

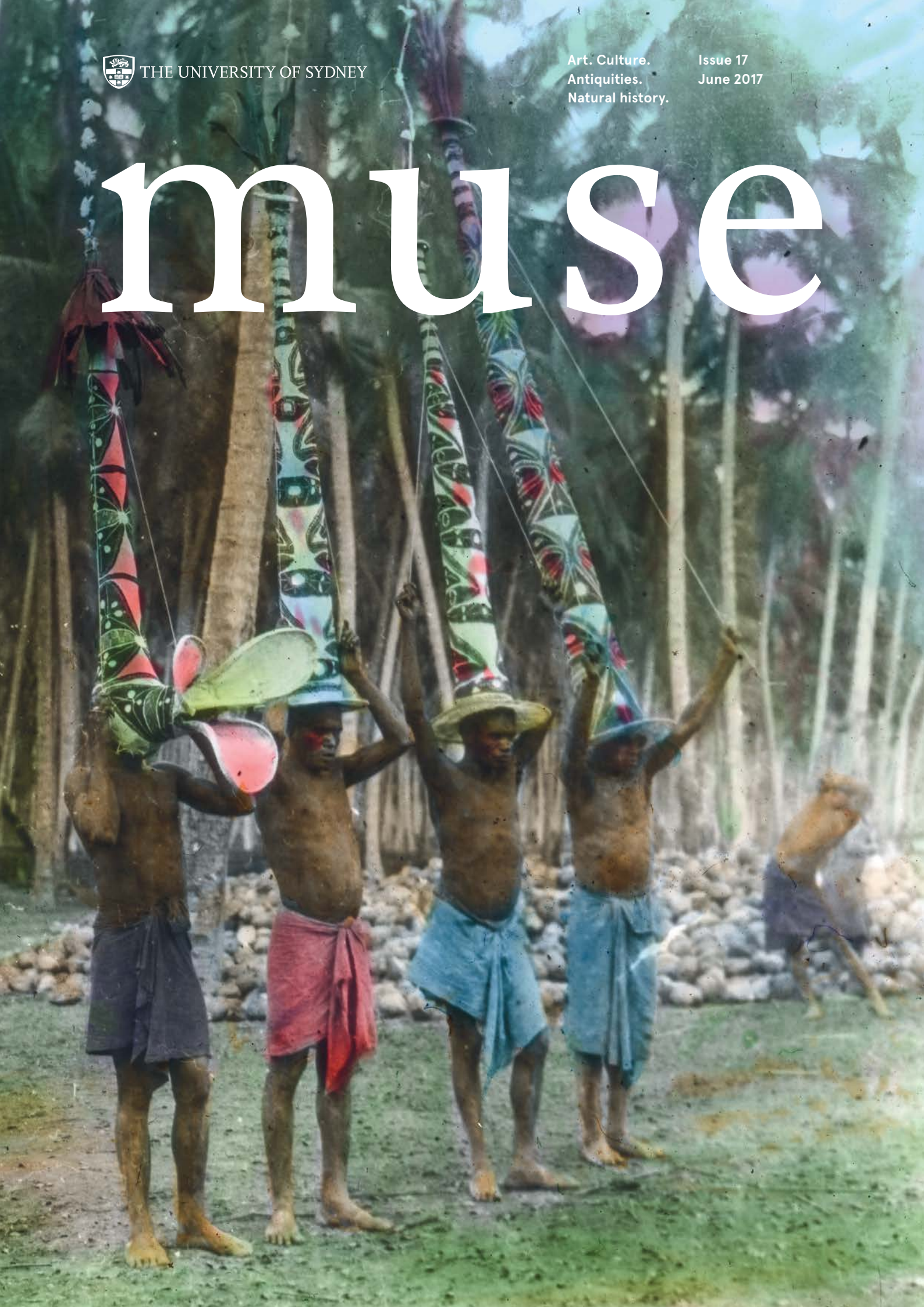


THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

Art. Culture.
Antiquities.
Natural history.

Issue 17
June 2017

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New home, new curator, new works

A word from the Director, David Ellis

In this issue we reveal the first glimpses of the Chau Chak Wing Museum provided by architects Johnson Pilton Walker.

Situated at the 'front door' of the University, opposite Fisher Library, the new museum will bring together the collections of the Macleay Museum, Nicholson Museum and University Art Gallery under one roof. The Chau Chak Wing Museum will feature state-of-the-art exhibition galleries, object-based study rooms, collection care facilities and of course a café and museum shop.



David Ellis, photo by Martin Ho

Occupying about 8000 square metres, the new building will triple the previous capacity of our museums.

Subject to development approval, construction is planned to start around November this year. The building is due for completion at the end of 2018 with the museum opening to the public in 2019.

Staff are busy researching and developing concepts for new exhibitions, digitising collections and conserving works. One of the challenges we are facing is our ability, for the first time, to show far more of the collections than has previously been possible.

In choosing new items to display we also need to consider their conservation needs. We are indebted to the many donors who have generously supported this critically important work.

In this issue, we introduce and welcome our new Senior Curator of the Nicholson Museum, Dr Jamie

Fraser, fresh from the British Museum and digs in the foothills of the Jordan Valley.

We reveal two new acquisitions: photographic works by renowned artist Hiroshi Sugimoto, purchased at auction in New York with funds from the Morrissey Bequest for the purchase of East Asian material in memory of Professor Sadler.

Our Schools Education Program continues to challenge and inspire through object-based learning linked to the schools' curricula. For many students, it is their first experience of a university. In our current spaces we are close to capacity. In the Chau Chak Wing Museum, however, the additional space allocated to object-based learning will enable our schools program to expand and flourish.

Keep up to date with the project at sydney.edu.au/museums

David Ellis
Director, Museums and Cultural Engagement

Sydney University Museums

Comprising the Macleay Museum, Nicholson Museum and University Art Gallery

The Macleay Museum and the University Art Gallery are now closed as we prepare for the opening of the Chau Chak Wing Museum in 2019.

The Nicholson Museum remains open: Monday to Friday, 10am to 4.30pm and the first Saturday of every month, 12 to 4pm
Closed on public holidays.
General admission is free.

Become a fan on Facebook and follow us on Twitter.

sydney.edu.au/museums

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Muse edited by Luke Parker.

This edition contains names and images of people who have died. We acknowledge that, for some people and communities, these may cause distress and sadness. Where possible, cultural permission to publish has been sought.

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Front cover and right: 'Baining dancers' hand-coloured lantern slide, photo: Ernest WP Chinnery, 1924-26, Gazelle Peninsula, East New Britain province, Papua New Guinea, transferred from the Department of Anthropology, the University of Sydney, 1990s, Macleay Museum, HP99.1.165. See story on page 2.

Above left: Adrian George Feint [bookplate for Thea Proctor], 1927 relief print, UA1990.714. See story on page 26.

Above: [William J Woodhouse standing in a doorway at the University of Sydney], glass plate negative, Nicholson Museum, NM2007.119.7. See story on page 11.

A world of memories

Jude Philp reports on a vital resource of Indigenous engagement with academic work held by the University of Sydney and recently inscribed on the UNESCO Australian Memory of the World Register.



Above left: Axe with iron head, Tiwi people, collection attributed to anthropologist Charles Hart, 1928-29, Tiwi Islands, Northern Territory, transferred from the Department of Anthropology, the University of Sydney, 1960-64, Macleay Museum, ETH.1786

Australia's oldest collection of academic anthropology records, documenting a number of Aboriginal communities in Australia and Indigenous communities of the Pacific region, has been recognised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Australian Memory of the World (AMW) Register.

Promoting Australian documentary heritage with influence and world significance, the AMW register contains a wide variety of material including the Australian Indigenous Languages Collection, First World War diaries, convict records, the *Endeavour* journal of James Cook, and the Pacific and Regional Archive for Digital Sources in Endangered Cultures (PARADISEC), which is partly housed at the University.

On Thursday 9 February 2017, the collections amassed by the University's pioneering anthropologists, held by the University Archives and the Macleay Museum, was inscribed to the register and celebrated at a ceremony at Canberra Museum and Gallery. Included are field notes, genealogies, correspondence,



photographs (such as the lantern slide featured on the cover of this issue of *Muse*), audio-visual material, reports, secondary sources, bark paintings and pearl shell ornaments. Together, these materials present a unique and often intimate record of life in Australia and the Pacific region in the early-mid 20th century.

A selection of the items is available to view online via our collections search: sydney.edu.au/museums/collections_search

For a listing of archival papers, look for AP Elkin's personal papers at sydney.edu.au/archives

Dr Jude Philp is Senior Curator, Macleay Museum

Above right: Ri:ji or jakuli (pearl shell ornament), Bardi people, possibly by Akamo, collected before 1940, Kimberley region, Western Australia, transferred from the Department of Anthropology, the University of Sydney, 1978, Macleay Museum, ETA.2007

New digs

Paul Donnelly introduces Jamie Fraser, the new Senior Curator of the Nicholson Museum.

Dr James (Jamie) Fraser has joined us as the new Senior Curator of the Nicholson Museum, succeeding Michael Turner who departed last year. We are most grateful to Candace Richards for her excellent caretaking of the role of Senior Curator for many months until Jamie's arrival.

Jamie previously worked in the Middle East Department at the British Museum, as project curator for the Levant. He began his role at the Nicholson in April 2017 after completing a season as project director of the Khirbet Um al-Ghozlan excavation project in Jordan with the British Museum.

He has a long and illustrious association with the University of Sydney, as a prize-winning undergraduate and graduate student, archaeological field director, trench supervisor on numerous excavations, lecturer in the Department of Archaeology and presenter of public lectures.

His talks at venues around the world, including the Nicholson, have ranged from Bronze Age burials to archaeology's murky relationship with espionage.

Jamie comes to the Nicholson with broad archaeological and museological experience. Since the early 2000s, he has participated in many international fieldwork

projects including in Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Greece, Uzbekistan, India, Cambodia, Afghanistan, the Solomon Islands, and Australia. Much of his fieldwork research in Jordan has been under his own direction, towards his now-completed doctorate on the dolmens (stone-slab tombs) of Jordan, the subject of his forthcoming book, *Dolmens in the Levant* (Palestine Exploration Fund Annual XIV).

"I recognise the unique position of the Chau Chak Wing Museum to transcend traditional boundaries between Old and New World archaeologies, and to set new agendas in developing integrated exhibitions that invite a broad cultural response," Jamie says.

Please introduce yourself to Jamie at one of the many Nicholson programs planned for this year.



In Kabul, Afghanistan, he worked with the Oriental Institute of Chicago on the repatriation of antiquities to the National Museum.

In addition to running the Nicholson, Jamie will be contributing to the suite of exhibitions proposed for the opening of the Chau Chak Wing Museum.

Dr Paul Donnelly is Associate Director, Museum Content, Chau Chak Wing Museum

Above: Jamie Fraser directing the British Museum's excavation project at Khirbet Um al-Ghozlan in the Wadi Rayyan in Jordan, March 2017. Photograph by Adam Carr

Planned to perfection

Dr Paul Donnelly unveils the first impressions of our exciting new Chau Chak Wing Museum development.

