

**DISCOVER THE FINEST TREASURES OF THE WORLD  
AT THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SINGAPORE**



*Lewis Chess Piece, found on the Isle of Lewis, Scotland,  
Made about AD 1150–1200 © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum*

**Treasures of the World from the British Museum  
5 December 2015 to 29 May 2016  
Exhibition Galleries, Basement, National Museum of Singapore  
Admission fees apply**

**SINGAPORE, 2 December 2015** – Get up close and personal with some of the world's finest artefacts from now until the end of May! For the next six months, 239 exceptional objects and treasures will be on display in the *Treasures of the World from the British Museum* exhibition at the National Museum of Singapore.

This highly-anticipated exhibition from the British Museum in London encompasses more than two million years of abundant culture and history, and features relics from ancient civilisations and treasures spanning Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Europe, the Americas and Oceania. The blockbuster exhibition is the largest and most comprehensive show from the British Museum's collection in Singapore to date, and is a collaboration between the National Museum of Singapore and the British Museum, the oldest public national museum in the world.

The oldest object in the exhibition is a stone handaxe from Tanzania made around 800,000 years ago, while the most recent artefact dates to 2013. Other iconic artefacts from the collection include two 11th-century chess pieces discovered on the Hebridean Island of Lewis, skilfully crafted brass plaques from the West African state of Benin, ancient jewellery from the Royal Cemetery at Ur in southern Iraq, and an exquisitely painted mummy board from ancient Egypt. Each object represents the cultural and artistic achievements of the civilisation it comes from, and collectively, the collection explores the enduring themes of life that connect people across the world, regardless of when or where they live.

Closer to home, the exhibition also includes items collected by Sir Stamford Raffles when he was in Southeast Asia, such as a Javanese mask and a *kris* and scabbard dating back to the

early 19th century. Two artworks from Singapore's national collection, Anthony Poon's *W – White on 2P Waves* and Iskandar Jalil's *Blue Vessel* have also been included to juxtapose the nation's artistic development against global art movements in the 1980s.

Director of the National Museum of Singapore, Ms Angelita Teo, said, "The British Museum's aim of curating a collection of objects that showcases the entire world, both in the past and present, is very much aligned with what the National Museum endeavours to do for our audience. This exhibition is both a timely reminder of the importance of the object in preserving Singapore's history, as well as a step towards the appreciation of the common values, aspirations and themes that connect us all. In today's integrated world, it is important that we learn not just about our own heritage and culture, but also to be exposed to and to appreciate that of the world around us."

Keeper of the Department of Asia, British Museum, Ms Jane Portal, added, "Singapore and the United Kingdom have a strong and deep-rooted relationship, which began with the arrival of Sir Stamford Raffles to the island-state in 1819 and endures till today. Although the British Museum and the National Museum of Singapore have collaborated in the past, this present partnership is unprecedented in its scale and ambition and marks another milestone in our mutually-beneficial friendship. This is the first time that our collection has been presented as a comprehensive exhibition in Southeast Asia, and it has been specially designed for audiences in the region. We are delighted to work with the National Museum and look forward to many more collaborations to come."

*Treasures of the World from the British Museum* also includes two Young Explorers' Zones designed for children aged 7 to 12. Featuring activity sheets and learning stations, these zones enable children and their parents to embark on a learning journey across the different regions of the world. In conjunction with the exhibition, visitors can also enjoy public programmes such as workshops, curated tours, lectures by representatives from the British Museum and other historians, as well as theatre performances in the gallery. Merchandise inspired by the exhibition and from the British Museum, as well as the exhibition catalogue, will be on sale at the National Museum's Museum Label shop.

*Treasures of the World from the British Museum* will be held at the National Museum of Singapore from 5 December 2015 to 29 May 2016. Admission fees apply.

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**About the National Museum of Singapore**

With a history dating back to its inception in 1887, the National Museum of Singapore is the nation's oldest museum with a progressive mind. Its galleries adopt cutting-edge and multi-perspective ways of presenting history and culture to redefine conventional museum experience. A cultural and architectural landmark in Singapore, the Museum hosts innovative festivals and events all year round—the dynamic Night Festival, visually arresting art installations, as well as amazing performances and film screenings—in addition to presenting thought-provoking exhibitions involving critically important collections of artefacts. The programming is supported by a wide range of facilities and services including F&B, retail and a Resource Centre. The National Museum of Singapore re-opened in December 2006 after a three-year redevelopment, and celebrated its 125th anniversary in 2012. The Museum refreshed its permanent galleries and re-opened them on 19 September 2015 for Singapore's Golden Jubilee. For more details, please visit [www.nationalmuseum.sg](http://www.nationalmuseum.sg).

**About the British Museum**

Founded in 1753, the British Museum was the first national public museum in the world. From the outset it was a museum of the world, for the world, and this idea still lies at the heart of the Museum's mission today. The collection tells the stories of cultures across the world, from the dawn of human history, over two million years ago, to the present. Objects range from the earliest tools made by humans and treasures from the ancient world to more recent acquisitions from Africa, Oceania and the Americas, the Middle East, Asia and Europe, as well as the national collections of prints and drawings, and coins and medals. World-famous objects such as the Rosetta Stone, Parthenon sculptures, and Egyptian mummies are visited by over 6 million visitors per year. In addition to work in London, the Museum takes part in an extensive programme of loans and tours, both across the UK and throughout the world. Find out more at [britishmuseum.org](http://britishmuseum.org)

## Annex A About the Exhibition

### ***Treasures of the World from the British Museum***

Exhibition Galleries, Basement, National Museum of Singapore

5 December 2015 to 29 May 2016

10am to 7pm

Admission fees apply.

Explore the finest artefacts the world has to offer at this highly-anticipated exhibition from the British Museum in London! Come face to face with the “unlucky mummy” falsely rumoured to have sunk the Titanic, marvel at gold jewellery from ancient Mesopotamian graves and be fascinated by the magical transformation mask from the Pacific Northwest Coast of North America.

Featuring stunning relics from ancient civilisations and treasures spanning Africa, Oceania and the Middle East, as well as Europe, Asia and the Americas, this extensive collection encompasses over two million years of abundant culture and history. Closer to home, the exhibition also includes items from the personal collection of Sir Stamford Raffles, such as a Javanese mask and a kris and scabbard dating back to the early 19th century. Discover these *Treasures of the World* and more at the National Museum from December 2015 to May 2016!

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## Annex B: Ticketing Information

### ***Treasures of the World from the British Museum***

Special Exhibitions Gallery, Basement, National Museum of Singapore

5 December 2015 to 29 May 2016

10am to 7pm

<b>Admission Charges</b>		
	Citizens & Permanent Residents (Discounted)	Non-Citizens & Non-Permanent Residents
Adults	\$14	\$20
Students <sup>1</sup>	Free	\$16
Seniors <sup>1</sup>	Free	\$16
NSFs <sup>1</sup>	Free	N.A.
Teachers <sup>1</sup>	Free	N.A.
Children 6 years and below	Free	
Return Visits <sup>2</sup>	\$10	\$16
HSBC Cardholders <sup>3</sup>	\$10 (50% off Standard Ticket)	
<b>Specials (Non-Citizens and Non-Permanent Residents)</b>		
Lee Hwa Members <sup>4</sup>		
InterContinental Singapore Guests <sup>5</sup>	\$16	
SIA Boarding Pass Holders <sup>6</sup>		

<b>Packages (Non-Citizens &amp; Non-Permanent Residents)</b>	
Family Package (2 Adults & 2 Concessions, 1 Adults & 3 Concessions or 4 Concessions)	\$52
All Access Pass – <i>Adult</i> (includes admission to Permanent Galleries and the exhibition)	\$25
All Access Pass – <i>Concessions</i> (Includes admission to Permanent Galleries and the exhibition)	\$18
Group bookings (Min. 20 persons)	\$16 per person

<sup>1</sup> A valid pass must be presented.

