

<p>Institution:</p> <p>University of Cambridge</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment:</p> <p>UoA31</p>
<p>Title of case study:</p> <p>Understanding Classical Archaeology in the Fitzwilliam Museum</p>
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Beard, Osborne and Vout were invited in 2008 by the Keeper of Antiquities, Dr Lucilla Burn, to assist in re-displaying the Greek and Roman objects in the Fitzwilliam Museum, with the support of the AHRC. Through the reorganisation of the galleries, the arrangement of exhibits and accompanying written materials (labels, information boards, website), their research on museum display, Greek and Roman sculpture, Greek vase painting, and Greek and Roman epigraphy has been made accessible to the public and transformed (real and virtual) visitors' understanding of the manufacture, distribution, use, preservation and collection of the artefacts displayed. Visitors, students and professionals in museology have registered – positively – the distinctive nature of this re-display.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>Since the 1980s, Cambridge has been noted for a particular approach to classical archaeology. Seminal research by Beard (on the academic staff since 1984, and Professor of Classics since 2004) drew attention (below 2) to the academic and intellectual context of the acquisition and display of casts in Cambridge, to the politics of museum display (1) and, more generally, to the importance of understanding ancient artefacts in context (3). Osborne's (Professor of Ancient History since October 2001) distinctive work has shown that neither Etruscan demand nor Athenian workshop organisation (4) distorted vase production in Athens, with the result that the imagery on Athenian pots can be primarily interpreted in an Athenian context, especially a sympotic one (5); Vout's (University Senior Lecturer, on the academic staff since September 2006) has illuminated the relationship of power and eroticism (8), and, in particular, the importance of Antinous' image and its beauty in both the Roman empire and the history of collecting (9–10). The Fitzwilliam re-display impresses all these aspects upon the visiting public.</p> <p>Outline of the research:</p> <p>a) by examining particular types of image – images seen and used in particular settings, or images that elicit particular reactions – Beard, Osborne and Vout have demonstrated the importance of understanding ancient imagery in context (3,5,7,8,9,10); the visual information in ancient iconography has been shown by their research to be part of a communication between object and viewers at a given point of time and in particular circumstances: for example, at the symposium (5) or in the nineteenth-century museum (2).</p> <p>b) by demonstrating the ways in which objects made in one time and place become different objects with roles that are often quite distinct when appropriated, imitated or adapted in another time or place (1,3,6–9) – including in the Fitzwilliam Museum itself (2, <i>Journal of the History of Collections</i> 2012) – Beard, Osborne and Vout have stressed that objects are not finished when they leave the artist's studio but rather are born there, and that there are many stories still to be told about them.</p> <p>c) by demonstrating the need to see objects from the past as made by, and for, individuals (4,7), and to take account of their history as a history shaped by individuals (2,8,10) Beard, Osborne and Vout have put both the series of patrons and owners of objects and the series of collectors and scholars (whether the Emperor Hadrian or Sir John Beazley) who have written about objects back into the story of classical archaeology.</p> <p>d) by examining the histories of particular collections, including collections in Cambridge (2, <i>Journal of the History of Collections</i> 2012), Beard and Vout have shown the ways in which all museum collections are products of their particular histories, shaped by the interests of collectors</p>

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who gave their collections, of curators who have pursued particular interests, of authors who have fostered particular narratives and of the changing legal status for objects excavated abroad.

Particularly distinctive to this research is its application of approaches previously pioneered by Beard and Osborne to specific objects and situations, some with direct reference to the Fitzwilliam Museum and other Cambridge material.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

Because Beard, Osborne and Vout called on the full range of their research to inform the Fitzwilliam re-display, it has not been realistic to convey that breadth for all three in just six references; in this case, it seemed appropriate to increase the number so as to be suitably indicative of the range and variety of the research input.

Evidence for research quality: publications marked (*) have been refereed by expert anonymous readers. Other indicative evidence is listed after the individual item.

