



# *The* Ashmolean

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE  
ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2006-07

## FELLOWS OF THE ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Sultan bin  
Abdul Aziz Al-Saud

Dr Dietrich Von Bothmer and Mrs Joyce Von  
Bothmer

The Lady Heseltine

Mr Yousef Abdul Latif Jameel

Neil Kreitman

Edmée Leventis

The Robert and Rena Lewin Charitable Trust

The Rt Hon The Lord Powell of Bayswater KCMG

Professor Hans Rausing KBE and Mrs Märít Rausing

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

Mr Carl Subak

Professor Michael Sullivan

University of Oxford

*The*  
Ashmolean  
Museum

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE  
Annual Report  
August 2006–July 2007



## VISITORS OF THE ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM AS AT 1 AUGUST 2006–31 JULY 2007

Nicholas Barber CBE – *Chairman*  
Sir Peter M North DCL (from January 2007);  
Professor Paul Langford (to December 2006)  
– *Vice Chairman*  
The Vice-Chancellor (Dr John Hood)  
Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research) (Professor Ewan  
McKendrick) (from December 2006)  
The Assessor  
The Senior Proctor  
Professor Alan K Bowman  
The Rt Hon The Lord Butler of Brockwell KG  
GCB CVO PC  
Professor Sir Barry W Cunliffe (to October 2006)  
Professor James Fenton  
Professor Chris Gosden (from October 2006)  
The Lady Heseltine (to December 2006)  
Professor Martin J Kemp  
Angela Palmer (from January 2007)  
The Rt Hon The Lord Rothschild OM GBE  
The Rt Hon The Lord Sainsbury of Preston  
Candover KG  
Professor Sally Shuttleworth (from January 2007)  
Martin Smith  
Andrew Williams

## VISITORS' COMMITTEES

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Professor Ewan McKendrick  
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John Beale\*  
Angela Palmer  
The Rt Hon The Lord Sainsbury of Preston  
Candover KG  
Lady Patricia Williams\*

\* co-opted member

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Ottoman embroidered wall-hanging, linen with silk embroidery. Turkey, sixteenth century (detail).  
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A N N U A L   R E P O R T   2 0 0 6 - 2 0 0 7

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## Chairman's Foreword

The redevelopment of the Ashmolean is now halfway to completion. This is a £61m scheme which involves replacing the obsolete galleries to the north of the Cockerell building with the new Rick Mather-designed extension. The project is seriously challenging and it is most encouraging to report how much progress has been made on all fronts.

The first front is physical. Construction of the new extension started in March, and proceeds on time and on budget. At the same time the curators, conservators and education team have been working with our designers Metaphor to turn the innovative display strategy Crossing Cultures Crossing Time into individual displays for each of the new galleries. This includes the selection of objects with appropriate layouts, case designs, labels and lighting. This is a huge task for a museum of the Ashmolean's relatively modest size and all concerned have done an impressive job getting things to the stage when we could open a prototype of part of one of the planned new galleries. This prototype display opened in October in the Randolph Sculpture Gallery. The aim is to elicit the public's response as well as to give our professionals first-hand experience of the practicalities of different case designs, lighting arrangements and labelling methods.

Another challenge is raising the required funds. We continue to make good progress and the Board is extremely grateful to our many supporters. In 2006 we held the first annual Fellows and Benefactors Dinner, at which we were delighted to award Fellowships to a number of our major supporters. This was followed by our second dinner last month, at which we awarded further Fellowships. The full list of our Fellows is shown at the beginning of this Report.

Based on the success of the Capital Campaign, we were able to rethink the level of ambition for the gallery displays. With support from the University, we have raised our sights significantly and increased the fundraising target of the redevelopment to £61m. This is a wonderful opportunity for the Ashmolean to build first-class galleries complete with new and highly sophisticated display cases. We believe that the new Ashmolean will now hold its own with best practice anywhere in the world.

The Museum also needs to achieve a major increase in its revenue funding. This year we launched an Annual Fund and the response from our friends and supporters exceeded all our hopes for the first year of such a scheme. This was all the more encouraging at a time when our visitor numbers are somewhat reduced and the profitability of our commercial activities has been affected. At the same time our revenue funding remains a challenge and we were pleased that the final report by the House of Commons Select Committee in July highlighted the financial pressures on university museums. The Ashmolean is one of the finest museums in Britain yet receives grants from the public purse at a level little more than half of what the Department of Culture, Media and Sport awards to museums with fewer visitors.

The Ashmolean is an integral part of the University and is proud of the way in which its curatorial staff contribute to the University's teaching and research. We have appreciated the many ways in which the University authorities have facilitated the progress described above which could not have been achieved without their active support.

The year saw a number of changes to the Board of Visitors. In December all those appointed when the new Board was first instituted came to the end of their four-year terms. Most were renewed but some did not offer themselves for reappointment. The Vice-Chairman Professor Paul Langford stood down and was succeeded by the Head of the University's Humanities Division, Professor Sally Shuttleworth. The new Vice-Chairman is a former Vice-Chancellor, Sir Peter North. Professor Sir Barry Cunliffe resigned following his retirement as Head of Archaeology and was succeeded by Professor Chris Gosden. Lady Heseltine also stood down from the Board but I am delighted that she continues to be closely involved with our affairs as Chairman of the Elias Ashmole Group. She was succeeded by Mrs Angela Palmer. To all those Visitors who have retired I extend the Board's warm thanks.

I want to pay particular tribute to all of the Museum's staff for their tremendous achievements during this busy year. The Board also appreciates the important support from our many volunteers who enable the Museum to do so much more than could be done otherwise. It is the Ashmolean's people, whether staff or volunteers, who make the Museum the distinctive place it is and I offer them my warm thanks.

**Nicholas Barber**

*November 2007*

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*Adventures like this one are very hard work and, as you will read in the following pages, there is at present an enormous amount of activity in the Museum.*

## The Director's Report

I came to the Ashmolean in 1998 with a very strong sense that the Museum must do better for its collections and better for its visitors. Since then we have created the Ashmolean Development Plan, received the approval of the University, raised the greater part of the necessary funds, and appointed architects, designers and builders. This was the year in which the dream started to become a reality. The 'sheds' at the back of the Cockerell building were demolished and Rick Mather's new building began to rise. At the time of writing the lower ground floor is complete and the ground floor almost finished. The staircases are beginning to take shape and the lift shafts are rising. Indeed, on my recent return from holiday, my first stop was the viewing platform and I was astonished to see how much had happened in the intervening weeks. For a Director, it is a heady moment when the building comes off the drawing board and indeed the ground.

A museum building, even one as elegant as this is going to be, is a means to an end. Its purpose is to enable us better to conserve, display and explain our collections to all our visitors, and it is here that our designers help us. Stephen Greenberg and his team at Metaphor have been working with us for two years now. They have enabled us to visualize the new displays and to present them in an arresting and informative manner. They have enabled us to put our interpretation strategy, *Crossing Cultures Crossing Time*, into practice. The results promise to be impressive.

As this Report records, we have received support from many individuals and institutions throughout the world. I have now made many presentations of our plans and there is a very rewarding moment when those across the table or in a larger audience understand the ambition and vision of what we are doing and catch our enthusiasm. I feel it to be a very great honour to have the chance to transform this country's oldest museum and I am thrilled when others – and there are now many of them – join us in this great adventure.

Adventures like this one are very hard work and, as you will read in the following pages, there is at present an enormous amount of activity in the Museum. Staff have been at full stretch this year. Aside from their work on the redevelopment they have maintained their normal activities including conservation, scholarly research, university teaching, loans to other museums, publishing, photography, and educational activities for students of all ages, especially children. The one area which has been at a lower level than in the past has been our exhibition programme. However, despite the severe constraints of the construction programme we have still laid on a number of modest shows such as *Recent Acquisitions of British Drawings and Watercolours* and *Dürer to Friedrich: German Drawings from the Ashmolean*. In addition the *Treasures of the Ashmolean* exhibition continues to highlight some of our finest objects from the collections of Antiquities, Eastern Art, Coins and Casts. I wish to extend thanks to all my colleagues. I am very conscious of the burdens that I have placed on them and I am appreciative of the way in which they have risen to this unique challenge.

*This has been a year of great achievement. We are now only a little more than two years away from opening the new building and there is much demanding work ahead...*

It is not just, of course, the Museum's staff on whom this burden is falling. We have a legion of dedicated supporters and volunteers, without whom this could not happen. They are led by the Visitors of the Ashmolean and their Chairman, Nicholas Barber. They have all given time and energy to the Museum and no one more than Nicholas himself who has been constantly at hand with immensely valuable advice and practical help. Lord Sainsbury has served assiduously not only as a Visitor but on the Steering Committee and the Design Sub-committee. Andrew Williams continues to lead our fundraising with characteristic drive and great success. Lord Butler chairs the Finance Control Committee, and Martin Smith has recently taken on the chairmanship of a newly formed Trading Committee. I am most grateful to them and the other Visitors. This year's Report lists all the members of our various committees including those who have been co-opted from outside the Board and I particularly want to thank them too. I would also like to acknowledge the contributions of those who serve on the Friends' Council and on the Elias Ashmole Trust.

I want to draw attention to the work of *Renaissance in the Regions*, which is not sufficiently understood. *Renaissance* is the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council's programme to transform England's regional museums. Since 2002 central government investment has helped us increase visitor numbers, improve standards, develop collections and support new ways of working. *Renaissance* funding to the Ashmolean, totalling over £145,000 for the academic year 2006–7, has focused on the Education service, with three staff being supported by *Renaissance* funds, and on the continued development of the new website, with an emphasis on improvements to public online access to collections. *Renaissance* has helped to fund new Ashmolean posts in front of house and human resource management, while collections have benefited from a new specialist picture conservator, and an associate registrar to better support the work of outward loans.

*Renaissance* funding by the Government will allow the Ashmolean and other university museums to build on the work of the last few years to sustain an improved, high-quality service to schools, visitors, and researchers, and to maintain our contribution to the development of other regional museums through *Renaissance*-funded programmes run in collaboration with MLA South East.

This has been a year of great achievement. We are now only a little more than two years away from opening the new building and there is much demanding work ahead, but I have absolutely no doubt that we have in the Ashmolean the team to fulfil the long-held dream of a new Museum.

**Christopher Brown**  
*November 2007*

## The Ashmolean Plan

The past year has seen a complete transformation of the Museum as work on site progressed from demolition through archaeology to the early stages of construction. As reported last year, the decanting of half a million objects had been achieved by June 2006 and internal demolition of the vacated galleries began at once. Demolition of the main structure was delayed by work on the neighbouring Classics Centre but was achieved by Christmas. Oxford Archaeology then came on site for a programme of excavation. This established the history of the medieval tenements that once occupied the site and yielded a small number of finds, including a Henry I silver penny, cut and shaped stone presumably looted from Beaumont Palace, and the skeleton of a mare and her foal. The archaeologists completed their digs early in March and a full report is in preparation. Our builder, HBG, worked alongside the archaeologists from January. Preparation of the site, full excavation, piling and concrete pours to major parts of the lower ground floor were completed by the end of July.

The Design Team continued to refine the design and specify its details. In particular much effort was put into developing a new application to the city's Planning Department for the removal of the 'apse' steps. This is a controversial subject for some, and one in which building history and new attitudes to physical and intellectual access must be balanced. The application was supported by the city and was subsequently approved by regional government.

*The past year has seen a complete transformation of the Museum as work on site progressed from demolition through archaeology to the early stages of construction.*

Demolition, November 2006.





Foundations being laid,  
May 2007. ▲

Work on the site continues  
in all conditions, February  
2007. ▼



The Visitors' Buildings Committee and its Display Subcommittee met on a monthly basis throughout the year, maintaining a detailed watch on the progress of the work. Members bring widely based financial and professional skills to complement and sometimes test the assumptions of the Director and his team. The HLF have also been active partners. The choice of a display case manufacturer has been a key decision. Working with Susan Walker and Henry Kim, Mace and our display designers Metaphor reviewed the work of five European manufacturers on the basis of both price and quality. A final decision will be taken shortly.

