



The Ashmolean

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE
ANNUAL
REPORT
2005-06

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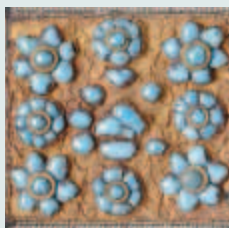
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University of Oxford

The
Ashmolean
Museum

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE
Annual Report
August 2005-July 2006



VISITORS OF THE ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM AS AT 1 AUGUST 2005

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The Vice-Chancellor (Dr John Hood)
Pro-Vice Chancellor (Dr William Macmillan)
The Assessor (Dr Frank Pieke)
Professor Alan K Bowman
The Rt Hon The Lord Butler of Brockwell
Professor Barry W Cunliffe CBE
James Fenton
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Professor Martin J Kemp
Professor Paul Langford
Sir Peter M North DCL
The Rt Hon The Lord Rothschild OM GBE
The Rt Hon The Lord Sainsbury of Preston Candover KG
The Rt Hon Sir Timothy Sainsbury
Andrew Williams

FELLOWS OF THE ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM

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Mrs Edmée Leventis
The Rt Hon The Lord Charles Powell of Bayswater KCMG
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The Robert and Rena Lewin Charitable Trust
The Rt Hon The Lord Rothschild OM GBE
Dr Mortimer Sackler KBE and Mrs Theresa Sackler
The Rt Hon The Lord Sainsbury of Preston Candover KG
The Rt Hon Sir Timothy Sainsbury
Professor Michael Sullivan

Cover illustration: *Neptune Calming the Waves*, maiolica dish,
workshop of Virgiliotto Calamelli, Faenza, c.1550–75 (detail).

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The Ashmolean

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Chairman's Foreword

The Ashmolean has been making encouraging progress with its £50 million plan to rebuild the galleries behind the Cockerell Building. Last December the University formally sanctioned the start of work. In the spring the galleries closed and decanting was completed, a huge task in itself for our curators and conservators. Demolition began in the summer.

The new galleries are to open in 2009. Rick Mather's building will have no less than 39 new galleries. The displays' theme will be 'Crossing Cultures/Crossing Time'. This exciting concept is explained elsewhere in this Report. Suffice to say here that the Ashmolean's combination of world-class collections and relatively small scale enables us to juxtapose galleries and themes in a way unique among the world's leading museums. For instance, on one floor a run of galleries from Ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt through Greece and Rome to India and China will enable the visitor to follow the story of the ancient Silk Road.

The objects in the new displays will not only look impressive. They will also tell stories about their origins, context, purpose, provenance, including the stories of some of the scholars and collectors through whom they reached the Ashmolean. In these ways we aim to make our collections more accessible to a wider public, to people of all ages and backgrounds including those to whom museums have traditionally seemed forbidding places.

Fundraising has continued well. The total passed £40 million and many new avenues have been opened up. For some time we have wanted to recognize our key benefactors in a more personal way and in September we inaugurated the Ashmolean Fellowships. A list of our initial Fellows appears at the front of this Report. The Board is extremely grateful to all of them and indeed to all those who have contributed to our campaign.

Although many galleries are now closed, some of our finest objects are on display in the new *Treasures of the Ashmolean* exhibition. In one small room they cover most of the globe in time and space. Perhaps nowhere else can so many objects of such premier quality be seen together so conveniently. And the way they have been displayed provides a happy preview of the 'Crossing Cultures/Crossing Time' theme of the new galleries.

Among the Ashmolean's more traditional roles is lending to other institutions. It should be more widely known that the Ashmolean is Britain's fourth largest lender. Last year we sent loans to 78 exhibitions in 87 venues in 14 countries, 536 works in total. Venues included the Metropolitan Museum of Art in NY, the Louvre in Paris, the Villa Borghese in Rome and the Getty in California. In Britain pride of place went to two exhibitions at the British Museum, *Samuel Palmer*, to which

we lent 24 works last autumn, and *Michelangelo's Drawings* in the spring (21 works). In the previous year the National Gallery's *Raphael* showed 15 works from the Ashmolean's collections.

The high calibre of the Ashmolean's scholarship should also be more widely recognized. A sad reminder of this came with the major obituaries marking the untimely death of Dr Andrew Sherratt. Most of our keepers and curators are key figures in their fields and they play an important role in the intellectual life of the University as well as within the Museum itself. This Annual Report again highlights an area of research being led by the Ashmolean.

During the year Sir Timothy Sainsbury retired from the Board of Visitors. He was the main benefactor for the Ashmolean's forecourt project some twelve years ago and had been a Visitor since then. The Ashmolean will always be grateful both for his generosity and his wise counsel in the boardroom. He is among the first of our new Fellows. In July 2006 we welcomed Sir Timothy's successor Martin Smith who brings us wide experience including as a trustee of the Science Museum where he is deputy chairman.

Much of the Board's work is carried out through its committees and the Board is grateful for their members who have worked so effectively throughout the year. Particular thanks go to the chairmen of the Finance and Development Committees, Lord Butler and Andrew Williams. During the year we established a new committee chaired by Martin Smith to oversee our commercial activities. I take this opportunity to thank all my Board colleagues for their support during the year.

While the spotlight falls on our capital fundraising, raising funds is of similar importance. The Museum depends on various forms of public money but these face unremitting pressures. This makes it all the more critical to increase our other forms of income. The roles played in this by the members of the Elias Ashmole Group, Tradescants and Friends are especially appreciated. So is the often unsung support of our many volunteers.

I hope this Annual Report will help the reader learn about the ongoing work of the Museum as well as about the transformation currently taking place. None of this could have happened without the sterling work of our staff and many volunteers and all those whose generosity underpins the work of this great institution. It is after all the people who make the Ashmolean the exciting place that it is today and I thank them warmly.

Nicholas Barber, CBE
Chairman





The Director's Report

The Ashmolean Plan

Last year in this report we were on the verge of receiving the formal go-ahead from the University's Council. This was duly given and the building contract let. Our chosen builders are HBG, an international building group headquartered in the Netherlands but with a large British operation. They have been on site for several months now and I am impressed by their efficiency and dedication to this immense project. The team is led by Anthony Nagle, who has shown a real understanding of the needs of the Museum. As I write, demolition is underway and the Drapers' wing is due to be levelled in the next few days. We expect demolition to be complete by the end of the year.

The year that is reviewed in this *Report* has been dominated by preparations for the new building and the installation of the collections in the 37 new galleries. The first practical job was, of course, the removal of the collections from the areas of the Museum which are presently being demolished. This was a huge task ably planned and led by Nick Mayhew, Mark Norman and Elisabeth Gardner, and I want to pay tribute to them and the teams of decanters who carried out this complex and demanding undertaking. About half a million objects were recorded, packed and moved, a process which enabled a good deal of retrospective housekeeping to be done, and provided information and images which will be added to our database and in due course made available on our new website. The website has been redesigned, with the assistance of the web design company Reading Room, and is now far more attractive and user-friendly.

Last year I announced the appointment of Metaphor as our design consultants and the creation of our new display strategy, 'Crossing Cultures/Crossing Time'. The work of planning our new galleries has continued throughout the year, led by Susan Walker and Henry Kim. It too has been a very demanding exercise and I want also to express my gratitude to them. By the end of 2006 we will have done a basic lay-out of all 39 galleries and in the New Year will move into a phase of detailed design. A key moment will be the appointment of showcase manufacturers, who will work with us in designing and developing the 380 showcases which are needed for the reinstallation of the collections.

Central to the process of moving the building and the collections display forward has been the Visitors' Steering Committee which has met monthly throughout the year. It is made up of volunteers who generously give us their time and to whom I am immensely grateful: led by our Chairman, Nicholas Barber, they are Lord Sainsbury, Mrs Caryl Hubbard, Michael Coates and Eric Gabriel. They receive a monthly progress report from our Project Managers, Graham Winter and Andy Bramwell of Mace and I thank them too for their effective monitoring of the scheme.

None of this would, of course, be possible without fundraising and the capital campaign continues to be led, with great success, by Andrew Williams. We passed the £40m mark in May. Indeed, it was in Stockholm, on this year's Elias Ashmole Group trip, that two of our members enabled us to pass this very important milestone.

Staff

On 30 September 2005 Professor Andrew Sherratt, who for many years had been the Curator of our Prehistoric collections, left the Museum to take up a Chair at the University of Sheffield. His wife, Sue, the author of a superb catalogue of our Cycladic collections, also joined the staff of the Department of Archaeology at the University of Sheffield. It was with great sadness that we learnt of Andrew's sudden death in February. He had been a great and distinguished servant of the Museum and the University and was beginning a new phase of his life. The many obituaries bore witness to his immense contribution to the study of archaeology: he was an original thinker and had much more to offer to the discipline. It is also with sadness that I record the early retirement of my assistant, Angela Woodcock, due to illness. She worked with my predecessor and with me since 1998 and I miss her calm efficiency and generous nature.

Professor James Allan moved from the Keepership of Eastern Art in order to set up the Ashmolean Inter-Faith Exhibitions Service. The Service had a great success with the Pilgrimage exhibition, attracting a large and diverse audience. However, the public funding we were hoping for was not forthcoming and, with great regret, the Service has had to be suspended. James has taken early retirement from the Museum and I want to thank him for his long and dedicated service to the Museum and the University. He led both the Department of Eastern Art and the Inter-Faith Exhibitions Service with a characteristic mixture of drive and great vision. The Eastern Art Department has been joined by Clare Pollard, as Curator of the Japanese collections in succession to Oliver Impey. She comes to us from The Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney and the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin. In Dublin she was closely involved in the reinstallation of the collections in Dublin Castle and her experience is proving especially valuable in the redisplay of the Ashmolean.

Professor Christopher Howgego, who had been Acting Keeper of the Heberden Coin Room, was appointed to the Keepership when Professor Mayhew moved permanently to the post of Deputy Director (Collections). Professor Howgego is a specialist in the study of Roman coins and has been the leader of the Roman Provincial Coinage project. He is a much-valued colleague and I was delighted by his appointment and look forward to continuing to work closely with him in the demanding years ahead.

Robert Thorpe (Deputy Director, Administration) has had an extended period of sickness but, at the time of writing, is returning to his duties at the Museum. Robert has a key role in the management of the changes necessary to prepare the Museum for the future and I am naturally very pleased indeed



that he is recovering. During his absence particular burdens have fallen on Nick Mayhew, Edith Prak and Julia Allen and I wish to record my gratitude to them here. My thanks too to Brian Collins, who retired after 24 years as a member (and lately the head) of the Museum security team; to Keith Bennett, who served the Museum as a draughtsman and graphic designer from 1981 until the summer of this year; to Julie Mackay, who headed the Education team during Jo Rice's maternity leave; to Karen Wilson, a key member of the Conservation team who has moved to the National Trust; to Caroline Newton, an effective and committed assistant in the Print Room, and to our Finance Officer Chris Kaye, who has joined Oxford City Council.

Exhibitions

The Treasures exhibition, in which we are showing (until the end of 2008) 200 of our key objects from the collections which are largely closed for the rebuilding, has proved a great success. It was masterminded by Rune Frederiksen, our Sackler Fellow. It is arranged by themes, which gives something of a taste of our new display strategy, although I must emphasize that this was Rune's own response to the collections.

Pilgrimage, organized by the Ashmolean Inter-Faith Exhibition Service and curated by Ruth Barnes, brought a large and very diverse public to the Museum. It was supported by Ian Laing during his period of office as High Sheriff of Oxfordshire. Ian and his wife Caroline were present at a series of special evenings which were provided in order to draw in many of the communities which make up modern Oxford. Many of our visitors to this exhibition had never been to the Museum before: this desire to reach beyond traditional museum audiences is central to the work of the Ashmolean.

Other exhibitions included the spectacular display of botanical art which brought together Shirley Sherwood's rich collection of modern botanical illustration with the University's resources. We are most grateful to Dr Sherwood for enthusiastically curating this exhibition and creating its superb catalogue, which was a bestseller in the shop. The photographs of *Oxford at Night* by Norman McBeath and Tom Phillips' *A Micro-retrospective*, which coincided with his marvellous Slade lectures, were among a series of memorable exhibitions this year. The programme was, however, necessarily reduced in 2006 and will continue to be relatively modest during the next three years. However the new building contains large temporary exhibition galleries and a new and ambitious programme of exhibitions for that space is currently being planned.