We are excited to share the first architectural interpretations of the new Chau Chak Wing Museum from our architects Johnson Pilton Walker (JPW). The images depict some of the exterior and interior appearance of the museum in its location at a prestigious main entry to the campus, where University Avenue curves down from the Quadrangle to Parramatta Road.

On this site, directly opposite Fisher Library, the museum will form one

side of a metaphorical 'gateway of knowledge' to the campus – with the library a repository of textual knowledge, and the Chau Chak Wing Museum a corresponding cultural repository of objects and artefacts.

In parallel with a worldwide recognition of the relevance of collections to enriched teaching and education, the new museum is poised to be as fundamental a part of the university experience as the library.

The bringing together, under the one roof, of the Nicholson collection of antiquities, the Macleay collections of natural history, ethnography, and science, and the University Art collections, is a watershed moment for the University's holdings. The collections began in the early 19th century and have grown exponentially ever since.

The co-location of the University's unique holdings into a 21st century building solves the inevitable





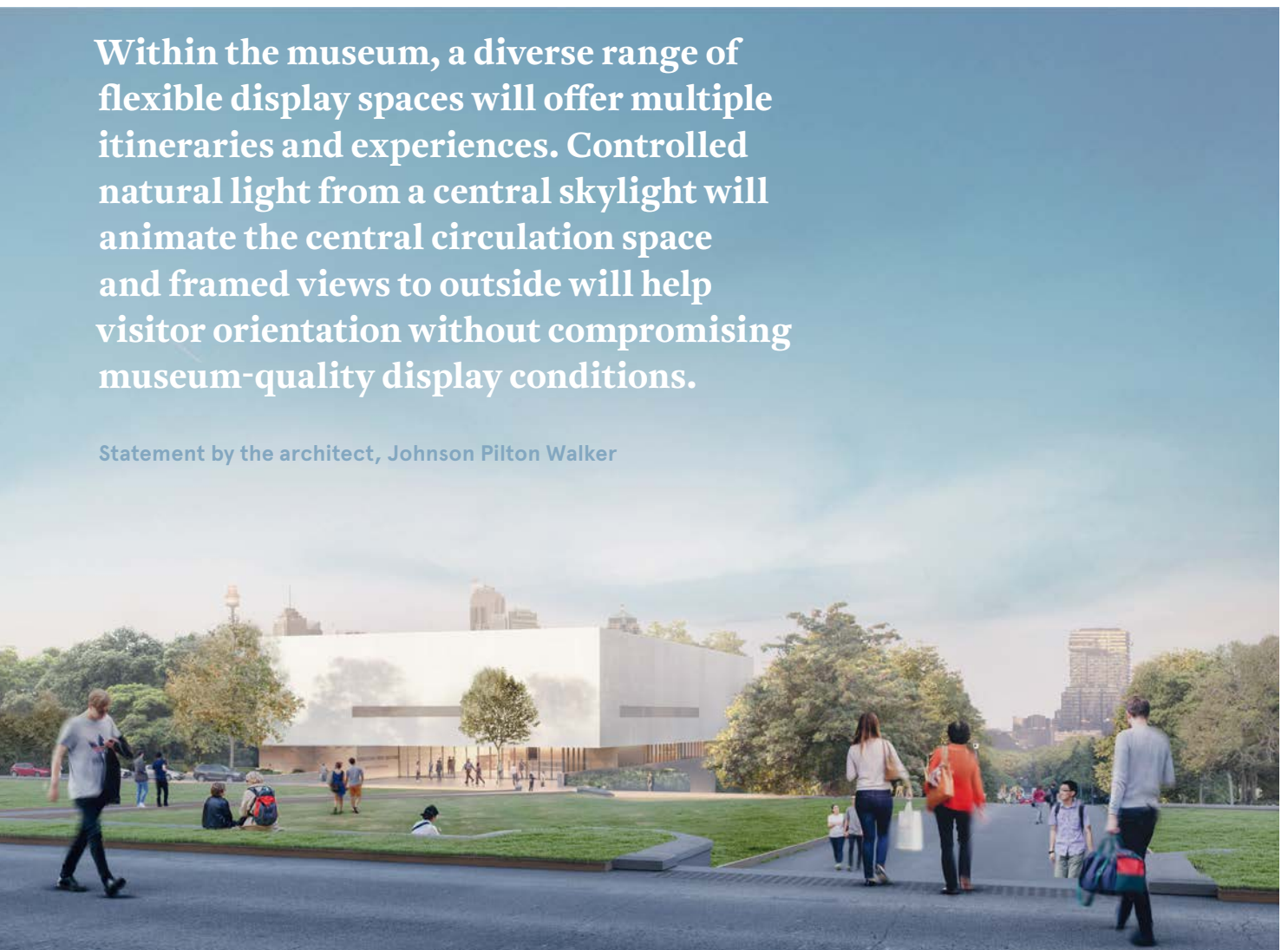
The Chau Chak Wing Museum is inspired by its place and purpose.

The University of Sydney is one of Australia's most recognisable institutions and nowhere more so than University Place, the most important public open space of Australia's first university. Our design for the Chau Chak Wing Museum is very much about this unmistakable sense of place.

We see this important addition to the campus as both a building that embraces the landscape, with a cascade of indoor and outdoor rooms and terraces, and a simple singular form that floats above this new landscape, completing the urban structure of University Place.

Within the museum, a diverse range of flexible display spaces will offer multiple itineraries and experiences. Controlled natural light from a central skylight will animate the central circulation space and framed views to outside will help visitor orientation without compromising museum-quality display conditions.

Statement by the architect, Johnson Pilton Walker





shortcomings of limited gallery space and outdated, inefficient infrastructure for our growing collections and expanding audiences. In solving these issues, the Chau Chak Wing Museum will be a world-class cultural destination and an essential teaching tool.

Scheduled to open in 2019, the museum will triple the current gallery space and provide tailored facilities vital to object-based learning and fostering visual literacy.

The Nicholson Museum will remain open well into 2018 to provide a physical presence for the collections on campus for as long as possible. The closure, at the end of 2016, of the Macleay Museum and University Art Gallery provides much-needed space and time to allow staff to focus on the new museum.

Curators and educators are busy developing exhibitions and program content, while conservators, photographers and registration staff are ensuring objects are prepared for display, and thoroughly documented for online and in-house digital content delivery.

The new building includes storage for the most vulnerable and in-demand portions of the collections, under the best environmental conditions.

With relevant selections of the collection stored on-site, the new ‘object studios’, which facilitate university teaching through object-based learning, will benefit teachers, students, researchers, school children and the public.

The bespoke study facilities, drawing on international best practice, will engage students and augment the traditional pedagogic lecture-based approach in what are promising to be innovative and worthwhile ways.

For the first time, the University of Sydney will have a touring gallery, able to accommodate travelling exhibitions from both local and international institutions, conforming to the stringent environmental demands expected of a museum in the 21st century.

The combination of exhibition spaces, study rooms and an auditorium will be a major facility,

suiting to making the most of the collections for the benefit of University students and staff, and the wider local, national, and international community.

On a research trip last year, I visited 65 museums and galleries across the United Kingdom and the United States, an invaluable experience, that provided a new appreciation of the complementary nature of our collections and their ability to discuss the big issues the world faces today – from the Anthropocene, to natural and human diversity and climate change.

In discussions at the Wellcome Trust in London, its head of public programs, Dr Ken Arnold, wide-eyed upon hearing of the collection diversity of the Chau Chak Wing Museum remarked, “That’s exactly the kind of collection we like to work with”.

Dr Paul Donnelly is Associate Director, Museum Content, Chau Chak Wing Museum

Images are artists’ impressions of the Chau Chak Wing Museum, supplied by JPW Architects. The design is subject to development approvals.



Time exposed: the world of Hiroshi Sugimoto

—

Dr Ann Stephen reports on two magnificent works by internationally renowned art photographer Hiroshi Sugimoto, acquired for display in the new Chau Chak Wing Museum.

The University has recently acquired two works by Hiroshi Sugimoto, one of the world's most respected art photographers. Born and raised in Tokyo, Sugimoto studied politics and sociology at Rikkyō University then retrained as an artist, graduating in Fine Arts from the ArtCenter College of Design, Pasadena, California, in 1974.

All of Sugimoto's works are black and white photographs, created using large-format analogue cameras. The artist has stated the aim of his work is to make "time exposed", a zen-like description of his lifelong project. Both the silver gelatin prints shown here date from 1997, though they are from different, ongoing photographic series.

State Theatre, Sydney (over page), presents the grand 1927 interior

of the State Theatre in Market Street, one site in Sugimoto's vast international *Theatres* series (1978–ongoing) which documents old movie palaces and drive-ins. Sugimoto used a tripod and a 4x5 large format camera with the shutter open and directed at the centre of the theatre screen. He exposed the film for the duration of a feature-length movie, with the film projection as the sole light source.

In our example, the glowing white screen illuminates the lavish internal details of Sydney architect Henry Eli White's eclectic mix of neo-gothic, Italianate and art deco features. Sugimoto discovered that "different movies give different brightnesses. If it's an optimistic story, I usually end up with a bright screen; if it's a sad story, it's a dark screen. Occult movie? Very dark."

Research has yet to establish what film was screening in the State Theatre at the time.

The other new acquisition, *Seagram Building – Mies Van Der Rohe* (left), part of Sugimoto's *Architecture* series, proceeds from what might at first appear an unpromising premise – to make blurred images of modernist monuments, an idea diametrically opposed to conventional architectural photography. The blurring effect results from Sugimoto's unconventional use of the large-format camera; he sets the distance between the lens and the film to half the normal focal length, creating, in his words, "twice-infinity".

The site recorded in this acquisition is Van Der Rohe's legendary glass-curtain wall building in

New York. The Bauhaus exile's sharp-edged, high-rise verticals, along with all human presence, are eliminated in Sugimoto's photograph, replaced by a soft, dematerialised screen, the very temporality of which suggests a lost modernist utopia.

The Sugimoto acquisitions were made possible through the Dr MJ Morrissey Bequest Fund, established in 1984 in memory of Professor Arthur Lindsay Sadler.

Sadler had taught in what was then called Oriental Studies at the University, from 1922–47, through the difficult war years when the department largely focused on Japan and China. Morrissey, a student of Sadler's, left in his will a bequest for a collection of "Far Eastern (particularly Japanese) pictorial works of art".

Today, Japanese is the largest department in the current Asian Studies Program, which contributes to the China Studies Centre and the Sydney Centre for Southeast Asia. After the publication of the profoundly influential work by Edward Said, *Orientalism* (1978), the term 'Oriental' became widely recognised as Eurocentric and has fallen out of use.

For three decades, the Morrissey bequest acquired late 19th and early 20th century Japanese and Chinese prints, examples of which have recently been shown in the University Art Gallery's 2016 exhibition, *Floating Time*.

