

ASHMOLEAN  
MUSEUM  
OXFORD



ANNUAL REVIEW

2022/23



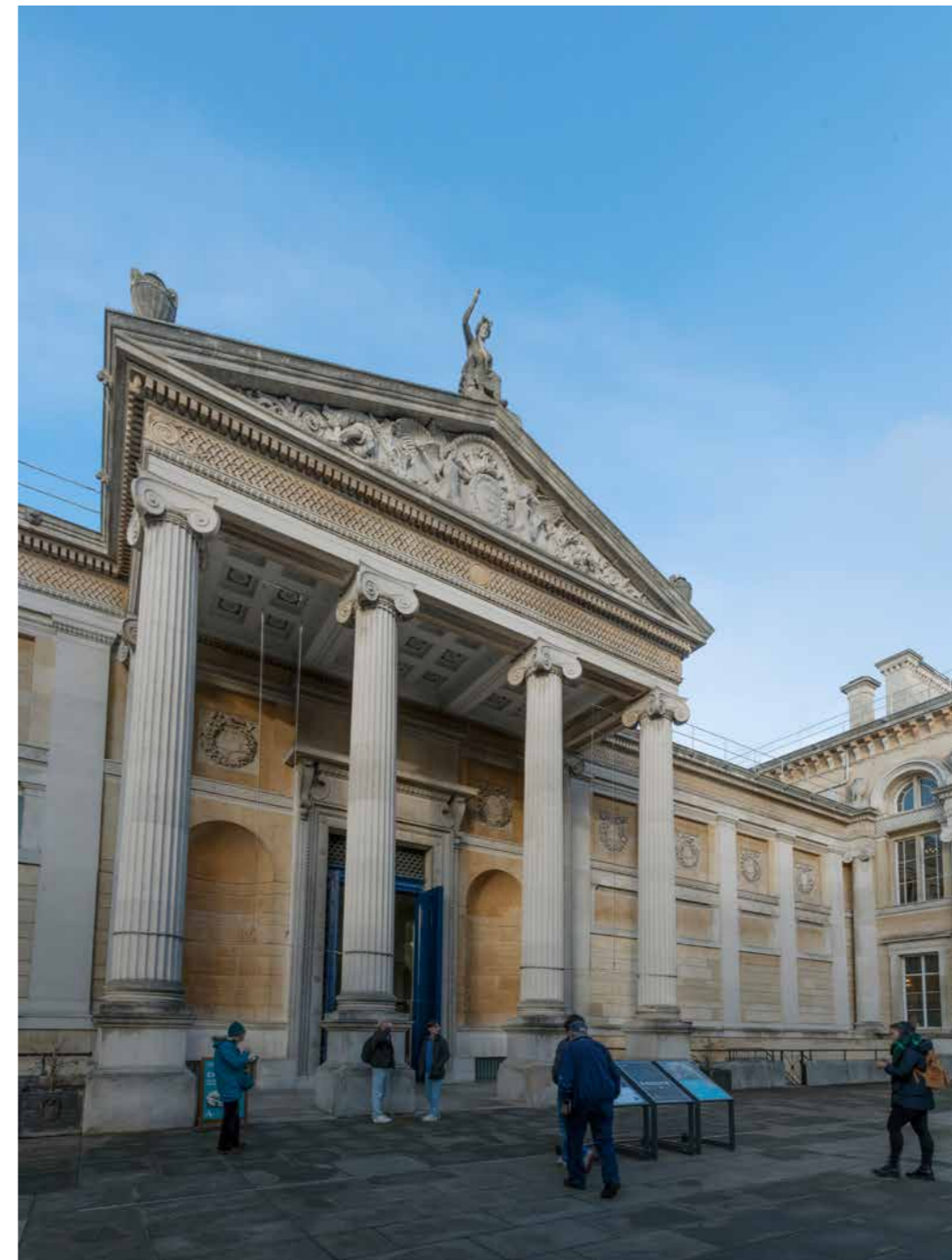
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# FOREWORD



**Lord Lupton**  
Chairman,  
Board of Visitors

**Xa Sturgis**  
Director,  
Ashmolean Museum

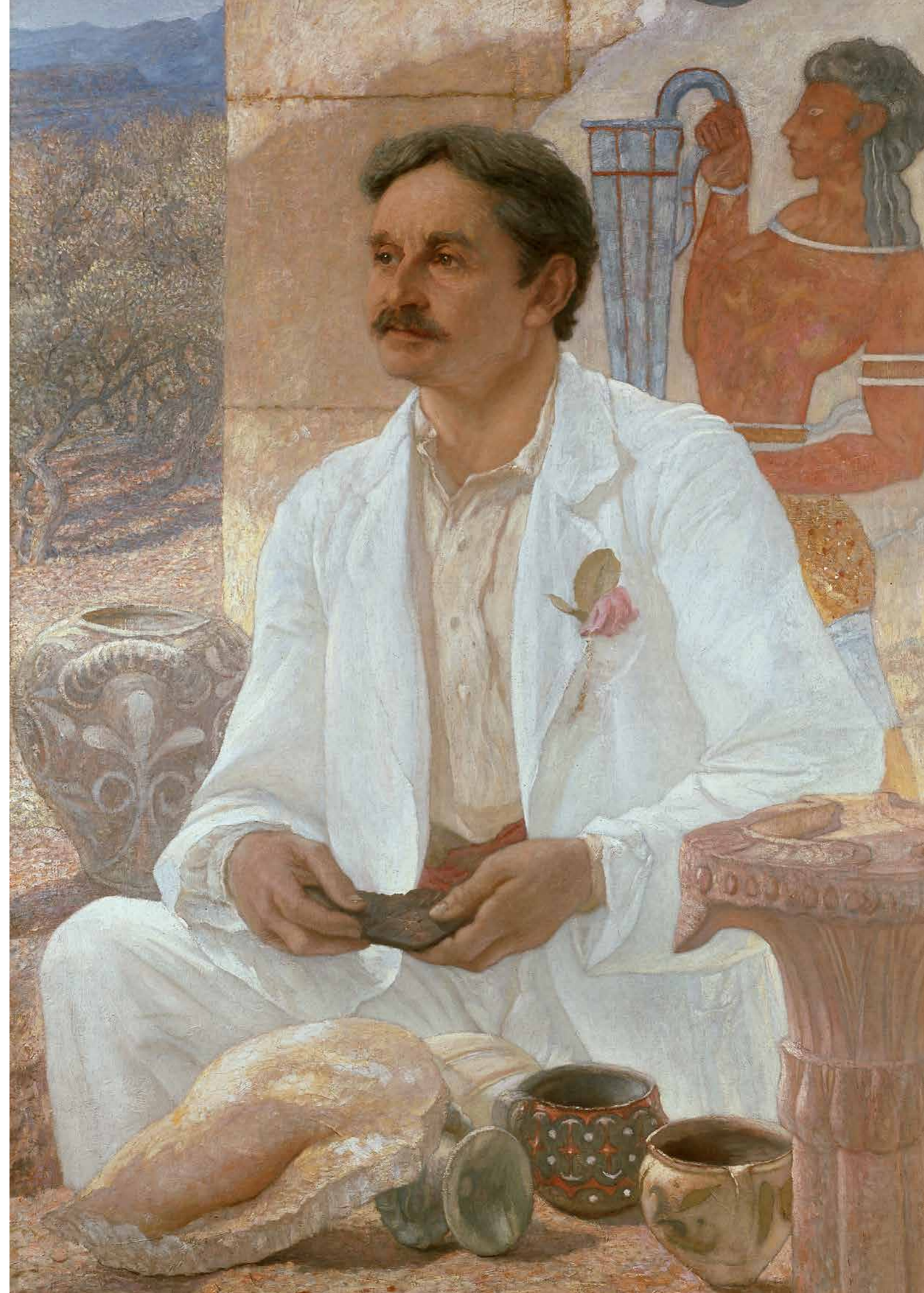
Of all the Directors and Keepers of the Ashmolean over its 340-year history perhaps the most consequential, in terms of shaping today's Museum, was the indefatigable Sir Arthur Evans (1851-1941), who was Keeper from 1884 to 1908 and remained involved with the Museum until his death in 1941. Over this last year we have been celebrating, commemorating and questioning his legacy in various ways, while at the same time we have continued to build on it. The Museum that Evans helped shape at the end of the nineteenth century is in robust health and continues to more than live up to the future he hoped for it. The year covered by this report (August 2022-July 2023) saw the steady rebuilding of post-pandemic audiences, so that by its end we witnessed one of our busiest summers on record. As this report also makes clear its collections have been enhanced, with knowledge being advanced through research projects and the collections used to inspire and inform in a wide variety of ways.