Acquisitions

Outstanding acquisitions have included two works on paper by Samuel Palmer, *Yellow Twilight* and *The Prospect*, the former by allocation under the In Lieu of Inheritance Tax procedure and the latter by purchase. Both were included in the Palmer exhibition shown at the British Museum and the Metropolitan Museum of Art this year. These acquisitions – and indeed the exhibition – confirm the Ashmolean as the repository of the finest group of



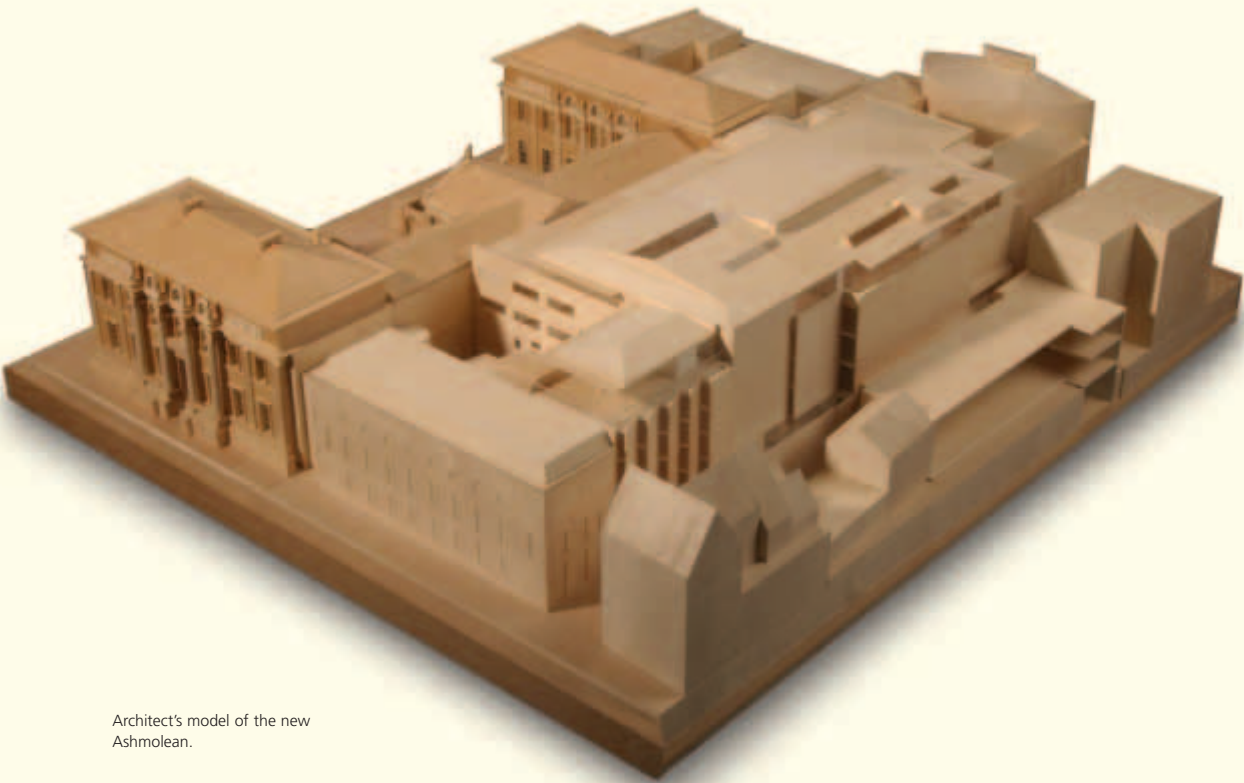


Palmer's work in the world. Also under the In Lieu arrangements we received Edward Lear's superb *View of Jerusalem* from the Waltham family. It has been on loan here for several years and we are especially grateful to members of the family for expressing their wish that it should remain in the Ashmolean.

The new Keeper of Eastern Art, Oliver Watson, has made a number of acquisitions of Islamic ceramics which will be seen in the Islamic Gallery in the new building.

As I mentioned at the beginning of my Report, which precedes the more detailed Departmental Reports, the Ashmolean Plan is well underway and building will begin early in the New Year. However, the front of the Museum remains open – Western paintings, decorative arts and graphic art, Greek vases and the Arundel marbles in the Randolph Sculpture Gallery and the Egyptian collections are all on show – much more than in many fully-open museums! – and we hope you will continue to visit and enjoy the Museum during this short phase of its long history.

Christopher Brown
October 2006



Architect's model of the new Ashmolean.

The Ashmolean Plan

The Ashmolean's major redevelopment to build on its strengths as a world-class museum is underway. Leading architect Rick Mather has created a design to transform the Ashmolean into a museum for a 21st century public. The Plan involves building 39 new galleries introducing the innovative display strategy 'Crossing Cultures/Crossing Time', an education centre, conservation studios, and a direct link between the cast Gallery and the main Museum building.

University approval for a building and display project (with an endowment for running costs) of £50 million was granted by Council on 5 December 2005. This constituted the 'green light' for work to proceed from planning to implementation. Project managers Mace tendered a two-stage construction contract and the construction company HBG were appointed on a fixed fee Stage 1 contract to work with the architects to develop 'buildability' and achieve the costed price. HBG began work in May, tendering all main packages, and tender returns were undergoing analysis at the end of the reporting period. HBG also accepted management responsibility for procurement of display cases, and an indicative tender was prepared for galleries on the ground floor. The demolition zone was handed over to them on 19 June 2006. Demolition work could not start immediately because of building work on the Classics Centre next door, but a full programme of security separations and roll-back of pipe runs and intruder and fire alarm systems was carried out in the intervening period. To achieve handover, the Museum had successfully logged, boxed and transported half a million museum objects to safe storage (see Decant Report p.19).

For its part, the University has contributed by paying for the relocation of a telephone exchange and committing major funds to stone cleaning and the maintenance of fabric on the Cockerell building.

The Museum has worked in partnership with the Heritage Lottery Fund. A start-up meeting was held in January. Hannah Salaman was appointed an HLF monitor and the Museum was visited in July by Giles Waterfield and Madhu Anjali on behalf of the Fund. The Museum has also endeavoured to work closely with its neighbours. Noise mitigation measures have been adopted in the Oriental Institute and lectures relocated for Modern Languages. We are particularly grateful for the understanding of these colleagues and of the people of St John Street.

An Update on Gallery Design

The year 2005–06 has seen tremendous progress in gallery design and the development of the 'Crossing Cultures/Crossing Time' concept. As the Museum has passed key milestones in preparing for the building project, work on designing the galleries of the new building has progressed without interruption. The first six months of the year were spent in developing the concepts for the new galleries, as museum curators produced design briefs for

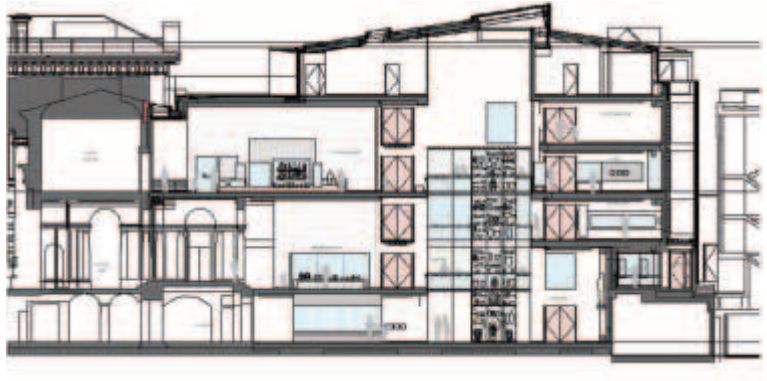


Top: model of the Art of the Islamic World Gallery as viewed from the east, illustrating the carpet case.

Middle: computer model sketch of the Education Centre.

Bottom: aerial view of the Museum with new building superimposed.

North–South cross-section of the new building along the main axis, showing the design of the Orientation Galleries and the proposed Ceramics Tower.



each of the 39 new galleries. The following six months have been spent translating gallery ideas into actual designs, and work is currently underway on the monumental task of selecting, assessing and conserving some 12,000 objects that will go back on display.

Since July 2005, the Ashmolean has been working with the exhibition design company Metaphor to develop the design principles for the new displays. Metaphor have brought to the project a team of designers and museum specialists who advise the Museum on how to make the ‘Crossing Cultures/Crossing Time’ concept a reality. Together, the Museum and Metaphor have created a sequence of galleries within the Museum, proposed a series of key developments to the architecture of the new building, devised templates for displays, and designed a family of new showcases for the galleries. By the end of 2006, the scheme designs for all galleries will be completed, allowing the Museum to begin the detailed work required to fill the cases and spaces in the Museum.

Model of the East Meets West Gallery as viewed from the north, illustrating the Coromandel Screen, central cases and the main graphic wall.

Accomplishing this level of design has required great commitment from Museum staff and a strong working relationship with Metaphor. Leading the way are the 39 gallery teams, composed of curators, conservators, educators and Metaphor designers.



Departmental Reports

Department of Antiquities

As for our colleagues throughout the Museum, the year has been dominated by the move out of the Ashmolean of over 200,000 objects from the Antiquities collections; the departmental archives, like the collections, of international importance; the staff (with the exception of Dr Whitehouse who retains her office in the Museum) and offices. We are especially grateful to our own Julie Clements, who gave unprecedented energy and time to the task; to Mark Norman and Elisabeth Gardner of Conservation, who respectively masterminded and, with Julie, managed large numbers of decanters; to Nick Mayhew, Deputy Director, who supported us throughout the process; and to Chris Powell, for developing the necessary software. Within the department, Suzanne Anderson provided constant calm and superbly professional management of innumerable orders and complex office moves.

The decant and the AHRC British archaeology project have together constituted a massive housekeeping exercise in which every relocated object has been photographed and recorded, and the British collections have been shown to be far more extensive – 50% rather than 25% of the whole – than previously thought. By any standards it has been a remarkable achievement to complete the move and its associated documentation within a year. Much work remains to be done on reconciling the various groups of data and moving them to MuseumPlus, our new documentation system. At the same time, nearly all of the department's new galleries have been developed to scheme stage, requiring curators to develop a clear vision of the future while the bulk of the collections remain inaccessible. That they have been able to achieve this is an enormous tribute to their energy and determination.

With so much change, this has been a challenging year. The Department suffered a major loss with the unexpected and premature death of Professor Andrew Sherratt whose willingness to communicate in witty and engaging fashion his unparalleled knowledge of old world prehistory is sorely missed. On a positive note, we have been greatly encouraged by the young students and others who have worked with us on projects and as volunteers. None of this would have been possible without their willing engagement, and we hope that the move of the Ashmolean collections will offer them valuable experience for building their careers.

One link with the previous year has been the second Roger Moorey Memorial Lecture, given by Dr Georgina Herrmann, FBA. Dr Herrmann spoke on 'Phoenician ivories: court or commercial production?' to a large and appreciative audience. The lecture was favourably reported in the August edition of *Minerva* magazine.

Department of Western Art

The year 2005 was the bicentenary of the birth of Samuel Palmer. The centrepiece of the commemorations was an exhibition organized at the British Museum and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in which the Ashmolean's pre-eminent holdings of the artist's work were shown to great advantage and to which Colin Harrison made pivotal scholarly contributions. Not long afterwards, the Ashmolean again made a spectacular contribution as one of the main lenders to the dramatic and almost embarrassingly popular exhibition, shown at the British Museum and Haarlem, of Michelangelo's drawings.

The year has also been something of an *annus mirabilis* for Palmer at the Ashmolean in that it has been possible to augment the collections with two beautiful and appropriate watercolours by the great Romantic artist: *The Prospect*, a watercolour from the series of illustrations to Milton on which Palmer was working at the end of his life, was acquired with the help of The Art Fund (formerly the National Art Collections Fund), the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the MLA/V&A Purchase Grant Fund, the Headley Trust, the Warden and Fellows of All Souls College, the Friends of the Ashmolean, and many private donations from Friends of the Ashmolean and others following a heart-warmingly successful public appeal; while *Yellow Twilight*, a rare work from the Shoreham period, was received by the Government under the admirable scheme by which works of art can be accepted in lieu of inheritance tax and allocated to the Ashmolean. It had previously belonged to Sir Eric Maclagan, Director of the V&A, and then to his son Michael Maclagan, historian, Herald, Visitor of the Ashmolean, and Lord Mayor of Oxford.

Other acquisitions under the Acceptance in Lieu scheme have been a silver toilet service of 1699, a large and splendid painting of *Jerusalem* by Edward Lear, and a painting by John Piper which complements the fine collection of Piper's drawings we have received from the collection of the late Robert and Rena Lewin; a group of nineteenth- and twentieth-century paintings and drawings, including Continental Modernist drawings (by Klee, Feininger, Modigliani, Kandinsky, and others) of a type uncommon in British museums, came through the same scheme from the collection of Sir James Colyer-Fergusson.

Among particularly touching gifts was one from a long-standing New York friend of the Museum, Mrs Mary-Jane Harris, through Americans for Oxford Inc. (a route which makes such gifts tax-deductible for American citizens) of a beautiful early-seventeenth-century drawing by the Florentine artist Cristofano Allori; of a late-medieval rock-crystal spoon in celebration of his marriage from Daniel Katz, the London sculpture dealer who has over the years been a wonderfully generous sponsor for the redecoration of several galleries and of cataloguing work; and from the Friends, in honour of their outgoing Chairman, His Honour Judge Paul Clark, of a lyrical and characteristic drawing by Michael Ayrton.

