

THE ORIENT EXPRESS

The Newsletter of the Friends of the Oriental Museum

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NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

Anne Bothwell

A new decade is on the horizon and the Friends' programme also promises something new.

In 2018 the Friends sponsored the publication of Malcolm MacDonald's autobiographical book 'The Pleasures and Pains of Collecting'. The highlight of the year was the Book Launch. The Editor, Alexander Shaw, gave a spirited account of his interest in Malcolm MacDonald and Professor Keith Pratt engaged the members with his personal memories of Malcolm MacDonald. Dr. Victoria Bagshot, niece of Malcolm MacDonald, entered into the spirit of the evening by wearing 'the Tartan'!

We have enjoyed an interesting and stimulating series of lectures over the past year; a special pleasure was a talk in March on three 19th Century Empresses – Queen Victoria, Empress Dowager Cixi and Queen Min of Korea – by one of our own members, Professor Keith Pratt.

Cancellation of the Annual Dinner due to lack of numbers subscribing was a great disappointment. A new venue, Ushaw College, had been suggested; this is now under review.

The Museum of East Asian Art in Bath have agreed to reciprocal free entry with our own Oriental Museum. If there was sufficient

interest I would be willing to organise a visit/tour to Bath - a City I know well.

I hope you will enjoy the programme of lectures for this season which begins, as always, with a joint session on 12th October with the North East Ancient Egypt Society (NEAESOC).

My best wishes to all our members and my thanks to my two Co Vice-Chairs – Ralph Austin and Sue Childs – for all their support.

Last Season's Lectures

As mentioned above, we have been treated this last year to a rich and diverse programme of lectures. The joint meeting with NEAESOC in October looked at a Ramesside town in Nubia, with a lecture by Dr Manuela Lehman from the British Museum. Linking to the launch of the MacDonald book in December, in October Beth McKillop, V&A Research Fellow, looked at British collectors of ceramics. November followed with a different medium, a lecture and display of traditional Japanese woven bands by Susan Foulkes. In January the Very Reverend Andrew Tremlett, Dean of Durham, discussed Lawrence of Arabia, moral treachery and World War One, very relevant to current events. In February, as a follow up to the Khyal exhibition, Prof Martin Clayton gave a talk on Indian music and the imagination. March saw Keith Pratt's talk on the three empresses. The season finished in May with a talk by Dr Joseph Lawson on the opium wars.

NOTICES

Subscriptions

Subscriptions are due by 1st October 2019.

Family – £25

Individual – £15

Concession (individual) – £10

Membership cards will be sent out on receipt of the subscription. Members who pay by standing order will receive their membership cards with the Orient Express.

Notice of the Annual General Meeting

Sunday 1st December, 3pm, in the Spalding Room, Oriental Museum.

Matters for discussion should be submitted to the Chair on fomdurham@fastmail.co.uk 14 days before the meeting.

Agenda will comprise:

- Minutes of the previous meeting, and matters arising
- Chair's Report
- Treasurer's Report, independently examined accounts, and appointment of independent examiner
- Secretary's Report
- Museum Curator's report
- Election of Officers and Members of the Council
- Submitted discussion topic(s)
- Any other business

The AGM will be followed by a Museum gallery tour.

On a Sunday, car parking is NOT available at Teikyo University. However, parking is available in the Museum carpark, and on street parking is available in Elvet Hill Road.

Members of the Council

Chair – Anne Bothwell

Co-Vice Chairs – Ralph Austin and Sue Childs

Hon. Treasurer – Brian Straughan

Hon. Secretary – Jane Manley

Members – Ruth Crofton, Lyn Gatland, Keith Pratt, John Ruffle, Charlotte Spink, Ian Stewart, Malcolm Walker, Penny Wilson, Dorothy Wolfendale

Annual Dinner

The annual dinner will be held in the week of 20 April 2020: date and venue to be announced

Mahjong Group

A group of Friends meet regularly at the Museum to play Mahjong. We welcome new members – either beginners or experienced players. Beginners will be given training: if you can play the card game Rummy then you can play Mahjong. So join us on the 2nd Sunday of every month, 2pm, in the Education Room of the Museum. We have Mahjong sets available. If you want any further details contact Sue Childs at:

fomdurham@fastmail.co.uk

Free Drinks Offer

On Mondays 2–5pm, Friends can enjoy a free hot drink from the Museum café. (Proof of membership required.)

