface for users on tablets and mobile phones.

Collections Online currently features over 50,000 items from across the Museum's curatorial departments, with new items being added on a monthly basis. The objects date from one million years ago until the present day and come from across the globe, from Renaissance Italy to Edo Japan. For the first time the Museum's 'treasures', such as the *Alfred Jewel* and Paolo Uccello's *The Hunt in the Forest*, can be found alongside significant collections such as over 200 prints and drawings by the greatest Dutch artist of all time, Rembrandt van Rijn, over 2,000 Eastern ceramics from the internationally renowned collections of Sir Herbert Ingram, Sir Alan Barlow and Gerald Reitlinger and over 3,000 archaeological items from Greece and Cyprus.

The successful launch of Collections Online is due to the tremendous effort of a dedicated Digital Collections Team which works closely with the rest of the Museum. The team now comprises nine members of staff, of which three data posts are generously funded by the Friends of the Ashmolean and two image posts are funded by the University of Oxford's Garden, Libraries and Museums (GLAM) Digital Strategy Programme fund. The initial goal is to publish one-quarter of the Ashmolean's collections online by the end of 2019. While the majority of our efforts in this past year went towards the development and launch of Collections Online,

☹️ No caption supplied... Is exerro tem vel ilique as ese quantii squiasp elicite sciatessimus secus et mil idundig entio.



a lot of preparatory work was also carried out in the internal collections database. This included the creation of 10,000 new object records and the improvement of 340,000 object records involving updates to one million supporting records (person, literature, image, thesauri and layered object data), as a result of numerous collection digitisation projects.

The Ashmolean's Digital Collections Programme forms part of GLAM's Digital Strategy. It aims to create full machine-readable metadata and digital surrogates of our unique collections and make them available and discoverable online, and to preserve and safeguard them for future generations. As part of this strategy, the team have converted selected datasets into linked data as part of a GLAM project pilot. The Ashmolean is also currently in the process of procuring a new collections management system, as well as a digital asset management system and a more user-friendly interface for the Museum's Picture Library. This has involved consultation with staff across the Museum, from the Curatorial departments to Commercial, Conservation and Education among others, to ensure these new systems meet operational requirements. This will greatly enhance every aspect of our Museum work – not only collections management, but also research, exhibitions, publication, teaching and public programmes.

THINKING WITH THINGS Podcast Series 2 released

Series 2 of *Thinking with Things* was released gradually from December 2017. The Podcast series, sponsored by Professor Raymond Dwek, invited academics from across the University of Oxford to choose an object that related to their research, revealing a whole world of ideas behind a single artefact. Eight new podcasts have been proposed for Series 2, of which the following four have now been recorded:



Professor Rana Mitter (History): Samurai vase



Professor Susan Jebb (Diet and Population Health): Greek comic terracotta



Professor Colin Mayer (Said Business School): Terracotta piggy bank



Professor Alison Woollard (Biochemistry): Cast of Hermaphrodite

View both series here www.ashmolean.org/podcasts/



🕒 Raphael (1483–1520)
Studies for a Resurrection, c.1511–14.
 Pen and brown ink, some marks in black chalk
 and some stylus marks.
 © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.
 WA1846.200

showed perceptions of drawing and of Raphael to have been radically altered, although the impact on the broader field of art history will naturally take longer to assess.

The Department of Western Art is also engaged in a variety of ongoing research

An Van Camp is researching and writing on Rembrandt's early career, with the Ashmolean's major exhibition *The Young Rembrandt*, in partnership with the Museum de Lakenhal, set to open in Leiden in autumn 2019.

Lena Fritsch and Clare Pollard are together researching and planning an exciting exhibition, *Tokyo Stories*, to be held in 2020.

Colin Harrison is developing an international loan exhibition for 2021. This will explore Camille Pissarro's relationships with other artists, including the Impressionists and the work of his own artist-sons.

As a result of Matthew Winterbottom's collaboration with Charlotte Ribeyrol (Professor of English, Université Paris-Sorbonne and visiting Fellow, Trinity College) on an international symposium held on 2 June 2017, *The Changing Colours of 19th Century Art and Literature*, planning for a larger research project on the topic of 'Colour in Victorian Britain' – including an ambitious exhibition in 2022 – is now under way.

The Ashmolean has been awarded a grant by The Getty Foundation, Los Angeles, for a four-year project focusing on the Museum's



🕒 Annibale Carracci (1560–1609)
Studies for the Camerino Farnese, c.1595.
 Red and black chalk, pen and ink.
 © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. WA1958.38

RESEARCH

Transforming our understanding of Raphael with eloquence in drawing as a research theme

Through a focus on Raphael's drawings, this two-year research project – funded by the Leverhulme Trust and completed in February 2018 – aimed for a new understanding of his art. Dr Catherine Whistler and Dr Ben Thomas (University of Kent), supported by Angelamaria Aceto as Research Assistant, carried out research that shaped the presentation of the Ashmolean's award-winning exhibition *Raphael: The Drawings* (1 June–3 September 2017).

The concept of eloquence in the context of Renaissance Italy, and in terms of what drawings can afford contemporary viewers, informed the project's approach as the team closely studied a range of drawings by Raphael in British and European collections. Whistler and Thomas located eloquence in the materiality of drawing, in the traces of the artist's hand, in the creation of a persuasive graphic language and in drawing's expressive and affective qualities. Their findings demonstrated the layered qualities of Raphael's drawings and their reflective nature as a mode of thought and realisation. In interdisciplinary workshops they explored ideas on the rhetoric of drawing, on memory and influence, as well as on cognitive processes and embodied knowledge. Through a variety of public and academic events, conference papers and scholarly publications in 2017–18, the results of the team's research have been widely shared. Audience evaluation of the exhibition and associated events, together with the many national and international press responses,

major collection of Italian drawings. 'The Paper Project: Prints and Drawings Curatorship in the 21st Century' is a new initiative from the Getty Foundation to strengthen curatorial practice in the field of graphic arts. The grant will support curatorial training in drawings scholarship and connoisseurship under the direction of Catherine Whistler. It will fund two eighteen-month Research Fellowships for early-career art historians to equip them to become leading drawings curators in the future. Their activities, including research travel and consultation with distinguished drawings specialists nationally and internationally, will focus on research and writing in preparation for a scholarly catalogue of the main collection of Italian drawings, with an online resource produced as a direct result of this project.

The research concerns about 2,000 drawings, including works by artists such as Filippino Lippi, Parmigianino, Annibale Carracci, Federico Barocci, Guercino, Carlo Maratti, Canaletto and Giambattista Piranesi, as well as many as artists yet unidentified. The Michelangelo and Raphael collections are the subject of separate research and publications. A Research Assistant, appointed with the support of the Tavolozza Foundation, brings additional expertise and essential research support to the project as a whole.

WESTERN ART PRINT ROOM AND COLLECTIONS ACCESS

Some of the most important works of art in the Western Art Department are found in our drawings and prints collection, accessible to the public (including students and researchers) from Tuesdays to Saturdays in the Print Room. We also have a programme of thematic talks on the collection for the public in front of the works of art. In the last year, a total of 3,450 visitors have enjoyed viewing or studying drawings and prints, whether as individuals or as part of a group. The inspiration and pleasure that many visitors derive from this experience is reflected in the range of responses received by the Print Room.

Here are just two examples:

During a visit to Oxford this past October, my fiancée and I paid a visit to your Print Room. You were so unbelievably helpful, accommodating and knowledgeable that we recounted the experience to all of our family and friends.

Thank you so much for making possible yesterday's class on Venetian Renaissance drawings, and for looking out all of the materials. We had a wonderful afternoon and, as you know, that close encounter with drawings is profoundly transformative for students.

THE NAHREIN NETWORK

In September 2017 the Nahrein Network secured a £2 million grant from the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council and the Global Challenges Research Fund Network Plus scheme. The Network is a collaboration between the Ashmolean Museum, UCL and the University of Kurdistan Hewlêr. It is supported by a number of international partners, among them the University of Mosul, the University of Baghdad, Basrah Museum and UNESCO Iraq. The four-year project aims to research sustainable solutions to the cultural heritage of post-war Iraq and its neighbours. Iraqi researchers receive visiting scholarships and grants for work that contributes to the economic and social development of their country.

Among the first grants awarded was one to Iraqi artist Rashad Salim who, through his community interest organisation Safina Projects, will deliver an important project to research and revive Iraq's ancient maritime heritage. The ancient craft of boatbuilding is one of Iraq's oldest heritage industries, but it is now disappearing; only a few workshops remain in the country. Traditional canoes of the Ma'dan (the so-called Marsh Arabs) disappeared in the 1980s as the marshes were drained under Sadaam Hussein, but these crescent-shaped



➤ Viewing drawings in the Western Art Print Room.

➤ Sumerian king list prism, written in cuneiform script, c. 1800 BC.
© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.
AN1923.444



© Two women poling a mashuf canoe in the marshes of southern Iraq, photograph of 1951.
© Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford.
2004.130.29532.1



➤ Paddle-shaped wooden clubs from the original founding collection of the Ashmolean. Presented by Elias Ashmole in 1677, from the Tradescant collection.
© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. AN1685.
B128–131

clubs appear in seventeenth-century ethnographic accounts from the Lesser Antilles. Research focused on the scientific analysis of the clubs. The main aims were to place the clubs chronologically (through radiocarbon dating), and by wood species identification and strontium isotope analysis to investigate the possibility that the clubs may derive from, or were imported into, the Lesser Antilles.

The research established that the probable dates of manufacture were c. AD 1300–1640. Three of the clubs were older than expected, probably preserved by indigenous peoples over several generations before being collected by Europeans in the early to mid fifteenth century. These were made of *Brosimum cf guianense* wood. The fourth (with incomplete decoration) was made closer to the time of collection and is of a different wood (*Platymiscium* sp). The strontium results are consistent with a possible provenance range for all four from Trinidad reaching south to French Guiana.

The full results of the project are presented in the publication (<https://bit.ly/2oi8x41>, or <https://bit.ly/2PIFdjz>). This work also considers how scientific research can enhance knowledge about objects from early museum collections.

The project was led by Dr Joanna Ostapkowicz (Oxford School of Archaeology) and the research team included Alison Roberts (Antiquities) and Jevon Thistlewood (Conservation). The four clubs are on display in the Ashmolean Story Gallery.