Of course, Evans is most famous today as the archaeologist who excavated (and controversially restored) the Palace of Knossos on Crete, proclaimed by him the birthplace of the Minoan civilisation and the origin of the Labyrinth myth. This year's major exhibition, *Labyrinth: Knossos, Myth & Reality* examined these claims and Evans's part in the excavation, as well as the understanding and myth-making around this extraordinary site. Curated by Andrew Shapland the show drew attention to other figures – including the Greek archaeologist Minos Kalikarinos who was actually the first archaeologist to discover the site – as well as to more recent discoveries and research that have built on and challenged Evans's conclusions. This was an exhibition that only the Ashmolean could have mounted, thanks to our holdings of Evans's archive of the excavation and his collections, but it was also an

international collaboration with our Greek partners and University colleagues on which we aim to continue to build in the coming years.

Before Evans set off for Crete, however, he had already transformed the Ashmolean. As Keeper he enlarged the building on Beaumont street (then the University Galleries) to accommodate the University's growing archaeological collections as they moved from their previous home on Broad Street in 1894 to create the Museum of Art and Archaeology that we know today. The building has changed substantially since – with piecemeal additions throughout the twentieth century and, most significantly, the Rick Mather building, that replaced Evans's 'sheds' and which, slightly startlingly, is now approaching its fifteenth birthday. These incremental additions have created issues of circulation and access; of environmental conditions and maintenance that anyone familiar with the Museum will recognise. At the same time our ever-growing visitor numbers place increasing strain on lifts, loos, kitchens, learning spaces and lecture theatres. In response to these challenges, and with a view to the Museum's long-term future, we have been working with the acclaimed architects Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios to develop a masterplan for the Museum. What is emerging is an ambitious and transformative plan for the future, encompassing the Museum's whole site and that of its neighbour the Taylorian Library which will transform access, create new galleries and reading rooms, to ensure a Museum and neighbouring Library that continue to meet the needs of its many audiences and users. We look forward to sharing these plans as they develop.

This year we also celebrated the centenary of Evans's great legacies for the Museum. In 1923, with the help of a timely legacy, he finally achieved his ambition of uniting all of the coin collections from across the University into a single institution. The Heberden Coin Room, one of the Ashmolean's four curatorial departments, now houses one of the world's great coin collections brought together from the items that were once shared between the Bodleian, the Ashmolean and numerous colleges across the University. A centenary dinner, presided over by the Vice-Chancellor celebrated the achievements of the department. In many ways the Coin Room is the perfect metaphor of the collegiate University – self-evidently a whole greater than its constituent parts, which, through coming together, is also a powerful engine of research and much-used resource for teaching. Twin technological developments in material analysis on the one hand and digitisation on the other are transforming the way that coins can shed light on the past and the Heberden Coin Room is among those at the forefront of these developments boding well for the next one hundred years. We think Arthur would be pleased.



# ASHMOLEAN IN NUMBERS

**361** days open

**847,288** visitors

**82,507** visitors to exhibitions

**1,159,000** unique visitors to our website

**320,000+** followers across social media

**3,923** participants in our public programme and groups tours

**2994** participants in subsidised programmes

**6,917** visitors took part in our public programmes, including family events, courses and talks

**10,143** schools self-guided visits

**9,899** schools facilitated sessions

**651** children took part in online school sessions

**20,693** schools sessions were delivered

**298** works loaned to 35 venues in UK and abroad

**390** volunteers gave their time to the Museum

**995** research visits to our study rooms

**3,040** visitors to the Western Art Print Room

**17,444** objects seen by visitors to the Western Art Print Room

**15** publications contributed to by Ashmolean curators

**3,218** media clips with a publicity value of £3.7 million



# EXHIBITIONS



## *Pre-Raphaelite Drawings and Watercolours* (15 July – 27 November 2022)

From a sketch on the back of an envelope to grand, elaborate chalk drawings, this exhibition – returning after its sold-out, limited run in the spring of 2021 – offered the chance to view our internationally renowned collection of Pre-Raphaelite works on paper.

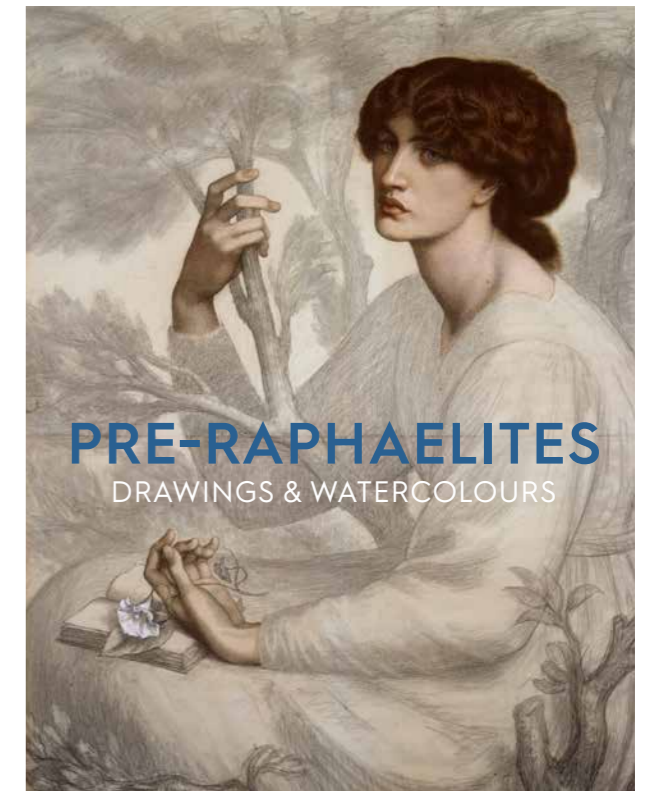
The show ran for nineteen weeks and was seen by 32,647 visitors. The thirty-nine-minute film produced for the 2021 exhibition was updated to reflect the updated displays. In the post-visit email survey, several visitors left comments regarding the film in one of the questions that invited general feedback via a free-text field:

‘Visit very much enhanced by watching film beforehand, which highlighted aspects I might not have noticed’

‘Watching the short film from the Ashmolean e-newsletter beforehand really brought the artists to life when seeing the exhibition in the flesh’

★★★★

‘Stunning’  
*The Observer*

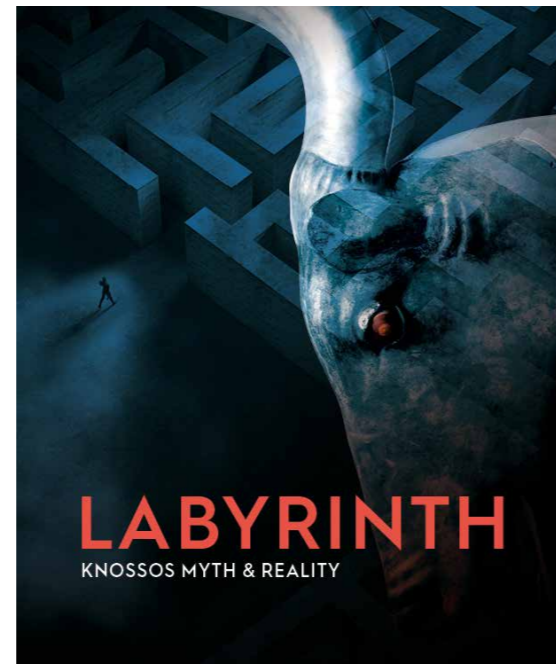


*Labyrinth: Knossos, Myth & Reality*  
(10 February – 30 July 2023)

According to legend, an elaborate labyrinth was built at Knossos on the island of Crete to hold a ferocious Minotaur. The palace of Knossos, discovered and excavated over 100 years ago, was the centre of a Bronze Age civilisation of people we now call the Minoans, named after the legendary King Minos. This was the first UK exhibition to focus on Knossos, and included over 100 objects which have never left Crete and Greece before.

Open for 24 weeks, the exhibition was seen by 65,362 visitors. 1,244 of these visitors completed an online survey with 83% rating the exhibition good or excellent. The Labyrinth social media campaign had 1,783,860 impressions with a reach of 1,720,870 and 99,580 engagements.

A *RESTORATION* (2016), an eighteen-minute, two-screen digital video and sound installation by Turner Prize winning artist Elizabeth Price, was shown in the third gallery.



★★★★  
"Thrilling"  
*The Times*

"The amazing Ashmolean has done it again"  
Stephen Fry



**Young & Wild?**  
(30 July – 20 November 2022)

The 1980s saw an international revival of painting in expressive, gestural styles. These works of art were often colourful and figurative, as well as experimental and energetic. In contrast with the then dominant trend of conceptual and minimal art, these artists worked in diverse media and found inspiration in urban sub-cultures like the punk and gay scenes.

This new artistic movement was soon called 'Neo-Expressionism'. It was particularly prominent in Germany, where the Expressionism art movement had originated in the early twentieth century. The Ashmolean has several collections of such modern and contemporary German art. This vibrant, free exhibition drew on highlights from these and recent acquisitions made over the last three years, which were exhibited here for the first time.



