

MUSEUM

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2001/2002 was another exciting year for the museum as work continued on the reinstallation of the galleries as well as on the numerous other projects that occupy the long and busy days of each and every museum staff member.

On 15 February, the six month-long construction phase in the new Edgar and Debby Jannotta Mesopotamian Gallery was brought to a close under the watchful eye of Assistant Curator and Project Manager Eleanor Barbanes. Each one of the galleries re-installed thus far has required a different degree of reworking, and the Mesopotamian Gallery was probably the most complex. Teams from sixteen different design and construction firms recrafted the space from the ground up, literally. New wiring under the terrazzo floors, new partition walls with granite baseboards, new lights and window shades, and refinished floors and walls all had to be completed before the Guenschel-built casework could be brought in from Baltimore. The cases, designed for the Oriental Institute by Vinci/Hamp Architects, Inc., are similar to those in the Persian Gallery. They were installed by a six-man crew from Maryland who brought their own customized rigging equipment and worked for three weeks straight in order to finish the job. The future home of the Mesopotamian collection now stands ready for the new installation (fig. 1), which will include many old friends as well as many objects that were not on display in the former gallery.

As those of you who have been in the galleries recently will have noticed, Exhibit Designer Joe Scott and Assistant Preparator Elliott Weiss have been busy. The new wall-mounted display cases in the Star Chamber (the space between the Joseph and Mary Grimshaw Egyptian Gallery and the Persian Gallery) now house a graphic display featuring the reinstallation project and the galleries that will be opening over the next two years. The Star Chamber now also contains a display rack that allows visitors to examine and purchase a series of Family Activity Cards that were designed by Museum Education. And a temporary computer kiosk in the west gallery houses a popular computer program designed for families but currently being enjoyed by many museum visitors.

Beneath all the hubbub in the galleries, Senior Curator and Registrar Raymond D. Tindel has kept the Registry running smoothly. He notes that he and his staff and volunteers have handled only about 19,000 objects this year, down from over 22,000 last year; yet somehow they don't seem to have felt (or looked) any less busy. Perhaps this is because last year was one during which faculty, staff, and visiting scholars made particularly heavy use of the collections (fig. 2). Abbas Alizadeh, Donald Whitcomb, and Peter Dorman used objects for the instruction of their classes; Robert Ritner's students read scarab inscriptions; and both Martha Roth and Walter Farber used cuneiform tablets for their classes. But the most active use of the collection was by the members of a technologies class, taught by Aslihan Yener and Nicholas Kouchoukos of the Department of Anthropology. Their students' projects ran the gamut from the high energy analysis of ancient metals to distributional studies of nearly 500 Amuq spindle whorls. Ali Hussain brought a class from Loyola University to study early Qur'anic manuscripts, Clemens Reichel continued his research on Diyala tablets and sealings, and Emily Teeter continued her work on Medinet Habu. Visiting scholars included Barbara Mendoza from Berkeley, who examined Egyptian priest statues; Erika Fischer from Halle, who studied over 900 pieces of Megiddo bone and ivory; and Kathryn Piquette from London, who is using

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Figure 1. View down length of Mesopotamian Gallery showing human-headed winged bull from Khorsabad and new Guenschel casework ready for installation of exhibits

archaic Egyptian bone and ivory tags in her dissertation. Mark Schwartz from Northwestern University analyzed bitumen residues on Chogha Mish pottery, and Mariana Giovino from Ann Arbor came to study “sacred tree” motifs. Australian scholar Paul Donnelly came to work on “chocolate-on-white” pottery from Megiddo, and Heike Richter from Mainz will be using Parthian slipper coffins from the Nippur excavations in her dissertation. Susan Allen, a former Oriental Institute colleague, now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, continues work on the Met’s publication of the Lisht ceramic corpus, and Thomas Hefter is currently surveying the Institute’s Arabic manuscripts for inclusion in the catalog of the American Oriental Society’s American Committee for South Asian Manuscripts.

Most of Ray’s time, however, continues to be spent unpacking the collections following the renovation and preparing for the reinstallation of the galleries. Thanks to a conservation grant written by Laura D’Alessandro, Head of the Conservation Lab, and myself, we have twenty more cabinets into which those in registration are unpacking more than 900 pieces of Egyptian New Kingdom pottery. And they have recorded the often-complicated movements of nearly 2,700 artifacts in preparation for the new Mesopotamian Gallery; 1,150 for the Henrietta M. Herbolsheimer, MD, Syrian/Anatolian Gallery; and 360 for the Albert and Cissy Haas Megiddo Gallery.

In the midst of all of this, Ray is converting his office to a new database system for collections management, one that will incorporate digital images of artifacts with the usual verbal data. When this process is complete — some 150,000 images from now — everyone will be able to use the collections much more efficiently.

