

PRESS CONTACTS

Pam Kosty
(215) 898-4045
pkosty@sas.upenn.edu

Darien Sutton
(215) 898-4045
dsutton@sas.upenn.edu

LONG-TERM EXHIBITIONS

Worlds Intertwined: Etruscans, Greeks, and Romans

More than 1,400 ancient artifacts are on display — including marble and bronze sculptures, jewelry, metalwork, mosaics, glass vessels, gold and silver coins, and pottery of exceptional artistic and historical renown — drawn from the Museum’s outstanding Mediterranean collection of more than 30,000 objects, dating from 3000 BCE to the 5th century CE. The exhibit traces the ancient Etruscan, Greek, and Roman civilizations as they overlapped and co-existed thousands of years ago. The suite of galleries also features interactive displays.

Egypt

Penn Museum has a Lower Egyptian Gallery and an Upper Egyptian Gallery that display items from the Museum’s collection of 42,000 artifacts, the majority of which were obtained from archaeological investigations in Egypt. The Lower Egyptian Gallery features a 12-ton red granite sphinx, the largest in the United States and the third-largest in the world. Surrounding the sphinx are the gateway, columns, doorways, and windows from the palace of the pharaoh Merenptah. The gallery also contains a nearly 5,000-years-old black basalt stela of King Qa’a, one of Egypt’s earliest rulers, and walls from the tomb chapel of Kaipure, a treasury official of the late Old Kingdom. The Upper Egyptian Gallery features fine Egyptian sculptures, including two statues of the goddess Sekhmet from one of the Theban temples of Amenophis III, as well as a seated statue of Ramesses II from the temple of Harsaphes, and a series of statues portraying non-royal officials.

Amarna: Ancient Egypt’s Place in the Sun

This exhibition offers a look at the meteoric rise and fall of Amarna, the boyhood home of Tutankhamun. The gallery displays more than 100 artifacts, some never before on display. Featured objects include a wall relief depicting the solar deity Aten, two statues that probably represent Tutankhamun, and personal items from ancient rulers.

The Egyptian Mummy: Secrets and Science

This important cultural and scientific exhibition explains Egyptian ideas about life after death, as well as the health and disease patterns revealed by X-ray and autopsy studies of mummified remains. The exhibit features nine mummies from the Museum’s own collection, materials used in embalming, and other artifacts found in ancient tombs to aid the individual in the afterlife.

Canaan and Ancient Israel

This exhibit features more than 350 rare artifacts from about 3000 to 586 BCE, excavated by Penn Museum archaeologists in Israel, Jordan, and Lebanon. Recognizing the role that the Bible has had in shaping the personal and cultural identities of people throughout the world, the exhibition asks the question, “What shaped the identities of the Bible’s people?” Highlights include inscribed jar handles and seals, weapons, gold personal objects, and faces modeled on ancient clay sarcophagi.

Living in Balance: The Universe of the Hopi, Zuni, Navajo, and Apache

This exhibition focuses on the cultures of four Native American peoples of the Southwest, and the sacred and cultural connection these peoples have with their environment. An Apache tipi and a Navajo hoogan framework, an illuminated walk-in sky theater, a video of the process of piiki making, and more than 300 objects from the Museum’s extensive archaeological and ethnographic Southwest collections offer insight and information about the history and traditions of these native peoples.

Raven’s Journey: The World of Alaska’s Native People

Late 19th and early 20th century art and culture of three Alaskan groups—the Eskimos, the Athapaskans, and the Tlingit—are featured in this exhibition. In all three cultures, “Raven” is believed to be the creator of all things, yet each group expresses this concept in distinctive ways. Nearly 380 objects from the Museum’s extraordinary American collections, accompanied by blow-ups of rare ethnographic photographs, illustrate the exceptional creativity of Alaska’s native people as the exhibit follows a “Raven’s Journey” through their world.

Buddhism: History and Diversity of a Great Tradition

More than 130 Asian artifacts from the Museum’s own collections are featured in this exhibition, which traces Buddhism from its origins in India to Tibet, China, Japan, and Southeast Asia (Thailand, Laos, Sri Lanka, and Burma). The exhibit illustrates this great tradition’s evolution and adaptation to the diverse cultures of Asia. Featured are a Japanese Buddhist altar, outfitted with a collection of 19th century temple furnishings; bas relief fragments from the 2nd century CE; a gilded Maitreya, a statue of the Buddha of the Future; and Tibetan tankas.