**Dia Al-Azzawi**  
(15 December 2022 – 11 June 2023)

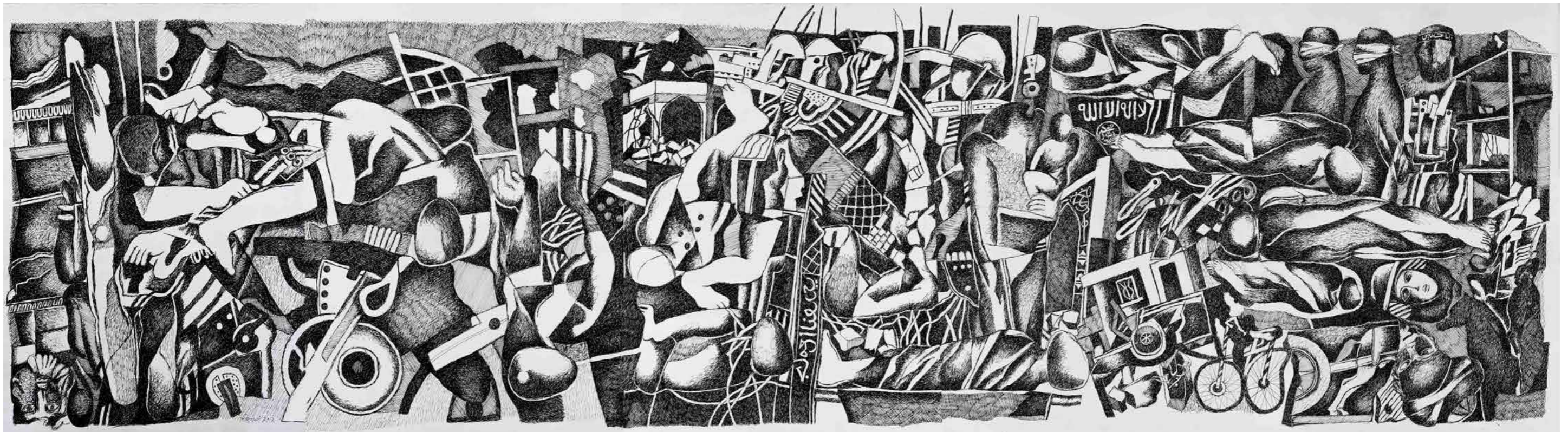
The Ashmolean Museum hosted the first UK solo exhibition of acclaimed contemporary Iraqi artist Dia al-Azzawi (b. 1939) entitled *Dia al-Azzawi: Painting Poetry*. Dedicated to the genre of *dafatir* – artist books – the exhibition highlighted this artist's creative relationship with poets and poetry and the documentary role of this specific art form for the recent history of Iraq.

A widely recognised master and pioneer of Arab modernism, Dia al-Azzawi is a versatile artist. Best known for large, colourful canvases, his artistic output in fact extends across many other media – from printmaking and sculpture to textile art. The exhibition also premiered *Mosul: Panorama of Destruction*, a ten-metre tapestry commenting on the impact of war on Iraq's second largest city woven specifically for the Ashmolean installation. Comparable to well-known historic epic narratives such as Picasso's *Guernica*, *Mosul: Panorama of Destruction* stands as a powerful testament to the impact of three decades of war in Iraq, offering a moving meditation on the human, material and cultural cost of conflict and injustice.



Dia al-Azzawi, *[A Personal Dialogue in] Samarqand: Mahmoud Darwish*, 2001, ink and gouache on paper, acrylic on fabric-covered paperboard, 20 x 20.3 cm, Artist's Collection, AZ.DAF.01.1

Dia al-Azzawi, *Mosul: Panorama of Destruction*, 2017/2022, cotton, acrylic, wool and 'Trevira CS' thread, 280 x 1000 cm, Produced by Factum Art 2022



**Art in China**  
(29 September 2022 – 24 September 2023)

Featuring works of art from the Museum's collection that were produced between 1949 and 1999 in mainland China. Chairman Mao declared the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 and until his death in 1976, art was subject to strict political controls.

Oil painting replaced the centuries-old tradition of ink landscape painting, and the Socialist Realist style adopted from the Soviet Union remained influential until the late 1970s. Pictorial woodblock printing developed from a folk craft to an increasingly creative medium used for both propaganda purposes and more subtle landscapes.

During the Cultural Revolution (1966–76) political images and messages were also produced in the historic media of woven or embroidered silks and papercuts. From 1978, the Reform Era ushered in new possibilities as China re-engaged with the world, and artists encountered ideas and cultural practices from elsewhere.

Right: Silver tetradrachm of Antimachus I (HCR45182)

Below: Zhao Xiaomo (b.1949), *Golden Sea*, 1972. Multi-block woodcut, printed with oil-based ink, 37.5 x 109.3 cm (EA2007.79)

**Coins at the Crossroads of Asia**  
(12 November 2022 – 29 October 2023)

From around 250 BCE to 10 CE, a series of rulers controlled an area of Central and South Asia in the ancient regions of Bactria and Gandhara. This display gives tantalising glimpses into the history of those ancient rulers and our understanding of the history of the Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek kingdoms, as they are now known.

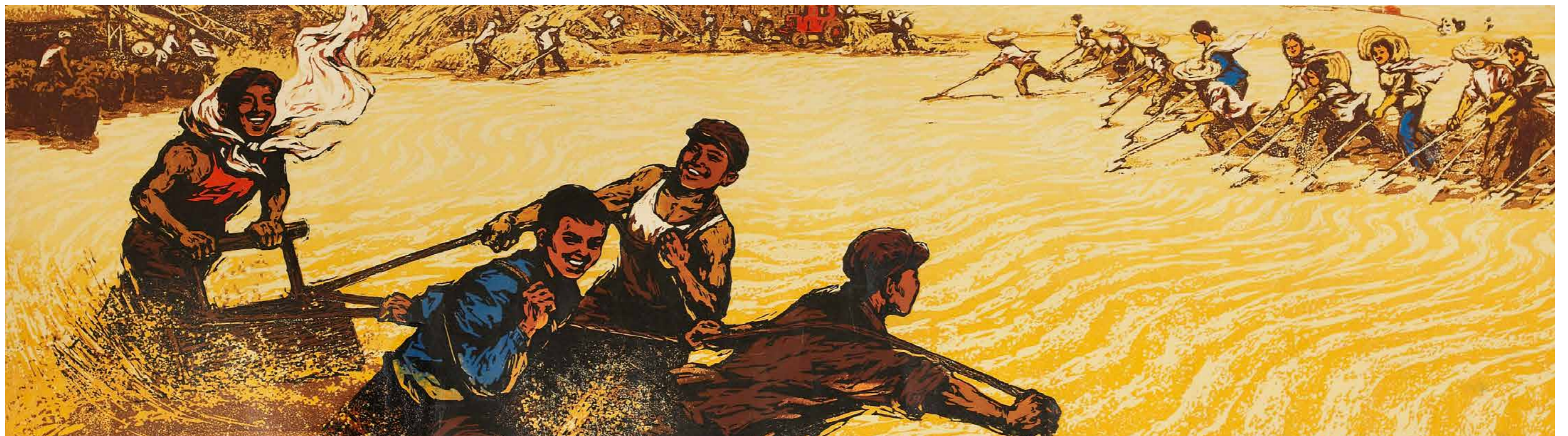
No written sources and few archaeological sites from this period survive in the region meaning that coins are, in many cases, our only historical source. While eight kings are mentioned in texts, we know of over forty from the coins produced in their names.

Coinage was a relatively new phenomenon at the beginning of the Graeco-Bactrian kingdom. Before the arrival of Alexander the Great in Central Asia in 329 BCE, the Persians had made long, thin 'bent bar' coins with images stamped into either end, while coins from Ancient India looked quite different, being irregularly shaped pieces of silver stamped with many different punches. Alexander brought with him the Greek style of coinage with images on both sides, a pattern followed by the Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek rulers.



**Counterpoint: The Chantrey Wall Project**  
(14 November 2022 – 12 November 2023)

After months of research and community engagement work, Counterpoint – an artwork created in response to the Ashmolean's Chantrey Wall – was installed in November 2022. It faces the display of sixteen busts by the sculptor Frances Chantrey representing wealthy, influential figures from the eighteenth century. Research revealed that many of the sitters benefitted directly or indirectly from the slave trade and included those who voted for its abolition. The sixteen paintings in the display are by British artist Mary Chamberlain, and created on vellum, a material that for centuries has been used to encode British law. They incorporate pigments made from colonial imports such as coffee, saffron and nutmeg. These artworks were conceived through community workshops that explored stories of people who shaped Britain's history but are not represented on the Museum's walls. The pieces are based on images of the participants who shared their responses. The project was made possible by the van Houten Trust, and the Ashmolean thanks the Black Excellence Project, Urban Music Foundation, Meadowbrook College and Transition Lighthouse for their participation.





