

The British Museum

Final Report ITP 2019

By Nyaz Azeez Awmar Director and Archaeologist

Koya Civilization Museum

International Training Programme:

It seems that participating in such important and interesting International Training Programme at the British museum is a great success for us and our museums as well. We have learned new important things and by getting information from academic people in different fields of work, such learning is important because we can use it and benefit from it in our projects in our museum. That's why I can say that the ITP is one of the most important and interesting programmes that the British Museum has. We can also say that it's helpful for entire countries and it's a great service in all museum, heritage, and archaeological aspects. I have got many interesting things from this programme that I will use and implement in my museum.



My Sponsor, the Thriplow Charitable Trust:

This programme, which is supported by some faithful and generous people allows all the participants to be accommodated and funded for the period that they have stayed. So I want to express my thankfulness to the *Thriplow Charitable Trust* for sponsoring me. They have given me this chance to participate in such important programme, it was really a great chance in my life and you are supporting us to learn. I want to thank you for your generous support.

If we want to talk about the programme we can say really it was very well organised and all the organisers and the manager and all the staff of this programme deserve to be appreciated, they were really helpful with everything.

Visiting some museums and archaeological sites in the context of the ITP program meant there was a warm welcome for us. When we were sent by the British Museum to these places, there was one of their representatives to lead us and to show us around. In some museums there were special exhibitions, visiting those exhibitions was free of charge for us with our British Museum pass. Everything was prepared for us!!



Fellows ITP (2019) in Pitt Rivers Museum and Ashmolean Museum in Oxford

On 20 July 2019 I visited this important archaeology site in Britain with my friends from the British Museum and the ITP. It was one of my hopes to see this important

place before I arrived in the UK, and to see other important archaeological sites and historical places. This site which could date back as far as 4500 years ago has remained a beautiful and important place that many people enthusiastically visit today.



Stonehenge

Stonehenge is an important site and it is in a nice landscape. I began to notice what I'm describing here has multiple projects on the go at the same time. There is audio to explain about the history of Stonehenge and the site has an exhibition, restaurant, gift shops and buses to transport tourists around the site.

I have seen that a lot of people from different countries come to visit this site so you cannot go too close to the stones or touch them so the stones remain protected.

The ITP programme has had a great effect on our museum. We learned new, interesting information. It made us want to set-up a special programme for children in education when they visit my museum. There were some kids' activities and learning, particularly around making some artwork around archaeology and excavation works, and drawing a picture in their imagination, encouraging them to have fun and to learn. This is what I noticed in most of the museums we visited. Kids' activities and learning from them is not available enough in our museum, so from now on we can invest in this with the cooperation of the schools when they visit the museum.



Another important thing that I had noticed was opening special exhibitions in the museums which enabled programmes with the different activities for the kids which directly related to the exhibition.

Object in focus:

Another important part of this programme was the Object in Focus project which was really important and interesting. It taught us several things such as exchanging information, collaboration, how way to prepare for an exhibition, presenting the project and giving enough information to those who visited it. It was really interesting and useful.

Having limited time was a problem for me because I haven't worked before in some aspects of the project but I hope I can work on it and implement this whole new idea in our museum.

The British Museum

Journey Towards Belief

15 August 2019

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The whole programme of the ITP was a 'school' for me which taught us many, important things which are not available in our region. This is why I will always continue with this programme and remain in contact with the participants and the

staff of the British Museum for getting further advice and instruction from them when implementing a project.



UK Partner Placement: The Collection: Art and archaeology in Lincolnshire:

Another important part of this programme was sending the participants to some museums in other places in Britain according to his/her specialisation. As I am an archaeologist, I was happy with the place that they chose for me - The Collection: Art and archaeology in Lincolnshire.

The collection is an award-winning archaeology museum and art exhibition space, forming a vibrant culture centre in the heart of historic Lincoln. The archaeology gallery takes visitors on a journey through the stone, bronze and iron ages before exploring the Roman, Saxon, Viking and Medieval eras. The museum tells the story of Lincolnshire's fascinating heritage. It was not lonely a museum but practically they have an excavation operation in one of the archaeological places in Lincolnshire. This was the perfect thing for me to visit while in Lincolnshire and it led to some very interesting discussions about how archaeological practices differ in our home countries. I visited Scremby in Lincolnshire, a site which is being excavated by the University of Sheffield. The excavation taking place is at the site of an early Anglo-Saxon inhumation cemetery (c.AD550-650).