A more ambitious approach to the quality of the new display revealed pressures on the budget that needed to be addressed. A careful study was carried out and a proposal for an increase in the budget was made to the University and approved by Council in July.

The Museum has continued to maintain close contacts with its neighbours who are on the Museum email list of weekly notices of work and attend monthly meetings. These have recently been held in HBG's site offices on the forecourt. We are grateful to the Taylor Institution for renting office space to HBG, which allows control of the site from close at hand. We are equally grateful to Blackfriars for permitting essential fire escape corridors through their gardens.

At the time of writing much of the ground floor has been laid and the new building will have reached its full height by the end of the calendar year.

## New Galleries

The substantial achievement of the year has been the completion of the scheme design for all the new galleries. From summer 2006 to the end of the year, discussions and planning took place between the Ashmolean curators and the consultant designers Metaphor to arrange the layout of the new galleries. This process involved deciding the major narrative themes, the location and sizes of the new showcases, and the number and sizes of the objects to be displayed on plinths or walls. The completed gallery drawings and report, including the preliminary development of wayfinding and graphics, were issued in December. Although these plans have since been further modified and developed, the Museum is now in a position to work out the final details of every aspect of the gallery designs.

The first half of 2007 has seen curators engaged in the selection of objects for the new galleries. Choosing the objects is just the first step in their preparation for display. The next challenges are for our conservators to assess the condition of the objects, and to clean and restore them where necessary. Mounts are then designed and made, and the objects photographed and repackaged for their eventual return to the Museum.

*The substantial achievement of the year has been the completion of the scheme design for all the new galleries.*

With some 400 new cases, all requiring exceptionally high specifications to maintain suitable security and climate for the collections, the Ashmolean offers easily the largest showcase manufacturing contract in Europe at the moment.

In addition to the design and development taking place behind the scenes, various initiatives will ensure that we can provide the public with the best possible interpretation of the collections and visitor experience. In the spring of 2007, we ran an evaluation project with focus groups and Museum visitors. This presented us with invaluable guidance on the way we might approach the writing of gallery text that is accessible and useful for all audiences, whether Ashmolean regulars, children, first-time visitors, students or scholars. Building work has now begun in the Randolph Sculpture Gallery on a prototype gallery, in which the new cases, graphic designs and labels may be assessed by the public.



## Departmental Reports

### Department of Antiquities

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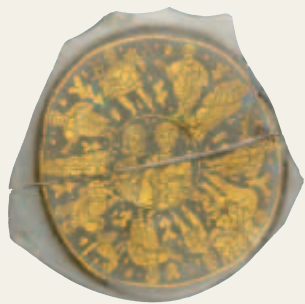
This year has seen the successful campaign to raise £250,000 for a major acquisition, the Wilshere Collection of Gold Glass and Inscriptions from cosmopolitan fourth-century Rome. Sixty-three objects, all formerly loaned to the Ashmolean by the Governors of Pusey House, now form a highly significant part of the permanent collection; the best will be displayed together in the forthcoming Gallery of the Mediterranean World. We are very grateful to all our supporters within and outside the Museum, especially the National Heritage Memorial Fund, The Art Fund, the V&A/MLA Purchase Grant Fund, the Tradescants, the Elias Ashmole Group, the Friends and the Young Friends of the Ashmolean and, not least, Professor James Fenton for his personal generosity and inspirational help in fronting the campaign.

Much work has been done this year in developing the new galleries through scheme design and beyond to the preparation of detailed object lists for inclusion in the showcases. A particularly exciting feature of this work has been the chance to open the packing cases and check the size, state and quality of the contents with our colleagues in Conservation, and the excellent team of Museum Assistants. Apart from progressing work on the galleries, these sessions also reconnect us directly with our wonderful collections. Work continues on reconciling databases and familiarizing ourselves with the collections management system, MuseumPlus, at the time of writing almost ready to be used for managing the detailed design of the new galleries. Once again we have been helped by an indispensable team of interns, assistants and volunteers.

Meanwhile work has continued on the AHRC-funded British archaeology project and the Leverhulme-funded John Evans project, both shortly due for completion. It has been challenging, to say the least, to combine the demands of project with redevelopment work, but these projects have revolutionized our understanding of the British collections and John Evans's remarkable scholarly network. They also add considerable richness to the new displays, notably the planned new Gallery of Europe before History.

With great pleasure we report the appointment of two new members of staff: Dr Jack Green has now taken up his post as curator of the Ancient Near East Gallery and has made remarkable progress with admirable speed, submitting scheme design documents within six weeks of his (at present part-time) appointment. Ioannis Galanakis, Keble College, was appointed Sackler Fellow with effect from 1 October. He has already completed sterling work, again with exemplary speed and efficiency, on the prototype Gallery of the Discovery of Minoan Crete in the Randolph Sculpture Gallery.

This year's Roger Moore Memorial Lecture, given by Steven Nelson and William Pestle, both formerly of the Field Museum, Chicago, recounted in a hugely entertaining and often moving fashion the story of the 1920s and 1930s, excavations at Kish, south of Baghdad. We may count among the significant advances of our time the ability to digitize and combine records deliberately divided at the time of excavation. However, the most sobering



*Much work has been done this year in developing the new galleries through scheme design and beyond to the preparation of detailed object lists for inclusion in the showcases.*

images were contributed by the father of an American reservist, a former archaeology student of the University of Texas, whose job now comprised shooting anyone who ventured unauthorized on the road below the ancient tell, where the 80-year-old excavation trenches behind the gun-post retained their original shape.



*Saint Florent le Vieil*, Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775–1851). WA2006.199 ▶

## Department of Western Art

The Department of Western Art's year has been very active, 'keeping the show on the road' while most of the rest of the Museum has been more comprehensively in the throes of the Ashmolean Development. Gallery closures and attempts to keep as much as possible of the core collection on display have resulted in some surprising and enjoyable juxtapositions.

The Museum has received a series of significant gifts associated with distinguished art historians: a drawing by Giulio Romano presented by Mrs Charlotte Gere in accordance with the wishes of John Gere; works of art, including two drawings by Paul Klee, bequeathed by Mrs Edgar Wind; and a group of drawings presented by a long-standing associate, Paul Joannides of the University of Cambridge, some in memory of his wife Marianne, herself a distinguished drawings scholar and long-time friend of the Ashmolean. (The publication of Professor Joannides' catalogue of our drawings by Michelangelo has also been the scholarly highlight of the year.) Turner's handsome watercolour *Saint Florent le Vieil* was acquired through the *in lieu* procedure, while an iconographically fascinating maiolica albarello made in Castel Durante (Italy) in 1562–3 was presented by the Royer family of Paris. Important additions to the collection of modern sculpture, by Henry Moore and Jean Arp, came respectively from Sir Rex and Lady Richards, and from the estate of Robert and Rena Lewin (whose generosity has made possible the creation in the new Ashmolean of a Gallery of



*Pharmacy jar (albarello)*. Workshop of Ludovico and Angelo Picchi, Castel Durante, 1562–3. WA2006.278 ▲



Jean Arp (1886–1966), *Reclining* (1960). WA2007.2 ▲

Modern and Contemporary Art). The most demanding purchase of the year – made possible by generous support from numerous sources public and private – was a dramatic Chelsea porcelain tureen in the form of a boar's head, the centrepiece of an historic collection of English porcelain, long on loan to the Museum; while four albums which contain nearly 40 per cent of the known drawings of William Holman Hunt will make the Ashmolean forever the prime centre for the study of this Pre-Raphaelite's work.

Tureen in the form of a boar's head, Chelsea porcelain factory, c.1755–9. WA2007.1 ▼

Most of our temporary exhibitions have been low-key as the Museum focuses its resources on the Ashmolean development, but an innovative series of events took place from 9 August to 12 November 2006 under the joint title of *Leonardo and Oxford: Discovering the World of Leonardo in Oxford's Collections*. Five Oxford institutions collaborated on a discovery itinerary where the idea of

'Leonardo' was used as a gateway to the University's rich collections. The emphasis was on the artistic, scientific and intellectual world that Leonardo inhabited; and on the way his work has been perceived by other artists, and by scholars and collectors. Martin Kemp, Professor of the History of Art, and Catherine Whistler were closely involved in the project, which was part of a series of international events under the rubric of 'The Universal Leonardo'.



The exhibition of *Recent Acquisitions of British Drawings and Watercolours* in autumn 2006 demonstrated the range and quality of our acquisitions in this field over the last five years,

showing both the energy of Colin Harrison, in particular, and the undimmed ability of the Museum to inspire collectors to become donors.

The exhibition in summer 2007 of work by the eminent German woodcut-maker Matthias Mansen brought to the galleries contemporary European graphic art on a scale and of an ambition not previously seen in the Museum. A public conversation between the artist and the curator Christian Rümelin was greatly enjoyed by the audience and is a successful format we intend to repeat.

With the support of a University Estates Department programme for repairing and upgrading the fabric of the Cockerell building, in tandem with the Ashmolean Development, work has commenced on a plan, managed by Catherine Whistler, to improve the sequence of Western Art galleries. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century art will be displayed on the top floor, linking into the displays in the new building; while the first-floor galleries will display art from the fourteenth to the eighteenth centuries. The creation in the new building of the Lewin Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art will allow the Daisy Linda Ward Collection to be moved down to the first floor, and a new gallery devoted to 'Britain and Italy', concentrating on works of art linked to the eighteenth-century Grand Tour, has been planned. Important environmental and security improvements are being carried through at the same time. The intention is to display the Western Art collections in a way that is more logical and more readily comprehensible to visitors, while retaining the much-loved atmosphere – somewhere between that of a national museum and a great historic house – of the traditional displays. In recognition of the need to focus the Museum's resources on the delivery of the Ashmolean development, however, the reconfiguration is planned on a limited scale.

### Heberden Coin Room

The main task of the year has been the development of displays for the new Money Gallery, and for many of the other new galleries. We have an unparalleled opportunity to plan systematic numismatic contributions to many chronological and thematic galleries. The enterprise calls for inspiration, perspiration and co-operation in equal measure. This creative work has been underpinned by the customization of the new collections management system for use with coins and medals.

The most notable acquisition of the year was a group of twelve gold rings, of a type once used as money in Ethiopia. The intention is to cover the entire world in the Money Gallery. Where coverage in the collection is inadequate, as is the case with some forms of 'ethnographic' money, deficiencies are being made good by selective purchase or by loans. The acquisition was aided by the Carl and Eileen Subak Family Foundation.

The Robinson Charitable Trust helped us to purchase handling collections of Greek, Roman, Anglo-Saxon, and Tudor coins. These handling collections are being built up to complement displays planned to support the history topics covered for Key Stage 2 in the National Curriculum.



India – Zodiacal silver rupee of Mughal Emperor Jahangir (1605–27 AD), struck at Agra ▲

*The highlight of the year was the launch of Roman Provincial Coinage Online ...currently the most advanced coin website in the world.*

The Coin Room's programme of visiting scholars, also funded by the Robinson Charitable Trust, was resumed in more typical form this year. We were particularly fortunate to have Joe Cribb, Keeper of Coins and Medals at the British Museum, as this year's Robinson Visiting Fellow. He was able to draw on his experience in creating the HSBC Money Gallery in the British Museum to help us with the design of a series of thematic displays on money for our own new gallery.

Effrosyni Nomikou is undertaking doctoral research at University College, London, which involves an ethnographic study of the exhibition design and development of our Money Gallery. As part of her studies she has taken responsibility for audience consultation and evaluation in relation to the gallery. So she is being of considerable help to us, even if it is slightly daunting to be the subject of study for a change.

Julian Baker has moved posts to become Money Gallery Curator, a fixed-term post with particular responsibility for medieval and modern coins. His old post as the Portable Antiquities Scheme Finds Adviser for Medieval and Post-Medieval Coinage has been taken over by John Naylor, who comes from postdoctoral work in early medieval archaeology at the University of York.