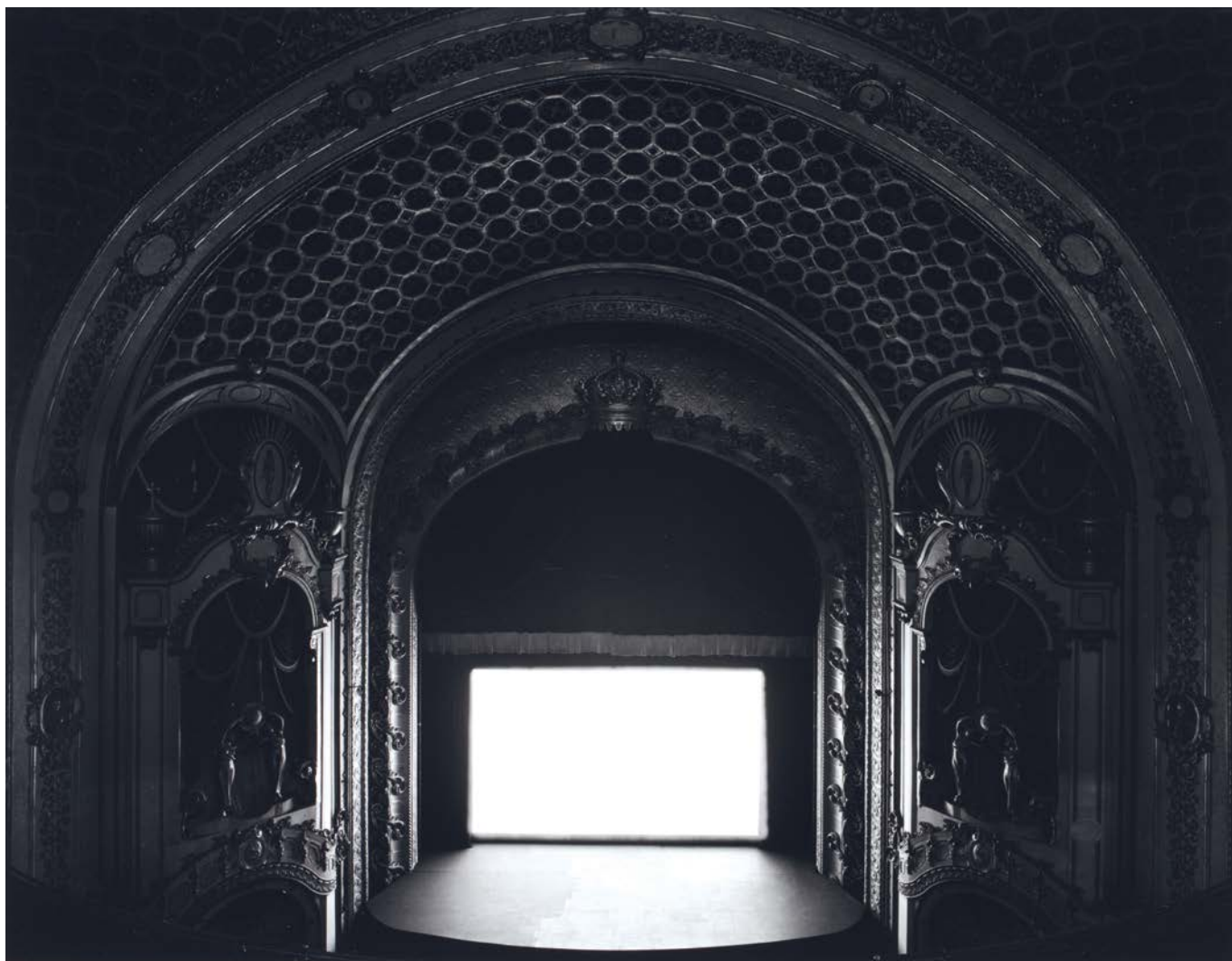
After extended discussion, the Morrissey bequest committee decided to consolidate funds, allowing for a series of major contemporary art acquisitions,

broadening the definition to include art from Southeast Asia. The Sugimoto photographs are part of this new initiative, and follow purchases of contemporary Southeast Asian artworks by Thai artist Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook in 2014 and by Singapore-born artist Simryn Gill in 2016.

Dr Ann Stephen is Senior Curator, University Art Collection

Page 8: Hiroshi Sugimoto, *Seagram Building - Mies Van Der Rohe, 1997 (Architecture series)*, silver gelatin print, 58.2 x 47cm, Dr MJ Morrissey Bequest Fund, University Art Collection, UA2017.4

Below: Hiroshi Sugimoto, *State Theatre, Sydney, 1997 (Theatres series)*, silver gelatin print, 42.3 x 54.6cm, Dr MJ Morrissey Bequest Fund, University Art Collection, UA2017.5



Some impressions of Greece

A new project seeks to identify the sites in Greece photographed by former curator William J Woodhouse. Candace Richards explains how you can get involved.



A rare collection of 1800 glass plate negatives, depicting the landscapes, archaeological sites, towns, villages and peoples of 1890s and early 1900s Greece, is held in the Nicholson collections.

Taken by William J Woodhouse (1866–1937), former Honorary Curator and Professor of Greek at the University of Sydney, the

photographs reveal not only his interest in the historic monuments of Greece but also his love of the people and culture, and the affinity he felt with this unique country.

Woodhouse hints at the desire to capture the Greek landscape in the introduction to his book *Aetolia: Its geography, topography and antiquities* (1897): “History only

attains its full value by borrowing actuality from geography and topography”, meaning one needed not only to read the works of Thucydides and Herodotus or view objects in a museum, but also to place the ancient past in the physical world.

Through photography, this goal could be achieved and shared



through publications, as well as with his students on the other side of the world in the coming decades.

The photographs primarily date to Woodhouse's fieldwork and social visits to Greece, a time when the country was on the cusp of industrial change and, significantly for travellers, increasing access to modern transportation. Woodhouse, following what was to be his last trip to Greece (1890s–1936), reflected on these changes in his address 'Some Impressions of Greece', printed in *The Union Recorder*, 7 May 1936:

"I carry in my mind what perhaps no one else in Australia has, a series of pictures of Greece in her different

stages of growth covering half a century of her existence ... In the old days, as one approached Piraeus, one looked eagerly to be the first to pick up the table-like rock of the Akropolis with its grey-golden crown of the Parthenon shining clear against the background of historic mountains. But now it is all very different ... Everywhere is visible the ugly evidence of an enormous influx of population and its consequent industrial expansion ... This time-saving [conversion to train and motor vehicle transport] means that you make no contact with the countryside and its people ... All that was the true spice of travel in Greece is now but a memory."

Needless to say, the intervening decades have seen significant further urban development, as well as sustained archaeological investigation. A quick comparison between Woodhouse's photographs of archaeological monuments and the same sites today demonstrates the extent of excavations and modern restoration (such as the Tholos of Delphi) and reveals the importance of the collection as a documentary archive.

The collection was donated to the Nicholson Museum by Liska Woodhouse, William's daughter and Museum Assistant throughout the 1940s. Part of the collection touchingly includes posed and



candid photographs of the Woodhouse family, in their home in the Blue Mountains and in Greece. Along with the negatives, the museum holds several of Woodhouse's notebooks, papers and reference scrapbooks. Unfortunately, only a fraction of this material relates to the photographs, and the location of only a few of the images was recorded.

Previous research projects, notably Rowan Conroy's PhD dissertation (2012), have delved into the photographic archive and assisted with identifying monuments and reconciling some of the images to their modern locations using geo-coordinates. However, because of the large volume of images to process, and the dramatic difference a century has made to sites and landscape, the vast majority of the collection is unidentified.

To help us identify and catalogue the collection, we are launching a community project, via Flickr, seeking the public's help to describe and

locate the Woodhouse photographs. Each photograph will be uploaded to the Nicholson Museum's Flickr page and we are asking for contributors to comment on the following questions:

- What do you see?
- Where was the photograph taken?
- Can you find the geo-coordinates (latitude and longitude) of this exact place?
- Do you know what year this photograph was taken?

We will acknowledge all of our Flickr contributors when the collection is published through our online collections portal at the completion of the project.

To become a contributor is simple: go to www.flickr.com and search for 'Nicholson Museum'. From there, you can browse the entire archive, create a Flickr user ID and begin adding your comments to any image you can help identify.

Candace Richards is Assistant Curator, Nicholson Museum

Images:

1: (page 11) WJ Woodhouse, [Grave stone of Demetria and Pamphile in the Kerameikos, Athens], glass plate negative, Nicholson Museum, NM2007.5.11

2: WJ Woodhouse, [Women and children in the area of the Pnyx with the Acropolis in the background], glass plate negative, Nicholson Museum, NM2007.118.14

3: WJ Woodhouse, [Villagers at work in Greece accompanied by donkeys, dogs and bears], glass plate negative, Nicholson Museum, NM2007.26.3

4: WJ Woodhouse, [Unidentified mosque by a river in Greece], glass plate negative, Nicholson Museum, NM2007.4.11

5: WJ Woodhouse, 'Temple at Velvina; from the South East' (reproduced in Aetolia p.329), glass plate negative, Nicholson Museum, NM2004.41.10

6: WJ Woodhouse, [The Tholos of Delphi, before reconstruction], glass plate negative, Nicholson Museum, NM2007.49.12

7: The Tholos of Delphi, photographed 19 September 2009
Source: Flickr, Peter CC BY-NC-ND



1.

Reclaiming identity

Rebecca Conway explores 19th century photographs of Tasmanian Aboriginal people from the Macleay collection as signals of legacy and endurance.

The Macleay Museum's historic photograph collection holds 14 glass lantern slides depicting Tasmanian Aboriginal people. Taken between 1858 and 1866, the images are of eight women and two men: Meethecaratheeanna, Drunameliyer, Plowneme, Pangernowidedic, Wapperty, Coonia, Drayduric and Truganini, and William Lanne and Calamarowenye.

Since their creation, the images have been used to perpetuate two kinds of identity theft: of the portrait subjects themselves, whose individuality was subsumed as they came to be identified as 'The Last Tasmanians'; and that of the other Tasmanian Aboriginal people whose ongoing existence was denied, partly as a result of this interpretation.

The violence of Tasmania's colonisation was well documented in its day and has been examined in detail by historians since. Aboriginal landowners fought British settlement and, by the 1830s, many had been killed in the struggle. The survivors' lives were affected by immense social change, violence, disease and dispossession.