In other areas of the collection too, important and appropriate additions have been made. The Art Fund has, as ever, been a rock in supporting purchases. Gift Aid donations from donors who wish to remain anonymous have made possible the purchase directly from the artists of exceptional pieces of contemporary silver and ceramics.

A loan from a private collection of nineteenth-century French pottery of the type known as *Céramique Impressioniste* has allowed these objects to be shown alongside paintings of the period, something too rarely done in British museums; it is hoped that it will be the first of a series of such loans from the same remarkable collection.

A great deal of work has been done during the year to keep as much as possible of the collections on display during the Ashmolean Development; we hope that the consequent crowding of works of art and musical instruments into those galleries which remain open will have an element of charm for some of our visitors, and be pardoned by others. The removal of the tapestries from the Mallett Gallery has allowed the room to be redecorated and relit, with help from Daniel Katz and from the DCMS/Wolfson Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund, as an atmospheric central salon for the first floor of the Museum; pictures have been hung in it and receptions and concerts will continue to be held there.

A highlight of the academic year was a spirited and brilliant series of Slade Lectures given by the artist Tom Phillips, RA. The innovation of having a practising artist give the Slade lectures (though Mr Phillips is also a polymath on an immense scale) proved a great success – it was almost unprecedented in the history of lectures in Oxford that numbers increased as the series developed – and we were pleased to be able to mount a ‘micro-retrospective’ exhibition to coincide with the lectures.

The Department looks forward to assuming the mantle of the Windmill Theatre (‘We never close’) during the building works and making welcome refugee colleagues from the Radcliffe Infirmary.

Heberden Coin Room

The year was a modest one for acquisitions. Funds were saved towards a major purchase which unfortunately failed to obtain a crucial grant. The excitement of the year lay elsewhere.

The entire Department was heavily engaged in the completion of decanting, which was managed without imposing on the dedicated decant teams. Hard hats were donned, and sleeves rolled up. All the standard coin cabinets and the reserve coin collections were moved to a purpose-built secure racking system within the remaining building. A second racking system within a lockable cage was installed in a closed gallery for the large cabinets. During the period of redevelopment possibilities to visit the collection will perforce be more restricted than usual, but the intention is to maintain scholarly access throughout. Our Collections Manager, Volker Heuchert, remains at



A moving scene: Professor Mayhew with lifting equipment.



Volker Heuchert with 'Romans on Tour'.

the Museum site to aid access. The rest of the Department now occupies offices on the Radcliffe Infirmary site, with the exception of Luke Treadwell who has taken congenial refuge in the Khalili Centre. The Coin Library was moved to the Sackler Library where it too will remain accessible for the duration of the building works.

Preparation for decanting involved intensive rehousing and recording. The entire medal collection was moved into new conservation-friendly cabinets and the archives were transferred into archival quality folders and boxes. The department now has electronic records of its coin cabinets, reserve collections, casts, and archives. All in all, this represents a remarkable achievement.

Throughout the upheavals teaching was maintained, as was at least some research. A symposium entitled 'Coinage in the Balkans, 9th–14th c. – Forty Years On' was held in honour of former Keeper Michael Metcalf. Generous funding from the Carl and Eileen Subak Family Foundation allowed Nick Mayhew and Julian Baker to put together a programme of 14 speakers, many of whom were from the Balkans.

The Carl and Eileen Subak Family Foundation and the Robinson Charitable Trust continued their generous support for our Visiting Scholars' programmes. The ongoing support by Wolfson College and St Cross College for the latter is very much appreciated.

In April, Chris Howgego, together with Volker Heuchert and the Education Service, organized the first 'Romans on Tour' event, which involved short talks and handling sessions for nearly 100 children in their primary school. This is the first time members of the Coin Room staff have gone out to schools in this way, and the event was a great success. It was particularly important in allowing the trial of ideas for exploring the core curriculum in the new Museum, at a time when the relevant galleries are closed.

Nick Mayhew's appointment as Deputy Director has been continued until retirement. The Visitors conferred on him the additional title of Honorary Curator of the Heberden Coin Room in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the Coin Room. Chris Howgego was appointed Keeper with effect from 1 June 2005. He was also awarded the title of Professor of Greek and Roman Numismatics with effect from 1 October 2006. Alessia Bolis completed her one-year appointment as Assistant Collections Manager. The Department is particularly grateful for her efforts, which were crucial in achieving the efficient and speedy move of the collection, archives, and offices.

Department of Eastern Art

The Department's work over the last year has been dominated by moving. Packing and moving the entire collection from galleries and stores into temporary storage elsewhere was accomplished over a period of many months by a dedicated and efficient team, ably guided for much of this time by Flora Nuttgens. The packing and transfer of the offices was undertaken in a shorter period but nevertheless consumed much time and energy both in the move

and in settling in at the new site. Inevitably, during this period normal work was much disrupted and some services suspended for the duration.

Normal work was also overtaken by the needs of the Ashmolean Plan development, and the focus of curatorial work was directed at the planning of the new galleries. Some dozen displays in the new building are directly the responsibility of members of the Department, and Eastern Art Curators are involved to a lesser extent in many other galleries.

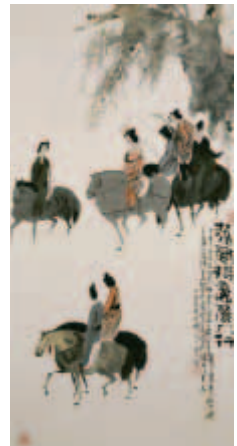
Additional to this work is the introduction of MuseumPlus, which offers not only the functionality to catalogue objects, but also the potential to plan displays and other important features. It is a complex application which requires time and effort to learn, but will give considerable benefits in the longer term. The Department's Documentation Officer, Helen Hovey, leads this work, and has been responsible for the transferring of the Department's previously used databases, and ensuring their accuracy and consistency.

During the year the Department staged two exhibitions. *The Mystery of Empty Space: Twentieth Century Chinese Painting*, in the Chinese Paintings Gallery from July to October 2005, was curated by the Department's Christensen Fellow, Weimin He. *Beauties of the Four Seasons*, a display of Japanese Prints in the Eric North Gallery from August to December 2005, was curated by Mitsuko Watanabe, a Research Associate in the Department. All Eastern Art Curators helped in the selection of objects and caption writing for the exhibition *Treasures of the Ashmolean* in the McAlpine Gallery from May 2006.

The Department saw the departure of Flora Nuttgens on maternity leave at the end of 2005, and we will miss her energy and commitment as Collections Manager. Dr Clare Pollard took up her post as Curator of Japanese Art in April 2006 and faces the challenge of getting to know her collections and planning the new Japanese galleries while all the material is packed away in store. Dr Ruth Barnes rejoined the Department on a temporary contract to work on three galleries in the new building. Aimée Payton joined us in January 2006 as Departmental Secretary and has already made major improvements in the efficiency and smooth running of the Department. Dr Oliver Watson, Keeper and Curator of Islamic Art, Dr Andrew Topsfield, Curator of Indian Art and Shelagh Vainker, Curator of Chinese Art, continued their programmes of research, lecturing and teaching.

Acquisitions have included two major Islamic items for display in the new galleries, and a splendid Chola bronze image from South India, purchased in memory of Dr J C Harle (Keeper of Eastern Art 1967–1987) with funds provided by an anonymous benefactor. The Department has also benefited from the generosity of many other individuals who made gifts and bequests. A number of long-term loans have been returned to their owners.

The Department records with regret the death of Mr E M Scratton in October 2005 at the age of 93. Since the 1950s Mike Scratton had been a generous friend and benefactor. He had donated many important and interesting objects



over the years, most of them collected in India in the 1930s. His extensive collection of Tibetan and Nepalese bronze sculpture and *thangka* paintings, on loan to the Museum since the early 1960s, has also been a mainstay of our Himalayan displays. We are most grateful to him and to Mrs Liz Scratton that, according to his longstanding wish, almost the whole of the Scratton Collection of Himalayan art has now entered the Museum's permanent holdings.

In September, Prof. James Allan retired from the Museum after almost forty years' service, mainly in the Department of Eastern Art. He first arrived as Assistant Keeper with responsibility for the Islamic collections, shortly after graduating in Arabic and Persian from St Edmund Hall. Along with his curatorial duties, he was able to complete a doctoral thesis on the early metalworking industry in Iran (1976). Together with several major catalogues and other later publications, this established him as a leading international authority on Islamic metalwork. Ceramics soon became another speciality, particularly after the munificent gifts made by Gerald Reitlinger in 1978, which led to the creation of the Museum's Reitlinger Gallery of Islamic Art. James was able to make some notable further acquisitions to enhance its displays, not least a fine Egyptian glass mosque lamp and the remarkable Cordoba ivory box-lid of AD 999. In 1991 he succeeded Mary Tregear as Keeper of Eastern Art. The period of his Keepership saw much constructive activity, including the building of a new Print Room for the Department, and of new galleries for Japanese decorative arts and for Chinese paintings. Moreover, the Indian, Chinese and Islamic galleries, as well as the Eric North exhibition room, were all renovated. The collections, especially of Chinese paintings, early Indian art and Japanese decorative art, were also considerably expanded with the help of benefactors. In addition to his curatorial work, James has always been an enthusiastic and energetic teacher and lecturer. He was largely responsible, together with Julian Raby, for setting up the successful undergraduate and MPhil degree courses in Islamic Art and Archaeology. Two years ago, James left the Eastern Art Department to head the new Ashmolean Inter-Faith Exhibitions Service, a project to which he brought a strong personal vision and commitment. The highly successful *Pilgrimage* exhibition, held in the McAlpine Gallery in 2005, proved one of the best-attended in the Museum's history. James now continues in his university teaching role, from his new base in the Khalili Research Centre, and we wish him well for the future.

The Cast Gallery

Three new items were added to the collection of the Cast Gallery. Two versions of a Hellenistic royal portrait head – the 'Berlin Attalos', with and without hair – were acquired from the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, and entered the collection in October 2005. In June 2006 the Gallery acquired a head of a Roman tetrarchic emperor from the National Museum in Zajecar, Serbia. This cast is skilfully painted to imitate the colours of the original – made of porphyry.

The heads are of the Hellenistic Greek and Late Roman periods, areas in which the collection is expanding.



Conservation

The Conservation Department was exceptionally busy through this eventful year balancing demands of packing and decanting the most fragile objects in the Museum, from Egyptian mummies to Japanese screens, with a series of unusually large outward loans (notably to the British Museum's Michelangelo exhibition, the Museum of the History of Science and to Henley River and Rowing Museum), the preparation of works for a forthcoming catalogue of European sculpture, and two large Ashmolean exhibitions, *Pilgrimage* and *Treasures of the Ashmolean*. At the same time the Department also relocated its old conservation laboratories dating back to the 1950s and set up four new laboratories at the Radcliffe Infirmary. These are now ready for work on the estimated twelve thousand objects needed for display when the new galleries of the Ashmolean Plan open.

Amongst the largest pieces to be conserved over the year were the five tapestries from the Mallett Gallery, long in urgent need of conservation, which were sent to specialist contractors in Belgium in November. The cleaning and treatment of the tapestries will take several years, and be completed in time for the reopening of the new galleries. The Department is very grateful to the Trusts and bodies that have given money to this project.

Planning for the Ashmolean development also entered a new phase this year and the Department was central to many areas, advising on gallery plans, environment, storage and services in the new building as well as case design and lighting. Perhaps the most exciting thing of all has been the planning of a new public conservation gallery and conservation studios in the new development.

The Decant

An essential requirement of the Ashmolean's development plan was that the parts of the building scheduled for demolition should be vacated by mid 2006. Preparations to pack and remove the entire collections from the Departments of Antiquities (excepting Egypt), Eastern Art, and the Heberden Coin Room therefore began in late 2004 from which time a small interdepartmental 'Decant Group' met regularly to plan and monitor the project's progress until the move was completed.

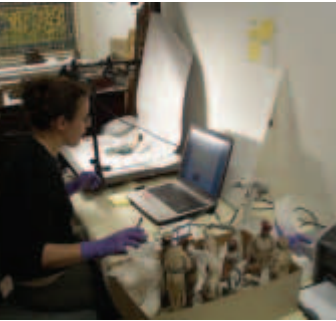
Before packing could begin, much preparatory work was required. The first stage involved surveying the collections so that a general strategy and timetable could be developed to deliver a project on this scale and, in Eastern Art, to build on previous work in the Department that had already assessed the storage needs of the organic collections. The survey involved not only the measurement of existing storage, but also the huge number of individual items, in order to accurately calculate the packed volume of material to be moved, to assess the new storage requirements, and to allow the removal itself to go out to tender. The Conservation Department researched, evaluated and developed packing methods and, most importantly, the Ashmolean's IT Department created a recording system that would allow the Museum to



16th century polychrome terracotta head of an angel (WA.S16) in clamps during conservation.