Numismatic research continues, although inevitably with less emphasis than has been usual. The highlight of the year was the launch of Roman Provincial Coinage Online: <http://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/>. This is currently the most advanced coin website in the world. It comprises one of the largest collections of images and related inscriptions from the ancient world which is searchable by iconography, place and time. It is an exciting development for those interested in ancient coins, in classical archaeology and in Roman history. The website received over two million hits within its first year of operation.

It is also a pleasure to report the generous support of the Carl and Eileen Subak Family Foundation for the Ashmolean's publication of Cathy King's book on *Roman Quinarii. From the Republic to Diocletian and the Tetrarchy*. This is an area in which Carl Subak has great expertise and an outstanding collection. The book enshrines traditional scholarship of enduring usefulness.

### Department of Eastern Art

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Work within the Eastern Art Department throughout this year was marked by the increasing focus from all staff on preparations for displays in the new building. Our relocation the previous year to off-site offices and stores at the Radcliffe Infirmary complex meant that in common with other departments our public activity was somewhat curtailed. Access to the collections was granted to students, outside researchers and the public wherever possible, though as display work increased in intensity through the year this became more restricted. As the collections are stored packed in containers, access requires considerably more staff time than was previously the case, particularly from the team of Retrievers to whom the Department as a whole is most indebted. The Department looks forward with great anticipation to the facilities which will be offered in the new building and which will enable access



Dr Clare Pollard with research assistants Joyce Seaman and Mitsuko Watanabe looking at prints recently donated by Professor Burton S Rosner and Nancy C Waugh. ▲





Dr Weimin He with the artist Yan Han, a leading modernist printmaker, during the print purchasing trip to China. Yan Han has donated five catalogues of his work to the Museum. ▲

*...highlights this year include the anonymous donation to enable the purchase of a superb Cambodian sculpture of a rishi or Hindu ascetic...*

to the collections in easier, more effective ways than ever previously possible in the Museum's history: through a greater range of permanent galleries, temporary exhibition and display spaces, study rooms alongside stores, and the new Eastern Art Print Room.

It is therefore proper that Departmental activity was concentrated on preparations for the new building – considering architectural design in detail, planning the layout and casing requirements for new displays, examining and selecting objects for display, and updating catalogue records with any new research required. This work occupied the greater part of the work of the curators: Oliver Watson (Islamic Gallery), Andrew Topsfield (two Indian Galleries), Shelagh Vainker (two Galleries of Chinese Art), Clare Pollard (two Galleries of Japanese Art) and Ruth Barnes (Textile Gallery and two Orientation Galleries).

The Christensen Fellow, Weimin He, undertook a prolonged trip to mainland China where he acquired a magnificent group of prints by contemporary artists; these will form the basis of an exhibition, catalogue and conference in the coming year for which he has taken responsibility.

Jon Thomson came to the end of his stint as Beattie Fellow in Carpet Studies. The most senior and distinguished figure in his field, Jon Thompson has been responsible for establishing the Fellowship, and has made major contributions both to the Department and to the subject at large over his years with us. We are delighted that he has agreed to become a Research Associate of the Department, and that we will be able to rely on his wise counsel in future. We are also grateful to his assistant, Pirjetta Mildh, who left at the same time, for the essential work she undertook in the digitization of Beattie archive material.

The Department has received very generous sponsorship for a major project of digitization and web publishing, to be named AMEAD (Ashmolean Museum Eastern Art Digital). This will provide a substantial educational resource based on the Department's collections, and will be launched simultaneously with the opening of the new building. The first essential appointments were taken up this year: Sigolene Loizeau as Collection Co-ordinator and Jo-Hung Tang as photographer.

The yearly Cohn Lecture was delivered with great panache to a most appreciative audience by Professor Timon Screech from the University of London: *On the Way to the Yoshiwara Pleasure District: Poetic Memory and Representation in 18th-century Japan*.

We continue to owe a great debt of gratitude to many individuals who support the Department – highlights this year include the anonymous donation to enable the purchase of a superb Cambodian sculpture of a *rishi* or Hindu ascetic, and a bequest from Oliver Impey (1936–2005), former Curator of Japanese Art in the Department, as well as two donations in his memory, which are particularly touching for us.



Cast of a late-Roman portrait-head (5th cent. AD) acquired from the Musée du Cinquantenaire in Brussels. H76

## Cast Gallery

This year has been a time of transition for the Cast Gallery. In January 2006, the permanent display was dismantled and the gallery transformed into storage space for decanted objects from other departments. Three casts are displayed in the exhibition *Treasures of the Ashmolean*, and three casts have been loaned to the new Ioannou Centre for Classical and Byzantine Studies. In spite of general disruption, the Gallery continued to be used for research and teaching, and important new casts were acquired.

Three late antique portrait heads were added to the collection: two from Aphrodisias in Turkey (H74 and H75), purchased with the support of the Association of Friends of Aphrodisias Trust, and a third, also from Aphrodisias (H76), acquired from the Musée du Cinquantenaire in Brussels. This Brussels head (H76) is an intense and striking portrait of a late Roman governor (fifth century AD), and like the portrait of the governor Oikoumenios (a cast from Aphrodisias acquired by the Gallery earlier) it carries on top of the head an abbreviated covert message from its sculptor who declares his Christian faith, as follows: ‘Christ was born to Mary: help me God!’

Casts from three Corinthian capitals of imperial buildings in Rome were acquired from the cast collection in Cambridge (which had de-accessioned them). The capitals are from the Temple of Mars Ultor in Augustus’ Forum, the Temple of Castor and Pollux in the Forum Romanum, and Hadrian’s Pantheon in the Campus Martius (H77 – H79). A major gift also came to the Gallery: a collection of sixteen casts of sculptures from Aphrodisias, made in the 1970s and 1980s, donated by Mrs Cenani Camoglu, the sister of the former excavator of Aphrodisias, Kenan Erim (H81 – H96).

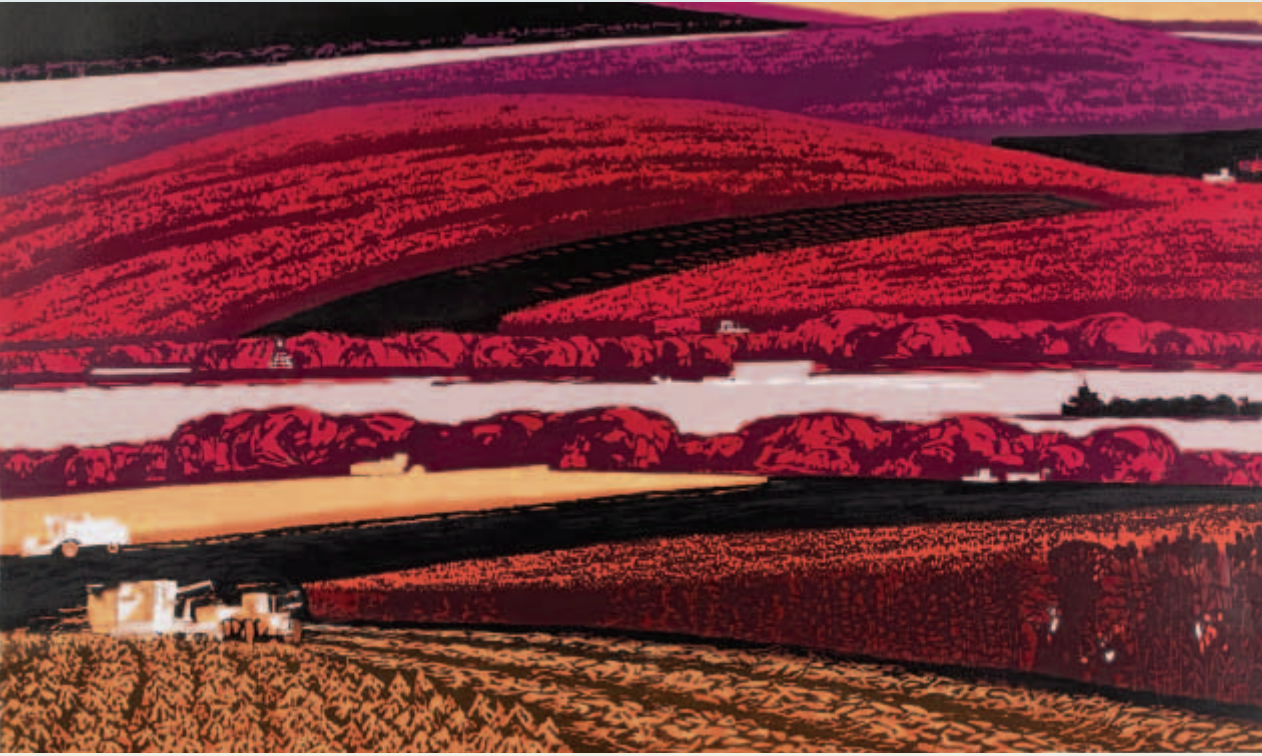
Dr Rune Frederiksen had his Sackler Fellowship extended to 31 December 2007 and continued work (with assistance from student volunteers) on the new catalogue of the cast collection. Dr Milena Melfi assisted Professor Smith in his research and publications and collaborated with Rune Frederiksen on the catalogue of the cast collection.

## Conservation

Over the past year the life of the Conservation Department has been dominated by the demands of the redevelopment project. During this period, conservators have been working on the design and content of the Department’s two galleries which will provide a unique and exciting insight into its work. Whereas ‘Restoring the Past’ will illustrate the development of conservation from repair in ancient times, through restoration following the Renaissance, to contemporary practice, ‘Conserving the Past’ will deal with the deterioration of objects and demonstrate how a forensic approach to conservation informs our understanding of them. The gallery will also showcase current Departmental projects through changing displays, complemented by a series of conservation ‘windows’ which will form a trail through the rest of the Museum. At the same time the Department has been assessing the objects selected for the new displays as gallery design moved into a more detailed phase (to date some 4,400



Li Xiu (b.1943), *The Return of the Graduate*, 1977. EA2007.43 ▲



objects have been examined) and is collaborating closely with project and departmental teams on case design and specifications, storage layouts, and the development of the conservation module of MuseumPlus. At the same time, demolition of the 'Evans Sheds', closely followed by the beginning of the construction phase has involved the Department in extra environmental, vibration, dust, and pest monitoring as well as the regular cleaning of those items that remain on display in the Cockerell building.

Interventive work has centred on loan and exhibition material – a significant number of Minoan pieces have been conserved for loan, whilst the Paper Conservation Studio has been fully stretched preparing fifty-six newly acquired contemporary Chinese prints for the exhibition, as well as numerous other graphic works for outward loans. Outsourced conservation has included four paintings which were treated by colleagues at the National Gallery during the year as part of our ongoing collaborative research programme. The conservation of the movement and case of a clock by Joseph Knibb, the famous seventeenth-century Oxford clockmaker, was generously funded by grants reported elsewhere. The highlight of the year was the completion of work on two of the five tapestries currently undergoing treatment in Mechelen. The two pieces from the 'Story of Diana' series changed almost beyond recognition as the accumulated dirt of centuries was gently washed away revealing not only much of the original vibrant colouring and silver threadwork but also some intriguing contemporary alterations.

As part of its outreach activities, members of the Department supervised a final year chemistry student project on iron gall ink, accommodated two textile

Chen Yuping (b. 1947),  
*My Hometown is by the Songhua  
River*, 1982. EA2007.13 ▲

*The two pieces from the 'Story of Diana' series changed almost beyond recognition ... revealing not only much of the original vibrant colouring and silver threadwork but also some intriguing contemporary alterations.*



conservation student vacation placements and, under the *Renaissance in the Regions* 'Skills Bank' scheme, advised the Tom Brown's Schooldays and the Royal Hampshire Regiment Museums on aspects of preventive conservation. During National Science Week the Department also co-hosted, with the Education Department, a very successful event called 'Shake, rattle, and roll', which was designed to explain complex conservation principles to family groups through simple hands-on activities and demonstrations.