Africa

Penn Museum’s African gallery features artifacts from diverse cultures throughout that vast continent. On display is everything from masks to musical instruments, clothing, architectural pieces, and everyday objects. Highlights include a group of rare bronzes from the kingdom of Benin, Akan goldweights, and musical instruments made from wood, skins, gourd, and plant fiber. Penn Museum was among the first American museums to begin collecting art and artifacts from Africa; most items in the collection were obtained between 1891 and 1930.

China (in the Harrison Rotunda)

Ninety feet in diameter and 90 feet high, the Rotunda is one of the largest unsupported masonry domes in the United States and is home to a premiere collection of artifacts from China. The Chinese collection includes two bas-relief horses carved for the tomb of the Emperor Taizong (founder of the Tang Dynasty) in Xian, glazed pottery horses and figures, coral and jade figurines, paintings on silk, and bronze and jade vessels. The gallery features Buddhist art ranging from the introduction of Buddhism in China in the 6th to its florescence in the

late 19th century, including a 6th century carved stone stela, two large Tang Dynasty murals, and a charming Maitreya Buddha from Shandong Province dated to 516 CE.

Mesoamerica

Penn Museum's Mesoamerican gallery displays more than 200 ancient artifacts from Mexico and Central America, some dating back 3,500 years. These objects—and others in the Museum's 28,000-artifact collection—were primarily obtained through the museum's own field excavations, recording, and analysis. Five grand stone monuments and two monumental circular alters from the Museum's early Maya excavations dominate the gallery. A floor case displays some of the 8th century burial materials from the ancient Maya site of Piedras Negras, Guatemala, discovered by Penn Museum archaeologists in the 1930s.

Islamic Gallery

The Islamic collection features artifacts from across the Middle East. The small gallery includes a display of more than 70 objects from the Penn Museum's own excavations in Rayy, Iran. Most pieces from the site, excavated in 1935-1937, date from the 8th to 13th centuries. The artifacts include jewelry, bowls, vessels, and tombstones made of ceramics, glass, metal, bone, and stone. Prominently featured in the gallery are two stone basins, one with a fountain, from 15th-century Cairo, Egypt.

Polynesia

Penn Museum's Polynesia gallery focuses primarily on the culture of the Polynesian islands from the point of European contact in the late 18th century into the 19th century, when most of the Museum's Polynesian collection was acquired. On display in the main part of the gallery are objects of artistic, religious and social importance including a large Fijian ceremonial kava bowl, wooden tiki figures from Herman Melville's Typee Valley in the Marquesas, the spectacular red and yellow feather cloak of a Hawaiian aristocrat, superbly carved bow and stern pieces of a Maori war canoe from New Zealand, and a Tahitian warrior's feather and shark tooth breast ornament that found its way, via one of the early explorers, to the Tlingit of Alaska. A second series of cases, featuring everyday objects such as stone adzes, fishhooks, and food pounders, traces the extraordinary migration of the Polynesian people and culture, over a period of more than two thousand years, to every major island group of the central Pacific.

* * * *

The University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology is dedicated to the study and understanding of human history and diversity. Founded in 1887, the Museum has sent more than 400 archaeological and anthropological expeditions to all the inhabited continents of the world. With an active exhibition schedule and educational programming for children and adults, the Museum offers the public an opportunity to share in the ongoing discovery of humankind's collective heritage.

Penn Museum is located on the Penn campus, across from Franklin Field, at 3260 South Street in Philadelphia. The Museum is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and 1 to 5 p.m. on Sundays. Closed Mondays, holidays, and the two Sundays of Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends.

Museum admission donation is \$10 adults; \$7 senior citizens (65+); \$6 for children (6-17) and full-time students with ID; free to Museum members, children under 6, and University of Pennsylvania staff, students, and faculty with a PennCard. Visit the Museum's web site at www.penn.museum or call (215) 898-4000 for general information.