The Drapers' gallery packed



Recording Indian figurines prior to packing

identify and track the hundreds of thousands of items that were going to be relocated. The Decant Group, chaired by the Deputy Director (Collections) began meeting weekly in November 2004 to formulate a plan of action and in February 2005, key project personnel were seconded full-time from their normal departmental duties to the project

Trial packing, by members of the initial decant team, began in February 2005 so that the packing methods and the recording system could be evaluated under 'field' conditions. Having been located, the accession number and original location of each item was entered on a database; each object was photographed and assigned a barcode, and finally packed in a container which was then itself barcoded so that its eventual location could also be recorded. Given the scale of the project and the demanding time scale, the whole exercise was timed so that targets could be set and progress monitored as the project progressed. Predicted volumes based upon the survey work were also verified or modified regularly to ensure that they were not significantly different from the actual volumes being created by the packers. These trials enabled the coordinators to calculate the number of extra personnel and devise a team structure that would be required to deliver the project on time - these were duly hired following the initial trials and packing began in earnest in May 2006. By June six teams of three packers (but because some posts were part-time, the number of people actually employed totalled 30) were working simultaneously in the departments of Antiquities and Eastern Art, coordinated by Elisabeth Gardner, Flora Nuttgens, and Julie Clements. Heberden Coin Room staff (Chris Howgego, Volker Heuchert and Alessia Bolis) planned the relocation of the numismatic collections and Catherine Casley those from Western Art whilst Chris Powell developed the database and provided IT support. Packing began in non-public areas but progress was swift and before long, galleries were closed to allow dismantling and packing of the showcase contents once everything had been photographed in situ in its historic display context. Ashmolean-led teams packed those objects that would conveniently fit into a standardized range of containers. The Museum's conservators packed particularly demanding pieces whereas oversize, but light, items were custom-packed by Harrow Green subcontractors. The packed collections, archives, and office moves were undertaken by them with the moving of heavy oversize items, including all sculpture, contracted-out to their Engineering Services department. Predictably, the removal of the Assyrian relief from the 1st Floor Drapers' Gallery to the Randolph Sculpture Gallery proved to be their most challenging task.

Whilst the packing proceeded, plans for the storage of the relocated collections were prepared by Ashmolean and Project Management team members, based upon the now verifiable packed volumes and environmental, conservation, and curatorial criteria. On the Ashmolean site, new stores were created by the temporary conversion of the Weldon Gallery and other areas into stores. Off-site preparations included the location and refurbishment of offices, stores and ancillary facilities required by the fifty or so staff members displaced from the Ashmolean. The office move took place over two weeks in March. The collections followed as soon as the off-site stores had been completed with the last items being moved on 23 June.

The Ashmolean has been involved in major projects for the past 15 years or so, but nothing on this scale had been attempted since the Second World War. However, even that exodus was dwarfed by this operation, the sheer scale of which was, by any standards, huge. It is an immense achievement, having not only quantified huge parts of the collections, but also provided a database of 250,000 entries, all of which are barcoded and digitally illustrated, covering about 500,000 items. Inevitably, given the speed with which this project had to be undertaken and the pressures that this exerted, it contains a proportion of inaccuracies but these were to be expected and, as part of the next phase, inconsistencies are gradually being identified and rectified where practicable prior to the transfer of parts of the Decant database into MuseumPlus. Until then, it provides a unique window into the Museum's collections and will be a vital tool for curators selecting items for the new gallery displays.

Against all odds, this huge project was delivered in less than 18 months and is something of which the Ashmolean in general, and the Decant Team in particular, can justly be proud. It was critical to the Ashmolean's development plans and its undoubted success is a tribute to the people who, working long hours, often in very poor conditions, actually made it happen.

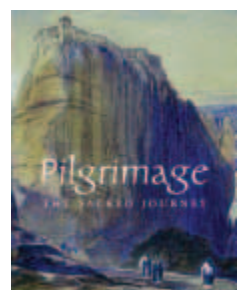
Ashmolean staff seconded to the Decant project: Mark Norman (Conservation Dept) – Decant Manager; Elisabeth Gardner (Conservation Dept) – Antiquities coordinator; Flora Nuttgens (Conservation Dept/Eastern Art) – Eastern Art coordinator; Julie Clements (Antiquities) – Antiquities Documentation Officer; Alessia Bolis (Heberden Coin Room) – HCR coordinator.

Publications

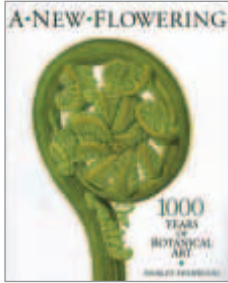
The catalogue for the exhibition *Beauties of the Four Seasons* was produced in August 2005. Written by Mitsuko Watanabe, this book featured woodblock prints (*Ukiyo-e*) from the Museum's collection. Works by classical artists such as Harunobou, Utamaro, Toyokuni and Eishi were included, spanning over a hundred years of this art form. (245 mm x 170 mm, portrait, paperback. 80pp. 45 colour illustrations. Price £12.95.)

The latest addition to the Handbook Series, *Japanese Decorative Arts of the Meiji Period* was published in October 2005. This was written by the late Dr Oliver Impey and Joyce Seaman. This handbook features 52 pieces from the collection, which as a result of active purchasing, has meant the Museum now has a good representative collection of the highest quality. (210 mm x 145 mm, portrait, paperback and hardback. 112pp. 92 colour illustrations. Price £7.95 paperback and £11.95 hardback.)

Pilgrimage: The Sacred Journey, published January 2006, explores the role of pilgrimage in Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and the religions that developed in India. It was written to coincide with the exhibition held in the McAlpine Gallery, but is not a catalogue of the display. It is intended to be read independently, as it explores attitudes to pilgrimage in the different religions; it also includes accounts of individual pilgrimage, both historical and



contemporary. Edited by Ruth Barnes and Crispin Branfoot, with contributions from James Allan, Francis Davey and Caroline Friend. (280 mm x 220 mm, portrait, paperback. 132pp. 117 colour illustrations. Price £14.95).



The Shop

The Museum shop enjoyed a very busy year. Our stock of books and an ever-changing range of gifts consistently reflected the Museum's collection and supported the temporary exhibitions. The year began with *A New Flowering – 1000 years of Botanical Art*; sales of the catalogue and other related products continued the successful period begun in May 2005. Other temporary exhibitions throughout the year were also successful in terms of extra business for the shop, especially *Pilgrimage*, the catalogue for which has become a best seller. The range of Christmas cards was particularly well received and was a major contributor to turnover this year.

Filming

Filming at the Ashmolean continued to be popular, with television crews from Greece, Japan and the USA. Notable inclusions are Channel 4 for 'The Real Meaning of the Sistine Chapel' and 'Lost Leonardo' and Lion Television for a documentary about the historic novelist Mary Renault.

The Café

The gallery closure programme and thus potential reduction in visitor numbers, together with staff relocation, were expected to impact the Café's turnover. However, active promotion of the Museum and Café as a suitable location for a range of formal and informal events, of which more than 100 were held during the year, offset these factors and contributed to another successful performance. The Museum is in the final stages of obtaining a licence to hold weddings, expanding the potential to generate revenue from this source. Maintaining this level of activity during the redevelopment phase and then planning for expansion on reopening will be a key focus of activities in the short term.

ICT Department

The IT Manager has continued to serve on the Committee for Museums and Scientific Collections (CMSC) and the Information and Communications Technology Committee (ICTC). The Department has continued to develop the Basketry website (with the Pitt Rivers Museum), host the Oxford University Collections & Museums History Group on-line Biographical Index (with Institute of Archaeology, PRM, and Griffith Institute) and support the Griffith Institute website.

The new Ashmolean website (www.ashmolean.org) was launched on 1 June 2006, on a new web server installed in April 2006. Many Museum departments were involved in the redesign activities, working in partnership with the website design company 'Reading Room', who provided a new Content Management capability which allows various pages to be updated by

specific departments. The Roman Provincial Coin Project, developed by the Heberden Coin Room and Oxford University Computing Services Academic Computer Development Team, was successfully transferred to a Museum-based web server in June 2006. This is to be officially launched in Michaelmas Term 2006.

The MuseumPlus system was bought and installed in January 2006. Data for the Antiquities, Eastern Art and Western Art Departments is now loaded onto the system and this is currently being expanded and refined for accuracy.

The ICT infrastructure for the new building was prepared and given to the Project coordinators in March 2006. The transfer of ICT equipment to the Radcliffe Infirmary site was successfully accomplished without any major hitches.

The Department has continued to provide general support to the Museum, including setting up new computers and troubleshooting user problems.

Photographic Department

The Photographic Studio relocated to assist the rebuilding works, although it has retained a small studio at 37 Beaumont Street. The move provided an ideal opportunity to effect the long anticipated conversion to a completely digital studio, replacing the traditional processing done in the old studio which was outdated and which could no longer continue. This has been a key strategic investment for current and future activities.

The digitization process involved acquiring much new equipment, including cameras, computers and a scanner, all of a high enough quality to equal or surpass that achieved with our traditional photographic equipment. Even though the use of digital imaging has increased dramatically over the last few years the staff faced a steep learning curve to come to terms with so much new and, in some cases, unfamiliar equipment.

We are confident that these changes will improve the service we provide and that, by savings in photographic materials and origination costs for Museum publications, we can look to recoup the initial outlay on the equipment within a few years.

Registrar

Loans Out

During the year the Ashmolean lent to 78 exhibitions held in 87 venues in 14 countries. In total, 536 works were lent. The Museum lent to 1 exhibition in Australia, 1 in Belgium, 1 in Canada, 4 in France, 7 in Germany, 3 in Ireland, 6 in Italy, 4 in the Netherlands, 1 in Spain, 1 in Sweden, 1 in Switzerland, 48 in the UK, 1 in Japan and 9 in the USA.

Among the exhibitions lent to were three loans to the Metropolitan Museum of Art for the shows, *Daughter of Re: Hatshepsut, King of Egypt*, 20 March to 9 July 2006; *Raphael: The Colonna Altarpiece*, 20 June to 3 September 2006;

and *Samuel Palmer*, 7 March to 28 May 2006, which included 24 works from the Ashmolean and which was also shown at the British Museum from 21 October 2005 to 22 Jan 2006. 21 works were lent to the major touring exhibition *Michelangelo's Drawings*, Teylers Museum, Haarlem, 6 October 2005 to 8 January 2006 and the British Museum, 23 March to 25 June 2006. 35 drawings were lent to the *James Barry* exhibition held at the Crawford Municipal Art Gallery, Cork, from 22 October 2005 to 4 March 2006. 31 drawings went to *The Dutch Golden Age*, at the Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, 22 September 2005 to 8 January 2006 and the loan of 50 Guercino drawings was made to the touring exhibition, *Guercino Drawings*, Cento, 28 May to 2 October 2005 and the Dulwich Picture Gallery, 2 November 2005 to 15 January 2006. Two large loans were made of works from the Antiquities Department which were removed for work on the Ashmolean Plan. This helps to ensure that important works remain on display during the period of the decant. These were the loan of 154 British archaeological items to the River and Rowing Museum in Henley and 137 works from the Tradescant collection to the Museum of the History of Science in Oxford.

Among the English venues lent to were Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Bowes Museum, Courtauld Gallery, Dean Gallery, Dulwich Picture Gallery, Fitzwilliam Museum, Imperial War Museum, National Gallery, Tate Britain, Tate St Ives, Watts Gallery and the Whitworth Gallery. Among the international venues to which the Ashmolean lent were the Getty Villa Museum, Santa Monica; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Musée d'Orsay, Paris; Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Museum Villa Stuck, Munich; National Gallery, Dublin; Nationalmuseum, Stockholm; Villa Borghese, Rome; and Waseda University, Tokyo.

Loans In

During this period 309 works were brought into the Museum for temporary exhibitions. Loan exhibitions were *A New Flowering: 1000 Years of Botanical Art*, which was held 2 May 2005 to 11 September 2005, and comprised 123 works drawn from the Shirley Sherwood collection of contemporary botanical drawings, plus works from the Bodleian Library, Magdalen College and other lenders. *The Cassel Silver* was shown from 2 August 2005 to 13 November 2005. In the Eldon Gallery the following loan exhibitions were mounted: *Spectacular Miracles: Images of Supernatural Power from Northwest Italy*, 19 October 2005 to 29 January 2006; *Tom Phillips: A Micro-Retrospective*, 8 February 2006 to 23 April 2006; *Oxford at Night: An exhibition of photographs by Norman McBeath*, 9 May 2006 to 23 July 2006. We also borrowed from the Bodleian, Pitt Rivers Museum, Museum of the History of Science and other lenders for the exhibition *Pilgrimage: The Sacred Journey*, McAlpine Gallery, 11 January to 2 April 2006.

During the same period a number of works were brought into the Ashmolean on long-term loan. This included a selection of French pottery from the Albert Dawson Collection, a pot by James Tower and a pair of silver candlesticks dating from 1671. Three long-term inward loans were made

possible through the support of the MLAC in coordinating cover under the government indemnity scheme. These works, all from private collections, were Johann Rottenhammer, *Christ on the Road to Calvary*, oil on copper; Sir Edwin Landseer, *Interior of a Highland House*, oil on panel; and Peter Paul Rubens, *Copies after Six Figures from Michelangelo's Last Judgement*, black and red chalks on two adjoined sheets. The loan of the Anthony Caro sculpture, *Toronto Flats*, which had enlivened the Museum's forecourt, came to an end in 2006.

