



Growth, change and a network of colleagues and friends

Sitting in London on a sweltering evening, talking with Shadia Abdu Rabo, a curator from the Sudan National Museum who participated in the first ITP in 2006, I received some stern advice: 'You should invite all of the first participants back for a second ITP, it has changed so much, there are so many aspects we did not have in that first year'.

This comment captures the essence of the ITP: people from around the world staying in contact, not reticent in offering strong opinions, but especially how the Programme has been dynamic, ever-changing, building on success and learning from mistakes. The fluid nature of the Programme is a testament to the work and imagination of the ITP team, especially Claire Messenger and Shezza Rashwan, of course, but also staff across the British Museum and other UK museums. However, most improvements, new ideas and changes have resulted from suggestions made by participants, whether during the programme or after returning home.

From those first sessions in June 2006, we have seen the introduction of exhibition projects, fundraising evenings at which curators present objects, the publication of a book on the first five years, weekend projects to assess other museum displays, a Facebook group administered from India and Palestine, a printed coursebook, and now the first issue of the ITP newsletter.

The newsletter takes you on a global journey through different museums, collections, staff and audiences. From planning the ambitious Grand Egyptian Museum in Cairo, to a photographic exhibition in Nampula or a stunning statue of Buddha in the Capital Museum in Beijing. Global perspectives will be a regular feature to explore how different museums approach common challenges – here we have perspectives from Newcastle, Giza, Lahore and West Bengal on what museum visitors expect.

This year's programme – the eighth – started on 12 August, later than ever before, principally to avoid the month of Ramadan, when travel away from families and long working days become difficult. For the first time we welcome a past participant back as one of the Programme's assistants – Eileen Musundi from the National Museums of Kenya. We have two new UK partners (the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, and The Manchester Art Gallery), and Manisha Nene from CSMVS in Mumbai will be coming back to London to develop her exhibition on Ganesha. We can only wonder what the ITP will look like in another five years!

Neal Spencer

Keeper, Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan
(former manager of ITP)

Hemmat Moustafa (ITP 2010) explores the British Museum's science laboratories with Michela Spataro.

The International Training Programme in 2013 – an update

As I write we have just said a sad goodbye to colleagues from China, Egypt, India, Kenya, Libya, Oman, Palestine, Sudan, Turkey and Uganda who joined us at the British Museum for the ITP 2013.

The Programme itself was similar to last year's but reflected some of the comments and suggestions from our 2012 cohort. This summer we kept the programme's themed days, brought back the Welcome Reception and put in short breaks for the morning and afternoon sessions – which I know our colleagues in 2012 would have appreciated! We continued with our Course Book that now accompanies the Programme and which we hope to make available online to all past participants in the near future. We were also lucky enough to be joined on the Programme this year by the Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, Oxford, and Manchester Art Gallery as UK Partners and by the Victoria and Albert Museum who hosted us for a morning on exhibitions and an afternoon of gallery tours.

We also revisited the format of the final presentations which we know so many of you found rather testing. We still asked participants to develop a temporary exhibition proposal but they presented their work – and an object from the Museum's collection – in a more informal and hands-on setting. I hope you will all check the ITP blog to enjoy the results of their work.

While planning ahead for this summer so much of 2013 has been about reflection. For the first six months of this year the ITP team have focused on the impact and sustainability of the Programme and on finding new ways to keep our network of friends and colleagues around the world together.

Our legacy projects so far this year have included a thorough evaluation of the Programme – which we'd like to take this opportunity to thank so many of you for completing – and which we will publish later this year.

This summer has seen us joined by past participant Eileen Musundi (ITP 2008) Curator, The Nairobi Gallery/Exhibitions Designer, National Museums of Kenya. Eileen applied, along with 37 others, to join us again on the ITP but this time to help us plan, facilitate and evaluate. I hope she will agree that this has been a great success and her role as 'trouble-shooter' for this year's participants has been invaluable.

At the end of September we welcomed back Manisha Nene (ITP 2011), Asst. Director (Gallery) at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya. Manisha's final presentation exhibition proposal *Visions of Ganesh* so impressed our Exhibitions department that we have invited her to join us again at the British Museum to develop a small, temporary exhibition in Room 3 based on her original concept.

Finally, we'd like to say a big thank you to everyone who has sent articles for the first edition of our newsletter. We hope you all enjoy it and feel inspired to contribute to Issue 2.