<sup>2</sup> Return Visit tickets are only available at the Museum's Visitor Services counter and with proof of a paid ticket to the exhibition or its related programmes. No refunds are available for adult exhibition tickets already paid for.

<sup>3</sup> A valid HSBC credit card or debit card must be used for payment. Applicable to globally-issued HSBC credit cards and Singapore-issued HSBC debit cards only.

<sup>4</sup> Lee Hwa members must produce a valid letter from Lee Hwa at the Museum's Visitor Services counter. Not available on SISTIC.

<sup>5</sup> A valid Intercontinental Singapore hotel key card must be presented at the Museum's Visitor Services counter. Not available on SISTIC.

<sup>6</sup> A valid boarding pass within 7 days of travel or valid KrisFlyer membership card must be presented at the Museum's Visitor Services counter. Not available on SISTIC.

\* Unless otherwise stated, all tickets are available from SISTIC and the museum's Visitor Services counter.

## Annex C – Exhibition Highlights

### From the British Museum



*Book of the Dead* papyrus, Egypt, 1069-945 BC © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

#### ***Book of the Dead* papyrus**

Egypt  
21st Dynasty, 1069–945 BC  
Ink on papyrus  
H: 47 cm, W: 35 cm  
EA 10554.5

This sheet of papyrus comes from one of the longest illustrated manuscripts of the ancient Egyptian *Book of the Dead* to have survived. Originally over 37 metres long, it is now cut into 96 separate sheets. The *Book of the Dead* was a collection of spells, typically written on papyrus and placed in the tomb. These spells ensured that the deceased had access to the knowledge required to be successfully reborn into an eternal life. This sheet records part of spell 17, a long and complex discussion of the nature of the creator-god. The illustration depicts the falcon headed sun-god Ra-Horakhty wearing a headdress composed of the solar disc.

The manuscript was made for a woman named Nestanebisheru, the daughter of the High Priest of Amun Pinedjem II. In this particular illustration, she is seen kneeling in front of Ra-Horakhty, raising her hands in adoration. She is accompanied by her spirit (*ba*) in the form of a bird with a human head.



Mummy of an adolescent boy, from Hawara, Egypt, AD 100-200 © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

#### **Mummy of an adolescent boy**

Hawara, Egypt  
Roman period, AD 100–120  
Human tissue, linen, gold, wax  
L: 133 cm, W: 40 cm  
EA 13595  
Gift of H. Martyn Kennard

This mummy is wrapped in many layers of carefully arranged linen. Inserted over the head is a fine portrait panel of a boy, painted on wood in pigments mixed with beeswax (encaustic). He wears a tunic with a purple stripe, or clavus, and a white mantle positioned high up around the neck. His cropped hairstyle, the clothing depicted and the technique of painting allow us to date the image to the early 2nd century AD.

Paintings of this type, known as “mummy portraits”, represent a fusion of Greco-Roman and Egyptian traditions. They derive from the Roman world in terms of style and technique, but their function as funerary portraits to adorn embalmed bodies is firmly Egyptian. Created from the middle of the 1st century AD and continued over the following two centuries, these strikingly naturalistic images are among the finest works of art to survive from classical antiquity. The apparent realism of the portraits has been disputed by some scholars. However, modern research suggests that many were indeed painted from life, though modified so as to flatter their aristocratic subjects.



Mummy-board,  
probably from  
Thebes, Egypt, 950-  
900 BC © 2015 the  
Trustees of the British  
Museum

### **Mummy-board**

Probably from Thebes, Egypt  
Late 21st or early 22nd Dynasty, 950–900 BC  
Wood, painted detail on plaster  
H: 168 cm, W: 38cm  
EA22542  
Donated by Arthur F. Wheeler

This exquisitely painted mummy-board formed the innermost covering of the mummy of an unidentified woman of high rank. During the first centuries of the first millennium BC, such sculpted and painted covers had come to replace the masks which were placed over the heads of mummies in earlier periods. The owner of this board, whose name is not preserved, is depicted with a large floral collar, through which her open hands protrude. Below this is a complex arrangement of scenes that include images of baboons worshipping the sun, figures of Osiris and many protective deities, including the name of Amenhotep I (ruled 1525–1504 BC), the dead king worshipped as a local god in Thebes.

The mummy-board is sometimes known as the Unlucky Mummy due to a series of misfortunes falsely attributed to it. As well as allegedly being responsible for the deaths of various individuals who have come into contact with it, it has also been suggested that the object was placed on board the ill-fated *SS Titanic* on its maiden voyage in 1912. While none of these stories have any basis in fact, they attest to the longstanding fascination with Egyptian religion and mythology in Western popular culture.



Brass plaque, Benin, Nigeria, 16th century AD © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum



Brass plaque, Benin, Nigeria, 16th century AD © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

**If using both images:**

Two brass plaques, Benin, Nigeria, 16th century AD © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

**Two brass plaques**

Benin, Nigeria  
Edo people, 16th century AD  
Brass  
H: 48.3-52 cm, W: 39.9-41 cm  
Af1898,0115.21; Af1913,1211.1

The powerful West African kingdom of Benin is famous for its brass castings, and particularly for its relief plaques which are unique in Africa. They were made from around 1550 to 1650 and were probably produced in matching pairs to clad the wooden pillars of the royal palace in Benin City. The palace was the centre of political and religious activities that ensured the well-being of the entire Edo state.

Some of the plaques portray important historical events while others depict scenes from court life and ritual. Both plaques illustrated here are dominated by the imposing figure of the Oba, or king, of Benin. On the left (a), the Oba is shown in the act of sacrificing a cow, assisted by five male priests who hold the animal's legs and head still for him. He wears several items of royal regalia, including an elaborate headdress and necklace that signify his elevated social status and power. On the right hand plaque (b), the Oba is depicted with a spear in one hand and shield in the other. On his belt is a brass ornament in the form of a leopard's head; the leopard being one of several creatures closely connected with royal power and authority. In the upper corners a pair of Portuguese traders are shown, each carrying a gift for the king. Depicted below are two attendants wearing pangolin (scaly anteater) skin helmets of the type associated with the leopard hunter's guild.



Gelede mask, Nigeria, AD 1900-1950 © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

### Gelede mask

Nigeria

Yoruba people, AD 1900–1950

Wood, paint

H: 69.5 cm, W: 25 cm

Af 1954,23.26

Gift of the Wellcome Historical Medical Museum

Gelede is one of the three major masking traditions of the Yoruba people of Nigeria. Taking place each year between March and May, at the beginning of the agricultural season, *Gelede* masquerades are performed by men but they honour the women of the community, both elders and ancestors, who are known collectively as “our mothers”. The masquerade takes place in the market place which is seen as a metaphor for the world, where humans and spirits mingle, but also as a place which is very much the domain of women. Each *Gelede* mask includes a female face, calm and serene, which is topped by a superstructure that demonstrates the inner powers of “our mothers”. These images are often anything but calm, as is the case in this example, which appears to show a leopard standing on top of a male figure, while a second male escapes up a tree.



Headress from the Royal Cemetery at Ur, Iraq, around 2500 BC © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum



Necklace from the Royal Cemetery at Ur, Iraq, around 2500 BC © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

### Headress and necklace from ‘The Royal Cemetery’ at Ur

Ur, southern Iraq

Early Dynastic period, around 2500 BC

Gold, lapis lazuli, cornelian

Headress L: 33 cm; Necklace L: 15.2 cm

ME122368 (1929,1017.180); ME122334 (1929,1017.146)

These two jewellery items come from rich burials at the city of Ur, located at the south-eastern extremity of Mesopotamia. Here, some 1,850 graves dating to between 2600 and 2000 BC were excavated by Sir Leonard Woolley in the late 1920s. Some of the earlier graves were identified by Woolley as “Royal Tombs” because of their construction, great abundance of grave goods and evidence of elaborate burial rituals and human sacrifice.