# COLLECTION NEWS



Prof. Frédérique Duyrat

## New Keepers

The year saw the appointment (if not the arrival) of three new Keepers to lead three of the Museum's four curatorial departments.

Prof. Frédérique Duyrat was appointed Keeper of the Heberden Coin Room, and also takes the new role of Director of Collections. Frédérique is a distinguished numismatist and scholar of ancient history. She arrives from the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris where she was the Director of the Cabinet des Médailles and oversaw the triumphant redisplay of their collections.

In Western Art we welcome Prof. Jennifer Sliwka, a Renaissance and Baroque specialist with a particular interest in religious art, who joins us from King's College London, having previously worked at the National Gallery and the Victoria and Albert Museum.



Prof. Jennifer Sliwka

Last but by no means least Liam McNamara, who has been the curator of Egypt and Sudan at the Museum since 2010, has stepped up into the role of Keeper of Antiquities. Liam's first duty at the Museum was to oversee and shape the complete redisplay of the Egyptian and Sudanese Collections in galleries that continue to be among the most popular in the Museum. Liam's specialism is, fittingly, Predynastic Egypt where our collections are particularly strong.

We are happy to say that the distinguished Keepers that these new colleagues are replacing, Chris Howgego, Catherine Whistler and Paul Roberts, are all maintaining roles in the Museum in the coming years and, as Research Keepers, will be completing a variety of projects for the Museum.

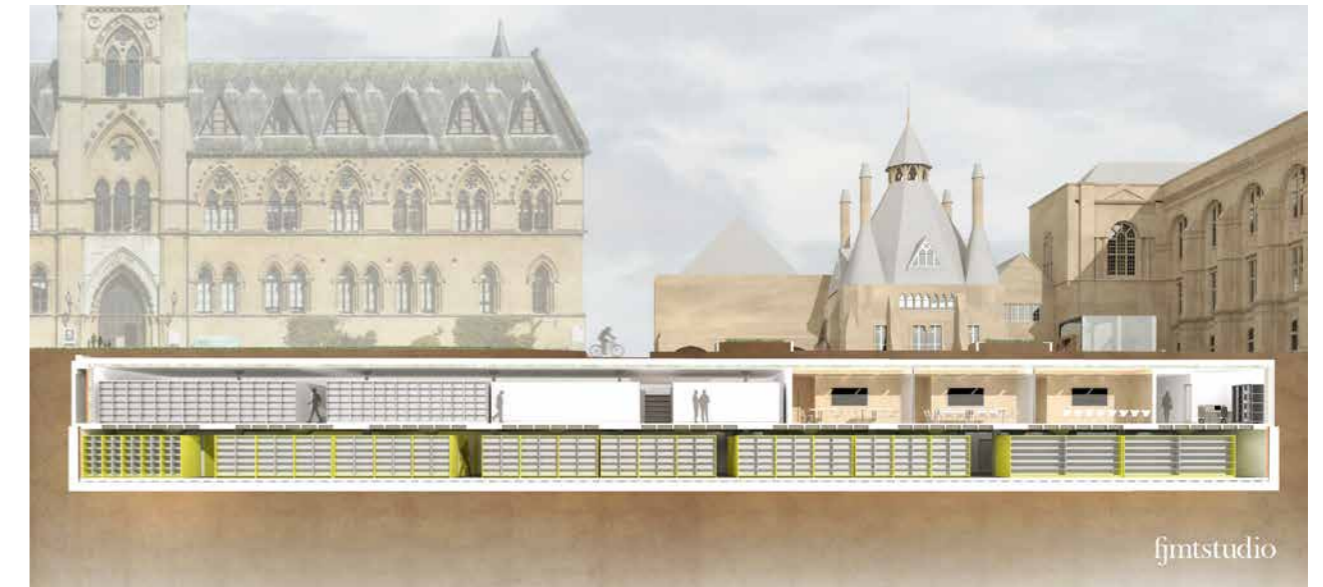


Liam McNamara

## CTRC and CSF Updates

Construction of the new Collections Teaching and Research Centre (CTRC) moved on apace over the last year. This included final details of the new racking systems and digitally mapping collections into each roller, shelf and bay ready to be filled. After a period of testing and proving the new energy efficient environmental systems, the project move team will install collections over nine months from November 2023.

The Collections Storage Facility (CSF) in Swindon is at an earlier stage of development with the building due to be completed in 2025 and the collections move to be completed in 2026. Designs have now reached RIBA stage 3 and include four visitor rooms, a digitisation studio, conservation laboratory, large freezer, holding area, oversized objects store and metals store. The shared storage area, chamber 5, will house museum and library collections from across GLAM.



## The Centenary of the Heberden Coin Room

On 24 October 1922 about one hundred people, including the Vice-Chancellor and eminent numismatists assembled at the Ashmolean to celebrate the public opening of the University's newly constituted Coin Room. This represented the culmination of a forty-year campaign by Sir Arthur Evans to bring together the coin collections of the collegiate University, hitherto held by the Bodleian Library and by many of the colleges, as well as by the Ashmolean. The creation of a new Coin Room was finally enabled by a bequest of £1000 from Charles Heberden, Principal of Brasenose. Bringing everything together in 1922 laid the foundations for the collection to become one of the top ten in the world. The Coin Room now houses a systematic and comprehensive collection of some 350,000 items, including paper money, tokens, jettons, and commemorative and art medals, alongside the coins.

# RESEARCH

## German Drawings Research Project

The Getty Foundation's *The Paper Project: Prints and Drawings Curatorship in the 21st Century* awarded \$100,000 to the Ashmolean for a Digital Project involving the Museum's holdings of drawings by German-speaking artists from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century with a focus on design drawings made for metalwork, stained glass, sculpture and prints. Led by An Van Camp, Christopher Brown Curator of Northern European Art, the funding allowed for a guest curator, Mailena Mallach, to join the project. During twelve months, over 300 drawings were newly researched, photographed, and catalogued on the Museum's database, including numerous discoveries. Digital outputs comprised of virtual knowledge-exchange workshops (with contemporary designers and fine arts students), an interactive website (highlighting fifteen design drawings, including a documentary film) and the compilation of research texts for all drawings, which will be made available on the Museum's new Collections Online. Additional funding was raised from the University's Oxford-Berlin Research Partnership, resulting in print room visits across Europe and two in-person workshops held in Oxford and Berlin, with contributions from an international group of German drawings specialists.

Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528), *Design for a table fountain*, c.1498-1503, pen in black ink with green, yellow, pinkish-brown and brown washes on laid paper, 30.1 x 19.3 cm (WA1938.25)



## Twentieth-Century British Drawings Project

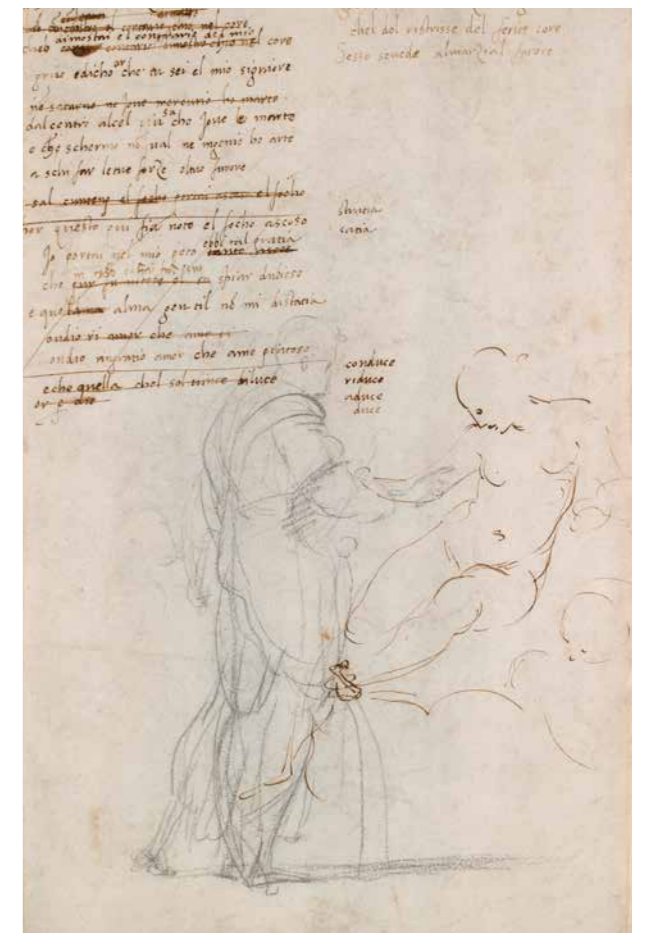
In February 2023 Dr Mathew Norman joined the Ashmolean Museum to begin work on the Twentieth-Century British Drawings Project. Generously funded by the Elizabeth Cayzer Charitable Trust, the goal of this project is to catalogue the Museum's significant collection of British drawings from the years 1900-1945. This group of approximately 2,200 objects points to the radical changes that occurred in the period as British artists responded to influences from the Continent and the social and political disruption caused by two world wars.