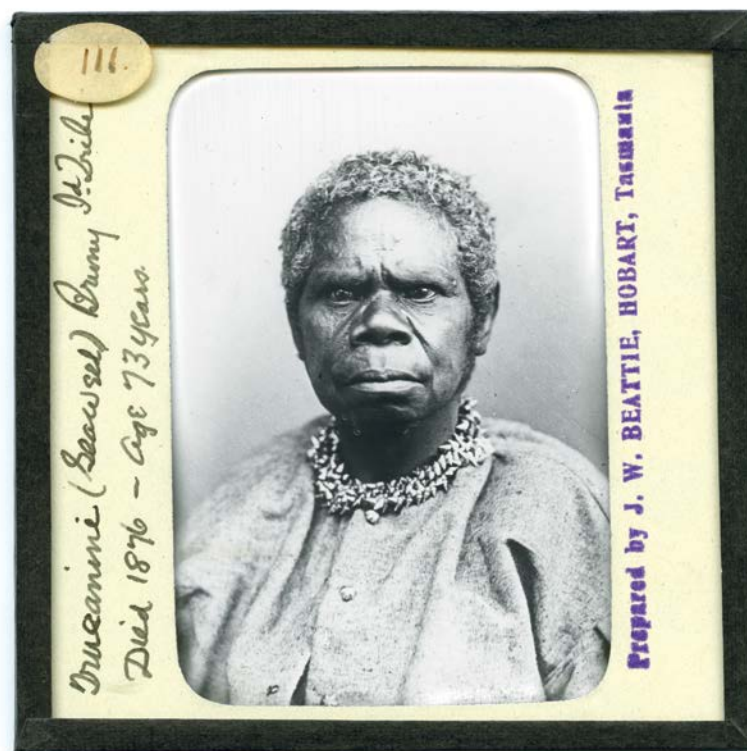
In an effort to reduce violent interactions and end 'The Black War', as it had become known, George Augustus Robinson was appointed a conciliator. From 1830 to 1834, he and a group of Aboriginal people, including Truganini, then about 18 years old,

reached out to people across the main island, offering them 'protection'. This took the form of segregated settlements, first at Wybalenna on Flinders Island and, later, at Oyster Cove station, south of Hobart. Families and individuals with mixed ancestry were not invited to go to these places.

Wybalenna was little more than an internment camp and mission. Aboriginal culture was suppressed and new anglicised names were assigned to some people. Many people died due to poor living conditions, sickness and possibly despair. By 1847, the 47 remaining from the original group of 135 Aboriginal people were moved to Oyster Cove where the situation proved just as dire.

Photography was in its infancy in this era, involving specialised equipment and lengthy procedures to capture and process images. In 2014, Julie Gough, an artist, academic and Tasmanian Aboriginal woman, wrote a detailed and poignant chapter for the book *Calling the Shots: Aboriginal photographs*, which assisted in the identification of the people in the Macleay images. As part of her research, Gough scrutinised the first 50 photographs of Tasmanian Aboriginal people, all produced before 1867, an incredibly large number for the period.

The Macleay holds two types of images that are a feature of this colonial photography: posed group



2.

and individual portraits. The group shots appear to showcase ‘assimilation’, with the subjects wearing European-style clothes in front of settlement houses. The individual portraits include anthropometrically styled frontal and profile views focused on documenting people’s heads and faces.

Four of the Macleay images are attributed to Bishop Francis Russell Nixon, who was the first Bishop of Tasmania from 1842 to 1863. The majority are individual portraits taken by Tasmanian-born Charles Alfred Woolley. At Oyster Cove in August 1866, he photographed the remaining five people living at the settlement: Coonia, Pangernowidedic, Truganini, William Lanne and Wapperty.

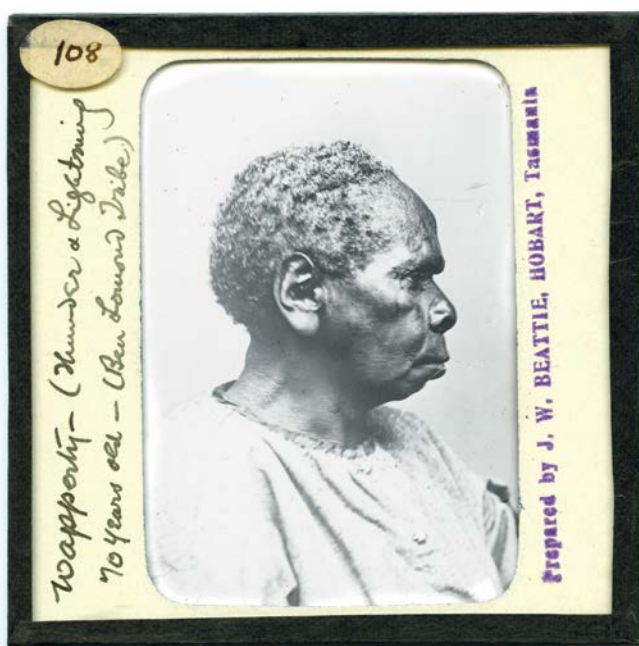
Framed in ‘colonial wood’, the images were displayed later that year at the first Intercolonial Exhibition, in Melbourne, which promoted the ‘products’ and ‘achievements’ of the Australian colonies.

In Woolley’s photographs, the women’s shell necklaces are prominent. Were these worn as symbols of cultural identity, defiance and resistance by the women? Traditionally strung on kangaroo sinew, necklaces of small pearlescent maireener (rainbow kelp) shells are a distinctive aspect of Tasmanian Aboriginal material culture.

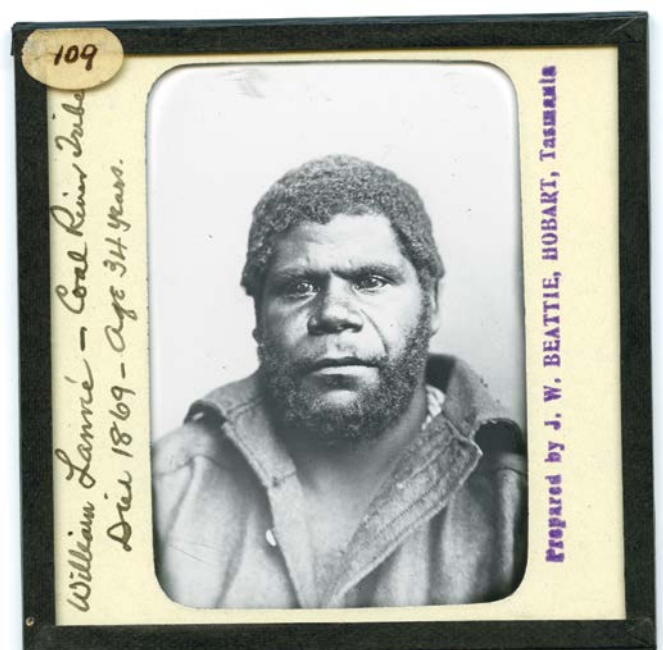
Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery’s Indigenous Cultures Senior Curator and Pakana (Tasmanian Aboriginal) woman, Zoe Rimmer, has commented that “Shell stringing was one of the only practices that was continued throughout the invasion and colonisation of Tasmania so it’s something that obviously had a special importance to people.”

By 1869, Truganini and William Lanne were the only survivors of the group photographed by Woolley. Despite a wide age difference, they were often described as being married, referred to as ‘King’ and ‘Queen’ and lauded as the ‘last’ of the Tasmanians. When Lanne died, his body was exhumed, fought over and mutilated in the name of science. Alone, Truganini moved to Hobart and lived with the spectre of this fate. When she passed away on 8 May 1876, her body was treated no better.

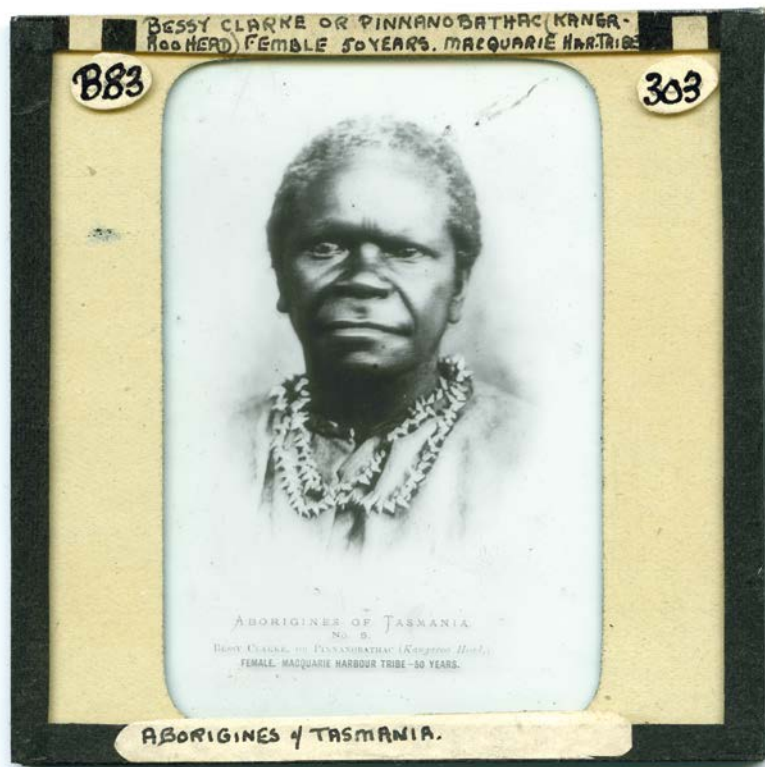
The images proliferated after their subjects’ deaths, with engravings made from the photographs appearing in books, such as James Bonwick’s *The Last of the Tasmanians* (1870), sealing their ‘fame’ and their people’s purported fate. Photographic plates also ended up in the Hobart studio of John Watt Beattie who reproduced them as prints in souvenir volumes in the 1890s. The Macleay holds images published as lantern slides by Beattie and by Sydney-based photographer and studio owner, Henry King.



3.



4.



5.

Widely copied and circulated internationally, people's personal names and identities were often confused or erased over time. The majority of the Macleay lantern slides came from the Geology and Anthropology Departments, used for teaching from the 1920s–40s. The portraits illustrated lectures on race, with the subjects employed as examples of racial 'types'.

Tasmanian Aboriginal activist Michael Mansell has commented that the "images are held up to perpetuate the racist myth that unless you were so-called full-blood, untainted by marrying with white people, you weren't a real Aborigine".

The continued positing of the people in these images as 'The Last Tasmanians' insults their memory as individuals and is also a denial of the Aboriginal identity of the people who survived. Gough has written that the official determination to deny the existence of other Aboriginal people, those not interned at Oyster Cove, has ramifications to this day: the mainstream populace has misunderstood Aboriginality, Aboriginal history and cultural continuance in Tasmania. The sad yet steadfast gazes in these portraits entreat us to understand a more complex and nuanced history.