Claire Messenger

Manager, International Training Programme

Shezza Rashwan

Co-ordinator, International Training Programme



Hadeer Belal, Freda Nkirote and Omar Joseph discussing storage with Lucinda Smith.

Kusuma Barnett giving the ITP participants 2013 a tour of the galleries.

The façade of GEM. By night, light will glow out the translucent alabaster wall that extends 800 metres and rises 50 metres high.



Arriving at the top of the stair visitors will see the most recognised architectural structures in the world – the pyramids of Giza.

Museum profiles

The Grand Egyptian Museum, Cairo

With a unique position on the Giza plateau, dramatically aligned with the great pyramids of Giza, the Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM) is currently one of the largest museum development projects in the world, and the world's largest celebration of Pharaonic history. The museum is designed to be an encyclopaedia of ancient Egyptian culture and will exhibit the GEM's collection of more than 80,000 objects spanning prehistory to the Greco-Roman period.

The GEM will have approximately 15 permanent galleries illustrating every aspect of ancient Egyptian culture. We will use modern technology and audio-visual media to create a comprehensive virtual museum experience helping visitors to discover the broad stories of Egyptian history.

The GEM project is a priority for Egypt on many different levels. It is envisaged that it will be a popular academic and cultural institution of the highest international standards and it is expected to attract several types of visitor groups – tourists, families with children, locals in family groups, school children, experts, academics and independent travellers. The exhibition programme is designed to attract and serve these target visitor groups. The outdoor spaces surrounding the museum building are being carefully planned to have a lot of recreational parks and facilities, a cultural and educational centre containing a 3D cinema, a library and a Conference Centre.

The Grand Staircase will be the highlight of the new museum. The architecture will bring visitors up to the pyramids plateau by way of a truly memorable staircase, with over 100 statues of the pharaohs in reverse chronological order. However, it is not just a staircase but a journey, a journey back in time, starting at the bottom with the Greco-Roman kings' statues and ending with the statues of Khufu, Khafare, and Menkaure facing their pyramids. This journey will tell the stories of the past, the stories of the great kings who made ancient Egyptian civilisation.

For visitors, it is a journey that encompasses 3,500 years, all of dynastic Egypt, every Pharaoh's cartouche and, where possible, a statue. This journey through the interpretative space of the Grand Staircase enables the visitor to live in history, reveal the ideas behind it and explore the past freely.

Progress on the GEM is going well. The site preparation was completed in 2005 with the Conservation Centre, Energy Centre & Fire station finished in 2010. The collection is currently being prepared for display and the main space for exhibition is due to open in August 2015.

Nevine Nizar Zakaria

Egyptologist, The Grand Egyptian Museum, Cairo (ITP 2012)

Museum profiles

The National Museum of Ethnology, Nampula, Mozambique



The National Museum of Ethnology, Nampula.

The displays in the National Handicrafts Design Gallery and Museum, Delhi.

The National Museum of Ethnology, Mozambique, also abbreviated as MUSEU, is a public institution of a cultural and scientific nature in the service of society and of its development. It has its headquarters in Nampula city and performs functions of scientific coordination and methodological guidance within its area of expertise throughout the country of Mozambique. This museum was opened to the public on the afternoon of 23 August 1956 by Colonial General Francisco Higinio Craveiro Lopes and was designed by the eminent architect Mário de Oliveira. The date of its opening is clearly stamped at the entrance of the Museum with two pieces of Makonde sculpture made by Makonde artist Shibangamunu in the same year.

The celebration of International Museum Day

As we all know, the worldwide community celebrates International Museum Day by hosting many events in their institutions, taking into account the theme (Memory + Creativity = Social Change).

At our museum we are no different in that we hosted a photographic exhibition entitled *The Sea of Mozambique*, which was inaugurated on 10 May 2013 and remained open to the public until the end of the month. The exhibition brought together different visions in terms of the uses and traditions of the people of the sea. We celebrated their courage, pride, navigation techniques, the construction of boats and all other issues related to the inauguration of a new boat – a moment marked by commemorations and rituals – and also the different types of fish found in the Indian Ocean.

Students from primary schools, secondary schools and university were present at the inauguration ceremony, not forgetting important political people, such as the permanent provincial secretary on behalf of the Governor and representatives from different governmental and non-governmental institutions.