Medieval Islamic Architecture: The Creswell Archive (2018–2021)

The Ashmolean is one of four partners (the others being American University in Cairo, Victorian and Albert Museum and Harvard University) of an international digitisation project, led by Dr Omniya Abdel Barr and funded by The Barakat Trust. This initiative aims to create an online portal for the photography of Professor K. A. C. Creswell, a leading twentieth-century architectural historian who bequeathed his photographic archive of medieval Islamic architecture to the Ashmolean Museum in 1975. This digital resource will not only offer single access to Creswell's documentation, currently scattered across several public and private collections, but also ultimately provide an essential resource for the cultural heritage sector – at a time when the artistic legacy of the Middle East is under continuous threat.

boats date back to ancient times. With the marshes currently being restored, the ancient connections between land and environment, craftsmanship and cultural heritage can be revived.

A major grant has also been awarded to explore comprehensively the state of cultural heritage in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. Led by Dr Saad Eskander, former Director General of the Iraq National Library and Archives, the project aims to establish a local cultural heritage network and centre based at Sulaimani Polytechnic University. Network and centre will bring together local stakeholders, experts and communities in focus groups and workshops to identify and analyse cultural heritage challenges and opportunities.

WOODEN CLUBS FROM 'INDIA OCCIDENTALES'

April 2018 saw publication of the results of a multi-disciplinary research project on four large tropical hardwood clubs from the Ashmolean. The clubs are from the Museum's founding collection donated by Elias Ashmole; they are thought to have belonged originally to the Tradescant collection.

The clubs are described in the Museum's 1685 catalogue as '*Quinque instrumenta ex India occidentali bellica, ex ligno brasiliano confecta, quae vulgò Tamahack appellantur*' ('Five weapons, from the West Indies, made of Brazil wood, commonly known as tomahawks'). In the seventeenth century the term 'West Indies' referred to all of the Americas, while 'tamahacks' was applied to any clubs from the Americas.

Despite the clubs being documented since at least 1685, their provenance and the indigenous context were unknown. The project considered the possibility that they might be rare examples of 'Island Carib' (Kalinago) material culture, particularly as images of such



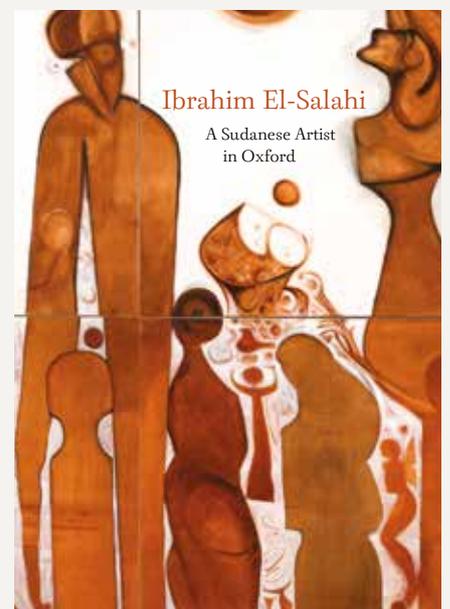
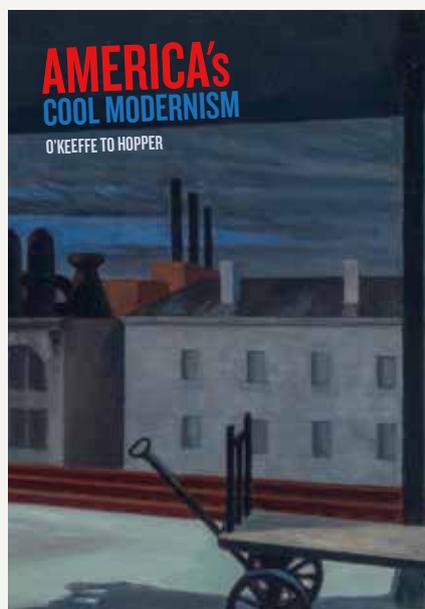
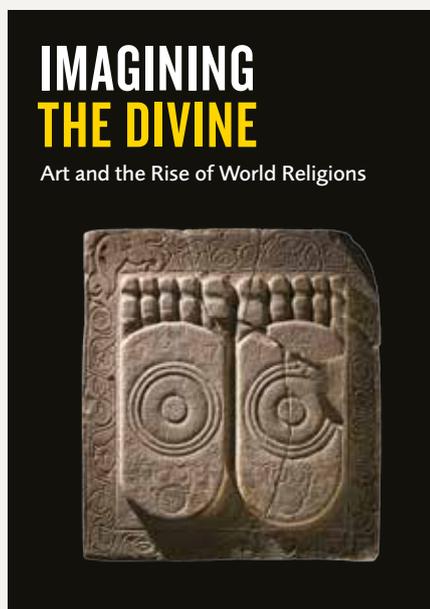
PUBLICATIONS

Catalogues were published to support a number of the exhibitions mentioned elsewhere in this review. These include *Imagining the Divine*, *Qu Leilei*, *America's Cool Modernism* and *Ibrahim El-Salahi*. To coincide with the opening of the multi-faith show *Imagining the Divine*, two more titles were published that appealed to similar audiences:

The Jewish Journey: 4,000 years in 22 objects from the Ashmolean Museum, written by Rebecca Abrams, tells the history of the Jewish people from antiquity to modern times through 22 objects from the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, brought together here for the first time. Many of the objects are little-known treasures and all 22 have remarkable stories. Spanning 4,000 years of history and covering fourteen different countries, the objects trace the evolution of Jewish life and culture from its earliest beginnings in

Ancient Mesopotamia through time and space to the modern day. Simon Schama said of this title 'The Jewish Journey takes 22 of the great riches of the Ashmolean Museum ... and with the guidance of Rebecca Abrams, the model of learned story-teller, provides a route through time and its objects to moments of illumination'. This book was published with the generous support of the Henry Posner Fund, the Ullman Trust and Dr Evie Kemp, in memory of her parents Rose and Dan Kemp.

Saints and Salvation: The Wilshere Collection by Dr Susan Walker offers a remarkable insight into one Englishman's enthusiasm for the early Christian church. A wealthy landowner travelling frequently to Italy, Charles Wilshere (1814–1906) saw it as his mission to acquaint the British with the then brand-new subject of early Christian archaeology and art.

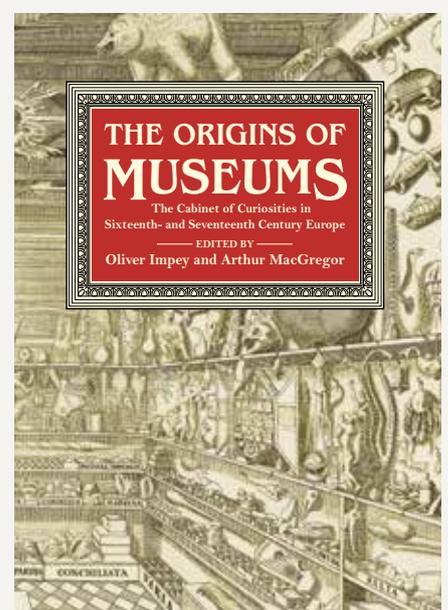
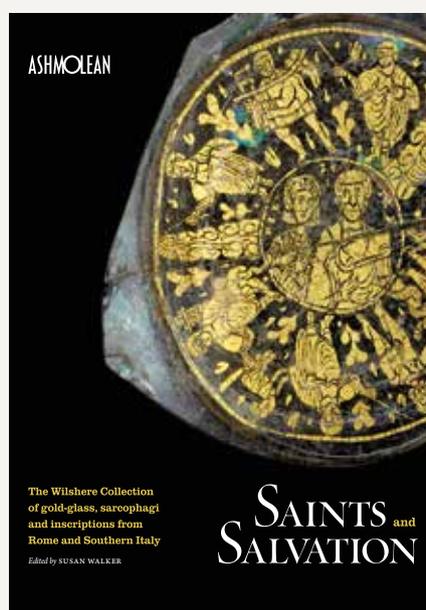
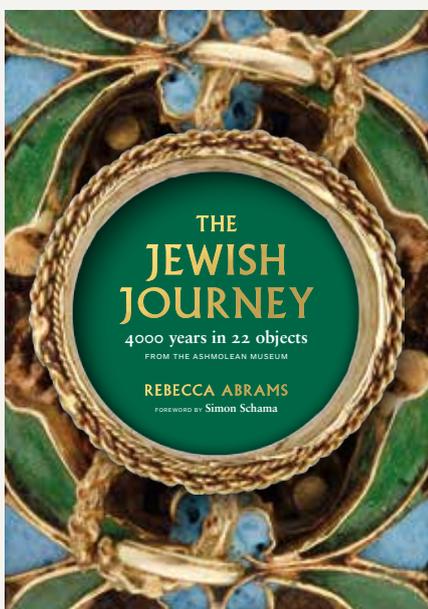