The huge quantities of rich jewellery worn by the main occupants of the tombs and their attendants illustrate the great wealth of Ur at this time. These items were made from a combination of gold, lapis lazuli, carnelian, shell and coloured limestone. Commonly occurring motifs included triangles, leaves, rosettes and huge boat earrings. Brilliant blue lapis lazuli and reddish-orange carnelian were highly prized commodities, valued for their appearance as well their scarcity. Both were transported into Ur over vast distances; lapis from Afghanistan and carnelian from the west coast of India.

### If using both images:

Headress and necklace from the Royal Cemetery at Ur, Iraq, around 2500 BC © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum



A divine attendant from Nimrud, Iraq, 810-800 BC © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

*Second heaviest treasure*

**A divine attendant**

Nimrud, northern Iraq  
Neo-Assyrian, 810–800 BC  
Limestone  
H: 182.8 cm, W: 82cm  
ME118888 (1856,0909.64)

This is one of a pair of guardian deity figures that stand in an attitude of attendance. The figures originally flanked a doorway in the temple of Nabu, an important god of writing, in the Assyrian capital of Kalhu (modern Nimrud). The cuneiform inscription carved around the guardian's body states that they were dedicated to Nabu by the local governor, on his own behalf and on behalf of king Adadnirari (ruled 811–783 BC) and the queen mother Sammuramat. The inscription ends with the request that the reader should trust Nabu above all others.

The statues were discovered at Nimrud in 1854 by Hormuzd Rassam, who was excavating the site on behalf of the British Museum. According to his account, there was another pair of statues without inscriptions carrying basins, but these were subsequently lost or destroyed.



Assyrian relief showing a protective spirit, Nimrud, Iraq, around 875-860 BC © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

**Relief showing a protective spirit**

North-West Palace, Nimrud, northern Iraq  
Neo-Assyrian, around 875–860 BC  
Gypsum  
H: 107 cm, W: 83 cm  
ME 102400 (1906,0714.1)

This relief from a royal palace shows an Assyrian protective spirit. The winged eagle-headed spirit, originally one of a pair that reached out and touched the "sacred tree", carries a tree cone or "purifier" that was probably covered in liquid from the bucket. The sacred tree, partly preserved on the left, possibly represents the fertility of the land.

The decoration of Assyrian palaces with extensive stone bas-reliefs was an innovation from the West first found in the palace of king Ashurnasirpal II (ruled 883–859 BC) at Nimrud. While some of the decoration in this palace, particularly in the throne room, was narrative and depicted events, the majority of reliefs depict protective spirits that were designed to ensure the well-being and prosperity of the palace's inhabitants and Ashurnasirpal's kingdom.



Gold death mask,  
Jerusalem, 1st-2nd  
century AD © 2015 the  
Trustees of the British  
Museum

*The lightest treasure*

**Death mask**

Jerusalem

Roman, 1st–2nd century AD

Gold

H: 14 cm, W: 12.3 cm

139535 (1983,0607.1)

Within many parts of the Near East during the 1st and 2nd centuries AD, some communities covered the face of the dead with a sheet of gold death mask such as this. Other examples are known from as far apart as modern Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. The facial features have been crudely embossed and there are two pairs of holes on either side, close to the edge, which allowed the mask to be sewn onto a burial shroud. In other cases, separate pieces of gold sheet were made to cover the eyes and mouth, and were lightly embossed to show these features in stylised relief.



Painting of the bodhisattva Samantabhadra, from Cave 17, Dunhuang, China, around AD 750-850  
© 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum



Painting of lokapala Virupaksa, Guardian of the West, from Cave 17, Dunhuang, China, around AD 850-900 © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

### **Painting of the bodhisattva Samantabhadra**

Tang dynasty, around AD 750–850

Ink and colours on silk

H: 59.7 cm, W: 20 cm

1919,0101,0.131

The subject of this painting is the bodhisattva Samantabhadra, the special patron of the followers of the Lotus Sutra. He is shown seated on a lotus and riding a six-tusked white elephant, his familiar mount. During the Tang dynasty (AD 618–906) Samantabhadra was closely associated with Mañjuśrī, the bodhisattva of wisdom, and the painting may have been one of a pair of votive banners that were hung together for use in worship. Though the colours are today quite faded, in its original state the painting would have featured sumptuous highlights in blue, yellow, pink and red.

### **Painting of Lokapala Virūpākṣa, Guardian of the West**

Tang dynasty, around AD 850–900

Ink and colours on silk

H: 48.8 cm, W: 19 cm

1919,0101,0.137.

This painting shows the lokapala Virūpākṣa, one of four heavenly kings who together protect the cardinal points of north, south east and west. He is depicted holding a sword, the jewelled scabbard of which rests directly on a demon's head, only the sparse red hair of which remains. As with many such banners from Dunhuang, the image originally featured borders down each side and a band of lozenges at the bottom.



Screen painting,  
Japan, late 16th  
century AD © 2015 the  
Trustees of the British  
Museum



Screen painting,  
Japan, late 16th  
century AD © 2015 the  
Trustees of the British  
Museum

**If using both images:**  
Pair of screen  
paintings, Japan, late  
16th century AD ©  
2015 the Trustees of  
the British Museum

**The four seasons with the sun and moon, a pair of 6-fold screen paintings**

Japan  
Momoyama period, late 16th century AD  
Ink, colours, gold and silver leaf on paper  
H: 147 cm, W: 307 cm  
1965,1012,0.1 and 2

The subject of this pair of screens is the four seasons, beginning with spring on the right, represented by double cherry blossoms, and ending in winter, with snow-covered bamboos, on the left. Spring and summer are marked by the disk of the sun, the ancient symbol of the male *yang* (Japanese *yō*) principle, and autumn and winter by the young crescent moon, representing the female principle of *yin* (Japanese *in*). The sun is seen through the masculine pine and the moon through the feminine maple. Partly symbolic, the screens are also decorative, their foregrounds filled with bamboo and brush fences covered in gold leaf over built-up gesso. The white pigments are also built up over gesso and originally would have shown up with greater brilliance. The painting style is a mixture of Tosa and Kano elements and is therefore probably the work of an independent town painter. The concept of the composition is from the late Muromachi period (1333–1568), but the lack of any sense of a background points to the succeeding Momoyama period (1568–1600).



Standing figure of the  
Buddha, Gandhara,  
Pakistan, AD 100-200  
© 2015 the Trustees of  
the British Museum

*Curator's Pick*

**Standing figure of the Buddha**

Ancient Gandhara, Pakistan  
AD 100–200  
Grey schist  
H: 92 cm, W: 32cm  
1899,0715.1

Located in the region between modern northwest Pakistan and eastern Afghanistan, ancient Gandhara flourished as a major centre of Buddhism in the early centuries of the first millennium AD. Under the patronage of the ruling Kushan dynasty, numerous monasteries and shrines were constructed and furnished with narrative reliefs and devotional sculptures of the Buddha and bodhisattvas (Buddhas-to-be).

This serene figure, carved in grey schist, is representative of the classic Gandharan image. Draped in an elegant monastic robe, the Buddha assumes *abhayamudra*, the gesture of reassurance, offering protection to the worshipper with his raised hand (now lost). The halo surrounding the head signals his enlightened status. The sculptural traditions of Gandhara were greatly influenced by Greco-Roman prototypes, as is revealed here in the deeply cut folds of the robe and treatment of the hair.