Design Office

The department has been heavily involved in the exhibitions programme. The *Treasures* exhibition required considerable attention to detail. Understanding the curator's vision for this mixed-object-based exhibition was crucial for designing a suitable layout for over two hundred objects in a very small space.

With the Ashmolean Plan making rapid progress, the Design Office has become increasingly involved with many of the key working groups. This involvement will increase significantly over the coming months as Metaphor's scheme designs move into the detailed design phase.

Rhian Lonergan-White has established newly developed skills in film-making and editing which we hope to be able to incorporate into areas of the new development where film work may be required. Rhian has already filmed some of the progress of the redevelopment, mostly archival footage of the old buildings which are soon to disappear. There have also been many filmed interviews of former Ashmolean staff.

Personnel Department

This has been a year of change for many of the Museum staff, and the HR team have been supportive during the move to the Radcliffe Infirmary, and the formation and implementation of the University's new pay and conditions structure. There have been 20 regular recruitment exercises during the course of the year, together with a number of temporary placements through recruitment agencies. A new training programme for the gallery staff was implemented. In this busy year, the assistance of the University's Payroll and Personnel Departments, and the support of Nick Mayhew, Edith Prak and Tom Lundie was much valued.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR (ADMINISTRATION)'S REPORT

Most of the administrative departments moved to temporary accommodation at the Radcliffe Infirmary site during the year in line with the requirements of the Ashmolean Plan. Planning for and executing this move, whilst meeting the wider demands of the Plan and continuing to provide excellent service to visitors, Museum and University colleagues and external agencies presented significant challenges, to which the departments responded with energy and enthusiasm. The Museum will no doubt require a period of adjustment to working on a 'split site' but it is evident that new ways of effective working are already evolving. The Museum can be confident that the period of redevelopment and its inevitable disruption will see no reduction in the quality of service delivered during this time.

Finance

Over the past year significant steps have been made towards ensuring accuracy in the Museum's new financial systems. The Museum has faced additional challenges during this time, with the resignation of both the Finance Officer and the Management Accountant over the period of the financial year end.

The post of Finance Officer has been revised and regraded, and Andrew Noton has recently been appointed the Museum's first Head of Finance. The finance team continues to be supported by Tom Lundie as interim Administrator/business consultant.

Over the forthcoming year the key financial challenges to the Museum will be to ensure effective budgetary control and to provide regular financial analysis of the Museum's activities and the redevelopment of the galleries.

University Funding Sources

University Funding Sources	2005-2006	2004-2005
Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC)	2,337,320	2,251,436
University Of Oxford	417,360	406,507
HR (pay, recruitment, etc.)	42,081	45,603
Research	213,210	129,030

Other Grants & Donations

The Art Fund (Acquisitions)	97,500	395,600
National Heritage Memorial Fund (Acquisitions)	45,000	558,345
Resource / V&A Fund (Acquisitions)	40,000	10,000
Other Donors	240,879	121,508

Visitor Numbers

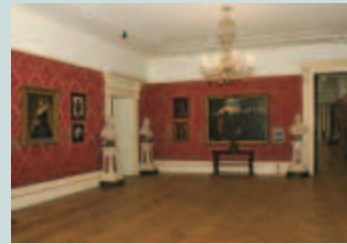
Visitor numbers were as follows:

	2005/06	(2004/05)	(2003/04)
Museum Personal Visitors	365,457	(390,600)	(346,600)
Website Sessions	360,182	(259,786)	(173,858)
Visits	733,763	(535,493)	(363,511)
Hits	17,338,715	(16,447,312)	(8,357,476)

There was a small drop in the number of visitors to the Museum, a consequence of the gradual closure of galleries to meet the demands of the Ashmolean Plan. It is encouraging to note that the website is enjoying a growth in demand and this will help to spread the news about the Museum's very positive future.

Building Services

Many building works and refurbishments have been undertaken this year, most notably in the Mallett Gallery, where extensive work has been done on the presentation of the collections to the public, including improvements in the quality of the lighting. The Department was also very active in enabling and supporting eleven exhibitions, most notably the *Treasures of the Ashmolean* and *Pilgrimage*, which involved all the staff for many months. With Robert Johnson's appointment, the Museum has acquired its first Frame Conservation Technician.



The Mallett Gallery





Exhibitions

A New Flowering: 1000 Years of Botanical Art

2 May to 11 September 2005

The exhibition showcased works from one thousand years of botanical art in the main exhibition of 2005. This provided a unique opportunity to compare illustrations by contemporary artists with the remarkable botanical art of the past. The exhibition was drawn from the collection of contemporary works of Dr Shirley Sherwood and was highlighted by illustrated texts from the Bodleian Library, and other lenders.

The British Art Medal Society Student Medal Project

26 July to 11 September 2005

A display highlighting works by contemporary medal designers.



The Mystery of Empty Space: Twentieth Century Chinese Painting

26 July to 16 October 2005

The exhibition presented the way empty space is one of the essential and traditional characteristics of Chinese painting in contrast to classical Western painting, where it is customary to fill the entire surface with colour and design.

The Cassel Silver

2 August to 6 November 2005

The Ashmolean was the first venue to exhibit this special touring display of eleven masterpieces of English silver from the 15th to the 18th century, from the spectacular collection formed by Sir Ernest Cassel (1852–1921). They were acquired by a group of museums in a successful campaign led by the Ashmolean.



Beauties of the Four Seasons

24 August to 19 December 2005

From Japanese beauties to decorative kimonos and flowers of the seasons, this exhibition of colourful woodblock prints (Ukiyo-e) from the Edo period (1603–1868) reflected more than one hundred years of Japanese taste and cultural respect for the seasons.



Spectacular Miracles: Images of Supernatural Power from Northwest Italy

19 October 2005 to 29 January 2006

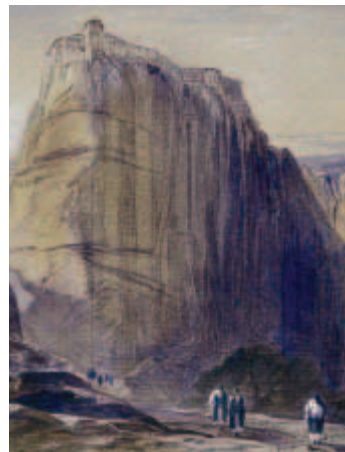
Organized by Gervase Rosser and Jane Garnett, the phenomenon of the miraculous image was explored in a series of photographs of statues and pictures believed to be capable of supernatural powers, from shrines in and near the city of Genoa, north-west Italy.



Pilgrimage: The Sacred Journey

11 January to 2 April 2006

The exhibition explored the place of pilgrimage in Christianity, Islam, Judaism and the religions of South Asia in the first exhibition presented by the Ashmolean Inter-Faith Exhibition Service (AIFES). In addition to works drawn from all departments of the Ashmolean the exhibition benefited from loans from the Bodleian Library, Museum of the History of Science, Pitt Rivers Museum and from private collectors.



Tom Phillips: A Micro-Retrospective

9 February to 23 April 2006

The career of the internationally renowned artist Tom Phillips, Slade Professor of Fine Art 2006, was represented in a display of small-scale works showing the range and diversity of his oeuvre. The exhibition featured works from the artist's collection and Pembroke College.



Oxford at Night: An exhibition of photographs by Norman McBeath

9 May to 23 July 2006

The exhibition showed a unique vision of Oxford in a series of twenty-five black and white photographs by photographer Norman McBeath revealing a city where everyday places assume the magic of stage-sets. An introduction to the accompanying catalogue was written by Jeanette Winterson.

Treasures of the Ashmolean: Antiquities, Eastern Art, Coins and Casts

24 May 2006 to 31 December 2008

For the first time, over two hundred of the most significant objects in the Ashmolean's collections of Archaeology, Eastern Art, Coins and Casts are displayed together in an exhibition which will run throughout the Museum's major redevelopment, enabling these key works from the collection to remain on show.



Focus on Research

All departments in the Museum perform research of international importance. The breadth of scholarship and subject matter is impressive. Each year we focus on a particular project as just one example.

The Chantrey Project

Work began in May 2006 on the Chantrey Project, a three-year programme of research into the gift of 170 plaster models by the pre-eminent British sculptor of the early nineteenth century, Sir Francis Chantrey (1781–1841). The works, including full-size models for public statues, private monuments and busts, were given to the Museum by the sculptor's widow in 1842. Despite the poor treatment of the works – some important works have been lost or destroyed, all but two of the statues were decapitated in 1939 to make space for an air-raid shelter, and the surviving heads were stored in inappropriate conditions for the first half of the twentieth century – the gift remains one of the most significant monographic collections of a native sculptor's works in the country. The research, under the supervision of Tim Wilson, and conducted by Greg Sullivan, is funded by grants from The Henry Moore Foundation and The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art. The research is intended to inform the conservation of the works and provide the intellectual background to the re-display of a substantial portion of them in the new Ashmolean Galleries.

An international advisory committee has been constituted to provide support and advice for the duration of the project. Members are Brian Allen (Paul Mellon Centre), Malcolm Baker (University of Southern California), David Bindman (University College London), Matthew Craske (Oxford Brookes University), Penelope Curtis (Henry Moore Institute), Charlotte Hubbard (Victoria & Albert Museum), Nicholas Penny (National Gallery of Art, Washington), Alex Potts (University of Michigan), Bert Smith (University of Oxford), Alison Yarrington (University of Glasgow).

Research has thus far been focused on the documentation, correspondence and plans which relate to the gift and are held within the archives of the Western Art Department. Archival work has also been carried out by Dr Sullivan in the Bodleian, the British Library, the National Art Library, and the Huntington Library, California. This primary material, along with important secondary material (such as the Chantrey Ledger, published in the Walpole Society in 1992), is currently being incorporated into a revised catalogue of the works, based on Nicholas Penny's 1992 catalogue of the surviving plasters.

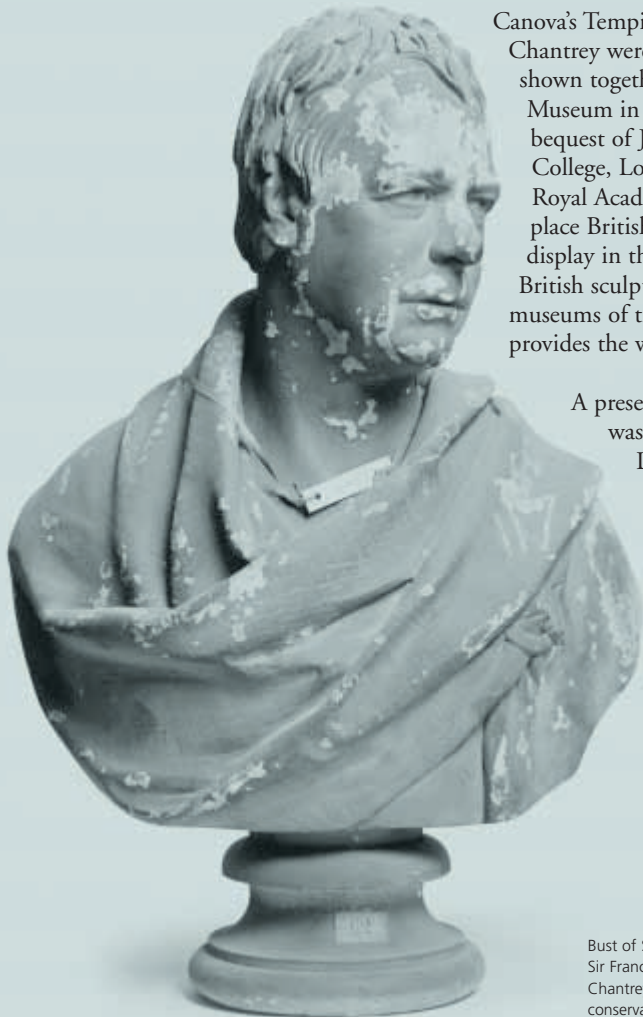
Greg Sullivan has been appointed co-curator, with Rune Fredericksen (Cast Collection), of the new gallery which will house around 35 of Chantrey's works. An object list and revised gallery brief has been prepared, with themes including Decapitation, Ideal Beauty, Literary Figures and the Face of

Empire, which will hopefully unite Chantrey's own works with some of his collection of casts after the antique. Sixty casts, including the Belvedere Torso, the Illissos from the Parthenon frieze, and ten busts of philosophers, were presented to the Museum by Chantrey's widow along with the sculptor's own works. Many casts were from moulds taken in Paris and had been bought by Chantrey in Rome. They were originally displayed in a gallery of Chantrey's works, designed by Sir John Soane, which was built onto the sculptor's studio in Belgravia. Some of these casts survive in the Cast Gallery today.