The tapestry illustrating the Death of Orion, after conservation. WA1937.84

The tapestry, from the Diana series, depicting the moment when a group of peasants are turned into frogs by the gods for refusing Latona and her children access to their well. WA1937.84

Finally, although this has been yet another challenging year for Conservation, it has also been one of opportunity with the award of funding over the next two years for a number of new posts. Whereas the Linbury Trust will be supporting an additional paper conservator, thus allowing the Department to begin to focus on the conservation priorities of the paper-related collections across the museum, the Ashmolean Plan will be funding four project conservators who will work on objects for display in the new galleries. However, funding from *Renaissance in the Regions*, with additional resources being provided by the Ashmolean, means that the Department will finally be able to appoint a painting conservator – the first in the Museum's 324-year history and a true landmark in its development.



A Larnax (pottery coffin) from Zapher Papoura cemetery near Knossos, decorated with papyrus plants and scale patterns, conserved in 2007. AE583. ▲

### Publications

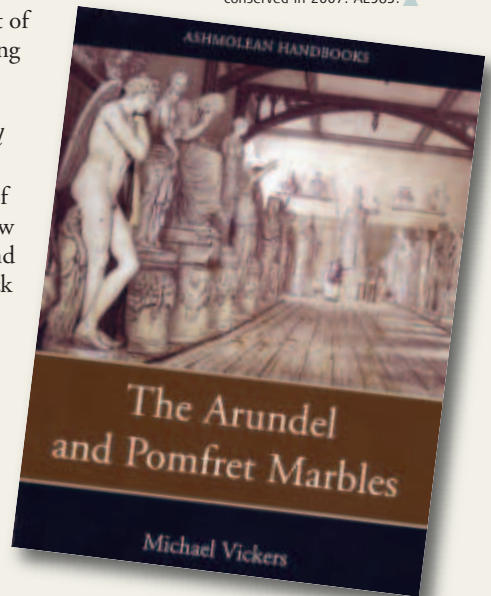
With the rebuilding of the Ashmolean under way, it was inevitable that the publishing programme would be affected, since most of the curatorial staff are heavily involved in the design and fitting out of the new galleries.

The latest addition to the Handbook Series, *The Arundel and Pomfret Marbles* by Michael Vickers, was published in December 2006. This handbook tracks the eventful history of the first major collection of classical antiquities in Britain, now housed in the Ashmolean (210 mm x 145 mm, paperback and hardback. 96pp. 78 colour illustrations. Price £7.95 paperback and £11.95 hardback).

Part II of Arthur MacGregor and Moira Hook's *Manuscript Catalogues of the Early Museum Collections* was published in April 2007. This was produced in collaboration with British Archaeological Reports in Oxford (295 mm x 205 mm, paperback. 450pp. Price £45).

### The Shop

The shop business is profoundly affected by the display of temporary exhibitions and by the availability of complementary publications. Since there have been no significant exhibitions in this academic year, shop performance has been down on the previous year. However, an average transaction value of over £8 still compares well with other major national institutions.





*Events sales have continued to grow, thanks to the café's close working relationship with the Museum and specifically the Events Manager. There is a lot of potential growth in this area...*

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## Filming

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Channel 4 came to the Museum to film paintings and drawings by Walter Sickert for its programme 'Sickert vs. Sargent' and ITV shot scenes for 'Lewis', the successful follow-up to the 'Inspector Morse' series.

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## The Café

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As expected, the gallery closure programme and lack of temporary exhibitions this year has impacted a little on café sales. Nonetheless it has been a successful year with local regulars still coming to the café as well as Museum staff. The staff discount has been increased in order to encourage staff at the RI site to make the 15-minute walk.

Events sales have continued to grow, thanks to the café's close working relationship with the Museum and specifically the Events Manager. There is a lot of potential growth in this area, and we have now joined with the Museum to employ an Events Assistant.

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## ICT Department

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The ICT Department has continued to provide essential support throughout the Museum, with Dr Jonathan Moffett and Dr Chris Powell based in the main Museum, and Ian Miller at the RI site. The Department also had the services of Alan Russell (June 2006 to May 2007), who successfully completed an audit of the Museum's ICT equipment as well as providing general support at both sites.

The departure of the Beazley Archive into the Classics Centre allowed the Cast Gallery to be integrated into the Museum's main network, which involved transferring all the Museum's computers and other devices to a new subnet. This was successfully accomplished, with a minimum of disruption, in six weeks (beginning of May to June).

As part of the Museum's Intranet, a 'Wiki' ('rapidly' in Hawaiian) has been set up to allow Museum staff to create a shared online resource. A calendar is being developed as another part of the Intranet.

The new Ashmolean website was launched in June 2006, and the transfer to the new web server was completed in October 2006. Subsequent work has been done to modify and customize the site as designed by Reading Room, in particular the Online Shop, a major addition being the implementation of a Friends' and Patrons' Discount.

## Photographic Department

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The digitization of the Department's photographic equipment has been a great success and we have had another busy year, having completed or being in the process of completing many new publications for the Museum while continuing to supply a reasonably uninterrupted service to the public. We are also supplying images for the displays in the new Museum galleries.

We are digitizing many existing transparencies and negatives as well as supplying digital images for all new photography, a process that will save time and money in the long term and lead to greater efficiency.

Jo-Hung Tang has joined the Department on a two-year contract to work exclusively on the digitization of Eastern Art objects for the AMEAD project. These images will initially be used for the website and research but will also be imported into the archive for general use.

## Registration Department

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In 2006–07 the Ashmolean lent 472 works to 79 exhibitions which were shown at 94 venues. Visitor figures obtained from some of the borrowing venues show that exhibitions to which we lent were visited by more than 2,100,000 people.

The 79 exhibitions were spread across the following countries:

Australia 2	France 7	Italy 7	Spain 1	UK 43
Belgium 4	Germany 2	Netherlands 5	Sweden 1	USA 7

Among the exhibitions to which we lent were *Cézanne in Britain*, National Gallery, London; *Goddess: The Divine Female in Hindu and Buddhist Art*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; *Indian Temple Sculpture*, CaixaForum, Barcelona and Madrid; *Caspar David Freidrich*, Hamburger Kunsthalle; *Raphael: The Colonna Altarpiece*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; *Vive la Parisienne*, Compton Verney; *The Colors of Clay*, Getty Villa Museum, California; *Constable in the Lake District*, The Wordsworth Trust, Grasmere; *Raphael: From Florence to Rome*, Galleria Borghese, Rome; *Rodin*, Royal Academy of Arts, London and Kunstmuseum, Zurich; *Rembrandt: The Quest of a Genius*, Museum Het Rembrandthuis, Amsterdam.

The Registrar and Associate Registrar supervised fine art shippers in all the packing and unpacking of loans, or packed and unpacked works themselves.

During the year the Museum received 100 applications for outward loans of which 62 were approved by the Visitors. The Registration Department also co-ordinated the condition reporting, and glazing and framing of 24 paintings required for outward loan.

The Museum borrowed works for the temporary exhibition, *Leonardo and Oxford: Discovering the World of Leonardo in Oxford's Collections* and the *Alice's*

*We are digitizing many existing transparencies and negatives as well as supplying digital images for all new photography, a process that will save time and money...*

Day display. Additionally, the Department assisted during the installation and dismantling of all temporary exhibitions.

A number of significant long-term inward loans were made. This included Frederic Lord Leighton, *Miss Ruth Stewart Hodgson*, oil on canvas; Peter Paul Rubens, *Copies after Six Figures from Michelangelo's Last Judgement*, black and red chalks; Bernadino Luini, *Head of the Virgin*, black and red chalk; an important collection of late Medieval and Tudor English silver spoons; a group of British paintings and watercolours comprising Sir Edward Coley Burne-Jones, *Music*, oil on canvas, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Hamlet and Ophelia*, watercolour, George Frederic Watts, *The Ideal*, oil on board, Augustus Edwin John, *Figure Study*, watercolour and W Graham Robertson, *Sarah Bernhardt*, watercolour; Sir Thomas Lawrence, *Portrait of the Fifth Duke of Leeds*, oil on canvas; Antonio Canal, called Il Canaletto, *A Capriccio with the Villa seen through a Ruined Arch with a Pool in the Foreground with Figures*, oil on canvas; Aert de Gelder, *Esther and Mordecai*, oil on canvas; Jacob van Ruisdael, *View of the Lake of Haarlem*, oil on canvas; Jacob van Ruisdael, *Landscape with a Cloudy Sky*, oil on canvas; and Studio of Titian, *Venus and Adonis*, oil on canvas.

A physical inventory and condition check was completed by the Registration Department of all long-term loans to Oxford colleges and institutions and records were updated.

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### Design Office

The Design Office has continued to work on the redevelopment plan, specifically working on the presentation of information throughout the Museum from gallery displays to front of house public information requirements. Numerous trials have been undertaken to test a variety of ideas for the graphic design approach for the redevelopment. We have been working closely with the Gallery Project Management Group and Metaphor on these issues. The first major testing ground for all of this will be presented in the Randolph Gallery prototype due in October 2007.

In parallel to this the Design Office has been continuing to support the Museum's ongoing activities throughout the year. Four exhibitions have been produced with all their supporting promotional material. Large graphics have been produced to promote and highlight the Museum's redevelopment project and are displayed on the St Giles side of the building. Graphics have also been produced for the forecourt and Beaumont Street areas emphasizing that the Museum is still open to the public. We are continually developing and improving our front of house presentation as and when we can.

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### Human Resources

It has been the busiest year on record for the Department, with 35 recruitment exercises (in previous years we averaged just 14). We have managed 34 departures and 4 maternity leaves, and administered 26 merit awards. Julia Allen has attended courses on stress management and Sarah Brown completed an on-line University course on recruitment procedures. The post of Senior Manager remains vacant to date, but it is hoped that it will be filled shortly.

## Finance

Following the successful reorganization of the Finance team in June 2006, with the new appointments of Andrew Noton (Head of Finance) and Claudia van Deventer (Management Accountant), the Finance Department has continued to develop the financial controls and procedures to produce accurate and timely financial reporting at all levels within the Museum.

This greater financial awareness has allowed for more effective decision-making, and the Museum has returned a £6,000 surplus for the financial year 2006–7.

### Income 2006/2007

AHRC	2,091,500
University Funding - all	950,424
Trust Funds and Investments	291,008
Donations	728,903
Renaissance in the Regions	204,068
Sales, Services and Trading	932,338
Acquisitions	389,052
Research	167,722
Other	23,108
<i>Total</i>	<i>5,778,123</i>

### Expenditure 2006/2007

Curatorial and Research	1,973,811
Conservation	192,103
Education	232,003
Development and Marketing	202,984
Administration	533,098
Building Maintenance and Upkeep	715,521
Visitor Services	448,125
Trading	817,941
Acquisitions	389,052
Research	167,722
Other	23,108
<i>Total</i>	<i>5,771,874</i>

Visitor Numbers	2006/07	2005/06	2004/05
Museum Visitors	338,789	365,457	390,600
Website Sessions	322,170	360,182	259,786

## Visitor Services

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Even though the Ashmolean has never been ‘smaller’ in its long history, George Earle and his team have had a very busy year looking after our visitors. Closures of some galleries have been unavoidable. The construction of the prototype gallery inside the Randolph Gallery has temporarily necessitated the closing of the Chester and Griffith Galleries, while at the same time the closure of the Daisy Linda Ward, Chambers Hall and Combe Galleries for refurbishment have all given us more opportunities to engage with the visitors and explain what we are trying to achieve in the future. This opportunity has been taken up with relish by the front of house team.

At the end of March 2007 Hugo Penning joined the Museum as the Front of House Manager. Before joining the Ashmolean he was employed at the National Portrait Gallery for seven years, where he studied part-time for his MA Degree in Museum Management. His other responsibilities are to manage the building services team, security and cleaning.

## Building Services

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Alan Kitchen and his team have also been very busy this year. Besides dealing with planning, co-ordinating and facilitating the refurbishments, they have also executed a lot of that work and then had to spring into action whenever art works needed to be moved urgently or some other emergency occurred.

Over the past year five exhibitions were hung and lit, 120 loans out were prepared, 80 works on paper framed for our own exhibition schedule as well as 28 paintings which needed glazing and backing. Quality furniture and plinths have been restored or completely designed and built from scratch, such as the beautiful Whistler glass cabinet which is now on show in the Mallett Gallery. In the meantime the team looked after the building itself by performing lots of maintenance work ‘back of house’ or escorting contractors to enable them to work safely in the Museum.