While many of the best-known artists from these years are represented in the collection, the project will also highlight the work of those who have been pushed to the margins of art history. While cataloguing the works, Mathew will seek to locate each drawing within the oeuvre of the artist responsible, adding contextual information to our records that will benefit those accessing object records through the collections online module of the Museum's website.

Austin Osman Spare (1886-1965), *Self-portrait Study and Studies of a Woman's Head*, c.1903-63. Graphite and crayon on paper, 42.5 x 33.7 cm (WA1963.62)

## Raphael

The Ashmolean is home to the most important collection in the world of drawings by Raphael (1483-1520), a canonical figure and the most influential draughtsman in the history of Western art. Originally owned by the portrait painter, Sir Thomas Lawrence (1769-1830), who amassed an unrivalled drawings collection, they were acquired by the University in 1846, making the Ashmolean the repository of a treasure that acted as a catalyst for further major gifts and bequests. Our collection includes about 80 drawings by Raphael, illuminating his creative process and the range of his artistic interests in painting, sculpture and architecture; another 120 drawings are by his students and close associates, including copies of lost drawings that help to document the progress of different projects. As a coherent body of work, the Ashmolean's Raphael collection calls out for a comprehensive study: Italian drawings catalogues by Karl Parker (1956) and Hugh Macandrew (1980) are fundamental reference works, but modern Raphael scholarship has brought new discoveries both on the historic or documentary aspects and on the materiality of the drawings themselves. Given this growing body of international research, we aim to produce an innovative catalogue that will be a landmark in Raphael and Renaissance drawings studies in a three-year research project led by Angelamaria Aceto. The research project aligns conservation science, art-historical research, and connoisseurship – the judgement of the trained specialist, based on the close scrutiny of the visual and material qualities of the drawings. The collaboration with conservation scientists in GLAM and international institutions has already opened up new avenues in our understanding of Raphael's creative and design processes.

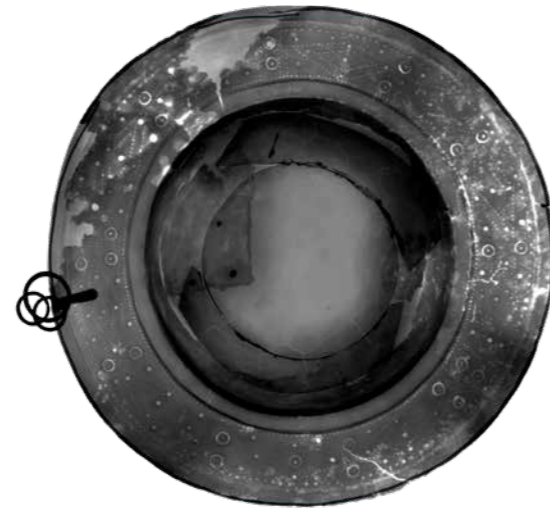


Top: Raphael (1483-1520), *Studies of the Heads of two Apostles and of their Hands*, c.1519-20. Black chalk over pounced underdrawing with some white heightening on laid paper, 49.9 x 36.4 cm (WA1846.209)

Bottom: Raphael (1483-1520), *Recto: Study for the Drapery of a Man in back view (Study for the Disputa)*, c.1508-10. Black chalk and charcoal with some white heightening (possibly white chalk) on laid paper, 38 x 23 cm (WA1846.186)

## Heritage science at the Ashmolean

The Museum runs a number of exciting new pieces of analytical equipment that are opening up new possibilities for collections research known as Heritage Science. Funded by a generous grant in 2021 (AHRC CapCo – Capability for Collections Fund) and shared across GLAM, the Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art Department, this next generation equipment focuses on non-destructive analysis rather than sampling, and, where possible, portability so that equipment can be brought to the collections which are often too fragile or too large to travel. The equipment includes a mapping XRF, combined XRF/XRD, pulse x-ray generators and digital plates, infra-red reflectography camera, reflectance transformation imaging (RTI) dome and 3D digital microscope. Already these have been used in two major research projects the results of which will feature in the exhibition *Colour Revolution* and a smaller display in the *Conserving the Past* gallery. Other projects include the examination of iron age objects from the site of Hallstatt, a panel painting attributed to Rembrandt, as well as many other collaborations and student projects. The Museum has long had a close relationship with scientific investigation of the collections, and these new techniques and pieces of equipment are part of the same tradition of bringing new discoveries to light with even our most familiar objects.



Above: X-ray of a copper alloy vessel from Hallstatt using an innovative new pulse x-ray system

Below: Analysis of a work from John Ruskin's teaching collection using the Hydra (combined XRF/XRD)



John Ruskin (1819–1900), *Study of a Kingfisher, with Dominant Reference to Colour*, 1871. Watercolour and bodycolour over graphite on wove paper, 25.8 x 21.8 cm (WA.RS.RUD.201)

## Ruskin's Painting Materials

This project officially started in April 2022, and has made a number of exciting discoveries. The material analyses of the pigments used in Ruskin's watercolours combined with archival research into his published texts and private correspondence revealed interesting details about how he chose his painting materials. Ruskin's personal choices have been fascinating to explore since he was bound to purchase industrially-prepared colours despite his well-known rejection of industrialisation.

Furthermore, this research has provided an excellent opportunity to implement, test and streamline the new analytical facilities, which include a cutting-edge macro X-ray fluorescence scanner and a non-invasive X-ray diffraction spectrometer. This equipment is located at the Ashmolean, and it is now ready to be shared across the GLAM division and with the School of Archaeology, enabling material studies of a diverse range of heritage objects.



## Chemical Analysis of Ancient Gold Coins

The scientific analysis programme of our Roman, Kushan, Axumite and Gupta gold coin collections has reached its seventh, and final year. Initially funded by George Green's Collaborative Doctoral Studentship on Gold Coinage in the Roman World, the programme was expanded to Rome's African and Asian neighbours from 2020 to 2023 by George's Leverhulme Trust Early Career Fellowship.

This year has involved continued close collaboration with Earth Sciences. Here laser ablation inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry (LA-ICP-MS) was performed on Kushan and Axumite gold coins. This uses a high-powered laser to remove an almost imperceptibly small 'spot' from the edge of the coin, which is then measured down to the part-per-million level (0.0001%). This allows us to determine the 'trace element fingerprint' of the metal, which we can then combine with our historical, archaeological,

numismatic, and documentary evidence to propose what manufacturing techniques were used and where the original source of the gold was.

Achievements over the academic year include: two sessions and two papers at the International Numismatic Conference; expert comment for the *Wall Street Journal* on the 'Sponsian' gold coins; and a Plenary Talk for the UK Neutron & Muon Science and User Meeting. During this year c.£200,000 has been secured to fund work on the Akumite collection at the ISIS Neutron and Muon Source, and £46,000 of seed funding was secured from the University to develop a portable version of the laser ablation sampling technique. More good news came in the final days of this year, with confirmation that George's thesis – 'Gold Coinage in the Roman World' – won the Conington Prize for the best thesis in the Ancient History, Religion, Art, and Archaeology cycle.

## Early Qajar Portraiture Research Project

In partnership with the Bodleian Library, the Ashmolean is spearheading a conservation and research project titled 'Expanding the Canon of Early Qajar Portraiture: The Analysis and Conservation of Two Paintings from 18th and 19th Century Iran'. These two rare and important portraits, one relating to the second Qajar monarch Fath Ali Shah (ruled 1798-1834), have been in the University collections since the early twentieth century, but have not been shared with the public due to their poor condition. The project aims to undertake a complete treatment of the objects in order to stop their deterioration and guarantee future access, as well as to study the portraits' oil technique. The team, led by Francesca Leoni (curator of Islamic art at the Ashmolean) and comprising conservators and heritage science from both the Bodleian and the Ashmolean, will analyse the pigments used through X-ray Fluorescence (XRF), X-ray Diffraction (XRD), Raman Spectroscopy and/or Fibre Optic Reflectance Spectroscopy (FORS) in order to gather enough data to reconstruct the technical characteristics of nineteenth-century Persian oil painting. The analysis will also allow to explore parallels with the European traditions and the procurement of raw materials supporting this art form at this transformative stage for Iran.

The funding in support of this project includes grants from The Flora Foundation, The British Institute for Persian Studies (BIPS), The Persian Heritage Foundation and The Pilgrim Trust.

Kneeling Portrait of Fath Ali Shah Qajar, oil on canvas, 159 x 94 cm, transferred from the Indian Institute to the Bodleian Library, LP 844 (JL656)



## Digitisation of the May Beattie Archive in Carpet Studies

In February 2023 the Eastern Art Department embarked on a two-year digitisation project of the May Beattie Archive in Carpet Studies. Bequeathed to the Ashmolean Museum in 2000, the archive contains May Beattie's lifelong research on Islamic carpets – from slides and photographic documentation, to personal notes and analyses of specimens from both private and public carpet collections around the world. The digitisation will concentrate on the paper material, amounting to c.45,000 items, with the ultimate objective to create an online resource for researchers and scholars to access freely.