Antonio Luis Ntimbanga

Exhibition and Education Department (ITP 2009)



Ethnology National Museum professionals celebrating International Museum Day, 30 May 2013.

Museum profiles

National Handicrafts Design Gallery & Museum, Delhi, India



Inaugurated and opened to the public in 2010, the National Handicrafts Design Gallery & Museum is a new addition to Delhi's list of museums. It is situated in the heart of the city at Rajiv Gandhi Handicrafts Bhavan, Connaught Place, and is still quite pristine, despite the high volume of visitors. The idea of this endeavour is conceptualised and curated by 'Gargoti'; the mineral museum, Nasik, Maharashtra. The display features various fine collections of different minerals and stones along with the sculptures that have been carved from these raw materials.

This is a way of exhibiting various materials which have been used for a long time in the handicraft industry, in their unrefined as well as finished form. Displayed sculptures are drawn from classical Hindu and Buddhist tradition, along with folk art to show the development of the overall craft tradition. The subjects of the exhibits are drawn from the length and breadth of the country. There are 'Bodhisattva' figures from monasteries of the Himalayan region and lustrous bronze sculptures from the southern state of Tamilnadu. Moreover, there are exclusively designed textile and fibre products from the eastern part of the country to show that creativity does not depend on the availability of stone or solid materials.

Intricate design, the fineness of the artistic skill and proportionate size makes every sculpture a 'masterpiece'. Though all the exhibits are newly made, they closely follow the ancient traditions and styles, showing the sophistication of Indian craftsmanship. This is the key objective of this new gallery – to spread awareness about the crafts of India and their material and especially geological sources.

Shambwaditya Ghosh

Archivist, EKA Cultural Resources and Research, India New Delhi (ITP 2012)

Museum profiles

National Museum of Iran, Tehran



Storage at the National Museum of Iran, Tehran.

Soup tin, Sudan, 19th century. British Museum.

The National Museum of Iran, like other museums across the world, has a separate place where it keeps valuable coins and seals, because these are regarded as being of the greatest importance for studying the history of civilisations.

Most of the objects in this section of the museum have been acquired through archaeological excavation, though some items have been donated or privately excavated. The very oldest stamp seals, dating to 6,000 years ago, are kept in the National Museum of Iran and were excavated from Susa. The oldest seals date to the 4th millennium BC and were formed from baked clay, calcareous stone, marble, soap stone and iron stone. Those original stamps were button-like in shape and sometimes adopted the shape of sleeping animals. Their designs were simple geometrical shapes, representations of insects, faces, the sun, human and animal figures.

Since the flat seals did not possess sufficient surface area to depict different scenes combined, the cylindrical type of seal was created. These cylinder seals are also made from semi-precious stones such as agate of different colours, lapis lazuli, jasper and black-and-white marble. These seals were decorated with scenes related to agriculture, hunting, fishing, animals and humans fighting, mythical animals, and worship of gods and goddesses. On the seals which date to the very early days of urbanisation, we find reference to most of the known professions such as potters, weavers, bakers, musical instrument makers, architects and farmers, even those of shipbuilders.

Zohreh Baseri

Curator of Coins and Seals, National Museum of Iran, Tehran (ITP 2007)

Collections in focus

Travels of a soup tin: Victorians in northern Sudan



One of the most unusual objects in the British Museum's collection was found at Kulubnarti, Sudan. Kulubnarti is located in the remote region of the Batn el-Hagar – 'Belly of Rocks' – in northern Sudan, about 400km upstream from Aswan, Egypt.

On one floor of the Ottoman fortification dominating the site was a small soup tin from the 19th century. Standing just 6cm high, the gold-coloured can (EA 78194), now missing its lid, was formed from a rectangular iron sheet, shaped around a cylindrical mould then soldered together. The label gives an indication of its former contents and provides instructions for cooking. It reads:

KOPF'S Extract of Meat and Compressed Food Company, Limited

Offices: 46, Cannon Street, London, E.C.

Factory: 28, Hearn Street, London, E.C.

ERBSWURST OR PEA SOUP

DIRECTIONS: mix the contents to a thick paste with hot or cold water then add sufficient to make a pint of soup and boil for a quarter of an hour.

Another panel reads: Made from the most nutritious ingredients, is exceedingly rich in flesh-forming, heat-giving and bone-forming properties.