## Security

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After the demolition of part of the Museum it was interesting to see how our security system reacted. Those issues that did arise were all dealt with very promptly by the team. The Security team also had to deal with the ‘usual’ acts of vandalism, cope with the incoming and outgoing post, and must have handed out thousands upon thousands of keys through the year.

*Quality furniture and plinths have been restored or completely designed and built from scratch, such as the beautiful Whistler glass cabinet which is now on show in the Mallett Gallery.*





'Spoon Race'. A wooden spoon face inspired by *The Hunt in the Forest* by Uccello. One of many spoons created in Ashmolean workshops as part of this Oxfordshire-wide project. ▲

*We continue to welcome many student volunteers from Oxford University and Oxford Brookes University who work with us on family and community projects.*

## Education

This has been an exciting year. We have continued to deliver a diverse programme of tours, talks, workshops, lectures, family events and gallery activities. 24,000 people visited the Ashmolean with the Education team, or took part in education outreach programmes during 2006–7. This is a major achievement given the massive reduction in galleries and capacity during the redevelopment. The voluntary guides continue to be at the heart of the Museum's education work. In addition we continue to welcome many student volunteers from Oxford University and Oxford Brookes University who work with us on family and community projects.

### Adult Programmes

A creative programme of activities, gallery talks, study days, workshops and lectures was delivered for adults. This included an uplifting performance by a local Gospel Choir to celebrate Black History Month, a 'Leonardo and Oxford' discovery day and a lecture series exploring arms and armour with master armorer Magnus Sigurdsson in which participants had the opportunity to handle detailed replica weapons and discover how they were made. 'Treasures of the Print Room' sessions were launched and these will continue with a monthly programme exploring this remarkable collection.

Henry Kim gave the David Piper New Year Lecture on *The New Ashmolean: A Vision of the Future* describing the delights of the new Museum scheduled to open in 2009.



'Investigating Portraits' Year 9 students from Wood Green Secondary School. Part of a three-year partnership project between the Ashmolean and Wood Green. ▲



Spoon Race – Elias Ashmole  
Spoon created by the artist  
Francesca Shakespeare. ▲

## Adult Outreach Programme

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We continued to develop our outreach programme for adults, working with new audiences and communities. For example: a group of adults with learning disabilities from the Kidlington Adult Learners Group were inspired by our Western Art collections to create wonderful collages which were displayed in the Museum; and our partnership continued with the Nuffield Hospital Day Centre, a programme which takes handling objects out for patients to discover and talk about. The cross-museums post of Community Education Officer has continued to develop programmes and partnerships with new audiences using the collections of all the University Museums as inspiration. This *Renaissance*-funded post is very successful in taking the museums to new audiences from Sure Start family centres to shelters for homeless people. This post works in partnership with staff from the Ashmolean.

## Sessions for Visually Impaired and Hearing Impaired Adults

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We continued our programme of handling sessions for visually impaired people and BSL signed tours for deaf people. These workshops have increased in popularity with new contacts being made all the time. There is a clear desire for this programme of activities which we plan to develop and increase for the new Ashmolean.

## Children and Families

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Enjoyed a stimulating programme of activities including a 'Rag Bags' workshop using recycled textiles to celebrate Family Learning Week, 'Drawing on Da Vinci' with the artist Korky Paul for the Big Draw 2006, and the 'Spoon Race' workshops with the artist Francesca Shakespeare as part of 'Oxfordshire 2007'. The 'Spoon Race' activities involved over 1,000 people throughout the county creating wooden spoon faces to celebrate 1,000 years of Oxfordshire. Over 100 amazing spoons were created in workshops at the Museum, inspired by the Ashmolean collections.

The Activity Trolley offered free self-conducted activity sheets for families. The 2006–07 themes included 'World Journey', 'Face to Face' and 'In the Picture'. Activities and workshops were delivered to support National Archaeology Day, the Big Draw, Family Learning Week, National Science and Engineering Week, and Heritage Open Weekend.

## Family Outreach Programme

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Over 500 children investigated the Ancient Egyptians and discovered the Anglo-Saxons as part of our Family Outreach Programme. This is a hugely successful ongoing initiative taking the Ashmolean to the wider community. Workshops took place in libraries and family centres across the county and attracted a diverse audience many of whom had never visited the Ashmolean. Several of the families attending these community-based activities have subsequently come to the Ashmolean to take part in our on-site programme of family events.

## Schools Programmes

Continued to be extremely popular despite restricted galleries, with over 12,000 schoolchildren visiting the Museum to take part in gallery activities, tours and workshops.

The Education team worked in partnership with Oxford Brookes University to welcome all 300 primary PGCE students to the Museum for an 'Art for the Afraid' workshop. This taster session introduces teachers to the use of pictures with their classes, developing their questioning and observation skills. This is the third year that we have welcomed this group of students and we plan to continue this programme. 2006–7 was Year 1 of the 'Take One Picture' partnership with the National Gallery and Initial Teacher Training Students from Oxford Brookes. This is a high-profile innovative project inspiring student teachers to use paintings as a resource for creative teaching across the primary curriculum. This year we welcomed 538 children: four schools taking part had never visited the Museum before and eight schools had not made use of the Western Art collections before.

## Schools Outreach

We continued to deliver a targeted outreach programme for schools, with over 350 schoolchildren taking part. Our 'Greeks on Tour' workshops took place in twelve schools, taking the Ancient Greeks on tour during this period of redevelopment.

Our second project was completed in partnership with Oxford Hospital Schools: patients, staff and carers created a beautiful collaborative textile collage wall–hanging inspired by the painting *A View from my Window* by Camille Pissarro. This is an ongoing partnership. We have also piloted taking part in cross-curricular days in schools, taking handling objects and activities (e.g. Investigating Ancient Egypt) and working throughout the schools across all age groups.

Partnership with Oxford Hospital Schools. A textile collage created by patients, staff and carers inspired by *A View from my Window* by Camille Pissarro. ▼







## Development

◀ Guests at the 2006 Benefactors' Gala Dinner in the Randolph Sculpture Gallery.

*The success of our fundraising for the redevelopment is largely due to the unswerving commitment of our many volunteers...*

As the Ashmolean's new building began to rise from the demolition site over the past twelve months a number of important gifts were received towards the redevelopment from generous supporters including Mr George Russell, Mrs Jayne Wrightsman, Mr and Mrs Charles Jackson, the Ronus Foundation, the H D H Wills 1965 Charitable Trust, Mr Martin Gordon, Mr Timothy Sanderson, and a number of anonymous donors. We are also grateful to the Linbury Trust and the Heritage Lottery Fund for their continued support.

The success of our fundraising for the redevelopment is largely due to the unswerving commitment of our many volunteers, and special thanks must go to the members of the Fundraising Steering Committee, the Capital Campaign Advisory Board and the Board of Visitors.

This year began with the inauguration of eleven of our distinguished benefactors as Fellows of the Ashmolean at our first Gala Dinner for Fellows and Benefactors. The Fellowships are an opportunity to recognise the contribution of some of our greatest supporters, and engage in a dialogue with them about the future of the Museum. The event was a great success, and featured tours of the collection and the construction site. The Fellowships were awarded by the Vice-Chancellor, Dr John Hood and Dr Christopher Brown.

Spring 2007 saw the launch of the Annual Fund, whose aim is to raise vital funds for the day-to-day running of the Museum. The appeal was sent to over 6,500 friends and supporters of the Ashmolean, and had raised over £73,000 at the end of the financial year, with gifts continuing to come in at the time of writing. We are grateful to all those who have given so generously to this appeal. Donors to the Annual Fund are listed at the end of this Report.

◀ Lord Powell of Bayswater receiving his Ashmolean Fellowship from the Vice-Chancellor, Dr John Hood.

Once again a number of trusts and foundations have generously supported the Ashmolean, making a significant difference to the work of the Museum.

Grateful thanks go to The Pilgrim Trust, The J Paul Getty Jr Charitable Trust and The Charlotte Bonham-Carter Charitable Trust for supporting the ongoing conservation work on the Museum's five European tapestries.

The Sammermar Trust has generously funded the conservation treatment to be carried out on a collection of gloves and stockings owned by Warren Hastings, the first Governor-General of British India, and a number of leather costume items in the Tradescant Collection are being conserved with the support of The Leathersellers' Company Charitable Fund. The Leche Trust helped fund the conservation of a fine seventeenth-century longcase clock by the Oxford maker John Knibb.

The Helen Roll Charity has again proved a loyal supporter, this year helping us to improve environmental control on the top floor of the Cockerell building by funding a new humidifier for one of the Western Art galleries.



The King David tapestry during conservation, mounted on a loom with its lining removed. A mirror underneath the loom shows the reflection of the reverse of the tapestry. ▲



The King David tapestry after washing. The colours are much brighter and the detail more visible. ▼

The Education Department has received grants from The Bryan Guinness Charitable Trust, The DLM Charitable Trust, The Barbara Whatmore Charitable Trust and The Staypar Charitable Trust for various family activities including Saturday morning drop-ins and drawing workshops as part of 'The Big Draw'. Further support for the Education Department this year came from The Inverforth Charitable Trust and The Marsh Christian Trust, and from The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust for a new storytelling project.

We are grateful to all these trusts for their support of our work.

This year we were delighted to be working with a wide range of new corporate supporters, as well as a number of established donors. Following their sponsorship of the *Treasures* exhibition, Henmans LLP helped fund a banner on St Giles, and are now involved in a trial audio-guide project at the Museum. Arts & Business awarded Henmans and the Ashmolean its South East Brand Identity Award in recognition of this relationship.

Other support this year came from the local construction company Beard, who supported a conservation project, and the Oxford and Cheltenham showrooms of the auctioneer Mallams, who have teamed up to raise money for the Museum. Another local company, Audley Travel, is sponsoring the *Chinese Prints* exhibition, while the estate agents Carter Jonas gave generous sponsorship for the Tradescant Patrons Group throughout the year, offering financial and public relations support.

The 'Picturing the New Ashmolean' competition received substantial corporate support prior to its launch. Our thanks go to the Oxford Bus Company, HBG (the construction company managing our redevelopment) and Oxford University Press for their combined generosity.

The revenue generated through venue hire has continued to increase this year. In late 2006 the Ashmolean was granted a Civil Ceremony Licence, and since then has hosted three weddings, with a further eight booked at the time



of writing. It is proving to be a popular place to get married. The Museum has also obtained a full premises licence, opening up further possibilities for entertainment and events.

In July 2007 the Events Manager Paula Falck was joined by an assistant, whose post is funded jointly by Digby Trout restaurants and the Elias Ashmole Group. The Events Assistant post was created to increase revenue from commercial events in the Museum outside normal opening hours. Both Digby Trout and the Ashmolean will benefit from the extra income generated by the post, as all venue hire profits, and 50 per cent of café profits, go towards the running of the Museum. Internal Museum events and bookings continue to be handled by the events team.

A number of legacy gifts were received this year. These included a bequest from the late Mr Brian Tait, a local businessman who owned land and property in Oxford. Mr Tait died in 2000, leaving his estate to be shared between the Ashmolean and the Oxford Preservation Trust. He was not personally known to the Museum and his benefaction came as a complete, but very welcome, surprise.

During the year we also received generous benefactions from the estates of the late Mrs Margaret Penning-Rowse and the late Mrs Caroline Miles. We are deeply touched to have received support in this way.

Our supporters and benefactors are listed at the end of this Report.

### The Elias Ashmole Group

This year the Elias Ashmole Group, chaired by Sir Christopher White and Lady Heseltine, enjoyed a number of events and trips. October 2006 saw the eighth annual Patrons' Dinner, held in the Randolph Sculpture Gallery. A reception in the newly restored Mallett Gallery was followed by presentations by curators on current projects at the Museum. Dame Liz Forgan, Chair of the Heritage Lottery Fund and the National Heritage Memorial Fund, gave an after-dinner speech.