Group of five gold finger-rings , Java, Indonesia, 14th–16th century AD, ©2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

**To use the below caption only when featuring 1 of the 5 rings:**

Gold finger-ring , Java, Indonesia, 14th–16th century AD, ©2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

**Group of five gold finger-rings**

Java, Indonesia  
Majapahit period or later, 14th–16th century AD  
Gold, crystal, garnet, pink sapphire  
W: 2.1-3.4 cm  
AF.2401, AF.2402, AF.2403, AF.2381, AF.2392  
Augustus Wollaston Franks Bequest

Variouly decorated with cast or applied ornaments in gold, engraving or semi-precious stones, these finger-rings attest to the wealth and splendour of the old royal courts of Java. The seal ring at the top left is engraved with a fish above a foliate design, perhaps a lotus. The ring next to it, top centre, is set with a cabochon crystal and features pearled ribs on its hollow shoulders. Two other pieces, top right and bottom left, are chased in high relief, the former with a plain gold bud as its bezel, the latter with foliate designs, while the ring at the bottom right has a large flat bezel set with a pink sapphire, a crystal and a garnet.

Conspicuous displays of wealth and prestige were an essential feature of courtly life in Java, both during the Majapahit period (around 1293–1520) and later.



Batik cloth, Java, Indonesia, before AD 1816 © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

*Earliest recorded batik and Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles collection*

**Batik cloth**

Java, Indonesia  
Before AD 1816  
Cotton  
L: 218 cm, W: 118 cm  
As1939,04.120  
Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles collection;  
Gift of Mrs J.H. Drake

Indonesia and the island of Java particularly, is unrivalled for the scope and variety of its *batik* textile production. Although the technique of patterning cloth through the application of wax is known in other parts of the world, it reached the highest level of refinement and complexity on Java.

This *sarong* skirt cloth is one of two in the British Museum that are among the earliest known examples of Javanese *batik* in any collection. It consists of a central panel (*kepala*) made up of triangular motifs (*tumpal*) with vertical panels to either side, and a main body (*badan*) on which the broken knife (*parang rusak*) design has been drawn. Stylistic traits, particularly the *parang rusak* pattern that was restricted to royalty, mark it as a piece from the Central Javanese court of Yogyakarta.

As Lieutenant-Governor of Java, Stamford Raffles visited the Yogyakarta court on two occasions, in December 1814 and again in January 1816. It is probable that the British Museum *batiks* were presented as diplomatic gifts on one of these state visits.



Figure of a pregnant woman, Cyclades, Greece, 2600-2400 AD © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

**Figure of a pregnant woman**

Cyclades, Greece  
Early Bronze Age, 2600–2400 BC  
Marble  
H: 20.9 cm, W: 6.4cm  
1932,1018.1

During the third millennium BC, relatively prosperous and well-populated settlements flourished on the Cycladic islands in the central Aegean Sea. Among the most striking artistic creations of this period are schematic figures carved in marble. Most are female and are typically shown with their arms folded across the chest, the right arm always placed under the left. This well-carved example is notable for its swollen abdomen, which suggests pregnancy.

The significance of Cycladic figures has been the subject of considerable debate. Many come from graves, perhaps indicating that they were made particularly for funerary use. However, since numbers of them have also been found in settlements, they may have been important in the rituals of the living as well. The depiction of sexual characteristics, and occasionally pregnancy, points to an emphasis on female fertility.



Marble group of a nymph escaping from a satyr, Italy, 2nd century AD © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

**Marble group of a nymph escaping from a satyr**

Tivoli, Italy  
2nd century AD  
Marble  
H: 77 cm, W: 68 cm  
1805,0703.2 (Sculpture 1658)

In ancient Greek myth, satyrs were part-human, part-animal beings closely associated with Dionysos, the god of wine. Given to wild passion, they are often shown in art as sexual predators chasing after nymphs and maenads, the female followers of Dionysos. In this marble group, a nymph struggles to free herself from a rapacious satyr who has locked his arms around her waist. Such images of amorous wrestling couples gave vivid expression to male erotic fantasies.

The sculpture is one of several known Roman versions of an earlier Greek work of the second or first century BC (now lost). With its complex composition of interacting bodies, designed to be seen in the round, it is typical of Hellenistic (later Greek period) art. The collector Charles Townley acquired the sculpture in 1773 through the English dealer Thomas Jenkins. It appears in the famous painting by Johan Zoffany, *Charles Townley's Library* (1781–83), now in the collection of the Townley Hall Art Gallery and Museum, Burnley, England.



*The Three Crosses*,  
Rembrandt, AD 1653 ©  
2015 the Trustees of  
the British Museum

### **The Three Crosses**

Rembrandt (Harmensz van Rijn) (Dutch, 1606–1668)

AD 1653

Dry point etching

H: 38.5 cm, W: 45 cm

1848,0911.40

The celebrated Dutch painter Rembrandt made over three hundred etchings, and the present work is one of his masterpieces. This scene of Christ's crucifixion is extraordinarily dramatic on account of the bold contrast between light and shade, with the frail figure of Jesus spotlighted in the centre. The crowd of figures beneath the cross can just be made out in the gloom, an effect that heightens the sense of confusion and suffering that surrounds Christ's death.

Rembrandt began training as an artist in Leiden at the age of 15. His skill and imagination led to great success once he moved to Amsterdam in 1631. Printmaking was a central element of his production. It supplemented his income and due to the portability of prints it also won him an international reputation, which was important to him since unlike many Dutch artists, he never travelled to Italy.

The Reformation emphasised the importance of private prayer, and prints such as this were both great works of art and a means of bringing Biblical stories vividly to life.



Lewis Chess Piece,  
found on the Isle of  
Lewis, Scotland, made  
about AD 1150–1200  
©2015 the Trustees of  
the British Museum

### **The Lewis Chessmen**

Probably made in Norway; found on the Isle of Lewis, Scotland

About AD 1150–1200

Walrus ivory

H: 8.3-9.7 cm, W: 3.9-8.3 cm

1831,1101.101 and 115

The remarkable medieval chess pieces known as the Lewis Chessmen were discovered on the Hebridean island of Lewis off the northwest coast of Scotland in 1831. Containing 78 elaborately carved chess pieces, as well as several other walrus ivory items, the hoard represents the largest single find of 12th-century European objects made purely for recreational purposes.

The two pieces shown here, both carved out of walrus tusk, represent a knight riding a horse and equipped for battle, and a standing bishop holding a crozier and holy book. The bishop was a recent addition to European chess at this time, reflecting the increasing importance of the Church in the hierarchy of state in the late Middle Ages.

It is difficult to identify where the chess pieces were made. Specific stylistic details on some of the pieces have enabled scholars to connect them to walrus ivory workshops in Scandinavia and, most probably, Norway. However, we cannot be sure exactly when or why they came to be buried on Lewis.



Malangan fish carving,  
Papua New Guinea,  
early 19th century AD  
© 2015 the Trustees of  
the British Museum

**Malangan fish carving**

New Ireland, Papua New Guinea  
Early 19th century AD  
Wood, shells, pigment  
H: 26cm, L: 34cm  
Oc.1739

*Malangan or Malagan* is the term used for both the complex carving style and the commemorative ceremonies that take place throughout New Ireland, an island situated to the north east of Papua New Guinea. During these celebrations, ancestors are remembered, the recently deceased are honoured and boys are initiated into manhood.

When the time comes to honour a deceased relative, an artist will be commissioned to make carvings using clan designs of birds, pigs, snakes, insects and men. In order to achieve maximum dramatic impact, the carvings are hidden from public view and only displayed at the end of the ceremony in a purpose-built display home. After the reveal, they are studied by the community and then burnt or left to disintegrate. It is believed that during these ceremonies some carvings, especially those representing figures, become embodied by the spirits of ancestors.



Door post, New  
Caledonia, 19th or  
early 20th century AD  
© 2015 the Trustees of  
the British Museum

*One of the tallest treasures*

**Door post**

New Caledonia  
19th or early 20th century AD  
Wood  
H: 236 cm, W: 82cm  
Oc1922,1213.1

This monumental figure was one of a pair that was made to flank the entrance of a chief's round house in New Caledonia. Towering above other settlement buildings, the round house signalled the strength of the clan and contained numerous carvings relating to the village's ancestors. Door post figures like this, known as *jovo* or *tale*, did not actually support the door frame but stood in front of it, holding in place the horizontal rods that supported the wall. The indigenous people of New Caledonia refer to themselves collectively as the Kanaks, and their homeland as Kanaky.