Most Victorian travellers venturing up the Nile went as far as Aswan or Abu Simbel. Few headed further upstream into the 'Belly of Rocks'. An advertisement from 15 January 1881 in the Otago Witness of Dunedin, New Zealand, provides a clue as to how this small tin travelled from London and ended up in this remote inhospitable area. It describes the soup as 'Invaluable for Domestic Use, Sportsmen, Tourists and the Bush. More than Two Million Tins used in the English Army.' Weighing just 2.5oz (70.9g) and priced at 'tuppence' (2d), it was a good iron ration for a soldier. As General Charles Gordon, Governor-General of Sudan and Khartoum fell under siege by the Sudanese forces of the Mahdi in 1884, plans to extricate him were laid, and this included extending the railway southwards from Wadi Halfa (roughly 300km south of Aswan) to move troops and supplies. Ultimately 9,000 troops were dispatched to the region. The railway arrived just east of Kulubnarti in the summer of 1885. Carried with tons of equipment across the world from England this tin is a modest legacy from a giant enterprise and an eloquent reminder of the sacrifices made by soldiers for their country.

Julie Anderson

Assistant Keeper, Ancient Egypt and Sudan, British Museum (ITP Departmental Representative)

Collections in focus

Statue of Amenhotep II with the goddess Meretseger

One of my favourite pieces from the magnificent collection at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo is a statue of Amenhotep II with the goddess Meretseger.

Amenhotep II was the seventh pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty and the son of Thutmose III. His throne name was Aa-Kheperu-Re and in this statue he is portrayed stamping on the Nine Bows which represent the traditional enemies of Egypt. He wears the white crown with the uraeus serpent on his head and a straight skirt decorated with a band with two uraeus serpents. The cartouche with the name Amenhotep II is inscribed on the buckle of his skirt. Behind him, the Theban goddess Meretseger, in the form of a cobra, coils around him and protects him. The goddess wears a headdress with the horns and sun disk. At the rear, her body forms coils that are in turn wrapped by papyrus stems.

The goddess Meretseger, whose name literally means 'who loves silence', was known by this name in the Valley of the Kings and Queens on the west bank at Thebes during the New Kingdom. She was sometimes also known as 'The Peak of the West' or 'The Lady of the Peak'.

Meretseger was worshiped throughout the whole Theban necropolis but especially by the craftsmen of Deir el-Medina, the workers' village that was situated in a barren pocket in the western hills to the southeast of the Valley of the Kings. The craftsmen of the Theban necropolis worshipped her in particular because they worked in a rocky landscape full of snakes. Meretseger was not harmful but she protected them so the craftsmen built chapels and monuments to worship her.

Marwa Abdel Razek Mahmoud Badr El Din

Associate Registrar for Movements, The Registration, Collections Management and Documentation Department, The Egyptian Museum, Cairo (ITP 2012)



Statue of Amenhotep II with the goddess Meretseger.

Red lacquered and inlaid wardrobes.

Collections in focus

Red lacquered and inlaid wardrobes



This pair of red lacquered and inlaid wardrobes was made in the Ming dynasty during the reign of the Wanli emperor (1572–1620) and belongs to the National Museum of China. Eight inlaid characters give the date as corresponding to the year 1584.

These wardrobes were always made in pairs and usually there were two cabinets on top of them. Inside each wardrobe there are three shelves, and under the second shelf two drawers. The bottom of the wardrobe has a cabinet cavity.

Because of the massive body and removable style, officials used the wardrobe to keep court dresses clean and tidy. Small things like hats and accessories were kept in the top cabinet.

The main material of the wardrobes is wood and all the pieces are connected by mortise and tenon joints. On the outside, the wardrobes are covered with red lacquer inlaid with mineral, amber, jade, mother-of-pearl and ivory. These colourful materials make the wardrobes beautiful and attractive. On this set, the craftsmen depicted a prosperous scene set in a garden.

Lacquered and inlaid furniture has always been an expensive, luxury product. Obviously, this pair of wardrobes was in the possession of an official or rich merchant in the Ming dynasty and these types of object remain a rarity.

Zhan Wang

Collections Department, National Museum of China, Beijing (ITP 2009)

Collections in focus

White-glazed statue of sitting Avalokitesvara



White-glazed statue of sitting Avalokitesvara.

Kali and two Shiva, painting in oil.