Rebecca Conway is Curator, ethnography, Macleay Museum

Images:

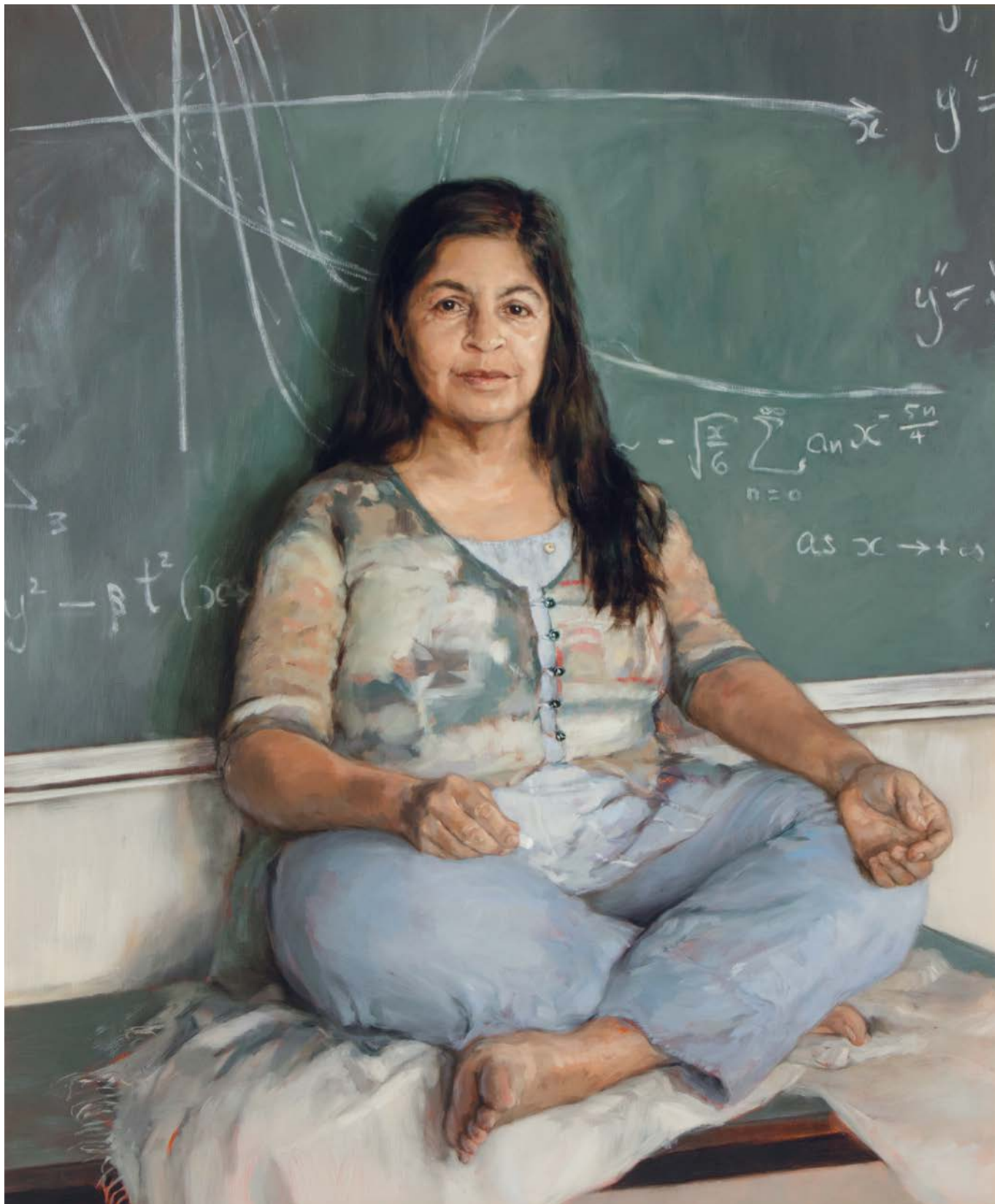
1: (page 14) Group portrait of people at Putalina, Oyster Cove. from left, front: Truganini (Lalla Rookh), Drunameliyer (Caroline), middle: Drayduric (Sophia), Calamarowenye (Tippo Saib), Meethecaratheeanna (Emma), back: unidentified woman, photo: Bishop Francis Russell Nixon, 1858–60, lantern slide published by Henry King, Sydney 1884–1923, Macleay Museum, HP90.28.929

2: (page 15) Portrait of Truganini, photo: Charles Alfred Woolley August, 1866, lantern slide published by James Watt Beattie, 1890s–1920s, Macleay Museum, HP99.1.111

3: Portrait of Wapperty, photo: Charles Alfred Woolley August, 1866, lantern slide published by James Watt Beattie, 1890s–1920s, Macleay Museum, HP99.1.108

4: Portrait of William Lanne, photo: Charles Alfred Woolley August, 1866, lantern slide published by James Watt Beattie, 1890s–1920s, Macleay Museum, HP99.1.109

5: Portrait of Pangernowidedic, photo: Charles Alfred Woolley, August 1866, lantern slide published by Henry King, Sydney 1884–1923, Macleay Museum, HP90.28.932



Celeste Chandler
Professor Nalini Joshi, 2017
oil on canvas, 122.4 x 102.5cm
commissioned by the University of Sydney,
University Art Collection, UA2017.2

Redressing the balance

Katrina Liberiou talks with artist Celeste Chandler about painting portraits of two important women for the University's collection.

In late 2016, Melbourne-based, Tasmanian-born painter Celeste Chandler was commissioned to create portraits of two eminent University of Sydney academics, Professor Nalini Joshi and Professor Margaret Harris, to address the historic omission of female portraits in Maclaurin Hall. Professor Joshi's portrait was unveiled on International Women's Day, 8 March 2017. The portrait of Professor Margaret Harris will be unveiled later in 2017.

KATRINA LIBERIOU (KL): For your 2016 solo exhibition, you 'set out to explore the heroic figure in painting'. You talked about the many heroic male archetypes: saints, heroes, soldiers, dandies, philosophers, prophets, martyrs and artists. When you came to consider female heroic archetypes, you found them limited to the saint, martyr and courtesan. Do you feel that these commissions are a counterbalance to this history?

CELESTE CHANDLER (CC): I'm not sure the experience of making these two portraits was a counterbalance, but I certainly reflected a great deal about what I was doing with them, and if I was just making a female version of the typical male academic portrait.

Early in our portrait conversation, Nalini and I discussed the difficulties around how women present themselves within academia. She observed that some women wear suits and try to emulate the authoritative male dress; others dress in very feminine or even in sexually provocative ways. Men, on the other hand, have a natural uniform of power – the suit – and this protects them from the critique

and self-consciousness that women seem to experience when navigating senior and authoritative roles.

I was conscious of trying to find other ways to represent Nalini and Margaret that were authentic, that gave a sense of who they are as people and how they navigate their paths. In both cases, they are astute in reading people and are motivated by the personal connections they make with others.

KL: Being commissioned to paint two portraits at once is quite a challenge. Can you tell us about your process and what interested you about the project?

CC: I do not usually take on portrait commissions, but this project really interested me because it has a political motivation – to present successful academic women on the walls of the hall in which young women sit their exams, a space that had, until now, been full of dead white men. This gave a specific audience and purpose beyond the standard portrait.

One of my conditions for this project was that I wanted to make the paintings from life, not from

photographs, and I have the greatest respect and gratitude to Nalini and Margaret who committed to the process through many hours of sittings.

I worked on the two paintings concurrently, mostly for practical reasons, a rich experience enabling me to do a sitting with both subjects in a day. Working in this way meant that the paintings were about the relationship between the subject and me, and about their physical presence in space and through time.

Rather than the fraction of a second captured in a photograph, the paintings capture many subtle changes in angle, posture and expression, characteristics brought out through conversation and also stillness, fatigue and humour.

Working from life meant that it became a collaborative process; decisions could be discussed and made together and we had time to reflect upon what we wanted to communicate through painting and through posing.

Continued over page.

KL: You have previously talked about the romance and mystique of painting. What is it that draws you to the medium in such a profound way?

CC: I just love paint! It's amazing stuff that transforms in front of your eyes. I get such a thrill from mixing a slather of smooth paste on my palette then sticking it on a painting and it can become light, space, shadow or skin. It's always a challenge; it's infuriating and elusive at times. I often feel like I can say things through painting that I can't verbalise and when I don't paint for a bit I get tetchy and unsettled.

KL: What have you gained from this experience?

CC: I feel like I've gained a great deal. I've had the privilege of spending many hours in the company of two very interesting women and to discuss their lives and perspectives. I can't begin to describe how rich and interesting that has been. I also had the chance to make two

paintings for an amazing site. It has been a great challenge that has tested my ability to work fast and under pressure. I'm looking forward to seeing them on the wall so I can see if they work as anticipated within the space of the hall, the lighting and the viewing angle.

Celeste Chandler received her undergraduate and master's degrees in Fine Art from the University of Tasmania in 2003, and her PhD from Victorian College of the Arts in 2014.

She has been awarded numerous prizes, and her work is held in the collections of the Queensland Art Gallery, the University of Queensland Art Museum, Redcliff City Gallery, Maroondah Art Gallery, the Sunshine Coast Council and now the University Art Collection, the University of Sydney.

Katrina Liberiou is Assistant Curator, University Art Collection

Below left: Celeste Chandler at work painting Professor Nalini Joshi, photo: Nalini Joshi

Below right, top: Celeste Chandler, *Painted Lady 2*, 2016, oil on linen, 66 x 61cm

Below right, bottom: Celeste Chandler, *Heroic Painting 1*, 2016 oil on linen, 66 x 61cm



On the road



Chris Jones discovers new information about a mysterious collector of Aboriginal artefacts held in the Macleay collection.

As part of the research of our collections, we are always seeking new information about artefacts and their provenance. A collection of Aboriginal objects in the Macleay Museum is known to have been collected by a 'Mr Delbridge' during a car trip around Australia, but not much had previously been discovered about the man himself.

In Susan Davies' 2002 publication, *Collected: 150 Years of Aboriginal Art and Artifacts at the Macleay Museum*, the entry for Delbridge states that "efforts to find more information about Delbridge, including his route around Australia, have been unsuccessful".

Who was Delbridge, and what was the reason for his journey? The

difficulty in finding information may in part be explained by Delbridge's charlatan nature, and a tendency to misrepresent himself.

Delbridge's personal life was marked by tragedy. Born in Ballarat on 8 October 1881, Frederick John Delbridge married Frances King Brown on 18 June 1900. Between 1901 and 1910, they had four sons and two daughters. In 1909, their son Alan died before his 1st birthday, and the following year Frances died. Later that year, Delbridge would have a son with Adelaide Carlyon, but the son died after only a few months. Delbridge and Adelaide married in 1911.

Delbridge worked as a miner for Victoria United Mine for 10 years.

In 1910, believing that he possessed magnetic powers, he started working for Charles Henderson Clarke's Magnetic Hydropathic Electric Healing Institute. The relationship did not last, ending in a court case with Delbridge suing Clark for breach of contract.

He continued to make a living as a masseur, magnetic healer and herbalist, with businesses in Victoria's Malvern and Bendigo. In 1913, he started a beauty parlour at 493 Chapel Street, South Yarra called Mesdames De Awson & Delbridge.

In 1914, the *Truth* newspaper exposed Delbridge as a "spiritualistic spieler", along with JT Allinson and photographer AW Coulson. According to the article, Allinson and

DON'T SUFFER. HOW TO KEEP WELL.

GOOD HEALTH MEANS MORE TO YOU THAN WEALTH

ARE YOU BURDENED BY ILL-HEALTH? DO YOU FIND YOUR WORK IRK
SOME, BECAUSE YOU ARE RUN DOWN? ARE YOU ONE OF
MANY SILENT SUFFERERS?

**DON'T SUFFER WHEN YOU CAN BE POSITIVELY CURED
WITHOUT OPERATION
BY**

Mr. Frederick John Delbridge,

**M.A.H.P., Specialist,
HERBAL PRACTITIONER.**

At my rooms I have a little museum of all kinds of Growths, Tumors, Gallstones, Kidney Stones, Hydatids, Goitres, Cysts, etc., etc., I have removed from different people without operation. I have cured hundreds of cases given up as incurable, and have hundreds of Testimonials. Patients unable to call are invited to write for particulars.