Pairs of figures are never identical and may have been carved as male and female partners. They portray recently deceased ancestors wearing mats, which are represented by geometric designs on the lower half of the post. These door posts would originally have been painted, probably with red, black and white pigments.



Maori personal ornament, Aotearoa (New Zealand), early to mid 19th century AD © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

**Personal ornament**

North Island, Aotearoa (New Zealand)  
Early to mid-19th century AD  
Nephrite, wax  
H: 22 cm, W: 10.5 cm  
Oc1854,1229.10  
Gift of Sir George Grey

Personal ornaments of this type, called *hei tiki*, are instantly recognisable as icons of Maori art and culture. Though some are made from wood, bone and most recently Perspex, most are made in nephrite or *pounamu*, which is understood to hold great spiritual power or *mana*. Worn by both men and women, *hei tiki* are regarded as treasured possessions and may be given personal names – this example is known as Ko Wakatere Kohukohu.

During the 18th and 19th centuries, *hei tiki* were often given as gifts to European visitors, including this one which was presented to Sir George Grey, the third Governor of New Zealand in 1848. It is understood that this *hei tiki* belonged to the well-known chief Hone Heke of the NgaPuhi tribe or *iwi*, in the Bay of Islands. Today, *hei tiki* are worn as symbols of Maori identity. They are passed down as heirlooms through family lines, thus accumulating more authority, significance and *mana*.



Vessel in form of a seated man playing a flute, Peru, AD 100-800 © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

**Vessel in form of a seated man playing a flute**

Peru  
Moche, AD 100–800  
Pottery  
H: 23-25 cm, W: 14-16cm  
Am 1909,1218.11 and Am 1909,1218.65  
Gifts of Henry Van de Bergh

The Moche kingdom flourished on the north coast of Peru from around the 1st to the 9th centuries AD. Here, a highly distinct and artistically sophisticated civilisation developed that was built on the arts, technology and social organisation inherited from previous cultures.

Moche artisans are famed for their remarkable sculpted and painted ceramic art. Many of the objects they produced were used by the ruling lords to demonstrate their knowledge, power and wealth. Others were given by the members of important lineages to their peers to maintain social and political allegiances, and also to celebrate marriage ties and alliances. The vessels depict a wide range of animals and gods, as well as important social, religious and ritual activities. Some capture the facial features of specific individuals with great realism.

**Vessel in form of a seated man playing a flute**

Moche potters excelled at modelling realistic depictions of people, plants and animals. This vessel depicts a musician meticulously attired with a knotted headband, short sleeved short and ear-spools. A pendant chest ornament bears a motif of a pair of birds. The man is playing a simple kind of duct-flute, which has a high-pitched melodious warble. He may have been participating in a seasonal

	festival.
 <p>Lintel showing a Maya ruler, Yaxchilán, Mexico, AD 600-900 © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum</p>	<p><b>Lintel showing a Maya ruler</b>  Yaxchilán, Mexico  Maya, AD 600–900  Limestone  H: 62 cm, W: 94 cm  Am 1923,Maud.6</p> <p>This is the upper part of a limestone lintel that decorated one of the doorways of a structure at Yaxchilán, a significant Classic Maya centre. It is one of a series of elaborately carved lintels commissioned by the rulers of the city that provide a lengthy dynastic record in both text and image.</p> <p>The scene depicted here forms part of a carefully prescribed sequence of royal accession rituals, including blood-letting and warfare, used to legitimise the authority of Maya rulers. The ruler Bird Jaguar IV (ruled AD 752–68) is seen preparing for battle, wearing an elaborate headdress with a Rain God mask and a military costume. One of his wives, a princess from the kingdom of Motul de San José, is presenting him with his spear. The inscription tells us that this event took place in AD 755. The “shell/star” glyph, just above the woman’s headdress (bottom left), indicates that war was being waged against a rival city at this time.</p>
 <p>Aztec deity mask, Mexico, around AD 1400-1521 © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum</p>  <p>Aztec deity mask, Mexico, around AD 1400-1521 © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum</p>	<p><b>Deity mask</b>  Mexico  Aztec (Mexico), around AD 1400–1521  H: 21 cm, W: 25cm  Grey volcanic stone  Am 1956,+.6</p> <p>This stone mask represents the Xipe Totec, a principal god of the Aztecs who was associated with spring and regeneration. He is shown with an elaborate corded hairstyle, spool-shaped earplugs and a gaping mouth, which extends right through the mask. On the inside surface is a four-armed figure carved in low relief, representing a priest as Xipe or the deity himself. He holds various attributes, including a rattle-spear, a shield and an inverted human skull (perhaps a container for incense).</p> <p>The Aztecs used masks in rituals to mark important moments of change such as the transition from the dry season to the wet season. The name Xipe Totec, “the flayed one”, alludes to the practice of wearing the flayed skin of sacrificial human victims during springtime planting festivals to ensure the renewal of life. The mask of dead skin was likened to dead vegetation concealing new life beneath it.</p>



*Potlatch* welcome figure, Canada, 19th century AD © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

*One of the tallest treasures  
Director, National Museum's pick  
Curator's Pick*

**Welcome figure**

Vancouver Island, Canada  
Kwakwaka'wakw people, 19th century AD  
Wood  
H: 237cm, W: 75cm  
Am1949,22.238

The Kwakwaka'wakw of Vancouver Island off the Pacific Northwest Coast made giant anthropomorphic figures like this to welcome guests at winter *potlatch* ceremonies. These were held to celebrate important events in people's lives, including birth and marriage, and also to honour the dead. Put up outside the ceremonial bighouse, such figures were intended not only to greet honoured guests but also to emphasise the wealth and importance of the chief.

*Potlatch* figures are usually depicted with both arms raised in a gesture of welcome. Here, however, one hand is placed over chest while the other hangs loosely at the figure's side. This ambiguity may suggest that the figure had a different function, perhaps as a mortuary figure marking the site of grave, though this identification is uncertain.



Transformation mask, Canada, AD 1890–1930 © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

*Director, National Museum's pick*

**Transformation mask**

Vancouver Island, Canada  
Nuu-chah-nulth people, AD 1890–1930  
Wood, painted with feathers  
H: 29 cm, D: 49 cm  
Am1976,03.50

The theme of transformation is of central importance in the art and beliefs of Native communities in the Pacific Northwest Coast region. Oral tradition relates numerous stories and myths of animals changing into humans or taking on the form of other animals. This transformation mask was used in the sacred *Klukwalle* initiation ceremony dances of the Nuu-chah-nulth people of Vancouver Island. At the height of the dance, the wolf face splits open to reveal a golden man surrounded by eagle "feathers". This transformation from animal to man exemplifies the spiritual bonds that link all living creatures in Nuu-chah-nulth rituals, where form is temporary and can be changed at will.



Woman's cloth, El Anatsui, AD 2001 © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

#### Curator's Pick

#### Woman's Cloth

El Anatsui (Ghanaian, born 1944)

AD 2001

Aluminium bottle tops, copper wire

H: 287 cm, W: 292 cm

Af 2002,10.2

Based in the Nigerian city of Nsukka, El Anatsui is one of Africa's foremost contemporary artists. He is widely known for his vast, metallic, cloth-like sculptures, which are constructed from aluminium tops and wrappings from discarded liquor bottles.

*Woman's Cloth*, one of the earliest of these works, draws inspiration from the famous narrow-strip woven silk textiles (*kente*) of the Ewe and Asante people of the artist's native Ghana. The bottle tops come from Nigerian brands of liquor whose names are linked to events, people, historical or current issues. Anatsui thus emphasises the continuing significance of traditional artistic forms while suggesting new perspectives on Africa in the 21st century. Linked by copper wire, the metallic pieces that form the sculpture change the shape of the work at each installation, echoing the fluidity and dazzling patterns of *kente* cloth.