My favourite object in the Capital Museum, Beijing is the white-glazed statue of sitting Avalokitesvara which was produced at the Jingdezhen Kiln during the Yuan dynasty (1271–1368), a period when China was ruled by Mongolian conquerors. The Mongolian rulers advocated Buddhism, so many fantastic Buddha statues appeared at that time. This white-glazed statue of sitting Avalokitesvara was one of them. The statue has very beautiful gesture. Avalokitesvara is sitting by a pond and watching the inverted reflection of the moon in water. She wears a crown decorated with a little Buddha, and wears *kasaya* (monastic robe) as well as long skirt. Complicated ornaments, such as precious jewellery and arm bracelets, make her appear both elegant and honorable. She has a merciful look, with eyes slightly closed and a smile resting on her lips. The ancient craftsmen used different skills like moulding, stamping, carving, etc. to make the statue and fully depict the peaceful religious temperament and virtue of Avalokitesvara. The statue shows the high level of porcelain sculpture at the Jingdezhen Kiln during the Yuan dynasty. It also shows the outstanding art of sculpture in ancient China.

Bo Haikun

Director of Education Department, Capital Museum, Beijing (ITP 2008)

Collections in focus

An early Bengal oil painting of 'Kali with two Shiva'



My favourite object from the collection of Victoria Memorial, Kolkata, India, is an early Bengal School oil painting by an unknown artist entitled 'Kali with two Shiva', displayed in the Indian School of Art gallery.

The painting is my favourite for several reasons. It is unique in that it shows the 'Two Shiva' – one is alive and another is dead. Usually only one Shiva is depicted in painting and on icons because the living one is genuinely Shiva but the dead one is a demon in the form of Shiva, whom the goddess Kali is destroying. This is the only painting in the world in which two Shiva can be seen.

It is an early Bengal school Indian oil painting. Oil technique, learned from the British artists in India to portray mythological subjects, was first implemented in Bengal in the early 18th century by local artists and the school plays a significant role in the history of Indian art. The detailing of early Bengal jewellery that can be seen in this painting and this adds another dimension to its importance and cultural value.

Finally, the painting depicts the goddess Kali with two Shiva. In Bengal, Kali is venerated in the festival Kali Puja during the months of October/November. Kali, also known as Kālikā, is the Hindu goddess associated with empowerment, Shakti. She is represented as the consort of Lord Shiva, on whose body she is often seen standing. Shiva lays in the path of Kali, whose foot on Shiva subdues her anger. Kali Puja is one of the biggest festivals of Bengal and hence the subject of this painting is my favourite as a Bengali myself.

Mrs Joyee Roy (Ghosh)

Senior Technical Assistant (Assistant Curator), Documentation Unit, Victoria Memorial Hall, Kolkata (ITP 2011)

Global perspectives

'What do visitors expect from museums today?'



We're all museum visitors as well as museum staff and what we can learn from ourselves is that we may well want different things on different days depending on how we are feeling, what is going on in our lives or who we're visiting with. For example, I might well choose a museum visit differently depending on whether I'm visiting on my own, with my 13-year-old son or my 80-year-old father. In terms of what museum visitors want today I think there are two key factors to bear in mind. One is changes in demographics and society. In the UK, for example, we have older people, a more ethnically diverse population and, increasingly, the first generation to be poorer than their parents. The second is technological change. A recent survey of key trends by the American Alliance of Museums identified two key areas of technology particularly significant for museums. These are 3D printing and the 'internet of things' (put simply the idea that 'things' across our lives will talk to each other, so that you could use your smartphone to switch on your heating or your air conditioning an hour before you got home). A third trend identified by AAM is about people's need to disconnect from technology in a world where everyone is connected to global communications networks for an increasingly high percentage of their time, and the idea that museums may be places in which people can disconnect. While in no way wanting to exclude technology from museums (it certainly has a place) this idea of 'disconnecting to reconnect' is something I think will interest many visitors – the power of objects and interpretation to engage people without the need for everything to have a screen attached!

Iain Watson

Director of the Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums (TWAM), Newcastle



Most of the people who go to museums do so for a day out with their family or their group or even as an individual seeking a space where they can explore the objects, communicate, find useful information, and have an enjoyable time as well.

The way that objects convey their meaning and become significant to the visitors is part of that communication. We know that each object has different meanings, according to the context in which it is located, therefore visitors need the help of certain interpretation to enable them to take meaning from the objects on display and to interact with them.