WHEN OTHERS FAIL CONSULT ME.

I UNDERTAKE NO CASE I THINK I CANNOT CURE.

**PATIENTS UNABLE TO CALL ARE INVITED TO
WRITE FOR PARTICULARS**

**Mr. FREDERICK JOHN DELBRIDGE, M.A.H.P.F.A.H.,
SPECIALIST, HERBAL PRACTITIONER,**

NOTE ADDRESS—

27 Zara Street, NEWCASTLE

See the "Argus," Saturday, 27th January, for Testimonials.

Delbridge claimed that "whenever they sit to be photographed, spirits come to grab hold of them to have their likenesses taken too". These spirits included Jesus, the Virgin Mary, Solomon and Nicodemus. They made money by charging people to see the photographs.

Delbridge and Adelaide moved to Albury, NSW, in 1919, buying a house in Dean Street, and he continued working as a herbalist. In 1921, Augustine Pauline Schliebs visited Delbridge with severe pain and paralysis in her legs and arms. Delbridge treated her with a mixture including capsicum, juniper berries and bark.

Unfortunately, Schliebs's illness was serious and she died of nephritis. The coroner's report was critical of herbalist practices. Although not criminally liable, Delbridge soon moved away from Albury, first to Woollongong, then Hamilton, and finally to Newcastle in 1923.

By 1926, it is evident that Delbridge and Adelaide's relationship was coming to an end. This may have been in part due to the stress of Schliebs's death, as well as the constant moving. From February, advertisements appeared in local newspapers selling motor launches, cars, and finally their house.

Adelaide would file for divorce on 23 August 1927, stating that she had left Delbridge in May 1926. On 10 July 1927, Delbridge set out from Sydney in a 1924 Vauxhall with the aim of circumnavigating Australia. It was on this journey that the 54 objects now in the Macleay were collected. However, he did not travel under the name Delbridge. His travelling companion was Mary Florence Green (Billie), and they presented themselves as Mr and Mrs Dean, possibly inspired by the street where Delbridge had lived in Albury.

The papers reported that Delbridge had made a wager of £1000 to not shave or cut his hair for the whole



journey, nor stay more than 30 days in a hotel. The money would be donated to the Children's Hospital, Sydney. The pair travelled to Brisbane, to the Northern Territory, on to Darwin, then Perth and Adelaide before returning to Sydney on 3 December 1927.

Billie described herself as a "very enthusiastic collector of local curios". They collected items throughout northern Australia, strapped in bundles and tied onto the running boards of the car. By the time they reached Adelaide, on 3 November 1927, the car is described as "having the appearance of a curio exhibition, as in addition to the outfit used on the trip it is packed with mementoes which Mrs Dean has collected".

Delbridge and Billie expressed interest in the lives and customs of the Aboriginal people they met on the journey. However, their comments reflect some of the

stereotypes and general attitudes that white Australians had about Aboriginal people in this period.

In one interview, Delbridge stated that stories he had heard of the "wild natives" he would meet, he found to be untrue. He later described the Aboriginal people he met as "quite harmless and very helpful when treated the right way".

Delbridge and Billie married on 24 July 1928, settling in Belmont. On 24 November 1929 they had a daughter, Billena Mary Theresa Delbridge. The family moved to Auckland, New Zealand in 1935, returning to Randwick in 1938.

Delbridge died on 12 November 1952. The artefacts passed into the collection of Stewart Lamb, who donated them to the Macleay in 1987.

Chris Jones is Assistant Collections Manager, Sydney University Museums

Page 21: 'Mr & Mrs F.J. Dean, motorists touring Australia, arrive in Perth, 12 October 1927', courtesy State Library of Western Australia, 100161PD

Opposite: 'Frederick John Delbridge, Herbal Practitioner', *Singleton Argus*, 10 Feb 1923, p. 8

Above: Coolamon, wooden vessel, Northern Territory, wood, pigment, Macleay Museum, ET87.13.29

Below: Woomera, spear thrower, Northern Territory, wood, resin, plant fibre, pigment, Macleay Museum, ET87.13.19



Hadrian's legacy

Dr Craig Barker examines the infamous Roman emperor on the 1900th anniversary of his accession to the Imperial title.



Hadrian is probably best known today for Hadrian's Wall in northern England, and Hadrian's Villa, near Tivoli in Italy. Born on 24 January 76 AD, Hadrian reigned as emperor for 21 years, from 117 AD until his death in 138 AD. He oversaw, from the first half of the 2nd century, the pinnacle period of Roman territorial expansion and military might. It was also an era of economic strength and artistic beauty; Hadrian is regarded as one of the 'Five Good Emperors' and a patron of the arts.

Hadrian was born Publius Aelius Hadrianus in modern-day Spain. His early life was devoted to military duty and he served in Emperor Trajan's Dacian campaigns, before a senatorial career. He developed close links with Trajan and his family, and married Sabina, the Emperor's grandniece. Although questions remained about the legitimacy of his imperial claim, upon Trajan's death on 8 August 117 AD, Hadrian assumed power with the endorsement of the Senate and the armies, and quickly had potential rivals executed. The Empire settled into two decades of peaceful and successful reign.

Hadrian, despite a self-depiction as a strong military leader, was a strong

patron of the arts, particularly architecture and sculpture: his villa was the greatest example of Alexandrian garden design in the Empire, and he oversaw the rebuilding of the Pantheon in Rome.

Marble sculpture in particular flourished under his reign; a marble head of a youth in the Nicholson collection (Fig. 4) is probably Hadrianic, and elements such as the wavy hair reflect the influence of Greek art in the classicising style that typified Hadrianic art.

This element of classicism is particularly visible in depictions of Hadrian's youthful lover, Antinous, who drowned in the Nile in 130 AD. Hadrian had the young man deified and turned into a cult figure. In sculptural depictions, Antinous would take on all the symbolism of classical Greek art: his youthfulness and sexual potency now immortalised in stone. Further, the deification of the Greek Antinous helped to symbolically link the Greek-speaking eastern Mediterranean with their Roman rulers.

During his reign, Hadrian travelled to almost all the provinces under his command to enforce the philosophy

of the Empire as a commonwealth of civilised people sharing a common Hellenic culture. He particularly admired Greece, growing a beard in the style of Greek philosophers: he was even teasingly called *graeculus* or 'Greekling'. He sought to make Athens a cultural capital of the Empire, building a library and finally completing, after centuries of construction, the Temple of Olympian Zeus.

This love of Athens is reflected in the monumental gateway Hadrian had constructed in 131 or 132 AD. A stereoscopic photograph of the Arch of Hadrian, held in our historic photography collection (Fig. 3), shows the arch as it would have looked around 1901, separating "the city of Hadrian from the City of Theseus", as the dual inscriptions on the gate describe.

As with all other Roman rulers, the minting of coinage was a means of demonstrating prestige and reinforcing position. Under Hadrian, regional coinage production emphasised his strong push for greater belonging within the structure of the Empire and would often bear representations of allegories of the various provinces.



3.

A number of silver coins in the Nicholson collection, formerly owned by grazier and collector AB Triggs, show the bearded emperor facing right, with a laurel headdress and the inscription IMP. CAESAR TRAIAN HADRIANVS AVG. (Fig. 1).

It is the obverse that gives indications of variations in the messages presented by the Imperial leader. One coin (Fig. 2) has a reverse with Roma, facing left holding a spear, clasping hands with Hadrian, who is holding a roll in his

other hand: a symbol of the unity of Roman military might and law under Hadrian's control. Other popular symbols of Hadrianic coins were Felicitas, Pietas and Libertas.

A silver denarius (NM2004.1830), of unknown provenance, depicts a bust of the empress Sabina on the obverse with the honorific title 'AVGVSTA'; the coin was minted after 128 AD when Hadrian accepted the title *pater patriae* and Sabina the title 'Augusta' (page 36).

On the reverse is a draped Concordia, a reference to harmony, which may have had a double meaning. The more usual reference would be to the harmony of the Empire under Hadrian's rule; but this reference may allude to the harmony in the couple's partnership, to counter growing rumours about the realities of their marriage.

A bronze drachm, minted in Alexandria following Antinous' death and deification (page 37), features a bust of the young man wearing a crown on the obverse; on the reverse he is depicted on horseback.

Hadrian is a complicated historical figure. His governance of the Empire receives high praise from modern historians, as does his influence on art and architecture. He was, however, a difficult and ruthless person. These small objects that have made their way to Sydney from across the Roman Empire reflect a remarkable period of Roman history.

Dr Craig Barker is Manager, Education and Public Programs, Sydney University Museums

1: Silver coin, obverse: bust of Hadrian; reverse: Pax holding branch and sceptre, Nicholson Museum, NM2004.1775

2: Silver coin, obverse: bust of Hadrian; reverse: Roma and Hadrian clasping right hands, Nicholson Museum, NM2004.1797

3: 'The Arch of Hadrian, Athens, Greece', stereoscopic photograph, Macleay Museum, HP2016.4.44

4: Marble head of a youth, probably Hadrianic, Nicholson Museum, NM66.67



4.



From the library of PN Barnett

Suzanne Kortlucke introduces some tiny yet intriguing prints from the University Art Collection.

The University Art Collection holds a small group of works on paper that fall at the intersection of artwork and ephemera: small decorative labels known as bookplates or *ex libris*, used to personalise books, and which bring together function and design.

Our examples, transferred from the Sydney Teachers College, were originally part of the collection of Percy Neville Barnett. A reportedly short-statured, mild-mannered man who worked in a bank, Barnett held the unusual title of Australia's most noted authority on bookplates.

Barnett's enthusiasm for and dedication to bookplates included the private publication of more than 20 deluxe limited editions. Hand-tipped (where the individual plates are pasted in separately) and often hand-coloured, the books were notable for their use of imported fonts and hand-made paper.

Each edition was hand-numbered and signed, and Barnett's attention to detail created beautiful volumes that are still sought after by collectors today. A founding member of the Australian Ex-Libris Society, Barnett's work in the

1930s, and the work of the society more broadly, heralded a period of resurgence in the creation and use of bookplates.

The examples in our collection are a product of this period of renewed interest. The society and its original 50 members were interested not only in historical bookplates but also in nurturing the creation of new ones. They supported artists and commissioned bookplates as gifts, even presenting them to members of the royal family. Sydney artist and trend-setter Thea Proctor commissioned multiple designs,



of which we have two examples. One, by Adrian Feint (page 1), is a nod towards the silk fans for which Proctor was well known.

Bookplates united artists, printers, book-owners and collectors, and often employed symbology, a complex mix for an art form often written off as ephemera. Among the University's collection is a woodcut print featuring a centaur holding a pipe, also by Feint, with the name of author Dorothea Mackellar, who wrote the widely known poem *My Country*. The significance of the centaur to Mackellar is unknown.

C. Nigel-Smith's bookplate, with caduceus and golf clubs, speaks directly to his occupation as a doctor and skill as an amateur golfer.

Bookplates grew to become small commissioned artworks in their own right and Barnett's influence in this niche of the Sydney art

world was enviable. He even convinced Sydney Long to take up a commission, after many years hiatus, to design a frontispiece for one of his publications.