Grave relief, probably from Athens, Greece, 4th century BC, head re-cut in the early 1st century AD © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

*The heaviest treasure. approximately 1100Kg*

#### Grave Relief

Probably from Athens, Greece

4th century BC; head re-cut in the early 1st century AD

Marble

H: 179 cm, W: 90cm

1839,1102.1 (Sculpture 626)

This grave relief depicts the idealised figure of a youth, naked but for a cloak over his left arm and shoulder. He holds a scraper or *strigil*, identifying him as an athlete. Although the stele and its image are of the 4th century BC, it was reused in the early 1st century AD to commemorate the death of a certain "Tryphon, son of Eutychos". His name is inscribed on the architrave above the figure in Greek letters of the Roman period. To personalise the stele even further, the head was re-carved in contemporary Roman style. Once again, the "portrait" is idealised and may have borne no resemblance to the actual person it was intended to represent. This recycled artefact has survived in remarkably good condition.



Stone handaxe,  
Tanzania, about  
800,000 years old ©  
2015 the Trustees of  
the British Museum

*The oldest artefact*  
*Director, National Museum's pick*

**Stone handaxe**

Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania  
Lower Palaeolithic, about 800,000 years old  
Quartzite  
L: 13.6 cm  
1934,1214.83

This handaxe is a masterpiece of the stone toolmaker's art. It is made from quartz with amethyst banding, a difficult material from which to fashion tools because of its extreme hardness. Using another stone as hammer, the maker had to use considerable force and accuracy to knock off flakes and create the thin, symmetrical shape and strong, straight edges with a consistent angle suitable for cutting and slicing. The maker was able to imagine the product and then take a series of actions to externalise the idea into a material form. This transformation of thought into three-dimensional form reveals that the essential capabilities of the human brain were evolving.

First made in Africa, handaxes spread to South Asia, the Middle East and Europe by about 1 million years ago and they remained in use for another 750,000 years. No other item is known to have been made for such a long time across such a huge geographical.



General view of the  
temple at Borobudur,  
around AD1814 ©  
2015 the Trustees of  
the British Museum

*Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles collection*

**General view of the temple at Borobudur**

Around AD 1814  
Watercolour on paper  
H: 51.4 cm, W: 68.3 cm  
1939,0311,0.6.1

The temple complex at Borobudur in Central Java is undoubtedly one of the greatest Buddhist monuments in the world. It was built in the 8th and 9th centuries under the patronage of the kings of the Saliendra dynasty (ruled around AD 775–860) as a Buddhist pilgrimage site. Shaped like a stepped pyramid, the main temple is remarkable for its terraces that are richly decorated with relief carvings and Buddha figures. The site began to decline in the 10th century as royal power shifted away from Central Java to the east, and was eventually abandoned in the 16th century.

Borobudur was brought to the attention of European audiences by Thomas Stamford Raffles (1781–1826) during his time as British Lieutenant-Governor of the island. In 1814, when Raffles was informed about a huge "lost" monument deep in the jungles near Yogyakarta, he dispatched the Dutch engineer H. C. Cornelius to investigate. With a force of 200 workers at his disposal, it took Cornelius two months to clear the site and partially reveal the huge terraced pyramid seen in this drawing. It seems likely that the image was produced for Raffles around this time.



Ritual staff, Sumatra, Indonesia, before 1824 AD © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

*Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles collection*

**Ritual staff**

Sumatra, Indonesia

Before 1824 AD

Carved wood

H: 176.5 cm, w3.8 cm

As1939,04.109

Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles collection; Gift of Mrs J. H. Drake

Among the Batak people of northern Sumatra, carved wooden staffs known as *tunggal panaluan* were used by religious specialists called *datu*. Regarded as powerful ritual instruments, such staffs provided protection, acted as magical weapons and commanded supernatural powers to be employed for healing, divination and ensuring fertility. The top of this example would originally have been adorned with human hair bound by cotton and fibre. As with many *tunggal panaluan*, the shaft features a series of carved anthropomorphic figures arranged in vertical order. These images relate to a Batak story in which incestuous boy-girl twin ancestors were absorbed into a tree from which they could not escape, despite the efforts of the five most powerful *datu*s. Staffs are thought to embody the magical force associated with this event.

The object was given to the British Museum in 1939 as part of the Stamford Raffles Collection donated by Mrs J. Drake, the great granddaughter of Raffles's heir, the Reverend Raffles Flint. While travelling in Sumatra in the early 1820s, Raffles conducted fieldwork into Batak culture, taking particular interest in the purported practice of ritual cannibalism.



Dagger and scabbard, Java, Indonesia, before AD 1816 © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

*Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles collection*

**Dagger and scabbard**

Java, Indonesia

Before AD 1816

Metal, silver, wood

L: 55.5 cm, W: 16 cm

Asia 1859, 1228.267a–b

Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles collection;

Gift of the Revd William Charles Raffles Flint

A *kris* (or *keris*) is a type of dagger associated primarily with Indonesia and Malaysia, but also found in other areas of Southeast Asia. It is composed of three parts – the blade, the hilt and the scabbard – each of which may be decorated, with significance coming from the form and patterning. The blade is often, but not always, of a wavy shape. Worn by men, the *kris* was supposed to correspond with its owner's physical proportions and temperament. As well as being weapons, *kris* are also heirlooms, part of ceremonial dress and a marker of social status. They are believed to have numerous magical properties, such as bringing good fortune or enhancing bravery. While a *kris* might bring back bad luck to one owner and have to be discarded, it could function benevolently with another individual.

This *kris* was collected by Sir Stamford Raffles during his posting as British Lieutenant-Governor of Java from 1811 to 1816.



Demon mask, Java, Indonesia, before AD 1816 © 2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

*Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles collection*

**Demon mask**

Java, Indonesia

Before AD 1816

Wood, pigment

H: 20 cm, W: 16 cm

1859, 1228.349

Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles collection;

Gift of the Revd William Charles Raffles Flint

*Wayang topeng*, which literally means “masked theatre”, is a traditional form of masked dance theatre found on Java, Bali and a few other Indonesian islands. Lasting many hours, *wayang topeng* performances primarily occur at night, accompanied by a percussive orchestra, the *gamelan*. Performers wear masks and heavily ornamented costumes, and the action is narrated through dialogue and dance. The stories that are performed mostly come from the Hindu epics, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, which have been popular in Southeast Asia for more than a thousand years, as well as local tales of the hero Prince Panji. A limited number of actors perform all the roles in an evening, changing masks to indicate their altered identity.

Made of painted wood, the masks are considered to have a spiritual essence. Some are full masks, while others cover only half the face to allow specific characters to speak more easily. This mask represents a demon with bulging red eyes, a scarred face and

vicious teeth, one of the many encountered by heroes in the fight between good and evil.



Bust of Emperor Hadrian, from Tivoli, Italy, around AD 125-130  
©2015 the Trustees of the British Museum

**Bust of Emperor Hadrian**

From Tivoli, Italy  
Around AD 125-130  
Marble  
H: 84 cm, W: 71 cm  
1805,0703.95 (Sculpture 1896)

Like his predecessors, the Roman emperor Hadrian (ruled AD 117–138) recognised the importance of his own image in enforcing and legitimising his political authority. Official portrait types of the emperor were produced in court workshops for copy and dispersal throughout the Roman world. Set up in public places such as forums and theatres, these numerous sculptures and busts stood as continual reminders of the all-embracing power of Rome and its ruler.

In this portrait, Hadrian wears the battle dress of a general, evoking his role as the all-powerful commander-in-chief and imperial protector. Characteristically, he is shown with luxuriant curly hair and a Greek-style beard. Hadrian travelled widely throughout the empire, visiting Greece several times. Indeed, his reign was marked by a revival in Greek thought, art and customs. The bust is one of many portraits of the emperor and his family found at Hadrian's famous and magnificent country residence near Tivoli.