So, what the visitors want from museums today are interactive galleries with up-to-date technology, not only to present the most important and beautiful archaeological pieces, but also to explain the content. Every object should be accompanied by a complete explanation in various forms, including text, videos, models, replicas, dioramas, audio guides, etc.

In addition to the above, visitors require museums to promote educational activities and outreach learning programmes. In order to lead visitors to deeper engagement with the displayed objects and enhance their communication with the museum, these programmes must take into account the fact that visitors are many varied types of individuals with differences in ages, levels of education, taste and interests.

Nevine Nizar

Egyptologist, Grand Egyptian Museum, Giza



In this age of technology, the revolution in the interconnection of the world has empowered the human race with the use of its collective fingertips to control information hubs without moving from their armchairs. Museums all over the world are becoming digitised and aim to provide maximum sources of information to internet and social media users.

Pakistan is a country which is steeped in history but has yet to cope with the basic infrastructure required for the establishment of information sources. A careful understanding of art, culture and heritage is still in progress and a very lax attitude is shown in provision of infrastructure. Many of today's visitors to a gallery or a museum are confused and unable to understand the narrative of history and heritage. They find it difficult to mark a difference between culture and tradition or to deal with the thin line between performing arts and fine arts.

As a private gallery we select our exhibitions carefully. We are trying to keep education as a priority and to cater for our audience which includes all age groups but especially youngsters. We aim to make their visit a learning experience every time.

Asad Hayee

Curator, Rohtas 2 Gallery, Lahore



When we read a story, presumably we search for a beginning, a middle and an end. Museums which tell stories probably generate such expectations in our mind. Previously I worked at a provincial museum at Santiniketan, West Bengal, which earned international attention over the years – a museum on the life and times of the Nobel Prize winning Indian poet-educator Rabindranath Tagore. It is a museum which seeks to tell the story of Tagore following the chronology of his life. Visitors followed text panels and accompanying exhibits in an inflexible order. I used to interact with visitors on a regular basis, gathering knowledge on what they wanted from our museum, and although I did not have many opportunities to redesign the entire museum it became very clear what our visitors wanted:

- Visitors want their questions to be answered. Important facts are often ignored presuming that visitors have a basic knowledge.
- They want authentic stories and friendly narratives that they can relate to.
- More visuals and exhibits, less text with precise description and correct information.
- A healthy and friendly environment to feel good, enlightened and entertained.
- Sources of natural light in the galleries.
- Appropriate amenities including clean toilets, safe drinking water, maps and brochures, museum shop, chairs and benches with special care for children, elderly people and differently-abled visitors.
- Museum guides and interactive devices.
- To be able to touch and feel objects.
- To take photographs.
- To have a look at the collections not on display.
- To participate in activities and events.
- To be informed on new acquisitions, exhibitions and events

In general, it appeared to me that visitors are always on the lookout for some reasons to feel privileged and special when visiting a museum and it is the duty of a museum to grow in such a manner. Through my countless interactions with numerous visitors, my general impression is that visitors are attracted towards death, suffering, humiliation, pain, separation, torture, loss, damage, risk, adventure, loneliness more than anything in a museum, no matter whether it is a museum of civilisation or a museum of natural history or kites. Visitors want to establish a vital connection between themselves, the objects displayed and the stories told. It is important to address and handle that desire in a creative and sensitive manner in a good museum.

Nilanjan Banerjee

Member of the Heritage Commission of Government of West Bengal, India

Bulletin board International

Egypt

The Grand Egyptian Museum Conservation center (GEM-CC) has 17 specialised laboratories for both conservation and scientific analysis. One of its laboratories is currently working on a specific project – restoration of the most ancient boats found in Egypt, Abu Rawash boats.

Abu Rawash funerary boats were discovered in the 1st Dynasty Necropolis at the northeast of Giza Plateau 'Abu Rawash' by the French archaeological mission of the Institut français d'archéologie orientale (IFAO, Cairo) in collaboration with Macquarie University (Sydney). They date back to the reign of king Den (c. 2950 BC) and are considered an extremely important event in the archeological field so far, as no earlier examples of boats have been found in such a state of preservation. The remains of four boats were transported to the GEM-CC for restoration work. The team of the special project lab are currently documenting, reconstructing and preparing the visualisation reassembly of the boats. They are also carrying out archaeometric studies to assess their state of preservation, and radiocarbon dating.