Through his work as collector, connoisseur and cataloguer of *ex libris*, Barnett did much to invigorate the use of bookplates in Australia. The examples in our collection, numbering almost 30, offer an intriguing opportunity to consider bookplate design, creation and use in the 1920s and 1930s.

The University of Sydney's Rare Books Collection holds many of Barnett's publications. Other bookplates can be found through our online collections search: sydney.edu.au/museums/collections_search

Suzanne Kortlucke is Public Programs Assistant, Sydney University Museums

Opposite, left: Adrian George Feint, [Bookplate for C. Nigel-Smith], c.1930, relief print, UA1990.724

Opposite, right: Adrian George Feint, [Bookplate for S.R Phippard], 1929, relief print, UA1990.726

Above: Adrian George Feint [Bookplate for Dorothea Mackellar], c.1930, relief print, UA1990.719

Unnatural history

A unique insect in the Macleay Museum entomology collections is not natural, but a human artefact. Robert Blackburn investigates.

Scarabaeus pulcher: thorace elytrisque pulchre variegatis, laevibus, capite nigro spina incumbente.

In 1787, Nils Samuel Swederus (1751–1833), a Swedish entomologist who worked throughout Europe, published the names and descriptions of some beetles held in the collection of Drury (1724–1803) in London, including *Scarabaeus pulcher*, a specimen from Tobago. Swederus clearly did not recognise the specimen as a composite; it was in fact two different specimens literally glued together.

This invented insect went unrecognised as composite until 1937, when entomologist Paul Norbert Schürhoff (1878–1939) reported that the ‘species’ comprised the head and body of two completely different beetles. Remarkably, Schürhoff recognised this from Swederus’s Latin description and not the physical specimen.

Professor Brett Ratcliffe, from the University of Nebraska State Museum, recently confirmed the body as that of a *Gymnetis* sp., matched with the head of a *Cotinis* sp. The two beetles are similar in size and shape, and are part of the same taxonomic family, but they come from geographically distinct places: the *Gymnetis* beetle is a

known resident of Tobago, while the *Cotinis*, not recorded in the Caribbean at all, is widespread over North and South America.



When and where did this handsome composite specimen come from, and who placed the two pieces together? Although in Drury’s possession, the beetle did not feature in his elaborate *Illustrations of Natural History* (three volumes, 1770–82), suggesting it came to him after publication. Swederus drafted his descriptions in London before December 1785, so *Scarabaeus pulcher* must have come into Drury’s possession sometime between 1782 and 1785.

Drury’s catalogues list only a single collector from Tobago, Mr Laing. Tobago was a tumultuous place in the 18th century, with English and

French colonists importing slave labourers to work the plantations. In 1783, the island was transferred from British to French ownership as a part of the Treaty of Paris, the signing of which ended the American Revolutionary War. It is unknown how long Mr Laing held his beetles before transmitting them to Drury. The collector was known to pay travellers 6 pence for any interesting insects they might bring him.

Heads on beetle specimens frequently detach from their bodies, and in a case of mixed insect species it would be very easy to accidentally ‘fix’ a specimen with parts from another. Famously, a specimen of the Madagascar Sunset moth *Chrysidia rhipheus*, featured in Drury’s *Illustrations*, was also assigned the wrong head.

Drury’s collections were dispersed at auction in 1805, where a large number of the specimens were purchased by Alexander Macleay (1767–1848) and are now held in the Macleay Museum. Professor Ratcliffe is currently working on the taxonomic revision of the New World beetles to which *Scarabaeus pulcher* belongs.

Robert Blackburn is Curatorial Assistant, Macleay Museum

Above: Holotype of *Scarabaeus pulcher* Swederus, 1787 (Flower beetle), Tobago, before 1785



School spirit in Vanuatu

Kirk Huffman reports on the delicate balance of traditional education and new initiatives in Vanuatu.

The government of Vanuatu strongly supports Universal Primary Education, but it is not compulsory, and while the idea of sending children to school is widely accepted, not everyone goes.

The reasons are complex but not unusual for this part of the Pacific, where geographical isolation is typical and linguistic and cultural diversity is the order of the day. Even modest school fees can be an impossible burden, particularly in areas outside the cash economy. Some ni-Vanuatu (local inhabitants) are dubious about the benefits of modern education, or even antagonistic towards it.

Various forms of traditional education systems and techniques existed across the 80+ inhabited islands that today make up Vanuatu, but none involved writing.

Traditional education for the late Chief George Boë Mwachumbani (d. 1992), of central Maewo Island, included memorising 1000 songs and 200 his-'stories', along with the prescribed ways to recount them.

Other learning systems involved aspects common to Western education, with levels of knowledge to be obtained, dress codes indicating a person's educational achievements, 'entry fees' payable and restrictions on access imposed.

From the 1840s, Western styles of education were introduced and run by Christian missionaries, who generally established churches on the coastal areas of the larger islands, hoping to attract converts from interior hills and smaller islands. Not until 1959-60 did the colonial governments of the Anglo-French Condominium of the New Hebrides develop secular education initiatives for ni-Vanuatu.

Even after independence in 1980, education and Christianity were seen to be one and the same, and the same term, *skul* (school), is used for both in the Vanuatu national language, Bislama.



The Bislama phrase “*Bae mi godaon long skul*” (“I will go down to school”) can be understood literally, or the meaning may suggest converting to Christianity – and a letting go of local educational and ritual responsibilities.

Many knowledgeable ni-Vanuatu fear that Western education does not value local forms of knowledge and responsibility. As one renowned chief said “It scrambles our brains; it steals our children”.

The first president of the Malvatumauri (National Council of Chiefs), Chief Willy Bong Matur Maldo, was sympathetic to modern education, but wary of it as well: “*Moa skul, moa save, moa stupid*” (“The more you go to school, the more you learn, the more stupid you (can) become”), was his famous comment. In other words, modern education can give information or ‘data’, but it must be balanced with *kastom* (knowledge) or the child will grow without wisdom, respect or an identity.

Across the nation, ni-Vanuatu have worked to bridge the gap between government schooling and traditional models of learning. Lasting from the mid-1970s until it was destroyed by cyclone Uma (1987), the Yaonanen Kastom Skul at Laowasapat in southwest Tanna, was one of the most famous initiatives.

A semi-spontaneous and hugely successful ‘school’, it provided a learning place that was not associated with any churches, taught in the local language, and allowed students and teachers to wear traditional costume.

The timetable followed the rhythm of agricultural, weather and ritual cycles. Graduates include the cultural liaison coordinator for Tanna, the award-winning 2015 film that embodies many of the ideals of the school.

The national education system, assisted through the Vanuatu Cultural Centre (VCC), also recognises that the national wellbeing is based on strong

cultural knowledge. Former VCC director Ralph Regenvanu (currently Minister of Lands) engaged support from UNESCO for the Rethinking Vanuatu Education Initiative, with emphasis on creating textbooks with local content.

In 2005, the first of the National Cultural Council textbooks was published: a four volume culture and history series available in English and French. This was followed, in 2010, by an eight volume teacher’s guide, the *Teaching of Indigenous Knowledge and Resource Management*. But with three official languages used in the national curriculum (Bislama, English, French), the issue of maintaining the strength of the 100+ living languages spoken across the nation is a concern.

In 2011, Chief Alben Reuben Sarawoh’bahap deployed his skills as a Malakula-based fieldworker of VCC to promote a parallel form of *skul* to sit alongside the government system. Malakula’s South West Bay Kastom School curriculum promotes



local languages, knowledge and cultures, as well as *kastom* concepts of environmental protection.

From the 1990s, the north Pentecost-based Turaga Nation (an Indigenous movement) has been pushing further, creating a new written form of their language, inspired by sand drawings, for use in the Bwatielen Borebore, Vovoraga, Mwaguana i Gotovigi (the Melanesian Institute of Science, Philosophy, Humanity and Technology).

“English may be a better language to do international business. French may be a better language to discuss artistic and poetic endeavour. Ni-Vanuatu languages are definitely better than both these international languages if one is back in one’s home and needs to talk about the important things in life: Land, Language, Culture and Identity,” said His Excellency Odo Tevi, Vanuatu Ambassador to the United Nations in 2017.

This article is dedicated to the spirits and memory of three recently deceased Vanuatu Cultural Centre fieldworkers: Chief Richard Leona Boëvudalua Tungoro Vanuatu, of Loltong, north Pentecost (d. 6 December 2015); Chief Vira Joseph of Avunatare, Malo (d. 5 May 2016), and Jimmy Simeon of V’nmavis, west coast Malakula (d. 26 September 2016).

Kirk Huffman is Honorary Curator (National Museum) Vanuatu Cultural Centre, and an Honorary Associate of the Macleay Museum

Page 29: “Go to *kastom* school and you can become a film star!” Nivhaal/Nah’wal-speaking cast of *Tanna*, awaiting the 2015 Sydney premier. On the left is ‘JJ’, the film’s multilingual cultural coordinator. Photo: Kirk Huffman

Opposite, left: Membership payment to initiate learning. A group of young male children, having paid the required pig price to Chief Edwil Kaising (with pig on left), and other rights holders, will pass through the sacred barricade (in background) to begin education into the preliminary levels of Nalawan Nemen. There are many Nalawan – sacred ritual knowledge cycles, referred to by some as a form of *kustom* ‘university’. NemeL Minduwo, Nindé language area, South West Bay, Malakula, September 1999. Photo: Kirk Huffman

Opposite, right: A mark of learning: hairstyle. In the Nivhaal/Nah’wal-speaking area in the interior of southwest Tanna Island, young males undergoing a specialised and lengthy special education process wear the laboriously-braided *nukül* ritual hairstyle. Interior of southwest Tanna, 1990. Photo: Kirk Huffman

Above left: In a *kastom* school. Yaonanen Kastom Skul students listen to their teacher, Jack Willy Lakai. Wearing the daily dress of their region, those with faces painted and ornaments are about to partake in a *nipé* dance ritual. Laowasapat, southwest Tanna, September 1978. Photo: Kirk Huffman, courtesy of Vanuatu Cultural Centre

Above: Woven mat, Vanuatu, Transferred from the Department of Anthropology, the University of Sydney 1965-79, Macleay Museum, ET86.2.11. The Macleay holds approximately 180 cultural objects from Vanuatu, including items such as mats and belts which are often part of women’s contribution to the *kastom ekonomi* (custom economy). *Kastom* products can be used to pay school fees in some provincial areas and, when worn, different designs can signify an individual’s ritual status within their community.

See detail right



Repair to remember

Helen Merritt reports on her internship in our conservation department, working on a significant Nicholson collection object.

My recent internship in the conservation lab involved documenting and treating an elaborately decorated red-figure funerary pot, known as a *nestoris*. Red-figure pottery rose in popularity in the Greek cities in southern Italy during the late 5th century, and this example was produced in Lucania.

The decorations are attributed to the Primato Painter, one of the last Lucanian vase painters from the 4th century BC. On one side, Heracles is depicted resting on a club, with a lion skin and a wreath, conversing with the goddess Nike, who is holding a *phiale*, a shallow bowl piled with offerings. The reverse side shows a draped Adonis between two women, Aphrodite, with a small bird, and Persephone, holding a mirror.