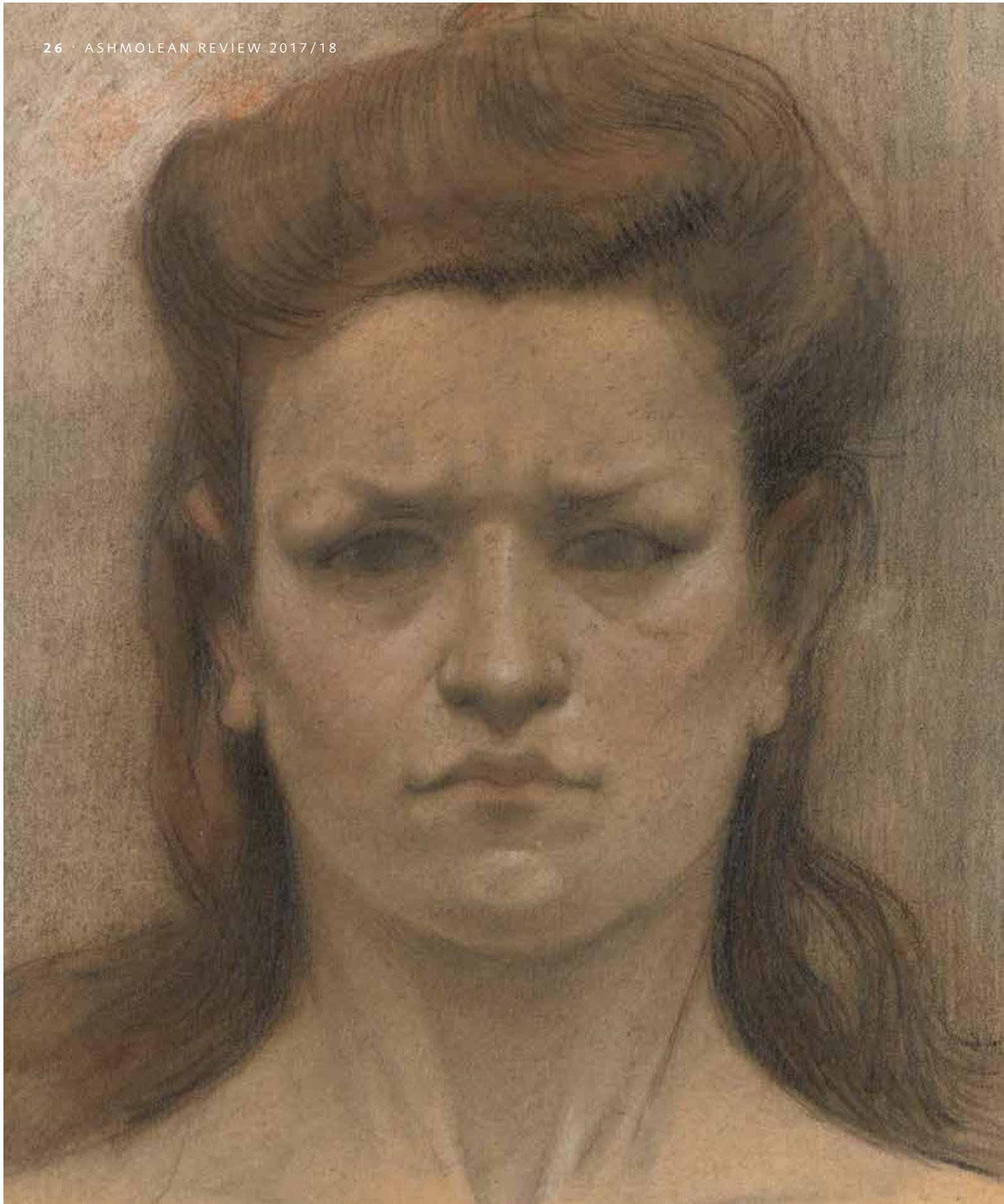


Newly discovered documentation, including correspondence held at the Vatican Library and the Biblioteca San Luigi, Posilippo, recounts Wilshire's acquisition of a remarkable collection of early Christian, Jewish and pagan gold-glass, sarcophagi and inscriptions, shipped to England for public display. Previously unpublished evidence presents the reader with intriguing new information about the provenance of the collection. In addition to this, recent scientific analysis of the objects, now in the collections of the Ashmolean Museum, allows major new insights – notably into the origin of gold-glass and its use in fourth-century Rome. This publication would not have been possible without the financial support of Christian and Florence Levett and the Thriplow Trust.

History Today carried a feature in 2015 that described *The Origins of Museums* as 'a cult book [that] spawned a new discipline in the

history of collecting'. Indeed, the first publication of this book in 1985 undoubtedly marked a propitious moment in the development of such interest, in what has since grown to be a dynamic subject area in its own right. That an appetite for such matters already existed is confirmed by the fact that the first impression sold out within a few months, a second impression a year or two later and a third in 1989. There was to be no further printing by the original publishers, Oxford University Press, but in 2001 a new edition appeared with a new publisher. Demand again proved buoyant, but within a few months the company failed; having operated on a print-on-demand basis, it left behind it no unsold stock. *The Origins of Museums* reverted to being a scarce (though much sought-after) volume. With original copies now selling for hundreds, if not thousands, of pounds, the Ashmolean is proud to make this important volume readily available again.





ACQUISITIONS



Salomon van Ruysdael (c.1600–70)
River Landscape in Herwen and Aerdt with a Ferry, signed and dated 1643. Oil on canvas. Accepted by HM Government in Lieu of Inheritance Tax and allocated to the Ashmolean Museum, 2018. WA2018.4

WESTERN ARTS

River Landscape by Ruysdael

This beautifully preserved panel is a masterpiece of Ruysdael's early maturity and an exceptionally fine example of the river landscapes that would dominate the artist's oeuvre. The Ashmolean already owns two landscape paintings by Ruysdael, *A Draw-Well with Cattle before Beverwijck Church* and *Scene before a Maypole with Alkmaar Church in the Background*. However, these are both from a later stage in the artist's life – respectively dated 1657 and 1669 – and do not feature the strong sense of distance and spatial harmony so characteristic of his earlier work from the 1640s.

Importantly, this painting is the earliest depiction of the villages Herwen and Aerdt by Ruysdael. These two villages are situated in Gelderland, in the east of The Netherlands, near the town of Arnhem and in close proximity to the River Rhine. In the Dutch and Flemish Gallery, the Ruysdael picture is surrounded by the Ashmolean's own collection of landscape paintings from the Dutch Golden Age, including works by important masters such as Salomon's nephew Jacob van Ruisdael.

Memento Mori

The Ashmolean Museum has acquired an extraordinary woodcut print through a generous contribution from the ACE/V&A Purchase Grant Fund. The Fund, which has benefited the Museum many times previously, supports the purchase of a wide range of material for the permanent collections of non-nationally funded organisations in England and Wales. It is provided by Arts Council England and is managed by the V&A.

The print is a funerary placard in the shape of a shield featuring a skull and crossbones, objects which clearly refer to death. The work must be seen as a *Memento Mori* – the Latin phrase for 'remember that you will have to die' and a universal reminder that death comes to us all. It is highly likely that this print was used during a funeral

Memento Mori, Italian chiaroscuro woodcut, c.1720–40. Printed from three blocks in black, grey and silver; on paper with traces of melted candle wax; mounted on a board with a sleeve and a piece of knotted string on the verso. Purchased (Blakiston Fund) with the assistance of the ACE/V&A Purchase Grant Fund, 2017. WA2017.70



procession as it bears traces of dripping candle wax. Funerary placards of this kind were usually discarded after the funeral or destroyed by accidentally catching fire from a candle. The transient nature of such boards renders this placard a rare survival, providing a unique insight into funerary practices.

Study by Armand Rassenfosse

Miss Noelle Brown worked as an administrator in the Western Art Department until her retirement. Following her death in December 2015, she left a legacy to the Ashmolean to be used for the acquisition of certain categories of Old Master and nineteenth-century drawings. This drawing is a superb example of Belgian symbolist art, a genre not otherwise represented in the Museum's collections. It was made in 1898 by Armand Rassenfosse in preparation for his greatest achievement: the illustration of Charles Baudelaire's masterpiece, *Les Fleurs du Mal* (The Flowers of Evil). This collection of poems was first published in 1857, but this study is related to the edition published in 1899 by the French bibliographic society, *Les Cent Bibliophiles*.



© Armand Rassenfosse (1862–1934)
Study for Les Fleurs du Mal. Graphite and pastel on laid paper. H: 24.7 cm; w: 17.6 cm.
 Purchased (Blakiston and Noelle Brown Bequest Funds), 2018. Ashmolean Museum, inv.no. WA2018.5

Rassenfosse made 170 colour etchings illustrating the poems. Although the portrait bust in the newly acquired drawing does not appear exactly in the publication, the same woman features in many of the illustrations. We can assume that she was one of Rassenfosse's favourite models. The closest examples illustrate the poems *Semper Eadem* and *Harmonie du Soir*.

Anonymous Gift and Long-Term Loans

The Ashmolean was fortunate to secure on long-term loan a remarkable group of works of art – paintings, prints, drawings, plaques and small-scale sculptures – from a single English private collection. The works range in date from the sixteenth to the early twentieth centuries.

The items generously donated to the Museum from this collection include:

- A bound volume of the rare first edition in four languages of David Teniers the Younger's *Theatrum Pictorium*, dated 1656–60. It contains 246 engravings by various Flemish printmakers [WA2018.29]
- Four volumes of *Die Kaiserliche königliche Bildergalerie im Belvedere zu Wien* (Vienna, 1821–8). These feature 240 engravings that illustrate the paintings in the Belvedere Gallery, as well as a series of preparatory drawings for prints by the Austrian artist Sigmund Ferdinand von Perger (1778–1841) [WA2018.30 and WA2018.31.1-105]
- Two bronzes by the British sculptor Alfred Drury [WA2018.32 and WA2018.33].



☞ Alfred Briscoe Drury (1856–1944)
Head of Griselda (above) and *Mother and Child* (right).

Bronze with marble stands.
 Presented anonymously in memory of Brian Sewell, 2018. © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. WA2018.32 and 2018.33



Blowing Hot, Blowing Cold by Matthias Stom

The most impressive item from the collection is a large oil painting by the Dutch artist Matthias Stom (c.1600–after 1652). This work, entitled *Blowing Hot, Blowing Cold, or The Peasant and the Satyr*, takes pride of place in the Weldon Gallery devoted to Baroque art. In the same gallery is the charming *Rebecca and Eliezer at the Well* by Andrea di Leone (1610–85). Highlights among the sculptures include an extraordinary bronze *Laocoön* by Charles Ricketts, dated around 1908, and a bronze by John Singer Sargent, *Mercury embracing Venus*, from around 1917; there is also a *Female Nude* by Auguste Rodin. Two print albums were also offered on long-term loan: Canaletto's *Vedute*, a volume containing 34 etchings as well as several reproductions, and Antonio Maria Zanetti's *Raccolta* of 50 chiaroscuro woodcuts from 1749.



☞ Matthias Stom (c.1589/1600–d. after 1652).
Blowing Hot, Blowing Cold; The Peasant and the Satyr, c.1640.
 Oil on canvas. Lent from a private collection, 2018. LI2640.1

Guido Reni: *The Abduction of Europa*

This magnificent painting by Guido Reni returned to The National Gallery, London in October 2017, after having been on display in our European Baroque Gallery for just over a year. The long-term loan took place while two of the Ashmolean's important baroque paintings were absent on loan to the exhibition *Beyond Caravaggio*, held in London, Edinburgh and Dublin between October 2016 and September 2017.

In this arresting poetic painting, Reni depicts the moment in which Europa, abducted by the god Zeus in the form of a bull, moves from a state of fear to one of love as Cupid fires his arrow. Her wavy hair and exquisite garments billow in the sea breeze, but she remains a figure of classical beauty. The internationally renowned artist, based in his native Bologna, painted the work for Wladislaw IV, King of Poland, in about 1637–9.