**From the national collection of Singapore**



*W – White on 2P Waves*

Anthony Poon  
(Singapore,  
1945–2006)  
Acrylic on canvas  
AD 1990  
1999-01345  
Collection of Singapore  
Art Museum

**W – White on 2P Waves**

Anthony Poon (Singapore, 1945-2006)  
Acrylic on canvas  
AD 1990  
1999-01345  
Collection of Singapore Art Museum

Drawing inspiration from the curvilinear form of a frequency wave, Anthony Poon first developed his Wave series of paintings in the early 1970s. In the late 1980s, Poon further explored the relationship between colour, light and movement on canvas by producing relief paintings featuring the wave motif. This work in white is the truest form of his study of light and movement. In addition to colour theory, rapid industrialisation and its impact on Singapore's landscape also had an impact on Poon's works.



Blue Vessel  
Iskandar Jalil  
(Singapore, b. 1940)  
Stoneware with local  
clay, AD 1986  
2006-01767  
Collection of National  
Gallery Singapore  
Gift of Datuk Dr S.  
Vijayaratnam and S.  
Jothiratnam

**Blue Vessel**

Iskandar Jalil (Singapore, b. 1940)  
Stoneware with local clay  
AD 1986  
2006-01767  
Collection of National Gallery Singapore  
Gift of Datuk Dr S. Vijayaratnam and S. Jothiratnam

Iskandar Jalil sought to revitalise and reinterpret traditional forms such as the sphere, at times transforming them into receptacles for food and water. According to him, "The spherical form is synonymous with me, a hallmark. It represents human traditions and my vision of the globe." While drawing inspiration from his Malay and Southeast Asian roots, his works reflect a strong influence of Japanese aesthetics and philosophy. This vessel was made by combining clay found locally at Jalan Hwiyeoh in Singapore, where a dragon kiln was previously located.

## Annex D – PROGRAMMES HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE EXHIBITION

### Daily Guided Tours

Guide tours for this exhibition in English, Mandarin and Japanese are available from 7 December onwards. Please see [www.nationalmuseum.sg](http://www.nationalmuseum.sg) for details.

*\* Unless otherwise stated, programme tickets are available from SISTIC. Programme ticket prices do not include admission into the exhibition. Ticket holders to the exhibition programmes can purchase tickets to see the exhibition at a special price of \$10 (for Singaporean citizens and Permanent Residents) and \$16 (for Non-Citizens & Non-Permanent Residents).*

### Young Explorers' Zones

Visit the Young Explorers' Zones in the gallery with your little ones. Learn about fantastical creatures from the ancient world! Be awed by the glittering gemstones! Or indulge in a good read about world cultures! Be sure to pick up takeaway Young Explorer activity sheets and cards from the learning stations and embark on a self-explorative journey to discover more treasures from different cultures around the world through animals, adornments and materials. Continue the family fun time at home with the extended activities suggested.

*Recommended for children aged 7 – 12, the Young Explorers' Zones can be found in the Asia section and between Americas and Africa sections.*

#### Education Resources

Education resources recommended for children aged 7 and above are also available for download on [www.nationalmuseum.sg](http://www.nationalmuseum.sg)

### CURATOR TALKS



#### **Treasures: A Journey around the World**

by Brendan Moore, Curator, Department of International Engagement, British Museum

5 Dec | 2pm (1 hour)

The Salon, Level 1, National Museum of Singapore

\$16 per ticket

Brendan's lecture will focus on the *Treasures of the World* exhibition, exploring many of the artistic masterpieces it features. In their breadth and range, these magnificent treasures provide audiences in Singapore with a sense of the British Museum collection as it can be experienced in London. They come from around the world and encompass many historical eras; together, they provide us with an overview of human cultural achievement over thousands of years. The exhibition also prompts us to consider the enduring themes of life that connect all peoples, regardless of when or where they live. Brendan's lecture will consider how these objects have helped to shape the way we understand the past and, indeed, the present.

**Brendan Moore** is a curator in the department of International Engagement at the British Museum. He completed his postgraduate studies at the Slade School of Art, University College London in 1990 and joined the museum in 1994. Brendan holds positions in several collections departments and has worked on a number of major museum projects, including the development of the award-winning Enlightenment Gallery and two television series about

the institution for Channel 4 and the BBC. In recent years, he has curated a series of large-scale exhibitions for museums and galleries in China, Korea, Canada, Spain, Germany and the United Arab Emirates.



### **Collectors of Asia at the British Museum 1753–2015**

by Jane Portal, Keeper of the Department of Asia, British Museum

6 Dec | 2pm (1 hour)

The Salon, Level 1, National Museum of Singapore

\$16 per ticket

Since its founding in 1753, the British Museum has collected and displayed works from across Asia, both old and new. This talk introduces various collectors who have contributed to the renowned Asian collection, helping the British Museum realise its mission to collect, research and display the various cultures of the world.

**Jane Portal** is Keeper of the Department of Asia at the British Museum. She studied Chinese at Girton College Cambridge, Chinese Archaeology at Beijing University, and Korean at SOAS London and Yonsei University Seoul. She joined the British Museum in 1987 and spent 21 years as a curator of Chinese and Korean collections, during which time she curated the Korea Foundation Gallery in 2000 and the award-winning First Emperor exhibition in the Round Reading Room in 2007. In 2008, she was appointed Matsutaro Shoriki Chair of Asia, Oceania and Africa at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston. After six years in Boston, she was delighted to return to the British Museum in 2014 as Keeper of Asia.

## **LECTURE**

### **Caves of the Thousand Buddhas: A glimpse of art and history through Zhang Daqian and Marc Aurel Stein**

by Dr Lim Chye Hong

Saturday, 23 Jan | 2pm (1 hour)

Free. Registration required.

The Salon, Level 1

With almost five hundred caves still in existence, the Mogao cave complex at Dunhuang presents about one thousand years of stylistic and iconographic development. Around the turn of the 20th century, a hidden cache filled with manuscripts and paintings was discovered in a previously walled up chamber, now known as Cave 17. Explorer and archaeologist Marc Aurel Stein (1862–1943) purchased many of these materials during his visits to Dunhuang in 1907 and 1914.

In 1941, the prolific Chinese painter Zhang Daqian (1899–1983) ventured to the Dunhuang caves, where he created meticulous copies of the famous wall murals on silk and paper. Zhang's sojourn in Dunhuang elevated his status and he was regarded as one of the finest painters of his generation.

This lecture takes a closer look at two paintings from Cave 17 that are currently displayed in the *Treasures of the World from the British Museum* exhibition at the National Museum of Singapore. Circumscribing the paintings and the murals in the Dunhuang caves are the adventures of these two legendary figures, Zhang Daqian and Marc Aurel Stein.

**Dr Lim Chye Hong** is a specialist in Chinese Art. She has lectured for the University of New South Wales and the Art Gallery of New South Wales during her stint in Sydney, Australia. She is also the English sub-editor of *The Tao Gives Rise to Ten Thousand Things: Taoist Relics from the Chu Region* and Festival Co-Director for River Nights 2015.

*Registration required. Please email [nhb\\_nm\\_lectures@nhb.gov.sg](mailto:nhb_nm_lectures@nhb.gov.sg) with your name and contact number. Please provide the details of the other participants if you wish to register for more than one person.*

## TOURS

### Curator's Tour

by Szan Tan, Senior Curator, National Museum of Singapore

Fridays, 18 Dec & 15 Jan | 7.30pm (1 hour)

Special Exhibition Galleries, Basement, National Museum of Singapore

\$20 per ticket

The *Treasures of the World* exhibition features over 200 exceptional objects from the collection of the British Museum. Discover some of these highlights with curator Szan Tan from the National Museum, as she shares her insights on the fascinating objects on display.