All of this has been made possible by the help of registrar's assistant Joey Corbett and a wonderful set of volunteers, including Mary Grimshaw, Janet Helman, Ila Patlogan, Jim Sopranos, Tamara Siuda, and Peggy Wick. Georgie Maynard, one of the longest serving volunteers in the registry, passed away recently. We wish there were some way to calculate the thousands of objects that she registered, inventoried, packed, and generally helped keep track of; the number would be astounding. Georgie will be sorely missed.

In August, the conservators completed the rigging of the sixth and final relief in the Khorsabad Court and moved on into the east gallery to stabilize, frame, and install the first relief there. Laura was the rigger-handler par excellence, ably assisted by Assistant Conservator Vanessa Muros and Getty Conservation intern Vicki Parry. Last fall, Vicki completed her internship and joined the museum staff as a contract conservator for the reinstallation project. Alison Whyte, a recent graduate of the Master of Art Conservation Program, Queen's University, in Kingston, Ontario, joined the museum staff as our fourth Getty Advanced Conservation intern. Alison's research topic for the internship involves an analysis of the glazed bricks from the facade of the Sin Temple at Khorsabad. Her research incorporates several different analytical techniques including microscopy, x-ray diffraction, scanning electron microscopy with energy dispersive spectroscopy, and electron microprobe analysis. The object of the study is to identify, both quantitatively and qualitatively, the raw materials used to create the brick fabric and the different colored glazes from Khorsabad.

In November the conservators turned their attention from Assyrian reliefs to our Babylonian glazed bricks. The two striding lions from the Processional Way were stabilized and installed in steel frames by Belding/Walbridge in their new location in the Mesopotamian Gallery (fig. 3).



Figure 2. A busy day in Registration and Archives work area. In foreground, visiting scholar Kathryn Piquette is studying archaic Egyptian tags while volunteers Hazel Cramer and Sandra Jacobsohn are busy with John Larson. In background, Robert Ritner and his class are examining Egyptian scarabs

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Figure 4. Ken Clesson looks on while Vicki Parry, Alison Whyte, and Vanessa Muros remove protective coating of impregnated paper that was put on surface of Assyrian reliefs almost six years ago, before they were moved

Conservation is now back at work restoring and making presentable for display the six reliefs in the Khorsabad Court (fig. 4). The final phase of this six-year project will be completed by the end of September. And, of course, work continues in the lab on objects scheduled to go on display in the new Mesopotamian Gallery. Over 200 objects came through the lab during the course of the year. The conservators treated 110 artifacts; the remainder were processed for sampling or research purposes, many for the course taught by Yener and Kouchoukos.

Jean Grant documented most of this activity and was kept hard at work doing new photography of objects for the Mesopotamian Gallery. Jean would like to thank two Photo Lab volunteers this year. Irene Glasner has been a steady worker, helping out with various tasks during her weekly visits. Irene's main job has been making prints of Medinet Habu ostraca as part of an inventory of that collection and our photographic records. Volunteer Pam Ames doesn't do "photo" work, but she has been a great help to Jean in cleaning out and rearranging the photography studio over the past year. The studio now has a place set up for copy stand work that can be used by anyone in the building.

One main problem Jean is facing these days is the discontinuation of many darkroom supplies, due in large part to the increasing use of digital cameras and images. The shrinking range of darkroom chemicals and papers make us wonder how we are going to continue to produce the crystal-clear images that Jean manages to coax out of our vast collection of negatives.

In addition to answering the phones, handling museum accounts, and keeping the building in functioning order, Museum Office Manager Carla Hosein continues to enter the data from our photographic catalog cards into a photographic image database. This database, when completed, will enable us to do keyword searches and sorts of various kinds — an obvious boon to photographic research on the collections. Having the information accessible in a word-processed format also will facilitate the production of labels, captions, and data for permission

forms for Photographic Services. To date, the information from just over 20,800 cards has been entered! Carla also continues to be responsible for doing research, producing and tracking the paperwork, and handling all the other details that are involved in processing the requests that we receive for photographic image materials and reproduction permissions — a total of 226 transactions during fiscal year 2001/2002.

For several years now, most of the time budgeted by John Larson and his volunteers in the Oriental Institute Archives has been spent unpacking the collections and making selected record groups more accessible for research. Priority continues to be given to material that will support the reinstallation of the galleries and to the needs of visiting scholars and researchers within the Oriental Institute's own community of scholars.