Nevine Nizar (ITP 2012)

Egyptologist, The Grand Egyptian Museum

Turkey

A photo exhibition of Anatolian carpets from Transylvania and a mini-symposium took place on 14 March 2013 in Ankara. This event was entitled *Romanian-Turkish Cultural Confluences: Romania's Heritage of Old Anatolian Carpets* and was organised by the Romanian Embassy, the Romanian Cultural Institute and the Turkish Yunus Emre Institute to celebrate 135 years of diplomatic relations between Turkey and Romania. **Levent Boz** (ITP 2011), consultant of the photo exhibition, presented *Transylvanian Carpets in Turkish Museums* during the symposium.

Two Turkish museums – Istanbul Topkapi Palace Museum and Gaziantep Zeugma Mosaic Museum – were featured in *The Times*' list of '50 Best Museums of the World'. Gaziantep Zeugma Mosaic Museum also nominated for European Museum of the Year Award.

Levent Boz (ITP 2011)

Culture and Tourism Expert,
The Ministry of Culture and Tourism

Working in the Department of Museums, we are always in contact with all of the museums in Turkey and know their main problems. Relating to this, at the end of this month we are going to organise an education programme for the museum curators. This course will aim to demonstrate and teach the differences between artificial and actual artefacts, especially for coins. In addition, the programme will contain what measures can be taken against the smuggling of historical artefacts and legislation about it. It also includes workshops, storage analysis and registration systems for new artefacts. I hope this programme will give a new viewpoint to the participants and also help to deal with problems in our museums.

Meltem Yaşdağ (ITP 2011)

Culture and Tourism Expert,
The Ministry of Culture and Tourism

India

After a long gap of 15 years the upper portion of the magnificent Queen's Hall at Victoria Memorial Hall opened for visitors on 11 September 2012. The important events of the life of Queen Victoria have been depicted through a series of twelve canvas paintings by Frank Salisbury.

Joyee Roy (ITP 2011)

Senior Technical Assistant (Assistant Curator)
Documentation Unit, Victoria Memorial Hall

Iran

The National Museum of Iran has undertaken a storage refurbishment for its seals collection, under the supervision of **Zohreh Baseri** (ITP 2007), Keeper, Coins and Seals, National Museum of Iran, Tehran. The collection of seals numbers more than 5,000 covering the 4th millennium to Achaemenid, Seleucid, Parthian, Sasanian and Islamic periods. The department of Coins and Seals moved and rearranged all of the seals in special cases and cabinets, in order to protect and conserve them.



The re-opening of Queen's Hall, Victoria Memorial Hall.

Queen's Hall, Victoria Memorial Hall.

Levent Boz at the opening of a photographic exhibition of Anatolian carpets.

Bulletin board UK



Anthropomorphic pectoral, Colombia, Tairona, AD 900–1600. © Museo del Oro – Banco de la República, Colombia.

Ming courts and contracts 1400–1450.

We are working on a new exhibition about the Ming dynasty with museum, library and university colleagues around the world, including many former ITP members. It will be on display at the British Museum from 18 September 2014 to 5 January 2015.

This exhibition will demonstrate how 50 years of the Ming dynasty transformed China into the country we know today. In 1400 to 1450 China was a global superpower run by one family. These aristocrats established Beijing as the capital, fixed Mandarin as the official Chinese language (now spoken by one quarter of the world), and the first Chinese diaspora communities were established.

Ming China was thoroughly connected with the outside world and absorbed many fascinating influences which are explored. The staggering wealth of the courts are manifested in the objects with some of the most beautiful porcelain, gold, jewellery, furniture, paintings, sculptures and textiles ever made. Many of these objects were undiscovered before 2002 and have never been shown within the context of China's multiple courts and their interactions with places from Mogadishu to Japan.

Jessica Harrison-Hall

Curator of Chinese Ceramics, British Museum

June 2013 saw the festival of the North East, which Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums (TWAM) helped steer. Hundreds of events explored the regions' creativity and innovation from the 7th century to the present day. TWAM developed 'A History of the North East in 100 objects' as part of the festival.

May saw the loan of the Backworth Hoard from the British Museum to Segedunum Roman Fort, Baths and Museum, for its summer exhibition, the first time the hoard has returned to the area since its discovery in the 19th century. This exhibition will be closing during the visit of the 2012 ITP participants this September.