**Szan Tan** has worked as a curator since 1997 and her interests lie in paintings, textiles and folk religion. She is also interested in the works of Singapore's first and second generation artists and has curated exhibitions about Singapore art such as *Being Together: Family & Portraits – Photographing with John Clang* and *A Changed World: Singapore Art 1950–1970s*. Szan is also responsible for a number of travelling exhibitions at the National Museum, including *Greek Masterpieces from the Louvre and Pompeii, Life in a Roman Town 79CE*, *Dreams and Reality: Masterpieces of Paintings, Drawings and Photography from the Musée d'Orsay* and *Treasures of the World from the British Museum*.



### Specialist Tour: 800,000 years of Design

by Laura Miotto, *M Arch. Hons*

Fridays, 5 Feb & 4 Mar | 7.30pm (1 hour)

Special Exhibition Galleries, Basement

\$20 per ticket

Design is often associated with something new, trendy and beautiful. By carefully observing a design piece, we discover that it also meaningfully responds to functionality and to the culture of our society. When did we start to design? Our need to design objects that improve our lives goes back in time.

Exploring an extraordinary collection that spans 800,000 years, this tour will take you on an amazing journey to reveal how the form, beauty and significance of the objects we use are constantly evolving. By paying attention to the material aspects of these objects, the tour will reveal surprising stories and reflect on the meaning of design.

With more than 15 years of experience in the field of design both as a creative director and an architectural designer, **Laura Miotto** has worked on the creation of a multitude of

permanent and temporary exhibitions. Graduated from the Milan School of Architecture, she has been living and working in Singapore since 2000. Her focus has mainly been heritage interpretation and design strategies in the context of museums, thematic galleries and public spaces. Among her projects, the Living Galleries at the National Museum of Singapore were given the Design Exchange Award in Canada in 2007 and *Quest for Immortality: The World of Ancient Egypt* the President Design Award 2010. Laura is currently the Design Director of gsmprjct in Singapore, an international firm specialising in experience and exhibition design.

## WORKSHOPS



### **Shades of Grey I – A basic portrait sketching workshop by Tang Ling Nah**

Saturdays, 9 Jan, 13 Feb, 12 Mar, 9 Apr | 3pm (2 hours)

Special Exhibition Galleries, Basement

\$40 per ticket (inclusive of materials)

Recommended for participants 16 years & above

Taking reference from selected portraits from the *Treasures of the World* exhibition, participants will be introduced to the genre of portraiture and learn to sketch portraits using pencil on paper in this two-hour workshop.

### **Shades of Grey II – Textures into design workshop by Tang Ling Nah**

Saturdays, 26 Mar, 23 Apr | 10.30am (2.5 hours)

Special Exhibition Galleries, Basement

\$40 per ticket (inclusive of materials)

Recommended for participants 16 years & above

Skill level: Intermediate. Participants should preferably have a basic knowledge of the elements of art and design. Some knowledge of painting and using colours will help.

In this 2.5-hour workshop, participants will visit the *Treasures of the World from the British Museum* exhibition to observe and record unique textures found on various artefacts such as statues, jewellery and tapestries. They will then create a design based on these textures, using a range of materials from coloured pencils and paint to ink.

**Tang Ling Nah** is a Singapore-based artist and independent curator. She is inspired by urban transitory spaces, and creates charcoal drawings, book art, installations, performances and videos that utilise buildings, places and architectural spaces to communicate stories about life.

**A Charmed Life – Jewellery making workshop by My Vintage Jewel Box**

Saturdays, 26 Mar, 30 Apr | 3pm (2 hours)

Seminar Rooms, Level 2

\$52 per ticket (inclusive of materials)

No prior experience required. Participants must be age 13 & above.

Learn how to make your own gold brass pendant using traditional jewellery-making techniques in this engaging two-hour workshop. Participants will get to experience the full creation process – from designing on paper to creating a finished product – and pick up useful skills in the process. The workshop will be conducted by Ryn Tang, a local jewellery artist who has been crafting jewellery since 2009.

## Annex E Exhibition Merchandise

In support of this exhibition, MUSEUM LABEL has brought in merchandise inspired by the exhibition as well as items from the British Museum shop. Visit the MUSEUM LABEL shop at the National Museum for more selections from 5 December 2015.



*Book of the Dead Mug – S\$18.00*



*Book of the Dead Magnet – S\$10.00*



*Book of the Dead Key Ring – S\$14.00*



*Book of the Dead Umbrella – S\$39.00*



*Egyptian Cat Tea Towel – S\$20.00*



*Metal Bookmark Gayer Anderson Cat – S\$18.00*



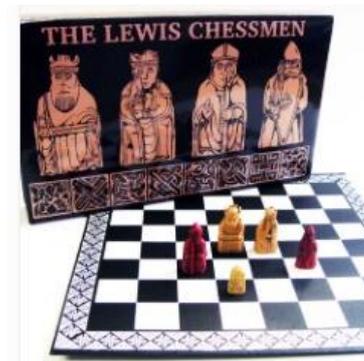
*Mummy USB Stick – S\$25.00*



*Egyptian Charm Keyring – S\$14.00*



Egyptian Mummy Nail File – S\$6.00



Mini Lewis Chess Set – S\$90.00



Medieval Charm Key Ring – S\$14.00



Roman Charm Key Ring – S\$14.00



Greek Charm Key Ring – S\$14.00



Egyptian Necklace Bookmark – S\$18.00



Greek Pots Tea Towel – S\$20.00



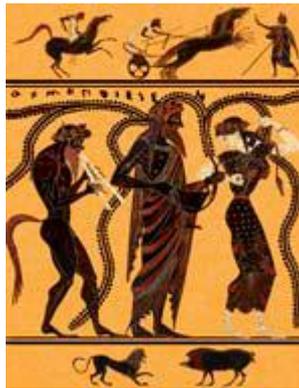
Greek Pots Bag – S\$30.00



Greek Warriors Magnet – S\$10.00



Egyptian Necklace Bag – S\$30.00



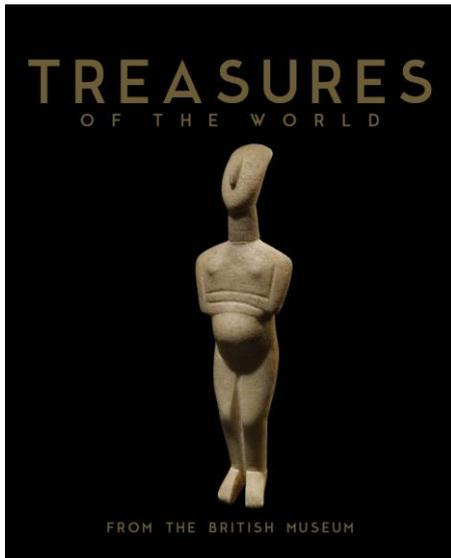
Greek Pots Notebook – S\$12.00

### About MUSEUM LABEL

**M**  
**L** MUSEUM LABEL

MUSEUM LABEL is the retail brand behind the museum shops operated by Singapore's National Heritage Board. Through vivid storytelling, relatable cultural experiences, and close collaboration with community and partners, MUSEUM LABEL gives life to our heritage through well-designed merchandise.

**Annex F      Catalogue – Treasures of the World from the British Museum**



**Treasures of the World** brings together over 200 exceptional objects from the collection of the British Museum. They come from all parts of the world and encompass a great range of historical periods — the oldest object displayed here was made around 800,000 years ago and the most recent dates to 2013.

Together, these artworks and artefacts embody an extraordinary variety of human experience. Each and every object here tells a story — sometimes, more than one — about the society that created and used it. Through them, we can explore the enduring themes of life that connect all peoples, no matter when or where they live.

Format : 264pp, paperback

Price: \$50/- excluding GST

ISBN: 978-981-09-6264-7

The catalogue retails at the Museum Label store at both the National Museum of Singapore and the Asian Civilisations Museum.