EASTERN ARTS

Ornamental panel depicting green tea picking and processing, made in the *oshi-e* (padded-silk) technique

This detailed panel appears in its original lacquered frame. It is a fine example of the *oshi-e* technique, in which silk or cotton wadding is covered with fabric and pasted to the background surface to create padded relief designs. Different types of fabric, often recycled kimono silks, were carefully selected to create a variety of effects. Details such as facial features, hair and fingernails were then painted on by hand. It is believed that this craft began among the women of Kyoto's aristocratic classes; during the Edo period (1603–1868) it gradually spread to samurai households and eventually to the wider population. Mostly used in Japan to make dolls or decorative votive plaques for shrines and temples, *oshi-e* work became popular with Western customers after Japan was opened up to foreign trade in the mid-nineteenth century.



☪ Guido Reni (1575–1642)
The Rape of Europa, c. 1637–9. Oil on canvas, 177 x 129.5 cm.
 The National Gallery, London. Presented by the Trustees of Sir Denis Mahon's Charitable Trust through The Art Fund, 2013



☪ An ornamental panel depicting green tea picking and processing, made in the *oshi-e* (padded-silk) technique, signed 'Sekka' 雪華. Japan, c. 1870–1900. Padded silk and paper figures on painted silk background, silk brocade mount, lacquered wooden frame. Purchased with the assistance of the Story Fund
 © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.
 EA2017.37



*Fukagawa Garbage Treatment Facility, Tokyo
(Tokyo Fukagawa gomi shori kōjō)*

Koizumi Kishio was a leading Sosaku Hanga (Creative Print) artist of the early twentieth century. He is best known for his ambitious series 'One Hundred Views of Great Tokyo in the Shōwa Era', which he produced between 1928 and 1940, in the years following the devastating Kantō earthquake of 1923. The prints depict the

© Koizumi Kishio (1893–1945) 小泉癸巳男 Japan, 1933.
Colour woodblock print, 37.15 cm x 27.94 cm.
From the series 'One Hundred Landscape Prints of
Great Tokyo in the Shōwa Era' (*Shōwa dai Tokyo fūkei
hanga hyaku zue*). Purchased with the assistance of an
anonymous benefactor, EA2018.15

transformation of Tokyo after the disaster, expressing both a sense of nostalgia for the old imperial capital and an optimism about Tokyo's resurrection as a modern metropolis. The industrial area of Fukugawa was hit especially hard by the earthquake. The new refuse treatment plant was completed by March 1933, just two months before this print was published. Koizumi focuses on the enormous chimneys, symbols of the modern city. Ironically, many of the sites depicted in the series would be destroyed just a few years later in the Allied bombings of the Second World War.

Friendship, 2012

Qu Leilei first became prominent in the late 1970s when he was one of The Stars Group of artists who exhibited their work on the railings of the National Gallery of China during the democracy movement in Beijing. He moved to London in 1985, and the exhibition that included this painting was his second in the Sullivan Gallery, following 'Everyone's Life is an Epic' (2005). Qu Leilei works principally in ink on paper, sometimes including collage, and has developed a particular use of brush and ink that embodies both European and Chinese techniques. Many of his paintings depict aspects of humanity and the individual, and clasped hands have featured in his work since the 1990s. This painting shows the hands of Michael Sullivan and the English artist Caroline Deane, Qu Leilei's wife.

© Qu Leilei (b.1951)
Friendship, 2012. Ink
on paper, 90 x 186 cm.
Presented by the artist
following the exhibition
*Qu Leilei:
A Chinese Artist in
Britain*, Khoan and
Michael Sullivan Gallery,
7 November 2017–15
April 2018.
EA2018.9





© Jarlet with floral decoration and painted sash in *famille rose* colours. Qing Dynasty, Qianlong Period, 1736–95. Copper alloy, with polychrome enamels; wood cover, with openwork decoration. Accepted by HM Government in lieu of inheritance tax. © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. EA2018.14

Eighteenth-century imperial enamel jarlet

This small jar was made in the imperial workshops in Beijing during the reign of the Qianlong emperor. Qianlong was a great collector and patron of art and craftsmanship, and during his reign specialist workshops were established both in the capital and around the country in relevant places – most particularly the porcelain kilns of Jingdezhen in the south. The very finely drawn, detailed decoration on this piece is typical of the ornate ornament seen on porcelain, textiles and carved objects of the period.

ANTIQUITIES

Model of the Moabite Stone

The Mesha Stele or Moabite Stone dates to around 840 BC and is inscribed in Phoenician characters with one of the earliest references to the kingdom of Israel. In 1874, six years after its discovery in what is now the country of Jordan (ancient Moab), the Stele was placed on display in the Louvre Museum in Paris. Here it created enormous scholarly and public excitement. Those unable to visit Paris could see this quarter-size version, made around 1877 by Mrs Sarah Layard. The model was displayed at a number of venues across the UK and attracted considerable interest. It was generously donated to the Ashmolean by a descendant of Mrs Layard.

South Arabian sculptures

These female heads come from a cemetery of magnificent tombs outside of Tamna', capital of the ancient kingdom of Qataban (present-day Yemen). Qataban was one of the wealthiest kingdoms of South Arabia, which controlled the lucrative trade in incense, such as frankincense and myrrh, with the societies of the Mediterranean and Middle East between c. 800 BC to AD 500. Such images, often with associated inscriptions, identified the tomb owners and helped to keep the memory of the deceased alive. The donor's father and mother were doctors who travelled widely through Yemen in 1954–62 as part of a smallpox eradication programme. They were given the sculptures locally in gratitude for their work and friendship.



© Model of the Moabite stone, c. 1870s. Plaster. Donated to the Ashmolean 2017. © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. AN2017.29



© Sculpted stone female heads. Yemen, 100 BC–AD 100. © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. AN2018.1 and AN2018.2

THE HEBERDEN COIN ROOM

Eric Engstrom Collection of Shakespeare Medals

This collection, received in 2017 by the Heberden Coin Room, constitutes the most remarkable assemblage of medals and other numismatic items relating to William Shakespeare (1564–1616), comprising some 400 individual pieces. It contains works by significant medallists and die engravers of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, including Dassier, Pingo, Westwood and Küchler. These are followed by a substantial number of Victorian pieces, with an obvious concentration for the tercentenary in 1864 (by Wyon, among others).

The material expands considerably for the twentieth century, both in quantity and breadth. There are medals and plaques of very diverse origin, encompassing France, The Netherlands, Italy, Portugal, Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, Japan, India, Canada and the USA. Another important occasion was the quarter centenary. Actual coins bearing Shakespeare's bust have been minted for San Marino, China, Afghanistan, Cook Islands, UK – Alderney and Canada. In the 1790 halfpenny tokens for places in Warwickshire and elsewhere feature portraits.



◆ Shakespeare Medal, Soviet Union, 1964. Copper.
© Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. HCR202033

Soviet Union, 1964 anniversary medal

Obverse: head of Shakespeare, Globe Theatre in background.
Inscription: THE GLOBE.

Reverse: Inscription: lines from sonnet 54 as translated into Russian by Samuil Marshak (1887–1964): *Prekrasnoe prekrasnej vo sto krat, uvenchannoe pravdoj dragotsennoj*/O HOW MUCH MORE DOTH BEAUTY BEAUTEOUS SEEM/BY THAT SWEET ORNAMENT WHICH TRUTH DOTH GIVE, William Shakespeare transliterated into Russian.



◆ Medallie pendant, possibly Italian, seventeenth-eighteenth centuries.

Robert Forrest Collection of Religious Medals

Obverse: Head of Christ. Inscription: *SALVATOR MUNDI* (Saviour of the World). Reverse: Head of the Virgin. Inscription: *MATER SALVATORIS* (Mother of the Saviour).

The collection of c.3,500 pieces focuses primarily on medals relating to Roman Catholic churches, places of pilgrimage and institutions, largely dating to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These items are mostly of British and Spanish origin, but there are also medals from Italy, France, Belgium and the Americas. Such medals were usually acquired as a souvenir and devotional aid during pilgrimages; others were sourced closer to home to underline local affiliations. Some older religious medals, dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, were not necessarily linked to a specific place; they feature holy figures, especially Christ and the Virgin, more generically. The Forrest Collection also contains a smaller selection of material from South Asia and the Far East, which relates to Hindu, Buddhist or Islamic religious sites.



TEACH & INSPIRE

The Museum's academic engagement with the University thrived during 2017-2018, in particular thanks to the generous funding from the Andrew W Mellon Foundation's continued support of the University Engagement Programme (UEP). We continue to grow a cohort of Faculty members for whom the Ashmolean now represents a regular and important resource for their teaching, and with whom we work to develop new courses and provide opportunities to enhance existing curricula. We teach with and train Early Career Researchers in the principles and practice of teaching with objects. Crucially, the members of the Ashmolean's curatorial team are increasingly deploying their expertise in the service of teaching.

The academic year 2017–18 saw the end of the tenure of University Engagement Programme Director Dr Giovanna Vitelli after six years. During this time both the volume and intellectual range of the teaching undertaken in the Museum have radically increased. Her responsibilities with regard to the management of the Programme have passed to Teaching Curator Dr Jim Harris, who continues to teach and to work closely with the divisions, departments and individual Faculty members.

The programme continues to be supported by a Collections Assistant with responsibility for teaching support is an invaluable asset to the Museum. The post is shared by Ben Skarratt and Michalina Szymanska, who bring a high degree of professional expertise to their roles. Both are Oxford alumni and hold Masters degrees. Their contribution to our teaching mission is vital, ensuring that preparing for classes does not fall as a burden on the departmental collections management staff. Skarratt and Szymanska are key to the nurturing and encouragement of our Faculty Fellows.

The programme also supported the appointment of an Administration Assistant for Teaching, Gemma Plumpton, who holds

an MA in the History of Collecting. Her presence is already having a positive effect on the smooth running of both the UEP and curatorial teaching.