*In late 2006 the Ashmolean was granted a Civil Ceremony Licence, and since then has hosted three weddings, with a further eight booked*

Members of the Elias Ashmole Group at Boughton House, Spring 2007. ▼



In April 2007 the Earl of Dalkeith kindly invited the Elias Ashmole Group to visit his residence, Boughton House. A 500-year-old Tudor monastic building, Boughton's French-style addition of 1695 led to the sobriquet 'the English Versailles'. Members of the group greatly enjoyed their visit.

In May 2007 the group made its annual spring trip – this year to Lisbon. The Director, Dr Christopher Brown, and Timothy Wilson, the Keeper of Western Art, led twenty-five patrons to many of Lisbon's greatest cultural institutions including the Museu Calouste Gulbenkian, Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, and the Tile Museum in the Madre de Deus Convent. The group also explored Monserrate, and the Palácio de Pena in Sintra. The trip ended with a private visit and farewell dinner at the Palácio dos Marqueses da Fronteira, with its grand interior, formal gardens and extraordinary *azulejos* (ceramic tiles).

*This year the Elias Ashmole Group made generous grants totalling £29,265 to the Ashmolean.*

This year the Elias Ashmole Group made generous grants totalling £29,265 to the Ashmolean. This included £2,500 to assist with the recent acquisition of contemporary Chinese prints dating from 1950 to 2006, £15,000 to help fund the post of Press and Publicity Manager, and £11,765 to help create the new post of Events Assistant for the Museum.

Members of the Elias Ashmole Group are listed in full at the end of this Report.

#### **The Tradescant Patrons Group**

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The Tradescants, chaired by Frances Jackson, have had a very active year, with programmes continuing to be well attended. September's third annual Director's study day explored *Treasured Collections of the Ashmolean*. Patrons had the opportunity to view many items from the Tradescants' collection of curiosities (the foundation of the Ashmolean's collection), which are on display at the Museum of the History of Science while work on the Ashmolean takes place. Ashmolean curators Susan Walker, Timothy Wilson, Arthur MacGregor and Rune Frederiksen explained how the Museum's collections were created.

In November 2006 Tradescants were invited to breakfast at the Museum and to take behind-the-scenes tours of the demolition of the old building. This event is part of a series offered to patrons as we reach different stages in the redevelopment.

In June 2007 Tradescants were special guests at the Museum of Garden History in London. The Director, Christopher Woodward, and the Head of Horticulture, Anne Jennings, guided Tradescants through the collections, which are housed in what was formerly the Church of St Mary-at-Lambeth – the final resting place of Elias Ashmole and both John Tradescants. The author Jennifer Potter gave a presentation on her book *Strange Blooms: The Curious Lives and Adventures of the John Tradescants*.

The estate agency Carter Jonas became a corporate sponsor of the Tradescant Patrons Group this year. The Director of Residential Sales, Mark Charter, says, 'Oxfordshire is extremely fortunate to house such a national treasure as



the Ashmolean and the Tradescants play a vital role in strengthening its local links. We are delighted to support this group, as it is a wonderful society for individuals who wish to be part of the Museum as it undergoes such a major transformation.’ The Tradescants are proud of this partnership and would like to thank Carter Jonas for their support.

Finally, the Tradescant Patrons Group has made a generous grant of £10,000 to the Education Department in support of its important work offering insight and understanding of the Museum’s collections to schoolchildren, families, young people and adult learners.

Members of the Tradescant Patrons Group are listed in full at the end of this Report.

### Friends of the Ashmolean

This year the Friends, chaired by David Boyle, made grants supporting a variety of activities in the Museum, not only to enhance the collections, but also to increase access to them. The most significant acquisition grant of the year was £15,000 given towards the purchase of the magnificent Boar’s Head Tureen, while £7,500 was allocated for two acquisitions currently under negotiation. Non-acquisition grants comprised £15,000 towards the post of Photographic Services Assistant within the Publications Department, and £5,000 to the Development Office for its support of the administration of

Members of the Tradescant Group at the Museum of Garden History, June 2007. ▲

*Oxfordshire is extremely fortunate to house such a national treasure as the Ashmolean and the Tradescants play a vital role in strengthening its local links.*



the Friends. Lastly, £5,000 was given towards the cost of mounting the *Recent Acquisitions of British Drawings and Watercolours* exhibition.

The response from individual Friends to the Museum's Annual Fund was inspiring, with Friends accounting for almost half of the 400+ donors, and giving in excess of £20,000 – almost a quarter of the total raised during the year. The Director wrote to the Chairman of the Friends expressing his appreciation of this.

This year saw the retirement of Hamish McCorquodale as Treasurer, due to an increasing number of commitments in Scotland. We are very grateful to Hamish for all his hard work with the Friends. Colin Wyman has taken over the role, and we are pleased to welcome him as a member of the Council.

It was a busy year for the membership team, who worked tirelessly to transfer the Friends' membership information and processes to the Museum's Raiser's Edge database. This took an enormous amount of work from a small number of volunteers, to whom we are grateful.

The activities team ran over thirty events this year. There were a number of enjoyable evening events in the Museum, centred on, among other things, the Egyptian galleries, the *Treasures* exhibition, the silver collections, and the hanging of the Mallett Gallery. The Friends' 2007 AGM was followed by an entertaining and informative lecture by Sir Roy Strong on *Twentieth-century Coronations*.

John Ashdown, who is a member of the Friends' Council, kindly led a number of tours around Oxford, including visits to four college chapels. Meanwhile, trips outside Oxford included Chawton House and the Jane Austen Museum, Fairford church, Arbury Hall, Kew Palace and Gardens, Yelford Manor, Standen House, and visits to the National Gallery's Velazquez exhibition and Tate Britain's Hogarth exhibition. Our thanks go to the activities team for all their hard work creating such a varied and interesting programme.

Finally, thanks must go to the Friends' 2,270 members and also to our patrons from the Elias Ashmole and Tradescant Groups, all of whom contribute so much, in so many ways, to the Ashmolean each year.



Construction under way on the Ashmolean's new building. ▼

The architectural dig under way on the Ashmolean site. ▶



## Press and Publicity

The Ashmolean's redevelopment, exhibitions and events have received extensive press coverage over the past year. In March, the start of construction was covered by the local press, the building trade press and *Design Week*. The Director gave interviews to the *Financial Times* and the *Museums Journal*.

The *Treasures* exhibition continues to attract publicity, with a six-month feature series in *Oxfordshire Life*. In addition it was selected as the critics' choice in the *Times*, *Observer Review* and *Independent on Sunday*, along with the temporary exhibitions of *Recent Acquisitions of British Drawings and Watercolours* and *Dürer to Friedrich: German Drawings from the Ashmolean*. The recent acquisition of the Boar's Head Tureen attracted coverage in the antiques, arts and local press, as well as featuring in the *Sunday Mirror*.

The Press and Publicity Office gave weekly site tours to target audiences from September 2006 to March 2007 covering the development's phases of demolition and the archaeological dig. Tours resumed in August 2007. Hundreds of people have been able to see the redevelopment take shape.

In June, over 200 visitors came to the Museum to listen to the Blackbird Leys Choir sing a variety of classical songs in a late night musical opening of the Ashmolean celebrating the City's 'Opening Doors Opening Minds' weekend. This was followed in July by 'Alice's Day', where the Ashmolean featured on the Alice's Day Trail. Sally Brown, Curator of Modern Literary Manuscripts at the British Library, gave a talk on the Wonderland Story and presented the film *The Original Alice* to a full audience. Storytelling took place on the forecourt and throughout the week a special display of manuscripts, proof sheets and printing plates illustrating Lewis Carroll's editions of *Alice's Adventures Under Ground* and *The Mouse's Tale* attracted great interest. Both events attracted new audiences as well as receiving widespread local press coverage.

The Press and Publicity Office has produced signage to cover the hoarding at the entrance to the construction site on St Giles and on the portacabin on the forecourt. Produced in two phases, the signage on St Giles was sponsored by Henmans and Arts & Business, and includes a series of posters featuring objects from the collections in the pedestrian tunnel, and a 39-metre banner on the roadside. The hoarding on the forecourt displays a 15-metre banner overlooking Beaumont Street, as well as information panels.

To expand the Ashmolean's communication tools, the Museum launched its e-newsletter in May 2007. Approximately 2,000 subscribers have registered on the website to receive the monthly newsletter, which provides highlights of the Museum's news, exhibitions and activities, with links to the website [www.ashmolean.org](http://www.ashmolean.org)

The *What's On* magazine continues to be distributed extensively throughout Oxford and the neighbouring counties.



## Exhibitions

During the year the Museum mounted a small series of exhibitions in the Eldon Gallery:

### **Leonardo and Oxford: Discovering the World of Leonardo in Oxford's Collections**

9 August to 12 November 2006

This formed part of a series of exhibitions highlighting the University of Oxford's rich collections, with Leonardo da Vinci as the key link in the chain. Focusing on his artistic and scientific interests, these exhibitions analysed the artistic and intellectual world inhabited by Leonardo, his friends and followers, while questioning today's image of him as a genius and celebrity.



Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) *Studies of figures and of Machinery*. ▲



### **Recent Acquisitions of British Drawings and Watercolours**

22 November 2006 to 18 February 2007

From Samuel Palmer to Paul Nash, the exhibition comprised some of the most striking and important acquisitions in the field of British drawings and watercolours made by the Ashmolean over the last six years.

Samuel Palmer (1805–1881)  
*The Prospect*.

### Dürer to Friedrich: German Drawings from the Ashmolean

27 February to 20 May 2007

Spanning four centuries, this exhibition comprised forty drawings by a range of the most celebrated German Old Masters. The work of the sixteenth-century artists Altdorfer, Dürer, Grünewald and Holbein were displayed alongside later artists from the nineteenth century, including Friedrich and the Nazarenes.

### About The House: Woodcuts by Matthias Mansen

23 May to 27 August 2007

This exhibition featured a series of large woodcuts by Matthias Mansen. Made in 1989–92, the series represents six rooms in a house and the domestic duties with which they are associated. This provided an opportunity to focus on the Ashmolean's growing collection of contemporary prints from German-speaking countries. The exhibition was entirely drawn from the collection of the Ashmolean but during the show two states of one of the images were presented to the Museum.

### Alice's Day Display

Randolph Gallery, 7 July 2007

A small exhibition bringing together manuscripts, ledgers and a printing plate for *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.



Matthias Grünewald (c.1475–1528) *An elderly woman with clasped hands*. ▲



Matthias Mansen (b.1958) *About the House - Studio*. ►





## 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

#### One of the Winds (Aeolus) unchained

**Giulio Romano** (1499–1546)

Pen, brown ink and wash over black chalk, pricked for transfer, 32.8 x 27.7 cm. Presented by Mrs Charlotte Gere in accordance with the wishes of the late John Gere, Keeper of Prints and Drawings at the British Museum. WA2007.77

Trained by Raphael, with whom he worked closely, Giulio enjoyed a high reputation as an artist and architect. He left Rome for the court of Federico Gonzaga, Marquess and later Duke of Mantua, in 1524, where he worked on a range of projects, designing buildings, tableware, fresco decoration and stage sets. Giulio was a virtuoso draughtsman, and this drawing displays the wiry pen lines and flowing rhythms that are characteristic of his mature style. It is preparatory for a fresco compartment in the Camera dei Venti (Room of the Winds) at the Palazzo Te, decorated in 1527–8; the contours are pricked to allow the design to be transferred.

#### Pharmacy jar (*albarello*)

**Workshop of Ludovico and Angelo Picchi, Castel Durante** (1562–3)

Maiolica, H: 24.5 cm. Presented by Raymonde Royer and family, WA2006.278

Armorial on the back show that this jar is from a well-documented set of pharmacy jars commissioned in 1562 from the workshop of the Picchi brothers in Castel Durante, near Urbino. The subject is a bizarre one from the medieval compilation known as the *Gesta Romanorum*. After the death of a king, it is announced that whichever of his sons shoots an arrow most accurately at his dead body shall inherit the throne; three sons accept the challenge, but the fourth, refusing to attempt anything so impious, thereby proves himself the rightful heir.