Free Entry

Reciprocal free entry for Friends at the Museum of East Asian Art in Bath. (Proof of membership required.)

FRIENDS LECTURE PROGRAMME 2019 to 2020

All lectures are held in Lecture Room 009, Elvet Hill House (next door to the Oriental Museum) on Wednesday evenings at 7.30pm, **unless otherwise stated**. An email alert will be sent out in advance of each lecture, and details can be found on the Friends website: <https://www.dur.ac.uk/oriental.museum/support/friends/>

Parking for Friends evening events is available at the Museum, and in the Teikyo University car park (your Friends membership card has to be left on the dashboard for checking by security staff).

Saturday 12th October, 2pm

Joint session with NEAESOC (North East Ancient Egypt Society)

Dr Carolyn Graves-Brown, Egypt Centre, Swansea University

'My Favourite Things in the Egypt Centre'

Wednesday 20th November 2019, 7.00pm
in the Spalding Room, Oriental Museum
'Show and Tell'

Friends bring along their favourite objects to share with others in a social evening at the Museum. For Friends only. Numbers are restricted so booking is required. Contact Sue Childs on fomdurham@fastmail.co.uk

Sunday 1st December 2019, 3pm
in the Spalding Room, Oriental Museum
AGM, followed by Museum tour

Wednesday 11 December 2019, 7.30pm
Rachel Barclay, Curator, Oriental Museum
'Silk Roads: Creating a New Gallery for the Oriental Museum'

Thursday 16th January 2020, 7.30pm
David Rosier
'Necropolis of China's First Emperor – Terracotta Heaven'

February 2020, date to be confirmed
Dr Philip Garrett, School of History, Classics and Archaeology, Newcastle University
'Topic on Japan'

Wednesday 4th March 2020, 7.30pm
Dr Penny Wilson, Department of Archaeology, Durham University
'Medieval Itineraries and Ports in the North of Egypt'

Week of 20 April 2020
date and venue to be announced
Annual Dinner

Monday 4th May 2020, 7.30pm
Dr Elena Narinskaya, Faculty of Theology and Religion, University of Oxford
'Eastern Orthodox Christianity'

ORIENTAL MUSEUM ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY 2018 to 2019

Rachel Barclay, Curator

It has been another packed year at the Oriental Museum. After the drop in visitor numbers during 2017/18 caused by a combination of closures for essential maintenance, bad weather and industrial action impacting on teaching, the total visitor numbers have

bounced back during 2018/19. The total number of visitors was 32,785, an increase of almost 5,000.

Contributing to this increase were the high number of visitors coming to our special events. The single most successful event of the year was Holi Festival in March. 755 people joined us to welcome the spring, taking part in the crafts, storytelling and of course the powder-throws that are the highlight of the afternoon. Our evening openings for Diwali and Lantern Festival also attracted record numbers of visitors. At times the popularity of these events stretched the museum building and our staff and volunteers to their limits. Introducing new elements such as the puppet theatre to Diwali proved very popular and we will continue to review the way that we run both events so that we can try to ensure that visitors continue to have a great experience as numbers grow.

Wonderful as these big events are, they can hide the work that goes on week in and week out, led by Charlotte Spink, our incredible Community and Engagement Officer. As well as masterminding these major events, Charlotte also works with a huge range of groups every day from our Under 5s to the two new projects we have begun this year working with local residents who are living with dementia. All of the team members also do talks, tours, handling sessions and workshops for a wide range of groups, some local and others who have travelled from other parts of the UK or even from overseas. Increasing numbers of events are handling sessions and almost 500 objects from our collections were shared with community members in this way this year.

Our events programme could not succeed without the contribution of our amazing student and community volunteers and our partners in the local community. We are very lucky to get such superb support year on year from so many people.

One of the themes of this year's temporary exhibition programme has also been long term partnerships. Most of this year's exhibitions have grown from collaborations with

individuals and organisations that have been built up over a number of years.

This year's special exhibitions programme kicked off with 'Scaling the Heights: bringing mountaineering literature to life'. This partnership between artists Stephen, Margaret and Kate Livingstone and Durham University academic Dr Abbie Garrington recreated heroic Himalayan mountain climbs in miniature with the assistance of a pair of vintage Action Man figures. The Livingstones have worked with the Oriental Museum staff and with the collections for many years. The wonderful handmade books which resulted from this new collaboration with Dr Garrington were exhibited alongside images from the archives at Palace Green Library and objects from the collections of the Mountain Heritage Trust. The exhibition then travelled to Cumbria and was shown at the Keswick Museum.