Curatorial teaching is central to the development of academic engagement at the Ashmolean. Over the past six years the UEP has made significant inroads in building relationships with some of the most far-flung parts of the University. However, it is the expertise of the curatorial team that forms the fundamental resource to grow and embed collections-based, object-led teaching as widely as possible in the curriculum. The year 2017–18 has seen an increase both in the number of Ashmolean curators teaching and in the number of courses on which they have taught. Curators have cooperated with each other and with colleagues in the University to enhance existing course offers and to develop new strands in the curriculum at every level, from first-year undergraduate to postgraduate.

In Japanese Studies, curators from Eastern and Western Art are working together to deliver an undergraduate option. In History, new classes have been developed with the Western Art Department and the Heberden Coin Room. In English, new, museum-based option courses and Faculty-based lecture courses have been offered at undergraduate and Masters levels. In Medical Science, existing collaborations with the Nuffield Department of Clinical Neuroscience and the Department of Psychiatry, which deliver a series of classes in each discipline, are being formalised and embedded in the curriculum.

These exciting developments are reflected in a growing awareness throughout the University and beyond of the potential of collections as an academic resource. The establishment of the GLAM (Galleries, Libraries and Museums) Teaching Forum has provided for the first



time an opportunity for curators and collections managers from across the University's collections to meet, discuss their practice and share the challenges presented by museum-based teaching. Elsewhere in the University the Museum's presence is evident in seminars given by curators and in the conversation around new modes of interdisciplinary teaching. In this arena, the Teaching Curator has been invited to speak to the new cross-divisional Teaching Networks Initiative and to the Humanities Research Centre's Teaching Forum for Early Career Scholars.

The Humanities Division, which includes some of the academic departments with which the Programme has worked most closely (English, History and Classics, for example), has committed to paying for any new teaching offered at Faculty level, on the established Senior Tutors' scale; an additional allowance is made for the extra work involved in preparing objects for Museum classes. It is hoped to negotiate an agreement to include existing teaching arrangements for 2019–20 during the current academic year.

This agreement represents real progress towards the formal recognition of Museum-based teaching as a valuable commodity in the University's internal economy. It is immensely encouraging for the long term, and provides a key framing element in our developing discussions with the other three divisions and the Conference of Colleges.

The successes of the Faculty Fellows' programme have been numerous – most notably two Humanities Division Teaching Excellence Awards that acknowledge the innovative, exciting work produced by the Fellows. Such work is recognised by the University as combining intellectual rigour with creative imagination; it represents an increasingly visible and important part of the Oxford landscape.

In the summer of 2018, the Faculty Fellows Programme finally became open-access, with an online application procedure and an offer sent out to every academic member of the University. The results were immediate, and the Fellows for 2018–19 will include a physicist and a mathematician, our first from the Division of Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences.

Providing training in object-centred teaching for Early Career Researchers (ECRs), one of the Museum's most substantial, eager and consistently engaged group of collaborators, has long been an important strand of the Ashmolean's teaching activity. In 2017–18 the *Eloquent Things* training course for ECRs, which has been offered termly for four years by Dr Jim Harris, was for the first time funded as part of the Humanities Division Doctoral Training Programme. Places on the course have also been allocated to ECRs from the Social Sciences Division, and we are in discussion about offering a separate course to their doctoral candidates.

Finding opportunities for ECRs to teach is more difficult. Schemes to train and enable ECRs to give talks in both the temporary exhibitions and the permanent collections have been set up in the past year. An innovative programme called *Krasis*, devised and run by the Teaching Curator and Faculty Fellow Dr Sam Gartland, has offered an experimental forum for new teaching. *Krasis* brings together ECRs and undergraduates, selected through open competition, in a series of research-led, interdisciplinary symposia based in the Museum. The programme won a Humanities Division Teaching Excellence award during its first year of operation and, separately, a University Teaching Project Grant. This has enabled us to fund honoraria for the participating ECRs through 2018–19.



Qu Leilei



International Training Programme

This is the fifth year that the Ashmolean has partnered with the British Museum in their International Training Programme (ITP). This offers global museum professionals the opportunity to gain insight into culture and heritage practices within the UK, as well as to share their own expertise and experiences. Hosted by the Antiquities Department over ten days, this year we welcomed three ITP Fellows: Ala Talebian (Tehran University), Heba Khairy (The Grand Egyptian Museum, Cairo) and Elnzeer Tirab (Khalifa Museum, Sudan).

The staff and collections across the Museum act as a platform for demonstrating current museum practice: discussions, workshops and hands-on sessions were provided by colleagues in Conservation, Education, Design, Public Engagement, Collections Management and Digital Collections, as well as the Sackler Library, Griffith Institute and the other University museums. The aim is to ensure that the Fellows gain not only a clear understanding of the workings of a university museum as a whole (with its particular focus on the use of the collections in teaching, as well as being a centre of research and public engagement), but also how the Ashmolean is one of five interconnected university institutions within GLAM (Gardens, Libraries and Museums).

Partnering with the British Museum in this leadership programme has provided an important way for the Ashmolean to build our international networks. We now have some twenty colleagues across the globe working in museums, archives and heritage sites who know us as friends, and in turn can be valuable points of contact to help facilitate our loans, exhibitions and research activity.



SCHOOLS

EARLY YEARS TO A LEVEL

This year 32,294 children and young people, ranging from early years of education to A level candidates, took part in Ashmolean learning programmes. New digital schools newsletters, featuring updates about exhibitions, special projects and study days, were launched this year and are emailed to subscribers three times a year.

The core primary schools programme of collection-inspired curriculum-linked activities was as busy as ever. 'Egypt Detectives' remains the most popular gallery activity, with sessions being delivered nearly every day of the school term. Three primary sessions were launched: 'Latin Language Adventure', part of the Ashmolean Latin Inscriptions project, run in partnership with Oxford University Classics Department and Warwick University; 'Treasure Hunters', linked to the Watlington Hoard project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, and 'Take One... Sumer'. We have been part of the national Take One approach for nearly 15 years; 'Take One...' started at the National Gallery and is about using one object as a focus for cross-curricular teaching and learning.

Beyond the ever-popular core primary schools programme, we worked on several targeted projects. One highlight is the Story Makers project, funded by Children in Need and run in partnership with Oxford Fusion Arts. Thirty children with communication difficulties from three local schools – Rose Hill, Wood Farm and John Henry Newman Academy – took part in a twelve-week programme



of activities in the schools and at the Ashmolean. Feedback from participants and parents was striking. One mother commented that with every passing week of the project her son's anxiety diminished. Another child literally found her voice for the first time during the project. On Saturday 17 March, 160 people attended the launch of the Story Makers exhibition, which was displayed outside the studio. This celebratory event combined the exhibition opening with a free drop-in activity for families.

To celebrate Ashmolean's birthday year and the opening of the new Ashmolean Story Gallery, the Ashmolean's Learning Officer: Early Years to Key Stage 2 visited every class at Ashmole Primary School in Lambeth. She worked with 210 children to deliver short, interactive workshops. The head teacher said it had been fantastic to make a link with the Ashmolean Museum. When he first arrived at the school nobody seemed to be aware of the connection, but this had now changed.

Our work with secondary schools and Further Education has strengthened and developed. The Ashmolean's Learning Officer for Secondary & Further Education has focused on building strong relationships with colleagues in key city schools, at Oxford Activate Learning (FE) and at Oxford Brookes University. We have a strong, on-going programme of schools sessions across Classics, Art & Design, History of Art and Creative Writing, with the majority of groups opting for visits to inspire their own artwork by drawing and sketching in the Museum.

A-level study days have strengthened and developed over recent years, drawing on input from partner teachers. We now offer regularly over-subscribed annual A-level days on the themes of Classics, History of Art and Chaucer's World. Study days have included partnerships with the Bodleian and the Story Museum. A level study day sessions are delivered by Oxford University academics, Early Career Researchers and artists; they offer sixth formers and teachers unique access to the Museum's world-class collections and teaching.

We also deliver bespoke study days for individual schools. These have included special study days for 150 students each from King Alfred's School, Wantage and Wycombe Abbey School, an academy in Surrey, about learning from objects, and a repeat of Chaucer's World for 60 English students from Cherwell School. In conjunction with the Joint Museums Arts Officer, we have run bespoke art study days for Cheney School, Oxford and an art study day featuring artist Jon Lockhart for Oxford Spires Academy. Both art workshops explored *America's Cool Modernism*; they included a visit to Modern Art Oxford in which students were able to create their own artwork and installation.

As part of our focus on building partnerships with city schools, we welcomed sixteen refugee and asylum-seeker students from Oxford Spires Academy to explore Renaissance and Impressionist art. This initial contact has potential to evolve and develop into a larger-scale project in 2018–19, focused around the Ancient Near East Gallery and working with curator Paul Collins.

BROADENING HORIZONS

YOUNG PEOPLE

A key strand of our work with young people this year is CREATIVES. This consists of a group of young people aged 16–19 from local schools who meet monthly to get behind the scenes of the Museum. They learn about the collections by meeting curators and discover more about roles and jobs in museums. CREATIVES also gives invaluable feedback to the Museum about new developments and planned activities, such as online resources and activities for schools. Now in its second year, CREATIVES has developed into a strong group of committed young people keen to learn from, contribute to and support the Ashmolean. They have developed confidence and a range of skills, including working with the public, event planning and delivery, and have enjoyed learning about the diverse collections.

This year the group tested ideas and resources for schools and added ideas into the new Civil War online resource. The young people learned about the recently acquired painting by William Dobson, which led to the group commissioning two artists to run two workshops for young people inspired by the painting. The group went through the process of sharing ideas, writing a brief, planning the materials publicity and then advertising the events to their peers and friends. The workshops (one on printing and one on etching), were a great success and drew in new local young people to the Museum.



CREATIVES planned and ran a collage and colouring activity at *America's Cool Modern* Live Friday which was enjoyed by all ages. Highlights of the year have also included outings to Modern Art Oxford, lunch at St John's College and a tour of Trinity College and its archives, followed by a picnic in the grounds.

This is one member's response to the experience:

Being part of CREATIVES has given me a unique insight and perspective into how a museum as prestigious as ours works from within. CREATIVES has given me the opportunity to meet members of staff in the Museum, from curators and historic researchers to co-ordinators of the gift shop. I have immensely enjoyed visiting exhibitions and collections, meeting new people on the panel and discovering a new display about historic artefacts within the Museum. Definitely an experience and worth missing a lie-in once a month on a Saturday morning!