The long-term aims of the project, in addition to the new gallery and catalogue, are to contribute to the growing academic interest in the British school of sculptors, cast collecting, and the manufacture and meaning of plaster sculpture. The gift of Chantrey's works represents the first successful attempt in Britain to place the works of a national sculptor in a large public museum. There are clear international connections with

Canova's Tempio and Gipsoteca at Possagno (Canova and Chantrey were acquainted and their works had been shown together at Woburn Abbey) and Thorvaldsen's Museum in Copenhagen. In Britain, the subsequent bequest of John Flaxman's models to University College, London, and those by John Gibson to the Royal Academy seem to represent a concerted effort to place British sculpture at the heart of teaching and display in the mid-nineteenth century. The story of British sculpture and of casts and their place in the great museums of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries provides the wider context for this research.

A presentation on the subject of the Chantrey gift was delivered to the Rector and Fellows of Lincoln College in May. Dr Sullivan has been made a Shuffrey Fellow at Lincoln, and the College's association with the project is warmly welcomed.



Bust of Sir Walter Scott, original plaster model, c. 1822, by Sir Frances Chantrey. This iconic bust – part of the Chantrey gift – is one of the works which is intended for conservation and display in the new galleries.

Education

Education Team

This has been an exciting, creative and demanding year for the education team. We continued our popular programme of tours, workshops, study days, family events, lectures and gallery activities for existing audiences, as well as developing new programmes which encourage new visitors to access the Museum. Despite the closure of significant parts of the Museum, 25,532 people visited the Ashmolean through the Education team during 2005–6. The voluntary guides continue to be at the heart of the Museum's education work. In addition we continue to have student volunteers from Oxford University and Oxford Brookes working with the Education team on many of our family and community projects.

Adult Programmes

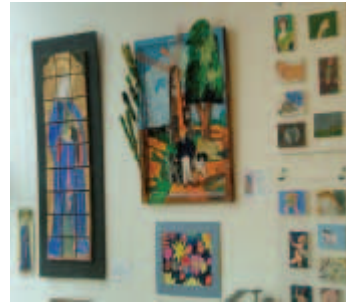
A rich and varied programme of activities, gallery talks, study days, workshops and lectures were delivered for adults. These included: a 'Pilgrimage' study day and practical workshops on 'Botanical Art' and 'Making Mosaics'. Oliver Watson gave the David Piper New Year Lecture on 'Dazzled by Lustre: Trying to understand Islamic Art'.

Children and Families enjoyed a lively and creative programme of events including: 'Anglo-Saxon Discovery' and 'Victorians at the Ashmolean' as part of Museums and Galleries Month and 'Impressions of Egypt', an Art Weeks activity with artist Francesca Shakespeare. The Activity Trolley offered free simple self-conducted activities for families. The 2005–06 trolley themes included 'Light and Dark', and 'Plants and Seasons'. Activities and workshops were delivered to support National Archaeology Day, National Drawing Day, Heritage Open Weekend and Art Weeks.

Programmes for Schools continued to be extremely popular. The 'Greeks On Tour' outreach session was launched - a workshop for schools during the next few years when the Greek galleries are closed to the public as part of the Ashmolean re-development. INSET sessions and workshops were provided for teachers and student teachers. The Education team continued its successful partnership with 'The Art Room' – an East Oxford-based project offering art therapy for 7–13 year olds with learning and behavioural difficulties. 'Anglo-Saxon Discovery', an on-line learning resource for Key Stage 2 was launched. The 'Oxford Hospital School Outreach Project', a wonderfully successful project working with hospital staff and pupils was also set up.

Access

We continue to work to lower barriers to access for all visitors including people with disabilities. We continued our successful programme of handling sessions for visually-impaired people and BSL signed tours for deaf people. The outreach programme for community groups has increased with family workshops taking place in different venues around the county.



Art work inspired by the Ashmolean collections created by children taking part in an 'ArtWeeks' workshop at the Museum and as part of a partnership between the Oxford Hospital School and the Ashmolean. The work is on display at the Said Business School.



Myths and Legends drop-in session



Oxford Hospital School Project and the Ashmolean. Working in the Children's Ward at the Radcliffe Infirmary to create a collage inspired by the painting Gilbert Cannan and his Mill.

Development

This year has seen funding for the Ashmolean Plan reach £40 million of its goal of £50 million. We are immensely grateful to those donors whose support and involvement is helping us to realize the Ashmolean Plan. A number of important gifts were made towards the Plan this year, by donors including: The Linbury Trust; The Clothworkers' Foundation (for the new Textiles Gallery); The Lisbet Rausing Charitable Fund (for The Hans and Märit Rausing Gallery); The Robert and Rena Lewin Charitable Trust (for The Robert and Rena Lewin Gallery of Modern Art); The Sloane Robinson Foundation; Ian and Caroline Laing, and a number of donors who wish to remain anonymous.

A focus of fundraising for the Ashmolean Plan this past year has been on building bridges to the United States and China, where we are now cultivating relationships with volunteers, stakeholders and potential donors.

A comprehensive stewardship programme has been developed over the past year. The programme was launched at an inaugural gala dinner for Museum benefactors on 29 September 2006. The event honoured the first of our Ashmolean Fellows.

Once again, we would like to pay tribute to the volunteers who give so much of their time and effort to the campaign. The continued success of the Plan would not have been possible without their generosity, good spirit, and leadership.

We have been fortunate enough to receive support from a number of trusts and foundations whose generosity has made a significant difference to the day-to-day running of the Museum. Grateful thanks go to The Pilgrim Trust, The Helen Roll Charity, The J Paul Getty Charitable Trust, The Radcliffe Trust, The Grocers' Charity, The Mercers' Charitable Foundation, and The Aurelius Charitable Trust for supporting the conservation of the Museum's five European tapestries, which until now have adorned the walls of the Mallett Gallery.

The Leche Trust and the John S Cohen Foundation have funded the conservation of a fine, eight-day longcase clock by the Oxford maker John Knibb. Our thanks go to these two trusts for enabling this important work to be carried out.

Thanks also go to the South Mercia Area of Member Societies of NADFAS for its grant towards the restoration of bracket clocks in the Department of Western Art.

We are extremely grateful to The Henry Moore Foundation and The Paul Mellon Centre for the Study of British Art for their funding of a three-year project to research the documentation for, and a wider historical background to, the Chantrey Gift and its subsequent treatment. The project is supported by the award of a Shuffrey Fellowship at Lincoln College, Oxford, to Greg Sullivan.

The Education Department has received funding from The Ormonde Foundation, The Tom Hall Charitable Trust and The Antony Hornby Charitable Trust. We are extremely grateful for their support of this vital part of the Ashmolean's work.

This year the Ashmolean continued to build and strengthen its relationship with the local business community, through corporate sponsorship opportunities. Two Oxford-based companies, neither of which has previously supported the Ashmolean, sponsored our 2006 exhibition programme. Hennmans Solicitors are sponsoring the *Treasures* exhibition and its accompanying guide, while Beard, the construction company, sponsored Norman McBeath's black and white photography exhibition *Oxford at Night*. Meanwhile, Mallams Auctioneers have agreed, for the second year running, to donate vendors' commission on goods put up for auction by Ashmolean supporters at specific sales.

This has been a good year for venue hire, with the number of bookings from both University and external hirers continuing to grow. The Ashmolean is in the final stages of obtaining a licence for civil marriage ceremonies, and it is hoped that the Museum will become a popular, not to mention original, wedding venue.

A number of legacy gifts have been both pledged and realized this year, two of which deserve particular mention. Firstly, the executors of the estate of the late Robert and Rena Lewin decided to name in their memory the Robert and Rena Lewin Gallery of Modern Art. Secondly, a generous gift was made from the estate of the late Miss Ann Dawson. We are deeply grateful for the contribution made by these and other gifts to the future of the Museum.

The Elias Ashmole Group

The 2006 Elias Ashmole Group Spring Trip was a great success. Led by Christopher Brown and Oliver Watson, eighteen members spent five days in May enjoying the rich cultural and artistic heritage of Stockholm.

In March the Elias Ashmole patrons visited the private library of the late Sir Paul Getty at the Wormsley Estate. Brian Maggs, head librarian of the collection, made many rare and valuable manuscripts available for members to see.

The annual Elias Ashmole Dinner of 2005 started with drinks in the Eastern Art galleries so that guests could enjoy that space for the last time before its closure for redevelopment. Drinks were followed by tours around the Museum and dinner in the Randolph Sculpture Gallery. The evening was concluded with a brief address from the Chancellor of the University, the Rt Hon The Lord Patten of Barnes, CH.

Among the Group's grants this year was £10,000 to support the conservation of the Museum's collections in preparation for the new displays in the transformed Ashmolean. The grant makes it possible for work on specific collections to commence this year, in keeping with the redevelopment's strict timetable.

As well as those patrons who wish to remain anonymous, we would like to thank the following Elias Ashmole Group members for their support this year:

Cecilia Akerman Kressner	Ian and Caroline Laing
Mr Richard Allan	The Catherine Lewis Foundation
Mr and Mrs Peter Andreae	Mr Christopher L Loyd
Sir Martyn and Lady Arbib	Mr and Mrs W Mackesy
Mr Nicholas Barber and Mrs Sheena Barber	Mr Jonathan Marks
Mr John Beale	Mr David J McLaren
The Hon Rupert and Mrs Daniela Carington	Mr and Mrs Colin Murray
Mr Hans de Gier	Mr and Mrs James Nicholson
Dame Vivien Duffield and Sir Jocelyn Stevens	Mr Jan-Eric Österlund and Mrs Jennifer Österlund
Sir John and Lady Elliott	The Rt Hon The Lord Patten of Barnes CH and Lady Patten
Mr J O Fairfax, AO	Mr and Mrs Erik Penser
Sir Ewen and Lady Fergusson	Mr and Mrs Michael Priest
Mr and Mrs Colin Franklin	Mr and Mrs Graham Pye
Dr and Mrs Peter Frankopan	Martin and Margaret Riley
Mrs Piers Gibson	The Rt Hon The Lord Rothschild, OM, GBE and Lady Rothschild
Mr Henry Ginsburg	Dr and Mrs Mortimer Sackler
Mrs Jennifer Hall	Sir Timothy and Lady Sainsbury
Mr and Mrs Christoph Henkel	Mr Adrian Sassoon
The Rt Hon The Lord Heseltine, CH and Lady Heseltine	Mr James and Dr Shirley Sherwood
Sir Simon and Lady Hornby	Mr and Mrs Michael Simpson
Mr and Mrs Charles Jackson	Mr and Mrs James C Smith
Lady Evelyn Jacomb	Sir James Spooner
Mrs Bruna Johnson	Dr Christopher and Lady Juliet Tadgell
Mr and Mrs Daniel Katz	Mrs Ninette Thornton
Mr and Mrs John Keil	Mr and Mrs Max Ulfane
Mrs Yvonne Koerfer	Baron and Baroness van Dedem
Professor and Mrs David Khalili	Mrs Margita Wheeler
Mr Neil Kreitman	Sir Christopher and Lady White

The Tradescant Patrons Group

Tradescant events continue to be extremely well received and attended. In March Tradescant and Elias Ashmole Group members enjoyed a private view of the Ashmolean's *Pilgrimage* exhibition, followed by a discussion, drinks and canapés. This was led by James Allan, Director of the Ashmolean Inter-Faith Exhibition Service (AIFES) and Ruth Barnes, Curator and Researcher for AIFES.

The second annual Director's Study Day took place in October 2005. Entitled 'East Meets West', the day featured lectures and guided tours looking at the movement of objects and ideas from China and Japan, through the Islamic World, to Europe, from the ninth to the nineteenth centuries.

Among other grants, this year the Tradescants have generously contributed £12,000 to the Ashmolean's Photography Department to purchase digital photography equipment. The upgrade to digital photography will save time and money spent in film-based production and will ensure that the Museum can meet the increasing demand for digital images.