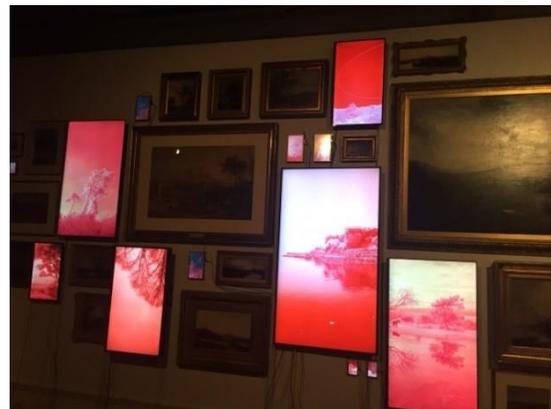
I enjoyed seeing the archaeological site and excavation with the university team and exchanging information about methods of excavation. When I was with the team we discussed at length about the laws surrounding metal detectorists and how they differ in the UK and Kurdistan. The use of metal detectors is strictly forbidden on archaeological sites in Kurdistan while there are laws on its use in the UK. Responsible metal detecting is encouraged as it can make an important contribution to archaeological discovery, and information is also provided about the ways of excavating and how to treat the land owners. What surprised me was that land owners were very helpful to the excavation team by providing accommodation and residence for them, supporting them for the success of the project.

In the museum they had two exhibitions open. The first was a dinosaur encounter which was open in the museum from 13 July - 8 September 2019 and was where you could come face-to-face with your favourite dinosaur in a thrilling setting. I saw, in The Collection, that during the exhibition on dinosaurs, at the same time there were special activities for kids like presenting workshops and talking about the history of the dinosaurs. In another section kids were making pictures of the dinosaurs. These activities meant the kids would be more familiar with the subject and understand the exhibition easily.



The second exhibition was at the Usher Gallery and it was open from 1 June - 15 September 2019. Evan Roth's 'Red Lines' with Landscapes presented the American artist Evan Roth's Artangel 2018-19 commission, 'Red Lines', streamed via the internet from coastal sites around the world directly into the gallery, alongside works from the Usher Gallery's landscape collection. Roth's 'Red Lines' project is a network of mesmerizing video landscapes, filmed in infrared at sites around the world.

Again, the activity for children with families who visited museum had a connection with the exhibition which was very important.





UK Partner Placement: University of Nottingham Museum:

This museum first opened in 1933 when Dr Felix Oswald donated finds from his excavation at the site of Margidunum, a Roman settlement at Bingham in Nottinghamshire. This included his internationally important collection of Roman Samian pottery. Today the museum holds and displays mainly regional collections of archaeology from Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, and Derbyshire, from the Palaeolithic period to the post-medieval period. There are also smaller collections from other countries including Italy, Greece, Cyprus, and Egypt.



We visited the museum's manuscripts and special collection stores. It was very big and amazing to see that this manuscript collection here can be accessed by archivists, academics and the public.



We also visited the computer sciences section and museum school programme which provided some important general information and they gave us some activity cards as a gift for my museum. Thank you so much!!



Thank you too to Clare Pickersgill, the Keeper of the University of Nottingham Museum, for the best gift for my museum - a box for coins storage.



Inside Nottingham's Peel Street Cave

The Peel Street Caves are big amazing caves we had the chance to visit and explore. I enjoyed my time inside the caves and learning more information about the excavation in the caves by the city archaeologists.



Thank you to everyone at The Collection: Art and Archaeology in Lincolnshire especially Dawn Heywood and Andrea Martin and at the University of Nottingham Museum, especially Clare Pickersgill, for an enjoyable and interesting UK Partner placement.

Department Middle East:

I also want to thank and share my appreciation of the Department of Middle East in the British Museum for their support and cooperation. They gave us useful information generally about the department, storage, objects and activities. They also give us some useful books, some lectures about archaeological projects and the history of Mesopotamia. I was very happy to work with this department.

At the end I would like to show my appreciation to the British Museum and Claire Messenger, Manager of the International Training Programme.

Thank you very much to the British Museum for giving us this opportunity. Thank you very much for everything.