To find out more, see the CREATIVES blog with highlights of each week's meetings <https://www.ashmolean.org/young-people>

FAMILIES

This year 11,756 people (both adults and children) took part in Ashmolean family learning programmes. Activities on offer included holiday drop-in events, gallery activity sessions and 'pick up and take' resources to enjoy on a family visit to the Museum.

A particular highlight was the launch of a new 'Baby Ashmoles' session, designed for babies under twelve months and their caregivers – whether mums, dads or grandparents. These sessions have added to our existing programme of Little Ashmoles (aimed at ages three–five years) and Ashventures (aimed at children of primary school age). All sessions are based in the galleries and encourage families to engage with the collections through stories, games, searches and object handling.

Baby Ashmoles ran as a pilot over four Friday mornings in October, supported by Arts Council Funding. Pilot sessions proved immensely

popular, attracting over 200 babies and their accompanying adults. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with one participant reflecting that she 'felt the opposite of being a nuisance with a baby'. Another commented: 'love the sessions – only baby group I've been to with something for adults and adapts baby group to a theme'. Baby Ashmoles is now running as a weekly session in term time, and we hope this will help to nurture a lifelong relationship with museums.

This year we were also delighted to partner with Oxford's Sudanese community to run our first fully co-created community family event in June. *Sudan to Oxford* linked to the Museum's exhibition of the world-renowned Sudanese artist Ibrahim El-Salahi. Working with the community's leaders, we created a family event that celebrated the exhibition, Sudanese heritage and culture, and coincided with Eid celebrations.

The co-creation process began by posing a simple question to children at the Sudanese Supplementary School: 'What must we have in the family day *Sudan to Oxford*?'. The children were very clear about their ideas. Sudanese food and drink, along with music and henna, came top of the list, as well as the concept of a 'tree' on which to hang visitor feedback (echoing the beautiful tree imagery in the exhibition). A Sudanese history timeline was also requested, which children and their families could decorate with their own artwork and images from the Ashmolean's Sudanese collections and El-Salahi's artwork. The children were also keen to include a 'write your name in Arabic' activity, with which they could potentially help non-Arabic writers.

Members of the Sudanese community then became integral to the planning process, advising on how to pull all these elements together to deliver on the children's ideas. On the day, the community owned this inspiring event, providing the Museum with singing, dancing and a genuine atmosphere of celebration. We look forward to deepening our relationship with the Sudanese community, and would like to see this model of collaborative event co-creation become core to the way we work with Oxford's communities and the events we arrange.



ASHMOLEAN LEARNING TEAM: SUPPORTING UNIVERSITY TEACHING

During 2017–18 the Ashmolean learning team has continued to work with a range of Higher Education institutions including Oxford University, Oxford Brookes University, De Montfort University, Warwick University and Nottingham Trent University. We have worked directly with approximately 500 Higher Education students and researchers.

For Oxford University colleagues we ran a variety of sessions, including training for Early Career Academics at St John's College, Oxford on working with groups and running public engagement with research activities. In a TORCH (The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities) study session we gave talks on accessibility for different audiences, including working with students with visual impairment and making research relevant and accessible for teenagers and young people. Our input to teacher training programmes at Oxford University for Secondary teachers continues to expand and develop each year. During 2017–18 we ran bespoke training sessions using Museum collections for PGCE students at Oxford University Department of Education, including English and RE. We are now working on new initiatives and partnerships with Geography and History PGCE tutors.



A session delivered by Ashmolean staff at a study day for 27 history teachers across Oxfordshire schools will encourage many more local teachers to use our medieval collections in their teaching. We are working on a pilot scheme with History PGCE tutors, Oxford Internet Institute and Oxford Spires Academy to explore how our Civil War resources and collections can be used at the Museum and enhanced by digital learning in schools.

A developing relationship with Activate Oxford resulted in an inspiring teacher training day for staff from Banbury, Oxford and Reading Colleges across a wide range of subjects at the Ashmolean. In these sessions we explored how the teachers could integrate creative learning from objects into their teaching.

We have established strong links with Oxford Brookes University. This year, for example, 21 PGCE students took part in three days training at the Ashmolean and the MHS on teaching Arts and Humanities using Museum objects and the Take One... approach; 65 first-year BEd students came for a one-day workshop using the collections to inspire music, art and dance; fifteen Year 3 BEd students attended a four-day training course at the Ashmolean in the autumn term; eighteen Year 2 BA Art & Design students came for a 'Working in Museums' session.

We are regular annual contributors to the training programme for the Oxfordshire Teaching Schools Alliance based at Cherwell School. This year we ran a half-day training session for eight trainee English teachers and a full day for 80 trainee teachers from across a wide range of Secondary subjects.

Thank you SO much once again, this has become a very valuable part of their course already ... we are indebted to you, your creativity and your expertise ... Everyone went away inspired by the experience and eager to try specific approaches and activities with their classes from as soon as the next day.

Beyond Oxford, Ashmolean learning staff contribute an annual session on learning and engagement in museums as part of the De Montfort University MA Arts Education course. We also run an annual programme with our design team for 120 Nottingham Trent University Graphic Design Students, in which participants explore the Museum, talk to staff and then work on their own project back at the University. We also concluded a three-year partnership project with Warwick University and Oxford University Classics Department on Latin inscriptions.

PUBLIC PROGRAMMES

Over 30,000 people, from babies to adults, take part in our What's On public programme each year. Each four-month programme offers a diverse mix of over 100 events, ranging from Baby Ashmoles to Live Fridays. Many of the activities are free, including our fabulous festival weekends – which this year have included *China*, *OneWorld* and *Anglo Saxons & Vikings* – as well as Live Fridays, daily volunteer-led tours, coin handling and family drop-ins. Our ticketed events have continued to be well received and well supported, with 90 per cent



of all tickets sold. Programmes range from popular talks by leading academics to relaxed concerts for people on the autism spectrum.

ENGAGING NEW AUDIENCES

The Watlington Hoard

Thanks so much for organising this event – the Hoard in its original location and a talk from the finder. Fantastic!
Participant in the Watlington Roadshow event, September 2017

The Watlington Hoard acquisition project, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, came to a wonderful finale in September 2017. Working in partnership with The Oxfordshire Museum, we delivered a week of activities at the local primary school, followed by a 'roadshow' event for the wider community.

During the school week 228 primary pupils participated in excavation and archaeology sessions, drama workshops and craft activities. Pupils also worked with a local artist to create two installation pieces now on display at the school. Prior to the project many schoolchildren did not know what a 'hoard' was, nor that one had been found in their local area. Class teachers praised Museum staff for 'building knowledge and wonder', emphasising their ability to widen knowledge beyond the curriculum and to focus on material history.

At the roadshow event held on the following Saturday, curators transported selected items from the Hoard back 'home' to Watlington and were on hand to answer questions. Also on offer were living history demonstrations, lectures, object handling and crafts activities for families. The event attracted 565 local people,



many of them primary pupils eager to see the 'real thing' on display at the Library for the afternoon. Children wore 'Watlington Hoard Guides' and pupils were observed enthusiastically sharing what they had learnt with family and friends.

The project sparked a real interest in and enthusiasm for local history, and the Hoard continues to inspire. Watlington Parish Council have acquired a set of replicas now on permanent display at the Library in Watlington, and the primary school plan to make the Hoard an annual feature in their curriculum. We hope that this, in turn, will continue to attract new audiences to the Ashmolean Museum to see the 'real thing'.

William Dobson: A Right Royal Adventure

The Museum's imaginative project – structured around William Dobson's group portrait of three Royalist Commanders painted in Oxford during the Civil War – was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. It has inspired activities with a variety of audiences.

All activities at *A Right Royal Adventure* – a special family-friendly event held in March – were designed, developed and led by volunteers with support from the Joint Museums Volunteer Team and the Ashmolean family learning team. The volunteers created a fantastic, inclusive afternoon out for families, offering huge enthusiasm, skill, time and commitment. One volunteer noted, 'I wanted to plan an activity to make use of the studying I have done around one of my favourite historical period. It was a great way of applying my studies in a different form. I also know the Volunteer Service and knew that I'd be well supported. I gained a greater confidence in my public engagement skills, but also learnt that I need to be concise... not everyone needs a full history lesson'.

Children from the Oxfordshire Association for the Blind gained Arts Award qualifications through their work on the Dobson project. They made an amazing tactile recreation of the painting that was displayed, alongside work from children at the Oxfordshire Hospital School, in our 'Please Touch the Art' community exhibition.

An Oxford Civil War Tour has also been developed (p.46), with our CREATIVES young people's panel providing a useful sounding board in the process. The Tour allows visitors to use their mobile devices to hear hidden stories and follow in the footsteps of the people of Oxford as they lived through the Civil War period.

China Festival

Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford
17 and 18 February 2018.

A weekend festival of art, dance, music to celebrate the Chinese New Year of the Dog.



The Future of History: Going Global in the University

The Royal Historical Society 2018 Symposium

Headley Lecture Theatre, Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford
22 and 23 June 2018

In the 150th anniversary year of The Royal Historical Society, this symposium was an important collaboration between the Ashmolean, History Faculty, Oxford Centre for Global History and the RHS. It focused on the nature of the 'global turn' in Higher Education, a trend that has challenged the traditional framework of history research and teaching in universities. The event brought together a range of scholars to discuss the practice of history in Higher Education now that history departments have been urged to go global – whether by reframing periodisation or in encouraging large collaborative research projects. A volume of conference proceedings is planned.



Pop-Up Cinema with Phoenix Picturehouse

Pop-Up Cinema moved to the Ashmolean's forecourt this summer as part of the very successful partnering with the Phoenix Picturehouse. Films including *Roman Holiday*, *Withnail & I* and Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo and Juliet* were shown from 4 to 6 August 2017. The Pop-Up Cinema was sponsored by San Miguel, with the café Tuk Tuk selling beer, popcorn and hot drinks to visitors. Each evening sold out its 200 tickets per night.

Launch of the Shout Out for Women trail

February 2018 marked the 100th anniversary of the Representation of the People Act 1918, which enabled all men and some women over the age of 30 to vote for the first time. GLAM, the University's organisation for Gardens, Libraries and Museums, received support from the University's Innovation Fund to work on a GLAM-wide trail to celebrate the event. The trail emphasised narratives relating to women working in anthropology and archaeology, and the representation of women in art, from classical to contemporary. This was coupled with a series of talks, events and performances that took place across the year. <https://ashmolean.web.ox.ac.uk/shout-out-for-women>.