## Academic Engagement

Academic engagement continues with imaginative teaching across the University curriculum, in partnership with colleagues, often early career researchers from the Eloquent Things and Krasis courses, from disciplines now including Law, Refugee Studies and Politics. We are working with the Opportunity Oxford and Astrophoria Foundation Oxford programmes, bridging the gap between school and university for students from under-represented backgrounds. In a new Ashmolean Access Ambassadors programme, we have trained a cohort of twelve student Museum guides, in collaboration with the Outreach teams from Somerville, St Hilda's, St Hugh's and St John's. They are devising and delivering their own Museum tours to targeted school access groups visiting their colleges, highlighting the Ashmolean as a key University resource. In partnership with the Terra Foundation and the Crankstart Scholarship programme we have offered four micro-internships to help build an online resource for A-level teachers and students of twentieth-century American history and literature.

## CDPs

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)-funded Collaborative Doctoral Partnership (CDP) scheme produces research that helps us to develop new perspectives on our collections while also training a new generation of scholars working between the academic and heritage sectors. Since 2016 the Ashmolean has hosted nine CDP researchers. In the 2022-23 period four projects were underway, with students hosted at the universities of Leicester, Exeter, UCL and Leeds. The projects illustrate the range and scope of the collaborative doctoral research within the Museum, and range from work on the Iron Age to Roman transition in Britain from the perspective of coin hoards, Museum collections, academic teaching, and the making of geology in the nineteenth-century University (in partnership with the Oxford University Museum of Natural History), and two projects on decolonising collections: one investigating knowledge formation networks in colonial India with specific reference to numismatics and one exploring the reception and consumption of classical casts in pedagogy in the British Empire.

## ECRs

In 2022-23 there were fourteen fixed-term contract researchers working within the Ashmolean. These included the recipients of two prestigious independent fellowships (Marie Curie Fellow and Leverhulme Trust Early Career Fellow), both based in the Heberden Coin Room, as well as researchers working on projects ranging from the European Research Council-funded 'Chromotope' project in collaboration with the Sorbonne Université and the Leverhulme Trust-funded Ruskin analysis project – research from which underpins the wonderful *Colour Revolution* exhibition – the Italian, British and German drawings projects, the Getty Paper Project, ongoing work on the Coin Hoards of the Roman Empire, and the AHRC-funded OXUS-INDUS project. Reflecting the University's commitment to the career development of research staff, there has been new activity to help to bring together fixed-term contract researchers within the Ashmolean and GLAM more widely to help to enhance our research culture. This includes a 'speed dating' session for researchers focusing on skills and knowledge exchange, workshops on topics including intellectual property, and social events.

# LEARNING

## Schools and University Programmes

We are rapidly building capacity for schools with a team of seven sessions leaders who deliver to groups across the age range, bringing experience and expertise to develop and strengthen our offer.

Primary sessions are in demand with continued interest in online workshops. New interactive workshops include the Indus Valley and Ancient Sumer and online teacher training. We have developed our expertise in working with children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), especially relevant with increased requests for support from schools. Our SEND activity bags are frequently used during sessions and welcomed by teachers. Our primary education officer was awarded a Vice Chancellor's Education Award for Innovating live streamed multisensory object based online workshops for schools during and post pandemic.

Our secondary offer is being developed and expanded to incorporate differentiated activities and wider research. A new session exploring the history and art of culture in China is proving popular, developed in response to requests from schools.

The Museum has also continued to make a significant contribution to curriculum teaching across the University of Oxford and beyond. Our curators have delivered seminars, lectures and handling classes for students in the School of Archaeology, the Faculty of Classics, the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies and the Department of History of Art, amongst others, as well as short courses for the Department of Continuing Education. Ashmolean staff have also supervised undergraduate and postgraduate extended essays, dissertations and theses, where their knowledge and expertise is relevant, or the Ashmolean collections are a particular focus. The size and diversity of the Museum's collections – and the opportunities they present for different types of teaching and engagement – is what makes the Ashmolean a world class teaching museum. The transfer of parts of the Ashmolean collections to the new Collections Teaching and Research Centre (CTRC) will also provide exciting new opportunities to expand the use of these and other GLAM collections in the future.



# ENGAGING OUR AUDIENCES

## Family Programmes

Our family programme experimented with new approaches including: a family opera, *Tutankhamun's Shoes*, by English Touring Opera; 'Baby Bundle', a subscription programme for families with babies up to twelve months old; 'Sensory Stories' featuring tours, reading, songs and creative activities for families with children aged up to four; and 'Bring Baby Lectures', providing opportunities for parents and carers to attend lectures without worrying about their babies disturbing others. This year saw the introduction of volunteer-led family tours taking place every weekend and in the school holidays.

As part of our commitment to host three days of free family festivals, the One World Family Festival took place on 11 and 12 February 2023, with 4,374 and 3,186 visitors respectively. This was the first in-person festival since 2019, and the first One World festival to focus solely on families and feature British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation as part of the event, through our partnership with Curating for Change. The event was co-curated with twelve community partners, and a range of twenty-eight activities celebrating the diversity of faiths and communities in and around Oxfordshire.

## Ashmolean Adventure

A new Ashmolean Adventure activity inspired by Bicci di Lorenzo's magical painting of *St Nicholas of Bari Banishing the Storm* was launched in December in time for the Christmas holidays. The activity enables families to engage with an animated version of the painting's story and explore themes of generosity and celebration.



Bicci di Lorenzo (1373–1452), *St Nicholas of Bari Banishing the Storm*, c.1433–1435. Tempera and gilding on panel, 29 x 59 cm (WA1850.26)





### Adult Programmes

A new public programmes framework has been drafted to enable a balanced overview of events as part of the public programme. As part of this we have introduced hero themes every six months, through which to explore our collections and exhibitions. The first of these was 'Myth & Reality', running from February to July 2023. Key highlights in the programme were headline events including the curator's talk with Dr Andrew Shapland and Dr Janina Ramirez exploring 'Myth, Reality & Ritual'. The programme also features a range of practical creative workshops for people to engage with, alongside talks and courses. The programme also featured collaborations with Photo Oxford Festival and Clay Live in collaboration with Oxford Ceramics Gallery, and future partnerships are in development.

As part of our audience development work, we held activities in conjunction with Florence Park Holiday Club, and a book making project with the Bodleian Library and artist Rana Ibrahim, linking to the Dia Al-Azzawi exhibition. We also held a printmaking stall at Eid Extravaganza and hosted an Iraqi Poetry Day on 13 May, and a poetry, music and crafts drop-in session on 10 June, featuring oud Player Rihab Azar, at the Museum. We have developed relationships with Age UK, the Clockhouse Centre and the Harcourt Arboretum to deliver Woodland Wonder sessions for over 60s. Working with colleagues across GLAM we have also supported 'Meet Me' and 'Time for a Cuppa' programmes for over 60s who do not regularly visit museums.

### Online Engagement

We succeeded in breaking annual website traffic targets in 2022, welcoming 1.15 million visitors to the main Museum website compared to 2021's 0.89 million. On 1 December 2022 we broke all our single-day website traffic records thanks to the strength of our digital communications and messaging, and the launch of our popular online advent calendar.

January 2023 marked the Ashmolean's launch on TikTok, a strategic bid to reach and engage young people aged 16-24, one of our key target audiences. Amongst our first posts was an animation created by one of the student animators that we collaborated with in summer 2022, telling the story of the Moon Hare netsuke, from our Japanese collections. More content will be released and commissioned in the coming months.

After this year's MET Gala, we shared on social media images of outfits from the event and compared them with Ashmolean objects and artworks. Our online audience enjoyed the posts enormously, with BBC South Today featuring it on their Saturday evening programme.



### Smartify Audio Tours

Our 'Highlights' and 'Rebellious Bodies' tours were launched in August and have been well received by both online and onsite audiences. The total number of users to date is 8,834, which includes tours sold to users as upsells on our website, since we started charging for the tour in April. Our new 'Myths and Legends' tour for families is due to be released in August, followed swiftly by our first Smartify exhibition tour in September, accompanying the exhibition *Colour Revolution: Victorian Art, Fashion and Design*.



## Members

The 1722 Rode Stradivarius violin, which is currently on long-term loan to the Ashmolean from the Segelman Trust, was the star of a special Members-only concert that celebrated the instrument's 300th birthday. The concert was generously supported by Richard and Jacqueline Worswick. Violinist Michael Foyle was accompanied by Martin Cousin in a programme that featured music written by Pierre Rode, the violin's namesake, and Beethoven sonatas that were written with Rode in mind. The concert was attended by 150 Members and specially invited Oxford University music students.