At the beginning of February we opened two exhibitions on the same night, 'The Art Studio presents: Behind the Mask' and 'Homelands: Documenting Centuries of Cham Migration'. As well as being partnerships, these two exhibitions sum up one of the other strengths of the Oriental Museum – the sheer variety of work that we undertake.

The Oriental Museum has been working with The Art Studio for several years. The charity provided support to people living with a range of mental health concerns, building confidence and encouraging personal expression through art. For this exhibition, participants took part in a series of workshops at the Oriental Museum focused on the ancient Egyptian collections. They then created artworks in a wide range of media and styles inspired by these visits and what they had discovered. The opening night was very bitter sweet for all involved. It was wonderful to see so many current and past members of the Art Studio gathered in the Oriental Museum to celebrate this project but we were also saying goodbye as the charity has tragically lost its core funding and this will be our final collaborative project.

Homelands is a collaboration with North-East photographer James Sebright, another long term partner. In 2016 James travelled around the South China Sea region as part of a Durham University research project focused on the Cham ethnic minority. Historically, the Cham people enjoyed a rich culture in a territory including several kingdoms in what is today central and Southern Vietnam. However, the Champa kingdoms began disintegrating following decisive defeats by the Vietnamese in the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries, starting a pattern of migration and flux that is still going on today. James met with Cham communities in China, Vietnam, Cambodia and Malaysia and this exhibition reveals the outcomes of this work documenting the lives and livelihoods of the Cham diaspora. James' portraits have prompted many interesting conversations with visitors on what it means to be a migrant or marginalised in society.

Our MA Museum and Artefact Studies exhibition this summer celebrated another important long term partnership for the museum: our ongoing collaboration with the Arnhold family and their enormously generous support for the collections. 'In Pursuit of Elegance: Chinese Jades from the Arnhold Collection' focused on just one aspect of this major donation to the museum given by Anthony and Mayca Arnhold, in memory of Anthony's father Gerard. As well as giving our students the opportunity to work with world class Chinese artefacts for the year, it has also been an opportunity to celebrate the memory of Gerard, a long time benefactor of the museum. When this exhibition closes in September 2019 we will be moving many of the pieces into the MacDonald Gallery so that visitors can continue to enjoy them.

Having talked a lot about long term partnerships, the final exhibition of the year, 'Things from Home', marks the beginning of a new collaboration with award winning ceramic artist Katrin Moye. Katrin's contemporary ceramics, inspired by the objects, landscapes and food that international students miss most when they are away from home, has been a huge hit with visitors of all kinds. Katrin worked with Assistant Curator, Gill Ramsay,

to position the works through our permanent galleries so that her pieces interact with our collections in ways that have delighted visitors. Katrin worked with students from Nottingham on her project. We hope in the future to find the funding to work with her on a similar project with our own students here in Durham. As such we hope this is just the beginning of what will become a much longer partnership.

Our programme of smaller scale contemporary art installations within the museum galleries has continued with 'Playing with Time' created by artist Alice Highet working with Dr Beth Bromley at the Department of Physics displayed in the MacDonald Gallery as part of the Celebrate Science Festival and '36point7' by artist Stuart Langley displayed on the ground floor to mark World AIDS Day.

Away from the museum itself 'Khyal: Music and Imagination' and 'A Good Reputation Endures Forever: the Chinese Labour Corps on the Western Front', continued to tour to venues around the UK. It was particularly pleasing to be able to take Khyal to the Nehru Centre, the cultural venue for the Indian High Commission in London.

Museum staff continue to support researchers from Durham and around the world. During 2018/19 we supported the work of 140 different researchers from 16 different countries including Belgium, Canada, China, Egypt, France, Germany, Japan, Malaysia, Netherlands, Pakistan, Poland, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland and USA. Despite the growing importance of being able to share information and images with researchers digitally, there is no substitute for working with the real object and so staff retrieved more than 2,500 objects from stores for visiting researchers to study during 2018/19.