### Tureen in the form of a boar's head

**Chelsea porcelain factory,**  
(c.1755–9)

Soft-paste porcelain, red  
anchor mark; max. H: 27 cm.

Purchased by tax-concessionary private treaty sale through Christie's (Bouch, Madan, Jones, and Virtue-Tebbs funds), with the aid of the Art Fund, the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the V&A/MLA Purchase Grant Fund, the Friends of the Ashmolean, Mr Martin Foley, the Oxford Ceramics Group and numerous private donors. WA2007.1



The Boar's Head Tureen, one of which was described in a Chelsea sale catalogue of 1755 as 'a very curious Tureen in the form of a boar's head, and a beautiful dish to ditto with proper ornaments', is one of the most spectacular sculptural achievements in English porcelain. It forms part of a uniquely historic assemblage, bought to furnish a house in Yorkshire shortly after 1760 by the family in whose possession most of the collection remains virtually intact. The collection has been on loan to the Ashmolean since 1993.

### The Immaculate Conception

**Pietro Antonio Novelli (1729–1804)**

Pen and black ink over graphite with brown wash, 40.7  
x 30.5 cm.

Presented by Marianne and Paul Joannides in honour of  
Catherine Whistler. WA2007.47

Novelli was inspired by the graceful lyricism of Giambattista Tiepolo in approaching this devotional subject, which celebrates the purity of Mary, mother of Christ. A delicately executed and highly finished drawing, this may have been a design for an etching or engraving. Novelli studied in Venice and in Rome, and was a prolific draughtsman, producing elegant designs for book illustrations.







### The Rise of the Florentines against the Duke of Athens, 1343

**Luigi Sabatelli** (1772–1850)

Double-sided sheet of drawings. Pen and black ink, with various inscriptions in the artist's hand, 21.3 x 30.5 cm. Purchased with the assistance of the Art Fund. WA2007.76

Luigi Sabatelli was a leading figure in Neo-Classical and Romantic art in Italy, an important teacher at the Brera in Milan, and an artist of central importance in the revival of painting in nineteenth-century Florence. This is a vigorous, creative sheet of studies for a possibly unrealised composition on a historical subject. The artist turned the sheet around as he explored the theme of a bloodthirsty civic revolt in medieval Florence, and tried out on the reverse a panoramic view of the surging battle seen from the Loggia dei Lanzi in the heart of the city. The first work by Sabatelli to enter the collection, this dynamic sheet greatly enhances our small group of Italian nineteenth-century drawings.

### Portrait of a Seated Woman, 1857

**Romain Cazes** (1810–81)

Black and coloured chalks and stump, 46.6 x 36.2 cm. Signed and dated, Romain Cazes 1857. Purchased (Russell Fund). WA2007.57

Cazes was a notable pupil of Ingres and enjoyed considerable success as a decorator of churches in the south-west of France. Like his master, he was

also a refined draughtsman of portraits. This example is especially charming, and joins a small but important group of portrait drawings by Ingres and his pupils in the Ashmolean.



## Saint Florent le Vieil

### Joseph Mallord William Turner

(1775–1851)

Watercolour and bodycolour on blue paper, 13.7 x 18.5 cm. Accepted by H.M. Government in lieu of Inheritance Tax on the estate of Mrs Audrey Sale and allocated to the Ashmolean.  
WA2006.199

Among the greatest treasures in the Ashmolean are the seventeen views on the Loire by Turner, given by John Ruskin in 1861. These come from a series of twenty-four watercolours made in preparation for the illustrations to the first volume of Turner's *Annual Tour*, published in 1833, of which twenty were engraved. *Saint Florent le Vieil* is another from the same series, and shows the village of Saint Florent, midway between Angers and Nantes.

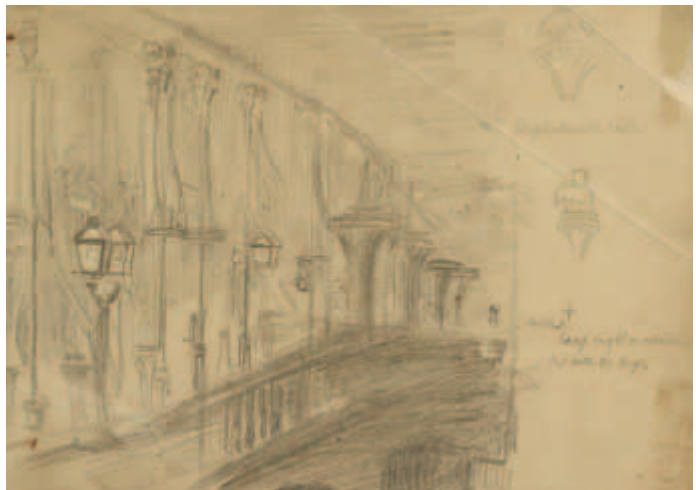


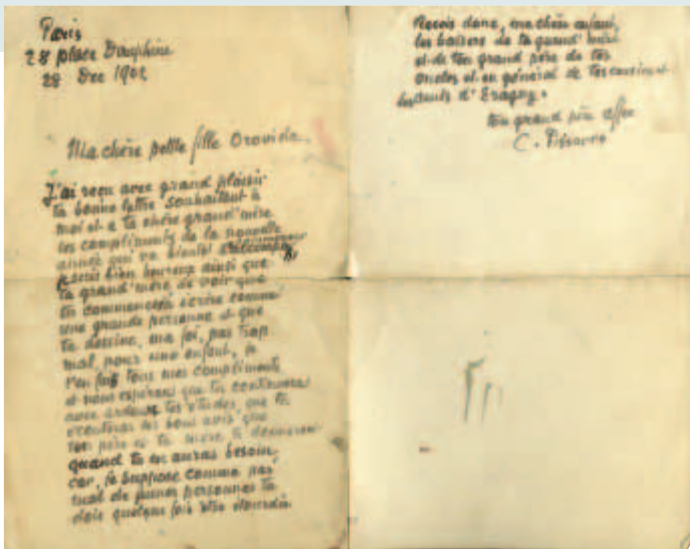
## Four Albums of Drawings

### William Holman Hunt (1827–1910)

Purchased with the assistance of the Art Fund, the V&A/MLA Purchase Grant Fund, and funds from the bequest of Professor Peter Brunt.  
WA2007.6.1-219

These four albums contain over 400 individual studies, and represent nearly 40 per cent of Holman Hunt's surviving drawings. The first album was given to the artist by his second wife Edith on their wedding day in 1875, and the second in 1879. The drawings range in date from c.1852 to c.1892, and include preliminary studies for paintings and designs for picture frames and book illustrations, as well as studies made from life, of Edith and her infant children, and of daily life in Jerusalem and the Near East.





### Letter from Camille Pissarro to Orovida Pissarro, 28 December 1902

Presented by Professor Simon Shorvon.  
WA2007.87

The Pissarro Archive, which includes works of art, letters, documents, and other material relating to the artists in the Pissarro family, was initiated by an extraordinary gift from the widow of Lucien Pissarro in 1950. Important later additions have been made by Lucien's daughter, Orovida, and his nephews John and David Bensusan

Butt. A new body of material, mostly relating to Orovida, has recently been presented by her heir, Professor Simon Shorvon. It includes this charming letter from the elderly Camille Pissarro to his nine-year-old granddaughter, complimenting her on her drawing and handwriting.

### Belpmoos, 1909

**Paul Klee** (1879–1940)  
Pen and ink on paper on cardboard, 21.6 x 25.5 cm. (sheet). Signed, dated and numbered at the bottom: *Klee Belpmoos 1909.49*  
Bequeathed by Mrs Margaret Wind in memory of Professor Edgar Wind. WA2006.159.  
© Artists Rights Society.

Paul Klee was brought up in Switzerland, moved to Munich in 1898, and acquired some formal training in various academies. In 1906 he moved back to Munich, after marrying the pianist Lily Sturm. On walks on the outskirts of the city he developed a flamboyant style of drawing on the basis of Van Gogh's approach to landscape drawing. These drawings are not meant to be precise depictions of a particular situation, but to give a visual impression of an atmosphere; they reflect his interest in late nineteenth-century art as well as contemporary movements. The drawing is from the collection of Edgar Wind (1900–71), first Professor of Art History at Oxford, and was part of the varied bequest to the Museum from his widow Margaret.





### Glass vase, a winter scene with trees

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Daum factory, Nancy

Glass, overlaid decoration in white and coloured glass, marked DAUM NANCY PR 723. H: 19.7 cm.

Presented by Gordon Silberman. WA2007.18

The Daum factory in Nancy was one of the prime European producers, alongside Lalique, of 'art glass' of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This virtuoso example is the first piece from the factory to enter the Museum collections.



### Reclining, 1960

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Jean Arp (1886–1966)

Marble, 16.2 x 26 x 3.2 cm.

Presented by the Trustees of Robert and Rena Lewin. WA2007.2.

© Fondation Arp.

This first work by Arp to enter the Ashmolean is a gift from the collection of Robert and Rena Lewin, collectors, dealers and long-time friends of the Ashmolean, in whose honour the new gallery for twentieth-century and contemporary art in the Ashmolean Development is named; it has been presented by their trustees. In late works like this, Arp returned to various ideas he had explored earlier, such as the reclining figure or the organic forms that he had first used in his Surrealist work in the 1930s.





### Mother and Child, Towel, 1979

**Henry Moore** (1898–1986)

Bronze, green patinated on ebony base; incised at the back: *Moore 2/9*

Presented by Sir Rex and Lady Richards. WA2006.198.

This work has been reproduced by permission of the Henry Moore Foundation.

This is the third sculpture by Moore to enter the collections and the most imposing. It reflects the lifelong interest of Henry Moore in the subject of the Mother and Child, as well as the spatial relationships between the two bodies and their relationship to the surrounding space. The bold and rather closed forms are reminiscent, in various ways, of Moore's approach to the same subject back in the 1940s. Moore reported to Sir Rex that 'the idea came when he used to go to see his grandchild (Gus) being bathed and Mary was in the habit of throwing a towel over her shoulder'.

### Seabird with Three Fish

**John Maltby** (b. 1936)

Ceramic sculpture, oxidised stoneware with a dry glaze, with metal, on a wooden base. H: 59.4 cm. Signed and dated 2006.

Presented in memory of Steve Reader. WA2007.14.

© the artist.

The artist is one of the most eminent of British studio potters, whose ceramics are already represented in the collection. He writes of this sculpture: 'The piece is not a specific bird but a kind of summary of all birds of that persuasion with which I am familiar. It has memories of cormorants standing with outstretched wings; herring gulls tearing fish-flesh apart with their ferocious beaks, aggressively posturing... These are obvious images but I think ideas sometimes go a little deeper: memories of German fighter planes, their bombs slung beneath their wings; the pavement salesman with his hanging watches revealed when he opens wide his coat. These are the images of which I am conscious in making such a piece – I am sure there are others also of which I am less aware.'



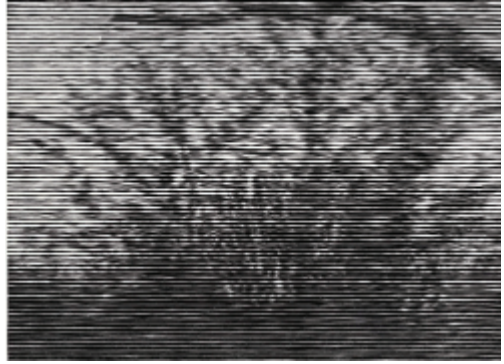


## 1 Sekunde (one second), 2004

**Christiane Baumgartner** (b. 1967)

Portfolio of twenty-five woodcuts, in white bound box. All prints in pencil verso signed: *Christiane Baumgartner*, dated 2004, and numbered 1–25. Purchased with funds from the Christopher Vaughan Bequest. WA2007.15.1–25. © the artist.

Christiane Baumgartner was born in Leipzig and started her training as an artist there before going to the Royal College of Art. Since the late 1990s she has started to develop a particular approach by fragmenting pictures into lines and then cutting them into woodblocks. In this portfolio she has used the sequence of twenty-five stills, making up one second of a video, depicting a landscape from a moving car. Her translation of this visual information into woodcut is one of the most innovative approaches to printmaking achieved in the past decade.