NEW Oxford Civil War Tour

Did you know that Oxford served as capital of England after Charles I and his court fled London in the 1640s? Or that the king himself lived in Christ Church? This new tour, launched in July 2018, is available both on the ground and in online form. It answers these and many more questions about this intriguing time in the city's history.

Both tours are attached to the Ashmolean's recent acquisition of the wonderful painting *Portrait of Prince Rupert, Colonel William Legge and Colonel John Russel* by William Dobson, now on display in Gallery 44, Level 2. The acquisition has been generously supported by funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund with thanks to Heritage Lottery Players.



Using the online tour, you can discover the extraordinary role that Oxford played during the early 1640s when it briefly became England's capital. Listen to hidden stories of the city and follow in the footsteps of Oxford's people from 1642–6 as they lived through the English Civil War. From Charles I to prisoners of war, military hospitals to royal lodgings, find out more about the lives and locations that shaped this city.

You can follow the complete new tour in one go, which takes around an hour and a half, or dip in when you feel like it, or just read the content online from the comfort of your own home. The tour is free and all locations can be viewed throughout the year. Find out more, and take the tour, on our website: www.ashmolean.org/civil-war-tour.



Curiosity Carnival

One of the Ashmolean's popular late night events, Curiosity Carnival – Oxford's European Researchers' Night – took place on Friday 29 September 2017. Around 9,400 people attended the event on the night (the Ashmolean taking the lion's share, with 2,494 attending) and engaged with 493 researchers, DPhil students and academics from over 60 different departments and faculties across the University. It was an amazing night of high quality, creative and innovative public engagement with research.

Highlights of the evening included: Turn investigator for CSI Ashmolean, Step into a lift and talk to the bellhop about claustrophobia, Use virtual reality to see your DNA in 3D, Understand more about extreme weather using the Magic Planet, Settle down in our authentic yurt to hear research stories from around the world.

Founder's Festival

Celebrations for our founder Elias Ashmole's 400th birthday year continued over the weekend of 27–29 October 2017. Beginning with a LiveFriday late opening, the Festival showcased The Ashmolean Story, a new gallery detailing the beginnings of the Ashmolean as the first public museum. To mark its opening we returned visitors back in time to 1683. Activities included: Watching the process of Brain Tanning deer skins (drawing on methods used by the Tsenacommacah people of North America who made the original Powhatan's Mantle), Gallery tours, Curator talks, Living History activities featuring an apothecary and a range of early modern science displays encompassing Mathematics, Chemistry (Alchemy), Optics and Philosophy.

Founder's Festival LiveFriday

This LiveFriday on 27 October 2017 attracted 1.300 visitors. It introduced a weekend of activities continuing the celebrations for the new Ashmolean Story Gallery and Elias Ashmole's 400th birthday year.

Highlights included: Living history characters and events such as Elias Ashmole, John Tradescant Jr, a talk on The Garden of Antiquities with Dr Alison Pollard, Living Painting by William Dobson (an interpretation by Past Pleasures) and insights into Robert Hooke's workshop. In the last event the scientist commented on his microscopes and his work *Micrographia*, published in 1665 – including his first observation and description of cells.



Ashmolean After Hours

From January 2018, on every last Friday of the month the Museum keeps its doors open until 8pm. This gives visitors the chance to explore the Museum's galleries and exhibitions after the regular working day. Here they can take in a talk, flex their artistic skills with sketching or collage making, or relax in the Atrium, listening to some music and enjoying a drink from the pop-up bar.

Christmas Light Night

Held on 17 November 2017, this popular event anticipated the oncoming season with choirs, craft and other festive activities.

OneWorld Festival

The Festival, linked to the *Imagining the Divine* exhibition, took place on the weekend of 18–19 November 2017. It celebrated Oxford's diversity and was a huge success. The event showcased the different faiths in Oxford to increase understanding and explored the interfaith links between religions through food, music, stories, beliefs and festivals of light.

The Public Engagement Team worked with more than 220 participants, ten volunteers and fourteen different faith groups to welcome 6,904 visitors over the Saturday and Sunday. This event was only made possible through the support of Richard and Jacqueline Worswick and The Oxford Civic Society. A heartfelt thank you is due to Imam Monawar Hussain MBE, Sir Hugo Brunner, Jawaid Malik, Kanta Gopal, Chinta Kallie and Wendy Robinson for assisting with programming.

Highlights of the event included: Invocation dances to Lord Ganesha and Lord Krishna with Oxford Hindu Temple and Community Centre Project, mindfulness classes and prayer space, an Interfaith panel discussion on the question 'What does faith mean to me?',





Muslim calls to prayer, Sikh *Shabad*, or hymns to the Guru, and a Taste of Chinese culture with the Oxford Chinese Community Centre.

A visitor to the OneWorld Festival commented:

Just a note to say how incredible it was to enter the Ashmolean yesterday and hear the African singing group in the atrium. Very powerful and moving – and fantastic to see a multi-racial group performing. We went upstairs to the European Art section and heard the Muslim group chanting and loved the juxtaposition behind the classical art and the old-fashioned country house interior design and the ancient intensity of the chanting.

What a brilliant idea to invite groups in to perform and contrast the different art forms.

AMERICAN COOL FESTIVAL

To coincide with its major exhibition *America's Cool Modernism: O'Keeffe to Hopper*, the Ashmolean in partnership with Blackwell's Bookshop presented 'American Cool' – a three-week festival from 8 to 31 May 2018. The Festival celebrated American art, literature, music, drama and film from the 1920s to the 1940s, culminating with a memorable LiveFriday.



Other events featured in the Festival included:

OXFORD PLAYHOUSE

A Streetcar Named Desire
Dorothy Parker Takes a Trip
The Silent Piano Speaks with Neil Brand

BLACKWELLS BOOKSHOP, Broad Street

1920s & 30s America Panel discussions

State of the Nation. With Bonnie Greer and Sarah Churchwell

What is American Modernism? With Eric White and Terra Professor Miguel de Baca. Chaired by Tara Stubbs

American Literature in 1920s–30s. With Alex Goody, Kristen Lewis and Diana Leca

American Cool LiveFriday – 25 May 2018

The 2,113 visitors who attended this LiveFriday, on 25 May 2018, enjoyed being greeted by the fabulous Gatsby Girls. They listened to some bite-size talks on America in the 20s, made a Georgia O'Keeffe collage, met a modernist author and discovered the password for the Ashmolean Speakeasy from the 'Silent' movie actors from Pegasus Theatre. Festival partners The Rothermere American Institute joined the event to lead talks on subjects ranging from Child Gangs in Prohibition Chicago to The Little Black Dress in 1920s America. The late night event also featured 'Blenheim Palace's Dollar Princess' – an entertaining talk on Consuelo Vanderbilt by Blenheim Curator Antonia Keaney, while the new John Lewis at Westgate Shopping Centre staged a 20s fashion show using the shop's modern collections. This proved extremely popular, with the Personal Stylist receiving fifteen requests for makeovers after the LiveFriday event.

WESTGATE SHOPPING CENTRE

Westgate Takeover

Between 9am and 6pm on 12 May the Public Engagement and Commercial teams took over Leiden Square in the Westgate Shopping Centre. There were performances by the Gatsby Girls in the Square, and accapella group The Beatroots sang tunes from the 1920s. A pop-up purple velvet tent served as a base for games, and there was also a photobooth with the new Ashmolean Gin for sale.

Cinema Screening @ Curzon Dawson City: *Frozen Time*

On 23 May at 6.15pm a cinema screening of *Frozen Time* was held. The film explored the history of Dawson City – the American gold rush town whose historical treasure of forgotten silent films was buried in permafrost for decades until 1978. The event also featured a talk by Nicholas Lawrence, Department of English & Comparative Literary Studies at the University of Warwick.



SUPPORTING THE MUSEUM

The Ashmolean remains extremely grateful to all of its benefactors, members and volunteers for their support over the past year. Your generosity has enabled us to fund vital posts and activity across the Museum and all gifts, whether large or small, have a tangible effect on our ability to achieve our ambitions. We thank each and every one of you for your support.

The following pages outline some of the areas in which you have made a difference.

VOLUNTEERS

Throughout the course of the year we were delighted that over 350 people volunteered at the Ashmolean. They supported events such as the popular LiveFridays, delivered tours and assisted the Visitor Experience team at the Welcome Desk, as well as providing valuable behind the scenes support to various departments.

A main priority was to bring a consistent approach to volunteering and working collaboratively with Joint Museums Volunteers and Community Engagement Service. To this end, a set of key operating principles and guidelines in line with best practice and University policy was introduced – among them the introduction of a full volunteer expenses policy, a draft volunteer handbook and an induction programme. Central to the provision was the introduction of Volunteer ID Cards. These not only act as a proximity pass, but also – with nearly 200 people regularly volunteering at the Ashmolean – offer a positive way to raise the profile of volunteers' contributions and to acknowledge them as an integral part of the team.

We look forward to growing the range of volunteer opportunities available, as well as broadening the appeal to the community and further enhancing volunteers' experience and enjoyment while delivering the objectives of the Museum.

THE ASHMOLEAN FUND

When the Ashmolean Fund was launched in 2014, our immediate short-term target was to raise £25m by 2020 towards the Ashmolean endowment. Thanks to the support of a generous and committed group of donors, we have achieved this target in 2018, two years ahead of schedule. At the time of writing, the Ashmolean Fund stands at £26.1m in gifts and pledge.

Thank you to everyone who has supported the Ashmolean Fund and enabled us to reach this milestone ahead of our target. We are particularly grateful to the anonymous donor whose exceptional generosity in pledging a seven-figure gift provided matched funding for over 20 endowment gifts.

Our focus over 2017–18 has continued to be on securing endowed funding for curatorial positions. We have now completed the endowment of the Sir Arthur Evans Curator of the Greek and

Aegean Collections, named for the Ashmolean's former Keeper whose archaeological work in Crete forms the basis of the Museum's Aegean collections. This will be the first time that these collections will have been brought together under a single curatorial post.

We have also secured the post of the Curator of Sculpture and Decorative Arts, thanks to the generous support of two longstanding donors to the Museum whose gift was matched by the University of Oxford's Endowment Challenge Fund. The Curator of Sculpture and Decorative Arts has responsibility for some of the Ashmolean's most-admired treasures, including internationally important collections of ceramics, jewellery, tapestries, sculpture and silver. We are delighted to have been able to name the Deedee Wigmore Gallery in honour of this gift.