Staff also continued to support Durham University research by travelling to Asia to work alongside our academic colleagues on their projects. In September 2018, I lead a team of five from the UK to run a workshop at the National Museum of Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur as part of a project funded by the School of Government and International

Affairs. The three day workshop attracted museum professionals from across Malaysia. The workshop focused on areas where Durham University expertise could create the most impact for Malaysian museums: establishing national museum standards, museum studies training and museum marketing. We are now working with partners across Durham University to pull together funding for a follow up workshop in autumn 2019.

Our strong partnership with Durham University's UNESCO Chair in Archaeological Ethics and Cultural Heritage Management continued. In last year's report I highlighted the 'Walking with the Buddha' exhibition created by staff from the Chair and the Oriental Museum for the Fo Guang Shan Buddha Museum in Taiwan. This exhibition closed on 30th September 2018 after a 20 week run. During that time it had received 992,989 visitors from 25 countries.

These visitor numbers were quite staggering, as was the feedback. Thousands of detailed visitor feedback forms were collected that are now forming the basis of a Masters research paper for one of our Chinese speaking MA students. It is a wonderful example of how an exhibition can not only showcase research but also generate new research opportunities as well.

The 'Walking with the Buddha' exhibition was based upon the research carried out by the UNESCO Chair team at sites in Nepal relating to the birth and early life of the historic Buddha. Between January and March this year, Craig and I were fortunate to be given the opportunity to take part in a new project in this region to create displays for a new museum at Tilaurakot/Kapilavastu, childhood home of Prince Siddhartha and the site of his renunciation of princely life to begin his quest for spiritual enlightenment.

The aim of the new museum, which is managed by the Government of Nepal's Department of Archaeology, is to help visitors and pilgrims to better understand the site so they get the most from their visit and to showcase objects from the archaeological

excavations carried out by the UNESCO Chair team. Due to funding restrictions we had only 9 weeks from project start to finish in which to fit out an introductory space, two semi-permanent galleries and a temporary exhibition gallery.

It was a huge amount of work but the opening day was overwhelming. The response from the local community was incredible. Craig was forced to abandon a tour for the VIPs because they just couldn't hear him over the noise of the hundreds of excited local visitors!

Meanwhile, back at home we have not been neglecting our students. Each year's teaching load is different as academics join and leave the university or go on research leave. A number of regular users of the museum's collections left the university or were on leave this year so modules for departments such as History, Modern Languages and Geography which have been a regular feature in recent years did not run. To balance this new academics arrive and new courses are developed. As a result new sessions were developed this year for Foundation Studies, Classics and Modern Languages. 687 hours of teaching and teaching support were delivered using the Oriental Museum collections over the course of the year. Equally exciting is the increasing amount of teaching we undertake as a team using objects from across our art, archaeology and Oriental collections. This accounted for another 761 hours of staff time. Across all of the modules we supported, more than 800 students worked directly with more than 2000 of our objects in hands-on classes.

The Friends of the Oriental Museum continue to provide vital support to us in everything we do. This year saw a very visible example of that support when the Friends took on the role of publisher for 'The Pleasures and Pains of Collecting' by Rt Hon Malcolm MacDonald. This book was definitely a labour of love for many of us involved but it has been very well worth it and has attracted a lot of interest, particularly in Southeast Asia. The project would not have been possible without the hard work of editor, Dr Alexander Shaw, the support of MacDonald's family, in particular Dr Victoria Bagshaw and her husband Ian, and

persuading Kate Weightman, our wonderful photographer, to come out of retirement for one last project. The Friends provided the all-important final piece in that jigsaw, for which we are extremely grateful.

Thanks to the generosity of the Friends, all profits from the book sales come directly to the museum to support our work. Profits for this year have enabled us to purchase new storage racking to house the growing Japanese porcelain collection. This type of project is vitally important for the preservation of the collections but is virtually impossible to obtain external funding for. It is the kind of work that I am sure MacDonald would have heartily approved of.

As hinted at above, the collections have continued to grow. I never cease to be amazed by the generosity shown by our many donors. Donations this year have ranged from a sample of ash from the Adoriyan Fire Temple in Tehran, donated by a member of the Zoroastrian community with full instructions for appropriate handling and storage, to a group of contemporary Taiwanese ceramics offered to the V&A in London which the V&A kindly offered to share with the Oriental Museum.