Acquired at Sotheby's in London in 1946 by the Classical Association then donated to the Nicholson Museum, the pot had once belonged to the Earls of Moray and had probably been displayed at the family seat at Doune Lodge near Stirling in Scotland.

My first task was to examine and document the vessel and assess its condition. It had been through several previous restorations, with re-adhered breaks, fills, cracks and some in-painting. Two fragments had become detached: a rosette disc that adorned one of the handles and a small triangular piece from the body.

In consultation with the conservation team, I proposed treatments to stabilise the pot with minimal intervention, to reduce the risk of further loss and improve its appearance and thus interpretation.

First, the broken disc fragment was reattached to the vessel, with a barrier coating in-between to prevent any adhesive from entering the ceramic pores.

Next, the visibly distracting areas of white plaster infill from previous repairs were painted: first with a removable barrier layer then black acrylic paint to match the previous in-painting which was similar in tone and gloss to the original surface.

The final proposed step, an attempt to slot a broken triangular fragment back into position, was not undertaken as the risk of damage was too high. It became clear that the piece had been 'locked out' and would not fit back into place without removing other broken fragments.

It was a privilege to be able to work on this exquisite object and be part of making it ready for exhibition in the new Chau Chak Wing Museum.

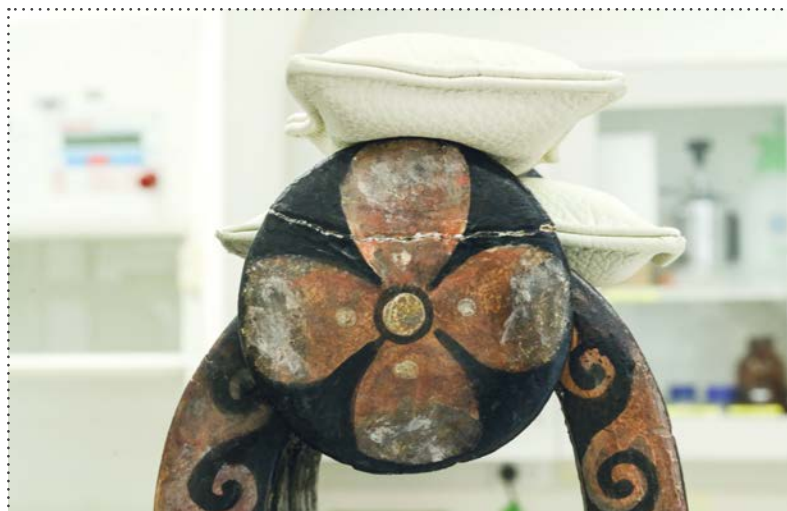
Helen Merritt has recently completed a Master of Cultural Material Conservation at the University of Melbourne, specialising in objects.

Opposite: Two views of the Lucanian red figure *nestoris*, 340-320BC, attributed to Primato Painter, Lucania, Italy, Nicholson Museum, NM46.46

Below left: The broken rosette disc being re-adhered to the object, held in place with small conservation pillow weights

Below right: Helen Merritt at work in a conservation laboratory at the University of Melbourne

Detail of repair



Man bites dog



Karen Alexander introduces an intriguing object from the Nicholson collection.

Tucked away in the Nicholson collection store is a small selection of objects from pre-Columbian Mexico – some colourful, some whimsical, all intriguing.

A standout is a pottery vessel shaped like a Mexican hairless dog, the Xoloitzcuintli. The vessel, dating to 1-400AD, is from Colima in western Mexico. It is coloured a deep red, with black painted details, and has a spout in the top of its upright tail.

The Xoloitzcuintli are an American native breed of hairless dog, prized among Mesoamerican cultures. A number of pottery objects from Mexico have been found depicting the Xoloitzcuintli, all with fattened bellies, some with corn cobs in their mouths or wearing human-faced masks and others dancing in pairs.

The fattened bellies, and the association with corn, have led researchers to conclude the Xoloitzcuintli were bred to eat. Dog bones are frequently found by archaeologists in faunal assemblages in Mesoamerican occupation sites, which further support the theory.

However, this was not their only role – the Xoloitzcuintli were also companion animals, just as dogs are for many people today, and their body heat was used to relieve the pain of rheumatism.

When the Spanish arrived in Mexico in the 16th century, they brought their own dogs. The European dogs were bred with native dogs, eradicating some breeds. The Xoloitzcuintli were saved from interbreeding by Mesoamerican peoples who hid dog populations in mountain villages in western Mexico, including Colima. The breed has survived to this day though it is now uncommon.

The Colima pottery dog vessel was presented to the Nicholson Museum in 1983 by Dr Walther Hess.

Hess had a colourful career with the German Foreign Office, from 1921 to 1965. He served as vice-consul to Poland in 1927 and in Jerusalem from 1929 to 1932. During the Second World War, he retired from active service, returning to accept the position of German Ambassador to Australia in 1952.

On his arrival in Melbourne, Dr Hess and his family were greeted by vocal protestors demonstrating against Germany's actions in the war, despite Hess's own lack of involvement. When Hess travelled on to Sydney, the authorities were so concerned about the prospect of another protest they smuggled him off the ship in secret.

He remained in Australia until 1959 when he was appointed German Ambassador to Mexico. During his time as a diplomat, Hess built up an interesting collection of cultural material. On retiring, he emigrated to Australia and made the generous donation of Mexican objects he had acquired while ambassador to the Nicholson Museum.

Karen Alexander was Curatorial Assistant, Nicholson Museum, until April 2017.

Above: Colima dog vessel, 1-400AD, Colima, Mexico, ceramic, donated by Dr Walther Hess, 1983, Nicholson Museum, NM83.12

Making history



1: Professor Nalini Joshi, artist Celeste Chandler and Professor Margaret Harris at the unveiling of Professor Joshi's portrait. See story on page 18.

2: His Excellency Dr Stavros Kyrimis, Consul General of Greece, presents the University's Dr Craig Barker with the Kosmas o Aitolos Award at the Australian Hellenic Educators Association awards.



3: In March, Judy Birmingham, left, with former colleague Lydia Bushell, reflected on her life in archaeology. The full interview is available on our website.

4: University Archives Senior Archivist Nyree Morrison at the UNESCO Australian Memory of the World inscription ceremony, Canberra Museum and Gallery. See story on page 2.

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For more information and to view the latest timetable, visit sydney.edu.au/museums and click on 'What's on'. Unless otherwise stated, all events take place at the Nicholson Museum.

July

Saturday 1 July, 2–3 pm
Postcards from the Past:
Venice and the Ancient World:
Byzantine and Roman Models*
Dr Robert Veel, Academy Travel
Cost: free

Wednesday 5 July, 10am–4pm
School Holiday Activity Day:
Mummies Alive!
Discover the world of ancient Egypt in a fun-filled activity day for children aged 5–12 years.
Cost: free

Tuesday 11 July, 10am–4pm
School Holiday Activity Day: Art
A day filled with arts and craft activities for children aged 5–12 years.
Cost: free

Thursday 13 July, 10am–4pm
School Holiday Activity Day:
Volcanoes
Budding volcanologists can explore the science and history of volcanoes in this fun activity day for children aged 5–12 years.
Cost: free

Wednesday 19 July, 6 for 6.30pm
Reviving Kubaba: uniting the body of a Hittite goddess with her newly discovered head
Dr Jamie Fraser, Senior Curator, Nicholson Museum
Cost: \$40, \$30 for Friends and their guests, \$10 for students. Includes light refreshments.

August

Saturday 5 August, 2–3pm
Postcards from the Past:
Florence through the eyes of a 15th-century artisan*
Dr Kathleen Olive, Academy Travel
Cost: free

Wednesday 16 August, 6pm
On the Consciousness of Cephalopods
Professor Peter Godfrey-Smith, University of Sydney
Cost: free

Thursday 17 August, 6 for 6.30pm
Knole Unlocked: The secret history of a country mansion
Nathalie Cohen, Museum of London Archaeology
Cost: \$40, \$30 for Friends and their guests, \$10 for students. Includes light refreshments.

Saturday 26 August, 10am–4pm
University Open Day
The Nicholson Museum will be open as part of the University's Open Day celebrations.
Cost: free

Wednesday 30 August, 6pm
Who owns the past?
Complex conversations on NSW Aboriginal heritage
The Macleay Museum's annual *Being Collected* lecture by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curators, this year explores the difficult issues around kinship, moral rights and world cultural heritage.
Cost: free



Silver denarius, minted Rome, obverse: bust of Sabina; reverse: seated Concordia, Nicholson Museum, NM2004.1830



Bronze drachm, minted Alexandria, obverse: bust of Antinous; reverse: Antinous on horseback, Nicholson Museum, NM2004.740

September

Saturday 2 September, 2–3pm Postcards from the Past: Ancient Qatna (Tell Mishrefeh) and its royal tomb*

Dr Paul Donnelly, Sydney University Museums
Cost: free

Wednesday 13 September, 6pm An irreplaceable heritage: recent discoveries in William Macleay's priceless mammal collection

Dr Harry Parnaby, Australian Museum
Cost: free

Wednesday 27 September, 10am–4pm School Holiday Activity Day: Archaeology

A day of arts and craft activities for children aged 5–12 years. Discover what it is like to work as an archaeologist.
Cost: free

October

Wednesday 4 October, 10am–4pm School Holiday Activity Day: Chinese Art

A free day of arts and craft activities for children aged 5–12 years.
Cost: free

Friday 6 October, 10am–4pm School Holiday Activity Day: Flight

From feathers to rockets and boomerangs to Greek myths, find out how flight works and how birds and flying have inspired artists and storytellers throughout history.
Cost: free

Saturday 7 October, 2–3pm Postcards from the Past: Amarna: Egypt's City of the Sun*

Dr Conni Lord, Sydney University Museums
Cost: free

Wednesday 18 October, 6 for 6.30pm Aerial Photography and Archaeology in Syria and Lebanon

Dr Daniela Helbig, University of Sydney
Cost: \$40, \$30 for Friends and their guests, \$10 for students. Includes light refreshments.



* Sponsor of the 2017 series *Postcards from the Past*

Current exhibitions

Please note: the Macleay Museum and the University Art Gallery are now closed as we prepare for the public opening of the Chau Chak Wing Museum in 2019.

Nicholson Museum

- *Alpha and Omega: tales of transformation*
- *The sky and the sea: ancient Cypriot art*
- *Lego Pompeii*
- *Death Magic*
- *Memento: remembering Roman lives*
- *Tombs Tells and Temples: excavating the Near East*
- *Actors, Athletes and Academics: life in ancient Greece*

All Nicholson Museum exhibitions are ongoing.

Follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/sydneyunimuseum or find us on Facebook by searching for 'Sydney University Museums'.

All details are correct at the time of publication, however, events may change due to circumstances beyond our control. Please visit our website for up-to-date information: sydney.edu.au/museums

If you wish to contact the Macleay Museum, the Nicholson Museum or the University Art Gallery, please see inside front cover for our details.



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