As well as those patrons who wish to remain anonymous, we would like to thank the following Tradescants for their support this year:

Dr Elizabeth A Bainbridge	Mrs Tamara Haggard
Mr and Mrs Jonathan Baker QC	Mr Nicholas Halsey
Malcolm and Susan Bannister	Mrs Shirley Harriott
Mr Nicholas Barber and Mrs Sheena Barber	Judge Charles Harris QC and Mrs Carol Harris
The Countess of Bessborough	Mrs Josephine Hearnden
Mr and Mrs Antonin Besse	Mr Charles Hebditch
Mrs Isabel Bickmore	Ms Jackie Hewison
Mrs Hazel Bolton	Mr and Mrs Allan Hirst
Mr David S Boyle	Mr and Mrs Sinclair Hood
Mr and Mrs Geoffrey Brunning	Judith and Peter Iredale
Mr Peter and Dr Susan Burge	Mr and Mrs Charles Jackson
Mrs Christina Chandris	Mrs Penny Jacoby
Sue and Graham Coley	Mr and Mrs Christopher G W Kennedy
Mrs D Joy Crammer	Mrs Marion Kenyon-Jones
Mr and Mrs John Crisp	Ian and Caroline Laing
Mr and Mrs Nicholas Cross	Ms Liz Leffman
Mr and Mrs Michael Dalglish	Mr John Leighfield
Mr David M Dell CB	Miss Jennifer Lewis
Dr Harry A Dickinson	Timothy Lewis
Lord and Lady Egremont	Mr and Mrs L E Linaker
J E Flemming	Ms Fiona Macleod
Mrs Sara Fox	Mrs Gillean Mann
Mr Martin Gordon, OBE	Mrs E J Martineau
Mr Joe Graffy	Mrs Robin Mathew
Sir Derek Greenaway Foundation	Professor Richard A Mayou
The Hon Mrs Charley Grimston	Mr and Mrs Hamish McCorquodale
Mr David Gye	Mr Eric McFadden
Mr and Mrs William Haddon	Mrs Claire McGlashan
The Hon Maureen Hadfield	Mrs Caroline M Miles



Conservation staff packing the Eastern Art collections



Packing in progress in the Beazley Gallery

Mr and Mrs Andrew Moore
 Lord and Lady Napier of Magdala
 Laura Naughton
 Mr Peter Newell
 Michael and Jane O'Regan
 Dr Thomas Parry
 Mr and Mrs David Peake
 The Lord and Lady Phillimore
 Mr R Guy Powell
 Mrs Susan Pragnell
 Mrs Dinah Reynolds
 Mr L C C Reynolds
 Dr Andrew W Rosen
 Mr David Rowe
 The Countess St Aldwyn
 Mrs Angela Schiller

Mrs Jessica H R Schroder
 Mr Timothy Schroder
 Dr Julie Scott-Jackson
 Sir James Spooner
 Mr and Mrs Christopher Stockwell
 Mr and Mrs R N Strathon
 Mr and Mrs J D Sword
 Miss Jean Thompson
 Dr Jennie Turner
 Giovanna Vitelli
 Mr Botho von Portatius
 Rosamond and Henry Warriner
 Madeleine Wheare
 George and Patricia White
 Alison Willes
 Mr and Mrs Brian Wilson

The Friends of the Ashmolean

During the year the Friends made a variety of grants to support the Ashmolean, including the purchase of a picture by Michael Ayrton for £5,200, and a contribution of £5,000 towards the purchase of an extraordinary maiolica dish from Pesaro. The Friends also supplied funding totalling £10,000 for two important education projects: the Oxford Hospital Schools Outreach Project and work with children at The Art Room. In addition, £5,000 has been reserved for a forthcoming major acquisition.

An appeal to the Friends raised the considerable sum of £15,000 towards the purchase of a very fine watercolour, *The Prospect* by Samuel Palmer. Almost ten per cent of the Friends supported this appeal, showing their generous and widespread support for the Museum.

At the AGM in July 2006, the retiring chairman, His Honour Judge Paul Clark, advocated the idea of leaving a legacy to the Ashmolean – something he is personally doing. These bequests are lasting tributes from those who have enjoyed the Museum over the years, and make a very real difference.

The Friends are very pleased that Mrs Helen Bessemer-Clark has agreed to be their Honorary Secretary and that Hamish McCorquodale has taken over as Honorary Treasurer. With a new team in place they are making great efforts to increase the number of Friends. There are currently 2,150 and a recent questionnaire bore testament to the Friends' loyalty: many of those replying were founder members.

Activities of the Friends this year have included the ever-popular private evenings at the Museum (including a presentation by architect Rick Mather about the Ashmolean Plan), and many enjoyable visits to exhibitions and places of interest, including a flight on the London Eye following a visit to Tate Britain for the Constable exhibition. More events are being held after hours in the Museum, with a view to accommodating those Friends who work full-time.

Now that work has begun on the Ashmolean Plan, the Friends hope to be running 'hard hat' tours before long. They look forward to a challenging year.

Supporters and benefactors

The generosity of individuals and organizations plays a vital role in allowing the Ashmolean to preserve and enhance its collections, and in making those collections available to students, scholars and the general public. Without their support, the Museum's work would not be possible. We would like to thank the numerous donors who have supported the Ashmolean this year, to whom we are deeply grateful. Unfortunately we cannot list them all here, but they include:

The AG Leventis Foundation	John and Diana Herzog
Anonymous	The Institute for Aegean Prehistory (INSTAP)
The Antony Hornby Charitable Trust	The John S Cohen Foundation
Mr Ian Armitage	The J Paul Getty Charitable Trust
The Arrow Charitable Trust	Ian and Caroline Laing
The Aurelius Charitable Trust	Mr and Mrs James Lambert
Mr Nicholas Barber CBE	The Leche Trust
Beard Construction	The Linbury Trust
Lady Berlin	The Lisbet Rausing Charitable Fund
The British Academy	Peter Lole and Co Ltd
The British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara	The Malcolm Hewitt Wiener Foundation
The Carl and Eileen Subak Family Foundation	Mallams Fine Art Auctioneers
The Charlotte Bonham-Carter Charitable Trust	Mrs Eve Marles
The Clothworkers' Foundation	The Mercers' Charitable Foundation
The Coral Samuel Charitable Trust	Mr Paul D Nelsen
The Craven Fund	The Ono Group Ltd
The late Miss Ann Dawson	The Ormonde Foundation
DCMS/Wolfson Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund	The Paul Mellon Centre for the Study of British Art
The Goldsmiths' Company Charity	The Pilgrim Trust
Sir Harry Djanogly	The Radcliffe Trust
Evolving City	Renaissance in the Regions
Farrer and Co	The Robert and Rena Lewin Charitable Trust
Feng Sushi Ltd	Sandringham Capital Partners Ltd
Sir Ewen Fergusson	The Sloane Robinson Foundation
Friends of Academic Research in Georgia	South Mercia Area of Member Societies of NADFAS
The Goldsmiths' Company Charity	The South Square Trust
Mr Martin Gordon, OBE	St John's College, Oxford
The Grocers' Charity	Stevenson Family's Charitable Trust
The Helen Roll Charity	The Tedworth Charitable Trust
Henmans Solicitors	The Tom Hall Charitable Trust
The Henry Moore Foundation	Mr Brandon S Wang
The Heritage Lottery Fund	

The Press Office

The Press Office has achieved widespread media coverage over the past year. A detailed article about the Ashmolean Plan by the late architectural correspondent Giles Worsley featured in the *Daily Telegraph* last October. This was followed by an article in the *BBC History* magazine, and coverage in the local press, including BBC South and the *Oxford Times*, about the process of decanting the Museum's collections.

In March, the Ashmolean hosted a successful press lunch for national arts correspondents to keep them up to date with the building plans, the new redisplay strategies and to emphasize the message that the Ashmolean will remain open throughout the rebuilding period. The ongoing publicity campaign for the Plan is supported by the public relations consultants Bolton & Quinn.

The exhibition *Pilgrimage* was reviewed in a range of publications from the *Times Education Supplement* to *Time* magazine and international news channels such as BBC South Today, British Satellite News and Al Arabiya News. *Oxford at Night: Black and White Photographs* by Norman McBeath was favoured in the *Independent*. *Treasures* has proved successful, particularly in the local press. The *Oxford Times* monthly Limited Edition will feature one 'treasure' each month for the duration of the exhibition. This summer's exhibition *Imagining Leonardo* has been reviewed by Radio 4's Front Row and the 24 Hour Museum.

This spring the Museum featured in several television programmes, including 'The People's Museum' (a series broadcast on BBC 2 asking the public to vote for their treasure in a British public collection), ITV Central's 'Hidden Treasures', and a film about the Art Fund commissioned for Sky TV's 'Artsworld'.

To enhance the Ashmolean's online presence, the Museum launched its new website (www.ashmolean.org) in June 2006. Providing extensive information about the Ashmolean Plan, the permanent collections, exhibitions and events, the site is easy to navigate and accessible to all users.

Four times a year 30,000 copies of the *What's On* magazine are produced and distributed extensively throughout Oxford, and the neighbouring counties. It has proved a useful vehicle to update readers on news of the development plans, the exhibitions and education activities.

Work underway on the roof of the Drapers' Gallery



Major Acquisitions, Gifts and Loans

(a fully comprehensive list of acquisitions will appear as usual in the online version of the Annual Report)

Western Art

Rock crystal spoon

Perhaps Venetian, c.1480–1500, with later additions. Length: 23 cm. Presented by Daniel Katz on the occasion of his marriage; formerly in the collection of Sir Philip Sassoon (Houghton Sale, Christie's, 8 December 1994, lot 86). WA2006.4

The spoon is made of rock-crystal, a rare and treasured material in the Middle Ages and Renaissance. The finial is of silver gilt and gold-studded enamel, with a probably later coral top; the central silver-gilt collar may also be a later addition. Enamel decoration of this refinement was made in the Duchy of Burgundy as well as in Venice and the origin of this precious object is still the subject of scholarly debate.



Maiolica dish, *Alcyone and Ceyx*

Italian, probably Pesaro, c.1500
Diam: 29.4 cm. Purchased (Madan Fund), with the aid of The Art Fund, the V&A/MLA Purchase Grant Fund, the Friends of the Ashmolean, and private donations. WA2006.3



The dish shows a story from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: King Ceyx departing on a sea voyage on which he would be drowned, and his wife Alcyone lamenting. The subject is based on a woodcut from an illustrated version of Ovid published in Venice in 1497. It is one of the earliest known examples of *istoriato* (narrative-painted) decoration on maiolica.

**Maiolica dish,
*Neptune Calming the Waves***

Italian, Faenza, workshop of **Virgiliotto Calamelli**, c.1550–75. Diam: 23 cm. Presented by the family of William Beare (1910–2000). WA2005.205

The subject is from Virgil's *Aeneid*, and is based on an engraving by Marcantonio Raimondi after Raphael known as the *Quos ego* (from the words in the poem). The style is that of mid-sixteenth-century Urbino maiolica but the mark on the reverse, VR AF, shows that this was made, probably by an itinerant painter, in the large workshop in Faenza of Virgiliotto Calamelli.



Silver toilet service

London, 1699–1700, mark of **Isaac Dighton**. Accepted by H M Government in lieu of Inheritance Tax on the estate of Bryan second Lord Moyne and allocated to the Ashmolean. WA2006.22

The toilet set consists of a handsome sculptural mirror and thirteen other pieces, engraved with the arms and crest of Sir Edward Acton of Aldenham Hall and Acton Scott (Shropshire) and his wife Mary Walter. Toilet (or dressing-table) services were major items of feminine domestic equipment in grand seventeenth- and eighteenth-century households. This set, made by a native English goldsmith

who is known to have resisted the acceptance into the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths of immigrant Huguenot craftsmen, complements the Treby toilet service, made by Paul de Lamerie in 1724–5, which has long been one of the most famous treasures of the Museum's collection of English silver.



Study of a Youth

Cristofano Allori (1577–1621). Black chalk on off-white paper, 21.0 x 16.7 cm.
Presented by Mary-Jane Harris, in honour of Timothy Wilson and Catherine Whistler, through Americans for Oxford Inc. WA2006.59

One of the most eloquent artists of his generation in Florence, Cristofano was admired for his graceful, lyrical style and his warm, rich colouring. This expressive study is for a figure in the painting of *Michelangelo and the Muse of Poetry*, part of the decoration of the Casa Buonarroti in Florence. The painting was begun in 1615, and completed by Cristofano's pupil Zanobi Rosi.





The Prospect

Samuel Palmer (1805–1881)

Watercolour and bodycolour over pencil on London board, 50.8 x 70.5 cm. Signed, SAMUEL PALMER.

Purchased with the assistance of The Art Fund, the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the MLAV&A Purchase Grant Fund, the Headley Trust, the Warden and Fellows of All Souls College, the Friends of the Ashmolean, and many private donations following a public appeal, in 2005. WA2005.165

The greatest achievement of Palmer's later years was the set of watercolours illustrating Milton's poems, *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. He had always had a special affection and admiration for these poems, so when, in 1863, the solicitor Leonard Rowe Valpy asked him if he had anything 'in hand which specially affected his "inner sympathies"', he replied that he had been contemplating a series of illustrations to Milton's minor poems for twenty years. The Milton series continued to preoccupy Palmer for the rest of his life: he completed the first of the eight large watercolours in 1868, and the last on his deathbed. *The Prospect*, seen at sunrise, illustrates lines 69–80 of *L'Allegro*, the passage beginning 'Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures'. It is one of the most personal and poetic of Palmer's late watercolours, and one of the last he completed: he was still working on it in February 1881, a few months before his death. The scene, although imaginary, combines reminiscences of Shoreham, in the foreground; Naples, in the panoramic view over the bay; and of the Italian landscape generally, in the city on the gulf, and the shimmering castle on the hilltop. When *The Prospect* and its companion from the Milton series, *The Eastern Gate* (private collection) were exhibited at the Old Watercolour Society in 1881, the perceptive Pre-Raphaelite critic F G Stephens described them as 'epoch-making pictures'.