Bill Griffiths

Head of Programmes, Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums



As part of the ongoing conservation of objects from the site of Kulubnarti, Sudan, a project initiated in 2005 when the collection arrived in the British Museum, a partnership agreement has been made with the Centre for Textile Conservation and Technical Art History, University of Glasgow. Some of Glasgow's conservation students will conserve archaeological textiles from Kulubnarti under the supervision and instruction of conservators from the Department of Conservation and Scientific Research and curators in the Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan in the British Museum, and conservation tutors from the University of Glasgow. The textiles date to the 6th century AD and are themselves very small and largely of wool and cotton.

Julie Anderson

Curator, Ancient Egypt and Sudan, British Museum

The British Museum has opened its latest major exhibition – *Beyond El Dorado: power and gold in ancient Colombia*. The exhibition will run from 17 October 2013 to 23 March 2014, and features over 200 gold, ceramic and stone objects from the Gold Museum in Bogotá, Colombia, alongside pieces from the British Museum's own collection.

Over the next five years, 25,000 digital photographs from the Trust for African Rock Art (TARA) photographic archive will be catalogued and made accessible through the British Museum's online collection catalogue, to ensure that this important collection is preserved and made widely available. This project is generously supported by the Arcadia Fund. The Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas is currently initiating a major archaeological research project looking at the prehistory of the Caribbean.

The Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas at the British Museum is busy planning and packing for the move of objects from the storage facility in East London to the new World Conservation and Exhibitions Centre (WCEC) on the main Bloomsbury site. The large objects will be the first to move from January 2014, followed by the African collection in July.

The Oceanic section has recently hosted a number of Indigenous Australian artists, who have spent time looking at the collection. This collaboration may result in new art works that can be added to the collection and potentially be displayed. The artists include Judy Watson, Jonathan Jones and Julie Gough.

Katherine Coleman, Programme Support Officer,
Africa, Oceania and the Americas, British Museum

Joyee Roy Ghosh (ITP 2011) has received the Nehru Trust Fellowship in collaboration with Charles Wallace Trust, India, to undertake research on *British Artists who visited India or never visited India during the 17th and 18th century: A comparative study of their styles, themes, techniques etc.* She travelled to London in July and August 2013 to visit galleries of British art in museums across the UK.

Shambwaditya Ghosh (ITP 2012) joined 'Sahapedia' in November 2012. 'Sahapedia' is an online open encyclopaedia on Indian history, culture and art. It is a non-profit organisation funded and technically supported by CMC Limited, a TATA enterprise. Shambo reports that this new engagement is quite challenging and exciting in terms of its execution and job description.

Salah S Adam (ITP 2012) of the Department of Archaeology in Benghazi, Libya, has been put in charge of a team of archaeologists and engineers tasked with developing new and appropriate storage facilities for archaeological artefacts from across Libya. Having participated in several high-level training courses in archive digitisation and object registration and documentation, as well as learning about the British Museum storage management during the ITP, we wish him all the best in securing Libya's rich archaeological heritage for future generations.

Aya Kirresh (ITP 2011) has just taken up a place on the Art and Space MA Programme at Kingston University (UK). Aya is also currently an architect and PR manager at Bina Engineering and wants to establish her own art and architecture business, dealing in handmade fashion, in East Jerusalem.

Zohreh Baseri (ITP 2007) received an award as a Superior Keeper in Iran on International Museum Day, 28 May 2013. She was also recognised as top researcher in the National Museum of Iran in 2013, at the General Directorate of Museums. In addition, Zohreh has also been accepted as a PhD student in Ancient Culture and Languages at the Islamic Azad University, Science and Research Branch.

Congratulations to:

Fiona Slattery Clark, Curator (Applied Art) at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, gave birth to twin boys, **James** and **Finlay**, in January 2013.

Xavier Múgambi was born to **Njeri Gachihi** (ITP 2010), on 31 May 2013.

Melanie Youngs, Research Officer – Historic Photography at Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales is pregnant and her baby is due in October 2013.

And **Meltem Yaşdağ** (ITP 2011) on the double occasion of the completion of her PhD in the History of Art: 'Symbolism in the Paintings of the Pre-Raphaelite Period' at Middle Eastern Technical University, Ankara, as well as the imminent arrival of a baby daughter!

We wish them and their families all the best.

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