## Eastern Art

### Ottoman embroidered wall-hanging

Linen with silk embroidery. Turkey, sixteenth century. H: 237 cm, W: 130 cm. Purchased with the assistance of the V&A/MLA Purchase Grant Fund. EA2007.104.

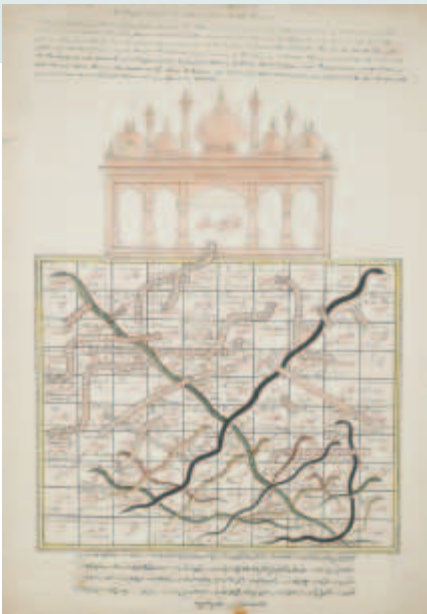
This is an exceptionally fine example of Ottoman embroidery, intended to be displayed in interior spaces. Similar textiles appear in paintings as wall hangings or cushion covers. This piece is made up from three panels embroidered with pomegranates and tulips, and its size suggests it was used as a wall hanging. The only other three-panelled Ottoman embroidery with this design is in Budapest.



### A *rishi* or Hindu sage

Sandstone. Cambodia, Angkor Thom region. Bayon style, c.1200. H: 50.8 cm. Purchased with the help of an anonymous benefactor. EA2007.105.

This Khmer standing figure of a *rishi* or Hindu sage wears a simple loincloth (*sampot*), as befits a forest-dwelling ascetic. His long matted hair is gathered in a high chignon and he has a thinly striated goatee beard. His eyes gaze in meditative absorption, while his full lips smile benignly. This image of a recluse of advanced spiritual attainment conveys a powerful serenity.



### Muslim Snakes and Ladders game

Ink and watercolour on English Whatman paper. India, Delhi or Ajmer, c.1810–15. 75.2 x 52.3 cm. Purchased. EA2007.2.

Snakes and Ladders was invented in India, originally with a religious didactic purpose. It was played in Hindu, Jain and Muslim versions, on boards charting the ascent of the soul from the lowest levels of existence to the heavenly regions. Reaching heaven or enlightenment is the aim of the game. This is a rare early nineteenth-century Sufi Muslim board, with texts in Persian and English. Only two other examples are known, in London and Cambridge collections.

### Qixia Mountain, 1961

**Zhang Xinyu** (b.1932)

Multi-block woodcut printed with water-soluble ink, 37.5 x 45.7 cm. EA2007.86

*Qixia Mountain* is one of more than 120 contemporary Chinese woodblock prints acquired this year by the Department of Eastern Art, to complement the collections of modern Chinese painting. The works date from the 1940s to 2006, and reflect the evolution of graphic arts in China through the political changes in the People's Republic.



### Peonies in an Ancient Bronze Vessel, 1903

**Wu Changshuo** (1844–1927)

Ink rubbing and ink colours on paper, 133 x 66 cm. Bequeathed by Oliver Impey. EA2007.103.

Wu Changshuo was one of the leading painters of the Shanghai School in the final decades of imperial rule in China, known for its fusion of the traditional style of ink painting with coloured decorative images. Wu was also interested in the nineteenth-century vogue for epigraphy and antiquarianism, and has incorporated a rubbing of an ancient bronze ritual vessel into this work. The inscriptions are by Wu and his circle of friends.



### Export porcelain ewer

Japan, Arita, c.1680–1700. H: 17 cm. Gift of Michael Webb in memory of Oliver Impey. EA2007.1.

Decorated in underglaze blue with European silver-gilt mounts, this late seventeenth-century porcelain ewer was made in Arita for the European export market. It is a good example of the finer quality porcelains shipped to Europe at this time. The unusual floral pattern was derived from contemporary textiles.



Japan

### Lacquered picnic set in the form of a boat

Lacquer on wood with engraved silver mounts. Japan, early to mid-nineteenth-century, signed Kankō Bunryūsai. L: 75 cm. Anonymous gift in memory of Oliver Impey. EA2007.106.



This unusual lacquer picnic set (*jubako*), in the form of a river boat with a detachable cabin enclosing a three-tiered food container and cover, is signed by Kajikawa Bunryūsai. The set is decorated with the Seven Lucky Gods and the detachable deck section encloses a boat-shaped sake flask.

### The actor Iwa Nagazaemon looking at embers in a brazier

Woodblock print. Japan, 1857. By Kunisada (Utagawa Tokoyuni III 1786–1864). Gift of Burton S Rosner and Nancy C Waugh. EA2007.124.

This study of a famous contemporary kabuki actor playing the role of a samurai is one of a group of twenty-three *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints recently donated to the Museum. They include works by Shunshō, Hokusai, Hiroshige, Toyokuni, Kunisada and Kuniyoshi.







## Cast Gallery

### Cast of a late Roman portrait head

Fifth cent. AD. Purchased from the Musée du Cinquantenaire in Brussels. H76

## Heberden Coin Room

### Gold rings used as money in Ethiopia

Probably nineteenth century. Purchased with the aid of a grant from the Carl and Eileen Subak Family Foundation. HCR4573.



Such rings were used as a form of money in Ethiopia. The rings are in denominations of units, three-quarters, halves, and quarters. They are on a weight-standard close to the ounce. Such a standard was introduced to Ethiopia by the use of Maria Theresa thalers, which became a standard currency in much of North Africa and the Arabian peninsula from the late eighteenth century onwards. The rings were purchased to bolster the representation of Africa in the new Money Gallery.

## Antiquities

### The Wilshere Collection

*Acquired from the Governors of Pusey House, Oxford, with the assistance of the Art Fund, the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the V&A/MLA Purchase Grant Fund, and the Patrons, Friends, Young Friends and private benefactors of the Ashmolean. The Wilshere Collection was formed at the end of the nineteenth century and contains thirty-six fragments of gold-glass and twenty-three sculptured reliefs and inscriptions. Dating from the second to fourth centuries AD, the objects were originally from Roman catacombs and display a wide variety of Christian, Jewish and pagan themes.*



Fragment of a gold-glass bowl made in Rome during the fourth century AD, and once embedded in plaster in the wall of a catacomb. It represents in the centre a married couple and radiating from them a series of Old and New Testament scenes: at the top, Christ instructing the Paralytic to take up his bed and walk, then in turn, the Raising of Lazarus, Adam and Eve, the Sacrifice of Abraham, and Moses striking the rock to bring forth water (AN2007.13).





Fragmentary gold-glass roundel from a bowl made in Rome in the fourth century AD. It shows a cross-looking Hercules (see the club behind him) capturing the Cerynian hind (shown here as a stag): the third of his Labours (AN2007.16).

An inscription from a Roman catacomb of the fourth century AD. It is unusual in being a Latin text written in Greek letters. It says: 'Venerosa, seventeen years, and with her husband fifteen months.' The most prominent feature is the Jewish Menorah in the centre (AN2007.62).



### Robertson Bequest

A watercolour sketch of an Athenian pottery *lekythos* and two gold pendants, by Thomas Burgon (1787–1858), the Smyrna merchant and collector of antiquities. Bequeathed by Professor Martin Robertson (AN2007.1).

### Attic bell-crater

An Athenian wine-mixing bowl ('bell-crater') formerly in Nostell Priory and acquired in Naples in 1818. A figure (probably Silenus) sleeps off the effects of too much wine, flanked by Pan and a satyr (Loan 533).



## 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.**

After three years of hard work at the coalface of the Ashmolean's redevelopment plan, I was delighted to be awarded a term's sabbatical leave from January to March 2007 as Balsdon Fellow at the British School at Rome. One of the most pleasurable aspects of my work as Keeper of Antiquities and Project Manager for the content of the new galleries is the astonishing variety and richness of the Ashmolean collections. But I was trained as a Roman archaeologist and art historian, and it is welcome repose to work at greater depth in the field one knows best.

Before arriving at the Ashmolean in 2004, I had written a short book on the Portland Vase, a treasure of the British Museum. Fascinated by cameo glass of the early Roman Empire, I longed to research the subject further. Fewer than twenty major pieces have survived, including five from Pompeii. Of these I selected three with narrative content, examining their contexts to understand how cameo glass was used in antiquity.

**Susan Walker**  
Keeper of Antiquities

*I was trained as a Roman archaeologist and art historian, and it is welcome repose to work at greater depth in the field one knows best.*

Cameo glass plaque and wall - painting from the House of Marcus Fabius Rufus at Pompeii. ▼



The 'Blue Vase', a treasure of Naples Museum, had the misfortune to be found in a tomb on the day of King Ferdinand II's visit to Pompeii on 29 December 1837. It has ever since been regarded as a 'plant' to impress the king. Nonetheless, comparing the images carved on the vase with contemporary marble cinerary urns, it seemed likely that the vase was indeed used for burial, probably of a young boy. In design and colour it closely matches four unusual columns of blue glass mosaic from the garden of the adjacent 'House of the Mosaic Columns'. Examination of the remains on site shows that vase and tomb are certainly linked to this large house on the north-western edge of Pompeii. Indeed a sequence of development may be proposed for the house and tombs, even the name of a possible occupant of the 'Blue Vase'. However, further excavation is needed to confirm the sequence and the identity of the deceased.

Two large plaques of cameo glass were found in the 1960s in the salon of the House of Marcus Fabius Rufus, part of a large complex of luxury houses built on the western city wall of Pompeii. The still extant salon, dating to the reign of Nero (AD 54–68), offers a wonderful view to the sea. Nonetheless the Roman owners painted the interior black, with fragile golden columns framing three paintings. Depicting scenes of seduction, successful and failed, these were doubtless intended as conversation pieces to amuse the residents and their guests. The glass plaques show a drunken Maenad of commanding, even regal, appearance and the wine-god Dionysus discovering the abandoned princess Ariadne. The women are dominant, the men passive in a re-enactment of the rites of Dionysus. All three paintings (only one of which shares a subject with the plaques) show remarkably passive males, even as successful seducers. The artists evidently copied some poses and settings of the glass plaques, elements unknown in other Roman paintings.

For Romans of the early empire, Cleopatra's Alexandria provided the model for a lifestyle in which hard-drinking royal women dominated men. The house of Marcus Fabius Rufus provided another unexpected insight into Roman attitudes to Alexandria. A wall-painting of the 40s BC had been completely preserved behind a later painted wall. The earlier painting is widely agreed to show Venus in her temple, but close comparison with a marble head of Cleopatra in the Vatican Museum suggests that both painting and sculpture reproduce a famous statue of Cleopatra erected in 46 BC by Julius Caesar in the Temple of Venus the Mother in his forum at Rome. The statue celebrated the birth of Cleopatra and Caesar's son, the future king Ptolemy XV Caesarion. The Pompeian painting was probably concealed after the Romans captured Alexandria in 30 BC and killed the young king. He is represented in the painting and originally on the Vatican head as a little figure of Eros clinging to his mother's face.

This project has offered insights into how cameo glass was used in Pompeii, and how Roman attitudes to Alexandria changed over the tumultuous period of history from Caesar's dictatorship to the death of Nero. It has offered intellectual refreshment, stimulation and a most welcome opportunity to meet new friends and colleagues and renew old acquaintances in Rome and Naples.

*The 'Blue Vase', a treasure of Naples Museum, had the misfortune to be found in a tomb on the day of King Ferdinand II's visit to Pompeii on 29 December 1837. It has ever since been regarded as a 'plant' to impress the king.*





The 'Blue Vase' and a detail of a mosaic column in the funerary gardens of the House of the Mosaic Columns at Pompeii. ▲



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