Yellow Twilight

Samuel Palmer

(1805–1881)

Pen and Indian ink with watercolour and bodycolour, 16.5 x 27.5 cm. Accepted by H M Government in lieu of Inheritance Tax on the estate of Michael Maclagan and allocated to the Ashmolean Museum, 2006. WA2006.2



One of Palmer's earliest treatments of a favourite motif, the wooded ridge with open country beyond, this drawing was probably made in the Darent Valley near Shoreham, c. 1830. A.H. Palmer recalled that he was so fond of this work that his father gave it to him, and he subsequently gave it to Sir Eric Maclagan after the great Palmer exhibition at the V&A in 1926. Geoffrey Grigson described it as 'a tender imaginative truth, a sunset sky which is, precisely, a visible image of an invisible, hardly attainable blessedness.'

Jerusalem

Edward Lear (1812–1888)

Oil on canvas, 81 x 161.6 cm (sight). Signed in monogram and dated *EL 1865*. Accepted by H M Government in lieu of Inheritance Tax on the estates of Captain and Mrs L.E.D. Walthall, and allocated to the Ashmolean Museum, 2006. WA2006.26



It was not until 1858 that Lear achieved his life-long ambition to visit Palestine, and he spent a fortnight making careful studies of Jerusalem from the surrounding hills. These formed the basis for five paintings, of which this is the largest and most magnificent. It was made for Samuel Price Edwards, a close personal friend of the artist, on his retirement from the Customs at Liverpool in 1865.



Wanderschleier (Moving Veils)

Wassily Kandinsky (1866–1944). Watercolour and black ink, the latter partly sprayed, 39.7 x 56.8 cm. Signed and dated lower left: VK [in monogram] 30. Inscribed on the backing in pencil: No 396 *Wanderschleier* / 1930 – *Voiles errantes*. Accepted by H M Government in lieu of Inheritance Tax on the estate of Sir James Colyer-Fergusson and allocated to the Ashmolean Museum, 2006. WA2005.198 © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London.

This watercolour is a typical example of Kandinsky's approach to watercolour in his later years at the Bauhaus. After his return from Russia in 1921 he soon joined the Bauhaus in Weimar and later in Dessau as Master for wall painting. When the Bauhaus moved to Dessau he lived in a semi-detached house, while Paul Klee and his wife had the other half. From Klee he took over in the late 1920s the spray-technique for watercolour, which soon became an important way of expressing tonal values and spatial effects, here especially by using triangular shapes.

Mönchroda

Lionel Feininger (1871–1956). Pen and black ink and watercolour, 26 x 32 cm. Signed lower left in black ink: Feininger. Inscribed, lower centre: MÖNCHRODA. Dated, lower right in black ink: 6 Dez. 1922. Accepted by H M Government in lieu of Inheritance Tax on the estate of Sir James Colyer-Fergusson and allocated to the Ashmolean Museum, 2006. WA2005.196 © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London.



Soon after the First World War, Feininger became a member of the November-gruppe, where he met Walter Gropius. When Gropius founded the Bauhaus, he invited Feininger to take charge of printmaking. It was also Feininger who was responsible for the programmatic woodcut of the leaflet to promote the Bauhaus. Feininger retained, during his time at the Bauhaus, his interest in landscape, concentrating especially on the construction of vertical elements. This watercolour is a typical case, where he uses the tower of a church as a striking element to depict the view of a small village. Although the inscription gives a slightly different spelling, it is likely to depict the church of the small village of Münchenroda, near Jena.

Composition

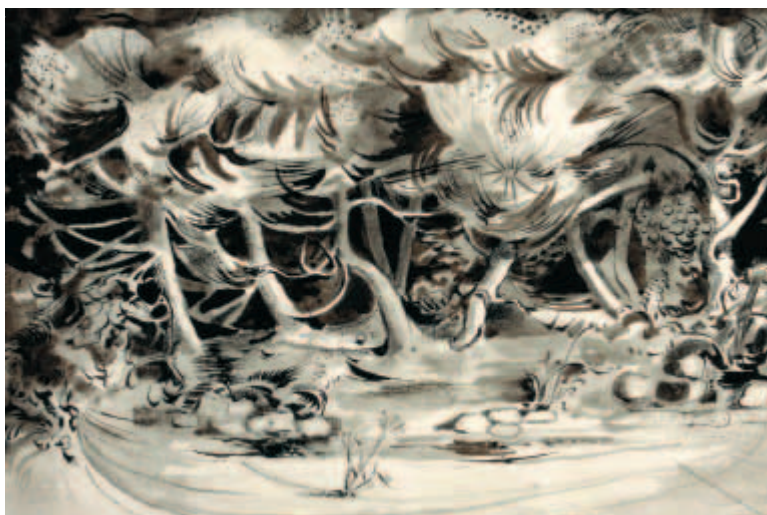
John Piper (1903–1992). Oil on canvas, 55.4 x 68 cm. Accepted by H M Government in lieu of Inheritance Tax on the estate of Michael Gyselynck, and allocated to the Ashmolean Museum, 2005. WA2005.184 © The Piper estate.

Piper was a late developer as an artist, and it was not until 1931 that he began exhibiting with the London Group. In 1934, he joined the 7 and 5 Society, which was devoted to abstract art, and dominated by Ben Nicholson. Piper exhibited his first abstract oils in the following year, after visiting the Paris studios of Jean Hélion, Jean Arp, and Picasso. *Composition* was one of the last of Piper's abstract paintings, and was probably executed in 1937.



Pine-wood, North West Gale

Michael Ayrton (1921–1975). Pen and black ink and wash, 29.2 x 43.2 cm. Inscribed with title and dated 17.9.45; further inscribed, *Very brilliant green ferns and red cut stones*. Presented, 2006, by the Friends of the Ashmolean to commemorate the Chairmanship, 1996–2005, of His Honour Judge Paul Clark. WA2006.10 © The artist's estate.



Throughout his prolific career, Michael Ayrton experimented with a great many styles, from the chic Surrealism of Tchelitchev in the 1930s, to the spare linearity of Picasso's etchings in the 1970s. During his earliest years, Ayrton was closely associated with the group of young Neo-Romantic artists whose art was shaped by the British landscape, and by the Romantic vision of Samuel Palmer. *Pine-Wood, North West Gale* is one of the most impressive and original of Ayrton's early works. The spiky brushstrokes and wiry penwork show the strong influence of Graham Sutherland, whom Ayrton met while on holiday in Pembrokeshire during the summer holidays of 1945 and 1946. The sense of elemental force, however, is one that Sutherland never attempted, and which is indeed rare in works by the Neo-Romantics, who generally preferred depictions of natural or man-made permanence.



'Swan bowl no. 1'

Malcolm Appleby

(b. 1946); hallmarked
Edinburgh 1995. Diam: 30 cm.
Purchased from the artist with a Gift
Aid donation from a donor who wishes to
remain anonymous and with the assistance of
The Art Fund. WA2006.60

This virtuoso example of engraving and embossing by one of the world's great masters of the techniques, is on a theme of swans in tribute to the artist's wife Philippa Swann. It joins the small but growing collection of contemporary British silver in the Museum, which was also enriched this year with another brilliant object, a vase by Michael Lloyd, commissioned and presented by subscribers in memory of Valerie Stewart (*The Ashmolean* 51, pp. 22–3).

Lustreware bowl

Alan Caiger-Smith (b. 1930). Tin-glazed earthenware, painted in red lustre. Diam: 45 cm. Purchased from the artist with funds given by donors who wish to remain anonymous. WA2006.167

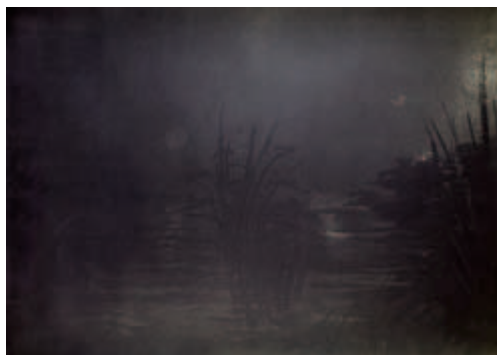
The potter and writer Alan Caiger-Smith has been almost single-handedly responsible for the revival in the United Kingdom of the traditional Islamic and Italian Renaissance techniques of tin-glazed pottery decorated with metallic lustres. His pottery at Aldermaston is, sadly, expected to close shortly and this is one of the most spectacular pieces from a lustre firing that took place in 2005.



Schilf

Peter Fischli (b.1952) and **David Weiss** (b.1946). Lithograph, 90.5 x 127.5 cm. Purchased by subscription to the Swiss Graphic Society (Christopher Vaughan Bequest). WA2006.156 © The artists.

David Fischli and Peter Weiss do not usually work as printmakers but as installation artists; they turn their interest to printmaking from time to time. In this particular case, commissioned by the Swiss Graphic Society and delivered to its members in 2005, they have used a heavily-coloured painting of a sunset, of a type which would be widely considered Kitsch, and transformed it into a nearly black lithograph. The sheet is printed with the same image on both sides, challenging our perception of the imagery in different contexts.



Eastern Art

Large glazed storage jar

Iraq, 8th–9th century AD. H. 77 cm. EA2005.85. Purchased with funds from the B D H Miller Bequest.

This jar demonstrates vividly the interconnectedness of the ancient world. Made in lower Iraq, probably in Basra, as a vessel for the storage and transport of goods, it nevertheless has a powerful aesthetic appeal to the contemporary eye. It is one of the finest examples of an important type of trading vessel, primarily made to contain date honey, a major export item from the area. Fragments of jars of this type have been found further and further afield – plentifully round the gulf and down into East Africa, then in India, and fragments have more recently been discovered in archaeological sites in South East Asia, China and even Japan. The return trade is illustrated by fragments of similar jars but of East Asian manufacture, discovered on the sites of coastal ports in the Middle East.



Bronze image of the saint Chandikeshvara

Tamilnadu, South India, late 12th century. H. 55 cm. EA2005.90. Purchased in memory of Dr J C Harle (Keeper of Eastern Art 1967–87), with the help of an anonymous benefactor.

The youthful saint Chandikeshvara is venerated in South India as foremost among the devotees of Shiva. His image in bronze is often carried out in procession, along with those of Shiva and his family, during the great annual temple festivals. In this highly sensitive bronze of the Chola period, Chandikeshvara stands with his hands joined in *anjalinudra*, the gesture of respectful greeting or adoration, while holding an axe in the crook of his arm. This important purchase is a fitting memorial for the late Dr James Harle, who was a leading authority on the art and architecture of South India.





Tibetan Buddhist ritual crown

Tibet, 19th century. Painted board. EA2006.104
E M Scratton Gift.

This five-leaved ritual crown depicting the Five Transcendent Buddhas would have been worn by a Tibetan lama or devotee on the occasion of an initiation ritual or during ritual chanting. It forms part of the outstanding collection of Himalayan Buddhist bronzes, paintings and ritual objects formed by the late Mr E M Scratton, which has been on loan to the Museum since the early 1960s. Through his generosity it has now joined our permanent collection of Himalayan art.



Blighted tree: an inauspicious omen

Page from a *Shakunavali* (Book of Omens) series.
Udaipur, Rajasthan, c.1720. Gouache on paper.
25.5 x 21.5 cm. EA2006.22

This stark and compelling image of a leafless tree – almost like the work of an Indian Arthur Rackham – is an illustration to the *Shakunavali*, a Book of Omens illustrated for Maharana Sangram Singh II (r.1710–34) at the Rajput court of Udaipur. Now dispersed, it originally comprised a series of 95 paintings with short Sanskrit texts, each depicting a good or bad omen. Not surprisingly, a blighted tree – if seen in a dream or when setting out on a journey – is an inauspicious omen.

Cast Gallery

'Berlin Attalos', with hair. Plaster.

Head from a portrait statue of Attalos I, King of Pergamon, c.240–30 BC. Staatliche Museen, Berlin.
CG H70.





Antiquities

Lead-alloy pilgrim badges

Bust of the martyr St Thomas Becket (top, right) 6.4 cm high. The martyred saint wears a mitre and patterned collar; his name is inscribed in retrograde letters below. Found at Queenhithe, London, and presented by Brian North Lee, FSA. AN2005.55

Bust of St Thomas Becket (top, left) enclosed by a roundel inscribed SANCTUS THOMAS within a multi-pointed star. Found at Vintry, London, and presented by Brian North Lee, FSA. AN2005.56

'Jack of Hilton'

Hollow-cast copper alloy figure, 31 cm high, late 13th or 14th century. A rare example of an *aeolipile*: the vessel was filled with water and warmed on the hearth to fan the flames with a jet of air released through the steam-pressure created within. 'Jack of Hilton' has been owned for centuries by the Vernon family of Hilton Hall, Staffordshire, where it was noted by the first Keeper of the Ashmolean, Robert Plot, and illustrated in his *Natural History of Stafford-shire* (1686). Loaned by Mr Peter Vernon. AN Loan in 531.





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