Membership prices were increased in February 2023 in line with inflation, and to reflect the Museum's rising operational costs as well as our reliance on self-generated income. Membership numbers continue to recover to near pre-pandemic levels.



## Volunteers

The volunteer team is continuing to grow, with over 300 volunteers signed up to support the Museum in visitor-facing roles and behind the scenes. The family volunteer roles, introduced in October, have been successfully running, with an average of 76 visitors attending over a weekend. There are also 22 new tour guide volunteers currently in training to deliver the Museum's free public tour programme and five Arabic poetry students supporting tours of the Dial al-Azzawi exhibition.

# A SUSTAINABLE MUSEUM

In line with Oxford University, the Ashmolean is committed to achieving net zero carbon by 2035. To make good on this commitment, in January 2023, we started to work with sustainability specialists 3ADAPT to establish the scale and source of our carbon emissions and develop a decarbonisation strategy covering our Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions.

## Carbon Baseline

Our initial work established our emissions baseline as approximately 2,417 tCO<sub>2</sub>e/annum in the 2021-2022 Financial Year. Scope 1 and 2 emissions made up approximately 30% of this total, the remaining 70% being Scope 3 emissions.

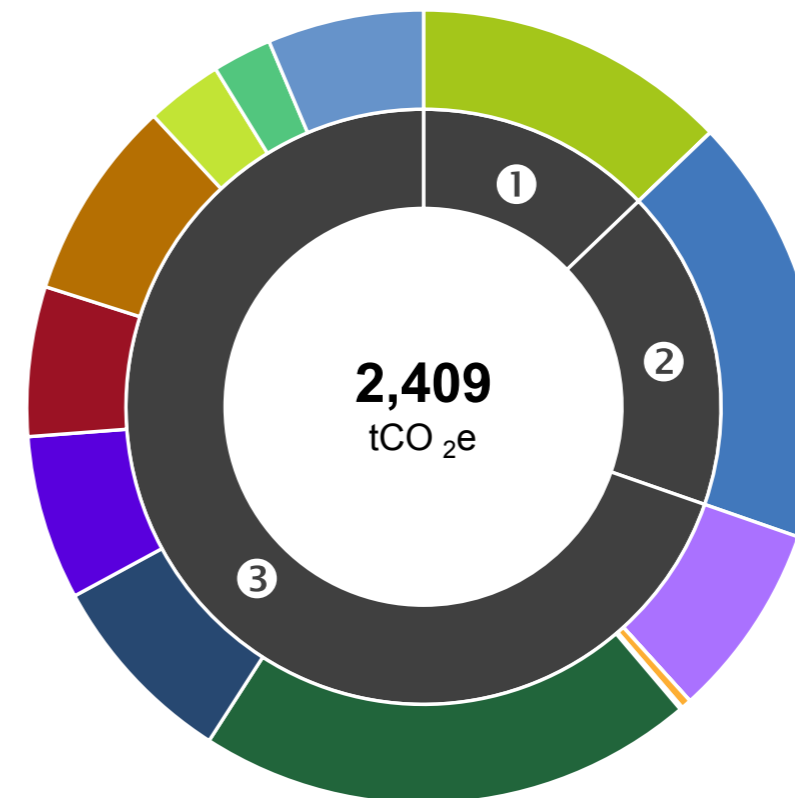
## Target Setting

Armed with this knowledge, we have set up decarbonisation working groups and developed decarbonisation pathways, by emissions type, with the aim of eliminating all Scope 1 and Scope 2 carbon

emissions by 2030, and reducing our scope 3 emissions by more than 40% by 2035. Interim targets are currently being developed and, in line with the University's policies, off-sets will not be considered before 2030.

A governance structure has been developed to support continued leadership and widespread staff involvement and ensure that the sustainability agenda is baked into everyday operations and decision-making. Carbon Literacy training is being provided and funding for staff-led environmental initiatives to stimulate the engagement of the staff and volunteers.

Visitor travel has been excluded from our Carbon Baseline due to the difficulties inherent in accurately measuring and influencing this source of emissions. However, visitor travel has been estimated as approximately 3,315 tCO<sub>2</sub>e/annum and we will continue to track, monitor and influence visitor travel decision-making as far as possible.



SCOPE	CATEGORY	tCO <sub>2</sub> e	%
1	Fuels	311	13%
	Fleet	<1	<1%
2	Electricity	422	17%
	T&D and WTT	192	8%
	Upstream Fleet	<1	<1%
	Waste	1	<1%
	Water	3	<1%
	Purchases	490	20%
3	Retail	194	8%
	F&B	162	7%
	Investments	147	6%
	Employee Commuting	198	8%
	Home Working	76	3%
	Business Travel	58	2%
	Object Travel	154	6%
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,409</b>	<b>100%</b>

# ACQUISITIONS

## Sir Alfred Gilbert (1854–1934)

Gilbert was key figure in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century New Sculpture movement. He is perhaps best known for his famous Shaftesbury Memorial Fountain in Piccadilly Circus, popularly known as Eros. This is a rare working model made of plaster, wax and plasticine. Most of Gilbert's working plasters were subsequently cast in bronze and few survive today. The model joins an already outstanding collection of New Sculpture in the Ashmolean, including many bronzes by Alfred Gilbert, that are mostly from the collection of the Reverend JWR Brocklebank.

Group of the Lovers, conceived and modelled c.1892, plaster, wax and plasticine, height 15.5cm. Accepted by HM Government under the Cultural Gifts Scheme from Bowman Sculpture and allocated to the Ashmolean Museum, 2022. (WA2023.3)



## Brooch

Ramshaw was one of Britain's most celebrated post-war jewellers. Her pieces are of seminal importance in the development of modern British jewellery and how we look at and appreciate jewellery. Stylistically this brooch heralds the artist's move into larger scale works, gates and screens, first catalysed by the 1993 commission from St. Johns College Oxford to make a gate for the Fellows Garden.

Wendy Ramshaw (1939–2018), Brooch, 1990, oxidised silver with eighteen carat gilding on edge, 13 x 9.5 cm. Presented by Marina Alandra Vaizey, Baroness Vaizey, CBE (WA2023.3)



## Portrait of William Carruthers (1829–1885)

Originally modelled in the early 1850s by Carruthers' brother-in-law, Alexander Munro, the plaque was later copied in colourful lustrated terracotta by French art potter, Clément Massier. The bat's wings are a light-hearted reference to Carruthers's role as a late-night parliamentary reporter. This plaque shows a fascinating connection between British Pre-Raphaelite art and the burgeoning French Symbolist movement in the late nineteenth century.

Clément Massier (1845–1917), after Alexander Munro (1825–1871), *Portrait of head of William Carruthers (1829–1885) with bat wings*, about 1890, earthenware, glazed and lustrated, 33 cm diameter. Purchased, with the assistance of ACE/V&A Purchase Grant Fund and Barroe Trust, 2022. (WA2023.57)

## Barbara Hepworth

Since the reopening of the Ashmolean in 2009, Hepworth's monumental wooden sculpture has dominated the Lewin Gallery devoted to art after 1900. Previously on loan from the artist's estate, it has recently been allocated to the Ashmolean in lieu of tax. It perfectly epitomises her ability to reconcile natural forms with abstraction.

Barbara Hepworth (1903–1975), *River Form*, 1965, American walnut, 81.5 cm (height). Accepted by HM Government in lieu of tax on the artist's estate, and allocated to the Ashmolean Museum, 2023. (WA2023.180)



## Gothic Brooch

This unique gothic revival brooch was given by Pugin to his third wife, Jane Knill (1825–1909), whom he married in August 1848. It then descended through four generations of the family.

Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812–1852), Gothic Brooch, about 1848, Gold and enamel, 4.5 x 4.5 cm. Gift of Barrie and Deedee Wigmore. (WA2023.58)







### Natal'ya Sergeevna Goncharova

This still life offers a glimpse of Goncharova's studio in Moscow, and incorporates a tumbling array of books, flowers, and paintings in progress. On the floor to the left is a discarded theatrical mask, a reference to her work for Sergei Diaghilev's *Ballets Russes*. The painting was one of several given by the artist to Arnold Haskell, the leading British ballet critic of the twentieth century.

Natal'ya Sergeevna Goncharova (1881-1962), *Still Life*, c.1908-10, oil on canvas, 98.7 x 101.6 cm, signed N. Gontcharova. Accepted by HM Government under the Cultural Gifts Scheme, from Mrs Larissa Salmina Haskell in memory of Professor Francis Haskell, and allocated to the Ashmolean Museum, 2022. (WA2022.818)



### Portrait of Auguste Bertin

The Bertin family were among the most powerful in France, as owners of the *Journal des Debats*. Their Chateau de Villepreux was one of the most cultivated in the country, with writers and artists gathering in the most atmospheric interiors. They were consistent patrons of Girodet, who made portraits of many members of the family. This small portrait shows Auguste Bertin at the age of nineteen, and is a small masterpiece of Romantic portraiture.