There have been several donations of material relating to the Second World War in East and Southeast Asia over the course of the year. This is an area which up to now has not been well represented in our collections. Much of this material carries a strong emotional charge and is difficult to display. However, it is proving to be of great interest to researchers and it is important that such material is collected and preserved for the future.

The most important donation of the year has been the significant collection of Japanese woodblock prints, postcards and related material donated by Mr J Scott. This wonderful group of material is particularly strong in Meiji Era prints (1868-1912 CE), including material that covers the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars. Industry in the North East of England played a crucial role in supplying the Japanese armed forces in these conflicts and so this collection links to

the history of this region as well as that of East Asia. The collection more than doubles the museum's holdings of Japanese prints and we are working hard to catalogue the collection ready for an exhibition in 2020 in collaboration with our partners the National Museum of Japanese History.

Which allows me to end as I began, talking about partnerships. As many of our Friends are no doubt aware, Durham University, like many institutions, is going through a period of significant change. There is no doubt that 2019/20 will bring some surprises but looking back over the past year is a reminder that we have succeeded thanks to our numerous friends, supporters and partners. Continuing to build on those relationships will help us to make the most of whatever new opportunities come our way. We are enormously privileged to care for this wonderful collection and we look forward to continuing to share it with as many people as possible over the coming 12 months.

ORIENTAL MUSEUM, EXHIBITIONS PROGRAMME 2019–20

Interface Arts presents "East meets West".

26 September to 15 December 2019

Preview Wednesday 25th September 2019, 6-8pm

Interface Arts is a network for artists and craftspeople in County Durham and the surrounding areas. This exhibition showcases works influenced by both the Oriental Museum's collections and Durham University's contemporary Western Art collections.

Pushing Paper: contemporary drawing from 1970 to now

29th February to 17th May 2020

Preview Friday 28th February 2020, 6-8pm

A British Museum touring exhibition 'Pushing paper: contemporary drawing from 1970 to now' will illustrate how artists experiment with the power of paper to express their ideas pushing the medium in new directions. It will highlight the breadth and quality of the Museum's collection of modern art, as well as its global scope. Amongst the oldest forms of human creativity, drawing is experiencing a

resurgence in popularity as artists increasingly choose the medium as a means to examine the modern world, with topics ranging from explorations of gender and political activism to questions of belonging and human sexuality. The exhibition of 56 works will showcase the astonishing diversity of contemporary drawing over the last fifty years, with graphic work by artists such as David Hockney, Rachel Whiteread, Sol LeWitt, Anish Kapoor, Tracey Emin and Grayson Perry, as well as exciting works by emerging artists like Hamid Sulaiman and Rachel Duckhouse.

60th Anniversary Celebrations

Thursday 28th May 2020

To celebrate the Museum's Diamond Jubilee, we will be opening a new permanent gallery and major new temporary exhibition:

Silk Roads

This exciting new permanent gallery will reflect the networks of exchange not just of material goods but also art, culture, faith and knowledge, that have stretched from the North East of England by land and sea across Asia and beyond for 2000 years or more.

The gallery will provide a cross-cultural introduction to the Oriental Museum and its collections as well as providing space for teaching and events. Located in the area currently occupied by the Marvels of China and West Asia galleries, the new displays will continue to support popular school sessions focused on China and Early Islam but also facilitate cross-cultural teaching for early years, university students and life-long learners. The space will be designed to have a flexible layout which will allow it to be easily reconfigured to highlight new research findings or allow special exhibitions and art installations to thread through the permanent displays.

Japanese Woodblock prints from the J P Scott Collection

29th May to September 2020

A partnership with the National Museum of Japanese History and the Japanese Embassy in London, this exhibition will display parts of the J P Scott Collection of Japanese works of art for the first time. This important new addition to the Oriental Museum's collections

was donated in 2019 and includes almost 500 woodblock prints as well as early postcards, books and ceramics. The exhibition will focus on the woodblock prints, looking in particular at three themes: landscape and travel, the Russo-Japanese and Sino-Japanese Wars and reportage prints, and traditional samurai stories and their portrayal in Kabuki theatre. These three very different themes will be used to explore the enormous range of woodblock printing as a popular art form in Japan in the

19th and early 20th centuries from current affairs to popular entertainment.

To check the start and end date of exhibitions before you visit consult the Museum's website <https://www.dur.ac.uk/oriental.museum/whatson/> or ring the Museum on 0191 334 5694