We are extremely grateful to everyone who has supported posts at the Ashmolean. At the time of writing, six Keepers or Curators are now fully funded by the Ashmolean's endowment, representing 25 per cent of our curatorial staff. This continues to be a key focus for us in ensuring that our collections will be accessible to the widest possible audience for generations to come.

We now look towards the second phase of our endowment campaign, when our ambition will be to increase the value of the Ashmolean Fund to £50m. An endowment of this size will guarantee an income of £2m per annum, helping to secure our core activities in perpetuity and ensuring that our renowned collections are available to a broad public, again in perpetuity.

SUPPORTING ALL WE DO

Many other posts within the Ashmolean continued to be funded by individuals and charitable trusts during 2017–18. These include:

- **The Gilbert and Ildiko Butler Family Foundation and Christian Levett: The Butler and Levett Curator of Classical Greece**, held by Marianne Bergeron
- **The Christensen Fund: The Christensen Fellow in Chinese Paintings**, held by Paul Bevan
- **Denys and Victoria Firth: Chinese Paintings Programme Coordinator**, held by Felicitas von Droste zu Hülshoff
- **The late Jaleh Hearn: The Jaleh Hearn Curator of Ancient Near East**, held by Paul Collins
- **Andy and Christine Hall, and Charlie and Camilla Park: Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art**, held by Lena Fritsch
- **The Headley Trust: Cross-Collections Trainee Curatorship**, held by Federica Gigante

The post of Secondary Education Officer, held by Clare Cory, continued to be funded thanks to the support of CHK Charities Limited, Sir Hugh and Lady Stevenson and Geoffrey and Caroline de Jager. Further support was received from over 100 donors to the Ashmolean's 'Teach and Inspire' annual appeal.

LEGACIES

The Ashmolean is built from generations of legacies: individual acts of generosity which together have created one of the greatest museums in the world. Legacies ensure the vitality of the Ashmolean and, as we focus on building our endowment, legacy giving is more central to our long-term security than ever. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to everyone who has chosen to support the Ashmolean by leaving a gift in their will during 2017–18, as well as their loved ones and executors for their support. This year, bequests have been made to the Ashmolean Fund, as well as to the display and conservation of our collections, ensuring that they can continue to be enjoyed for generations to come.

Nearly 20 per cent of our endowment has come from bequests. Legacies will help to ensure the Ashmolean can continue its work in perpetuity, and are straightforward and tax-efficient both in the UK and internationally. They are also versatile: you can specify which area of the Museum your gift should support, for example a collection or department of personal significance to you. We are always keen to ensure that your individual wishes are reflected, and every gift counts.

MEMBERSHIP: THE FRIENDS OF THE ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM

Our Members continue to be among our most loyal supporters. Now fully a department within the Museum, we are able to optimise on available resources to recruit and grow our memberships, translating in turn to greater financial support for the Ashmolean. This allows us to deliver our key aims of caring for our collections and undertaking research, outreach and education work – and, of course, of staging world-class exhibitions. The invaluable support of Members helps the Ashmolean to flourish and to realise our aspirations to be the world's greatest university museum of art and archaeology.

This year generous contributions from among the Friends helped to secure the success of the Secondary Education and Outreach Programme appeal, which will help to inspire a new generation of young museum lovers.

In addition to unlimited access to our major exhibitions, Members have enjoyed the ever-popular programme of preview days, evening private viewings, trips and lectures which greatly enrich their experience of the Museum. Members' Week is a chance for us to express our gratitude for their contributions towards the Museum and is now a regular feature on the calendar. Members' Week 2017 was filled to the brim with exclusive, behind-the-scene activities and special offers, and the event was very well received by participants.

Growth of our Friends continues to be very healthy: we gained over 1,400 Members in 2017–18, representing a year-on-year increase of 19.5 per cent. We are incredibly lucky to be supported by a team of eighteen volunteers, who contributed in total over 2,400 hours to support the delivery of the membership scheme – from membership administration to running events in and around Oxford.

THE PATRONS OF THE ASHMOLEAN:

The Elias Ashmole Group and the Tradescant Patrons Group

The Patrons of the Ashmolean provide vital financial support beyond their annual membership fee to the specific needs of the Museum. They contribute substantially to acquisitions, special exhibitions, conservation, the expansion of the Museum's collections to the educational programme and key curatorial posts. The generosity of our Patrons enables us to realise our goals for an international museum.

Last year the Patrons of the Ashmolean made grants to the Ashmolean totalling £120,000. In addition individual Patrons have supported and given to a range of special projects across the Museum, as well as donating a total of £97,457.50 towards the Annual Fund and public appeals.

As part of the Patrons' programme this year, the Elias Ashmole Trust visited the stunning city of Naples, with special visits to the Capodimonte, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Pompeii and Herculaneum. The Director's Study Morning focused on *America's Cool Modernism: O'Keeffe to Hopper*. The exhibition showcased significant examples of American art produced during the roaring 1920s and depression-era 1930s, some shown for the very first time in the UK. Other private talks and tours in the Museum included the exhibitions *Old Traditions, New Visions: Art in India and Pakistan after 1947* and *Qu Leilei: A Chinese Artist in Britain*.

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 Mr Barrie and Mrs Deedee Wigmore
 The William Delafield Charitable Trust
 Winton Capital Management
 Lady Wolfson of Marylebone

ASHMOLEAN COMMERCIAL DEPARTMENT

The Commercial Department delivered a net profit of £855k. This was generated from Retail and Brand Licensing, Catering, Venue Hire, Corporate Membership, Picture Library, Publishing.

RETAIL AND BRAND LICENSING

Retail and Brand Licensing continue to work closely when reviewing and implementing opportunities around range development which can be sold both onsite at the Museum and off site. During early 2018 we saw the launch of our Ashmolean Gin, flavoured with seventeen botanicals inspired by our collections. Licensing continues to expand its partnerships with those companies, designers and artists who wish to utilise the collections. At present there are twelve licensees working with the Ashmolean. Two years in to the seven-year strategy, Licensing remains on plan to see the financial contribution grow in this area to £275k by 2023.

EVENTS, CATERING AND CORPORATE MEMBERSHIPS

Venue Hire and Catering continued to enhance the visitor experience, both during the day and in the evening. Towards the end of 2017–18 we held several Gin 'n' Jazz evenings at our pop-up bar on the rooftop terrace, which all sold out. The teams worked together to oversee more than 400 events, ranging from weddings to academic conferences.

FRIENDS MEMBERSHIPS

During 2017–18 the Friends Membership team moved across from Development to the Ashmolean's Commercial Department. At the end of June we held our annual Members' Week, at which we sold a series of ticketed events and tours. The Membership team is supported by our dedicated team of volunteers, who are extremely committed to enhancing Members' experience and to helping us recruit and retain new and existing Members.

Compared to the previous year, sales generated in these areas during 2017–18 were significantly up. This combined to deliver a net financial contribution increase of 24 per cent on 2016–17.

To complement the work of the Commercial Department, the Ashmolean is delighted to have the support of 20 Corporate Members working in partnership.



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

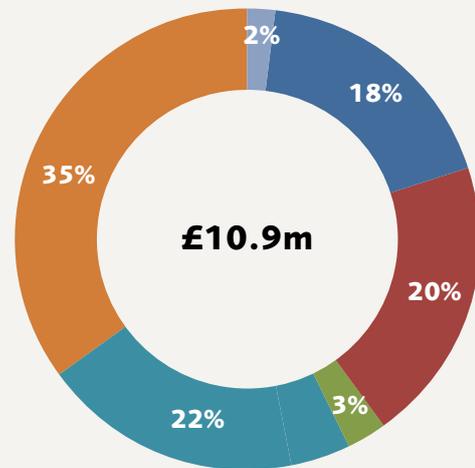
INCOME

Total income received in the year was £10.9m. Self-generated funds were £0.8m higher than in 2016–17 (up 26 per cent year on year). They reflected an increasingly successful and popular exhibition programme and programme of public events which supported an increase in income from ticketed admissions, memberships and secondary spend on site. At almost 60 per cent of the total, income from philanthropic sources, research grants, endowment income and commercial activities – including admissions and memberships – accounted for the lion's share of the Museum's total income. As University funding, and indeed all types of public sector funding, come under increasing pressure, the Ashmolean continues to invest in expanding its fundraising and commercial activities to secure its future financial resilience.

EXPENDITURE

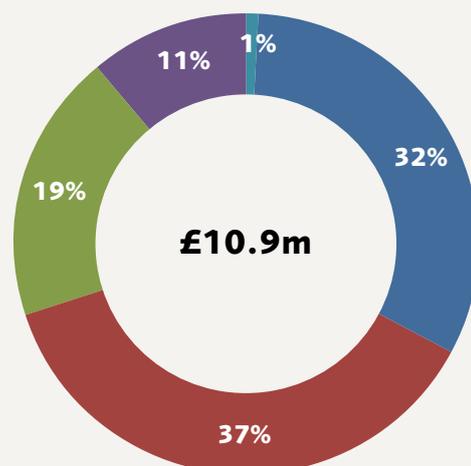
Total expenditure in the year was £10.9m. This was £1.2m less than in 2016–17, primarily because there were no major acquisitions in the year. (In 2016/17 the museum raised and spent £1.6m of philanthropic funds on on major acquisitions listed on p.26.) In most areas expenditure, including the costs of collection care, research, administration and commercial activities, were contained at a level lower than the previous year. However, the costs of Public Engagement, including teaching and exhibitions, increased by £0.6m year on year, reflecting the Ashmolean's investment in our programme of public events and our ambitious exhibition programme. We are grateful to our funders, supporters and sponsors (listed on pages 48, 49) for their continuing support for these important activities.

2017–18 Income £m



- Self-Generated: £3.8m
- Higher Education Funding Council for England: £2.2m
- University of Oxford net: £2.0m
- Philanthropy: £2.4m
- Arts Council England: £0.3m
- Research Grants: £0.2m

2017–18 Expenditure £m



- Public Programmes, including teaching and exhibitions: £4.0m
- Care of the collections and research: £3.4m
- Administration and infrastructure: £2.1m
- Trading, including cost of goods sold: £1.2m
- Gallery projects and acquisitions: £0.2m

The Ashmolean Museum
is supported by:



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