Anne-Louis Girodet-Trioson (1767-1824), *Portrait of Auguste Bertin de Vaux*, 1817, black and white chalks with stumping and some gum on paper, 21.8 x 17.3 cm, signed GT mars 1817. Purchased (Hope Fund, Noelle Brown Bequest Fund) in memory of Jon Whiteley, with the assistance of the ACE/V&A Purchase Grant Fund, 2022. (WA2022.814)



### Oliver Impey study collection of Japanese export art

In 2022 the Ashmolean Museum received from the Impey family an important study collection of Japanese artworks relating to the research of the late Dr Oliver Impey, Curator of Japanese Art at the Museum from 1967-2003. These comprise a group of *shoki imari* early Japanese porcelains dating from c.1620-1660, a group of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Japanese export lacquer cabinets and vessels, and a painting and magnificent sideboard from the Meiji era (1868-1912). The collections link to Oliver's pioneering scholarship in the fields of each of these areas, reflecting the relationship between scholarship, collecting and Museum work that characterised Oliver's activities as a curator. The objects greatly enrich the Museum's collection of Japanese art and provide an enormously valuable resource for the study of three key areas of Japanese art history and for the study of Japan-UK artistic interaction.

A variety of *shoki imari* porcelain, featuring a saucer (bottom right) illustrated with lake and rocks, within a gadroon border. Gifted by the family of Oliver Impey (EAEN.458)



### Chinese Ming porcelain dish

Chinese porcelain dish with underglaze blue 'lotus bouquet' decoration, Ming Dynasty, Yongle period (1403-25). Formerly collection of Reginald and Lena Palmer. (EAEN.562)



### An exceptional group of historic kilims from the collection of Georgina Wolton

In 2022 the Ashmolean Museum received fifty kilims from Georgina Wolton's estate through the Acceptance in Lieu Scheme. Ms Wolton belonged to a generation of connoisseurs and scholars who established this typology of rugs as a significant aspect of the material culture of regions such as Anatolia, the Caucasus and northern Iran. The carpets, distinguished by bold colours and strong geometric designs, mostly originate from Islamic Anatolia and date to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Public collections of historic kilims are extraordinarily rare and mainly exist outside of the UK. As such, this acquisition is transformative for the Ashmolean Museum, enriching its holdings of Islamic carpets but also complementing the May Beattie Archive for the study of carpet-making which contains extensive research on Anatolian weaves.

Saff (prayer kilim), Syria or Central Anatolia, eighteenth century, wool, flatwoven, 140 x 356 cm. (EA2024.18)

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# COMMERCIAL OVERVIEW

Over the last twelve months, we've increased the revenues we generate across the majority of our commercial areas. Our picture library team have processed more than 5,000 image requests and expanded into new international territories. Our events team have operated more than 232 events in our Museum spaces from business breakfasts and private views through to conference dinners, awards ceremonies and unforgettable weddings and family celebrations. We've refreshed our basement café and rooftop restaurant – including the beautiful outdoor terrace space. We've refreshed all of our menus – introducing new concepts like sharing platters and deli salads. We've published new exhibition catalogues and books including 'Museum Secrets: Hidden Stories from the Ashmolean', a compilation of podcasts created through 2020 when the museum was closed through lockdowns. We've introduced fantastic new licensee partnerships like Ashmolean Beer with Hook Norton and Ashmolean Tea with Team Tea – both of which can be purchased via our new Ashmolean online shop.

And we've refreshed our main museum gift shop working with Lumsden Design who specialise in retail designs for museums and cultural attractions. As you can see from the images – we've moved the counter to the back of the shop and created a series of 'zones' to

help visitors navigate their way around the shop. We've freshened up the paintwork, flooring and lighting. We actually up-cycled the vast majority of the fixtures through the shop, refreshing them rather than replacing them and we've used Graphenstone paints – an award-winning ultra-low carbon paint and another of our new Licensing partners. The colour on the back wall of the shop is 'Kingfisher' – inspired by John Ruskin's *Study of a Kingfisher*.

We've also been refreshing our product ranges – working with more UK-based designers and makers to showcase a curated selection of products we think our customers will love. It's really important to us that we offer a unique range of products: products that are original, distinctive and connected to our collections. We're so grateful to the brilliant makers we've been working with who are taking inspiration from objects around the Museum that inspire them – to create the products that people buy as a memento of their visit – helping us in turn to operate the Museum.

We're so grateful to all of our members, corporate members and commercial customers – because every purchase made ensures that we can continue to operate the Museum on a free-entry basis year-round, for everyone to enjoy. Thank you.

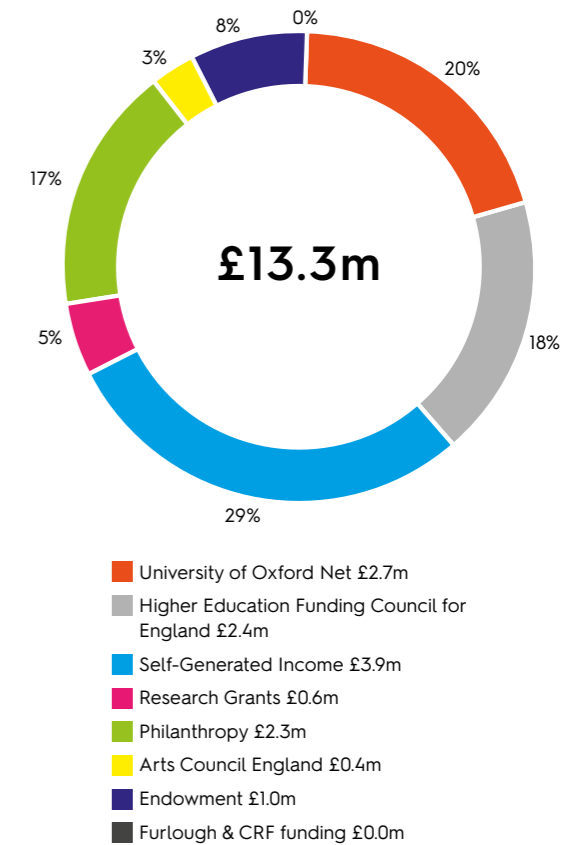


# FINANCIAL NARRATIVE

## Total income

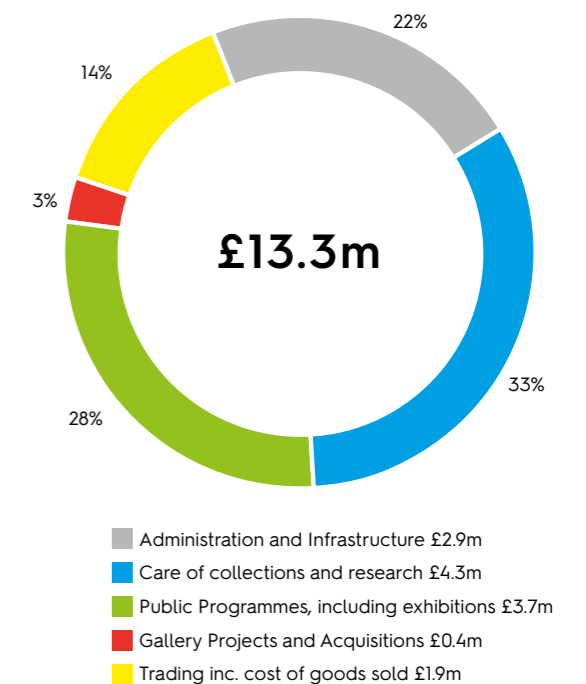
Total income received in the year was £13.3m, up £1.1m on the previous year. This is due to a £0.6m increase in the net funding received from the University in recognition of the inflationary pressures particularly on pay costs and utilities in the year. Philanthropy was also a key driver up by £0.5m driven by the exhibition programme and also an increase in core fundraising. Footfall continued to recover in year driven by an increase in free-entry visitors up 51% on the previous year and helping to drive an improvement on self-generated income of £0.1m. Funding from both the Arts Council and Higher Education Funding Council continued into this year at the same level. Research grants increased by £0.1m due to new projects secured and Endowment income also increased by £0.1m. These improvements are offset by a reduction in Cultural Recovery grant and Furlough income of (£0.3m) as these schemes have now closed.

As the impacts of Covid 19, Brexit and the Russian/Ukraine conflict work through the economy, especially the public purse and visitor economy, all sources of museum funding continue to be under great pressure. Thus building our endowment, fundraising and public donations continue to be vital for the Ashmolean financial resilience. We are very grateful to all donors and supporters who continue to support our cause.



## Total expenditure

Total expenditure in the year was £13.3m. This was £1.0m more than the previous year. This is mostly due to the inflationary pressure on pay costs across all areas, including a large increase in utilities costs driven by the increase in price per unit during the year.



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