Through the summer of 2001, Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations Ph.D. candidate and Epigraphic Survey epigrapher Harold Hays continued working through the records of the Coffin Texts Project to identify the Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts that were omitted from the original publication program of the Coffin Texts Project. In August, Barbara A. Keller from the University of Pennsylvania came to do biographical research on American archaeologist Clarence S. Fisher and his nephew C. Stanley Fisher. In early October, Jeffrey Abt of Wayne State University returned to continue an ongoing project on James Henry Breasted. Timothy P. Harrison visited from Toronto at the beginning of November to examine archaeological field records from the Oriental Institute excavations at Tell Tayinat in the Amuq. From late January through March, Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations graduate students, including Alexandra Kelly, Scott Plumley, Samantha Stewart, and David Unger — all enrolled in the course taught by Aslihan Yener and Nick Kouchoukos — made appointments with John to continue their class projects by investigating the field data pertaining to specific objects found in the Amuq in the 1930s. In March, Charles Kolb, a student from Purdue University, returned to continue research for a computer-generated reconstruction of a part of Karnak Temple for



Figure 3. Ken Clesson and Robert Pizur of Belding/Walbridge installing one of the Babylon lions

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his senior design project. In mid-April, longtime friend Barbara Breasted Whitesides, a granddaughter of James Henry Breasted, returned to Chicago to resume her research into Breasted family diaries and correspondence. In May, Don McVicker (North Central College) came to begin research to try to determine if Breasted's Oriental Institute had served as a model for Frans Blom's plan to establish the Middle American Research Institute at Tulane University.

John Larson is pleased to report that we have received the following new acquisitions for the Oriental Institute Archives. Shirley Ralston presented a small collection of her late husband's personal research papers on ancient Egyptian mummies and science. In September, Mary Silverstein donated a collection of correspondence and other material relating to Dr. Yang Zhi, her husband David Jacobson, and the early years of the Institute for the History of Ancient Civilizations (IHAC) at Northeast Normal University in Changchun, Jilin Province, China. In January, Professor Robert D. Biggs presented two table decorations from the Oriental Institute's Fiftieth Anniversary Dinner in 1969, probably the work of then Museum Preparator Robert Hanson.

The Oriental Institute Archives Volunteers for the past year all have worked regularly with John Larson in previous years. They are Hazel Cramer, Peggy Grant, Patricia Hume, Sandra Jacobsohn, Lillian Schwartz, and Carole Yoshida. We were deeply saddened by the death of longtime Archives volunteer Helaine Staver in October, and we miss her greatly. This year, Hazel has worked primarily on materials from the Oriental Institute Publications Office and on proofreading texts for various Archives projects. Working part of the year at her summer home in New Hampshire, Peggy Grant has transcribed (from photocopies) several of Gordon Loud's annual field diaries from the Oriental Institute excavations at Khorsabad. Pat continues to work diligently on her long-term project based on the papers of Helene Kantor. Sandy has proofread scores of transcription printouts, generated by several Archives volunteers, and she helped to prepare the photographs from the microfiche publication of Carl Kraeling's work at Ptolemais in Libya, so that the images can be scanned for posting on the Oriental Institute website. Lillian has re-cataloged our collections of nineteenth-century photographs and has been continuing her project with a physical inventory of our holdings. Carole continues with the task of remounting the 35 mm transparencies in our Slide Library. It is our happy obligation to acknowledge the many and varied contributions of these Archives volunteers with our grateful thanks and warm affection for their many years of dedication and support.

Our attendance for the year was 36,814, which kept Head of Security Margaret Schroeder and everyone else fairly busy. Margaret greeted visitors and workmen alike and kept the security systems within the building operating smoothly — a great challenge in the face of what seemed to be almost continuous malfunctioning of the fire alarms. In addition, she continued to take part in the Chicago-area Security group and attended the Smithsonian's Symposium for Cultural Property Protection in Charleston, North Carolina, in February.

The presence of the major traveling exhibition, *Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth*, at The Field Museum from 20 October to 3 March gave rise to many Oriental Institute and Field Museum activities, which you can read about in more detail elsewhere in this report. In addition to joint programming and classes, the museum mounted a small exhibit featuring some of the modern objects inspired by ancient Egyptian themes and motifs from the collections of Robert K. Ritner and John Larson. We also worked with Robert to produce a gallery tour of our own Egyptian Gallery to highlight objects that illustrate aspects of the legendary Cleopatra VII's life and times.

Also in conjunction with *Cleopatra of Egypt* from 23 October through 27 January, the Institute hosted a traveling exhibition *The Angle of Repose: Four American Photographers in*

Egypt, sponsored by LaSalle Bank. The exhibition, organized by Sarah Anne McNear, Curator, LaSalle Bank Photography Collection, consisted of twenty-four large format photographs and was accompanied by a handsome catalog.

As we move into a busy and productive new year, which will see the opening of the Mesopotamian Gallery, I would like to thank the entire museum staff, as well as our many dedicated volunteers, for their continued warm support and good cheer. Without their teamwork, none of our past or future accomplishments would have been or would be possible.

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