M. Beard

1. "'Please do not touch the ceiling": museums and the culture of appropriation', (with John Henderson), *New Research in Museum Studies* 4 (1993) 5–42 (cited in S. MacDonald, *A Companion to Museum Studies* (2010); used in teaching at UCL Institute of Archaeology, www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/.../ARCLG053_RethinkingClassicalArt.pdf).
2. *'Cast and cast-offs: the origins of the Museum of Classical Archaeology', *PCPS* (1993) 1–29 (cited in <http://casts.berkeley.edu/Syllabus.html>).
3. **Classical Art: from Greece to Rome* (with John Henderson) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) (cited at <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/modules/module/CAC1012/>).

R. Osborne

4. 'Workshops and the iconography and distribution of Athenian red-figure pottery: a case study', in S. Keay and S. Moser (ed.) *Greek Art in View: Essays in honour of Brian Sparkes* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2004) 78–94 (review by Eisman in *BMCR* reckons this 'probably the most important essay of the collection' – while disagreeing with it; cited on reading list at University of Manchester, <http://www.readinglists.manchester.ac.uk/lists/3EFD5467-E7A8-FABD-8C58-5293D14A71DC.html>).
5. *'Projecting identities in the Greek Symposium', in J. Sofaer (ed.) *Material Identities* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007) 31–52.
6. 'What travelled with Greek pottery?', *Mediterranean Historical Review* 22 (2007) 85–95 (cited on reading list at University of Manchester, www.readinglists.manchester.ac.uk/.../27F91291-4EFB-3310-F917-A0C5C3BF265B.html).
7. *'The art of signing in ancient Greece', *Arethusa* 43.2 (2010) 231–251.

C. Vout

8. **Power and Eroticism in Imperial Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) cited in Petrie Museum trail, <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/museums/petrie/documents/AlternateSexualities>.
9. 'The art of damnatio memoriae', in S. Benoist and A. Daguet-Gagey (ed.) *Un discours en images de la condamnation de mémoire* (Metz: Centre regional universitaire lorrian d'histoire, 2008) 153–172 (review in <http://questionsdecommunication.revues.org/1270?lang=en>).
10. 'Hadrian, Hellenism and the social history of art', *Arion* 18.2 (2010) 55–78.

Grant

"Greece and Rome at the Fitzwilliam Museum", PI Dr Lucilla Burn; start date, 6 October 2008, end date, 5 October 2011; value, £277,102. AHRC Programme: 'Research to underpin new displays and temporary exhibitions – Maximising the impact of scholarly research in the arts and

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humanities'. This programme was designed to set up partnerships between those working in museums and in university departments.

All outputs can be supplied by the University of Cambridge on request.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

The research listed above is widely used in teaching art and archaeology and museology in HEIs other than Cambridge (the references cited above give some evidence of that). The particular impact explored here is the impact a) on, and b) by means of, the re-display of the Greek and Roman gallery in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge (re-opened 20 January 2010). Through this re-display the research impacts on cultural life, education and public discourse, attracting more visitors to the Fitzwilliam and to Cambridge and improving the quality of visitor experience (from schoolchild to tourist).

The re-designed galleries are significantly different from all other museum displays of Greek and Roman antiquities. Beard, Osborne and Vout had an input into all aspects of the display, including its physical arrangement and philosophy, individual labels, interpretative panels, hand-held information boards for use in the gallery and parallel web resources, exploiting their past research to give these a distinctive form and content. The stress throughout is on a much richer range of object histories than is customary in museums where one story (of history, art history or ancient life) is normally privileged. The new display draws the visitor's attention repeatedly to the functions of objects displayed; the importance of findspots; the circumstances and date of discovery; the information to be gained from technical analysis; and the key role played by collectors in determining the appearance, nature and meaning of these objects and in shaping museum collections.

For example, the display of the Pashley Sarcophagus explains not only its Dionysiac iconography but also its allusion to the Roman triumph and its collecting and restoration history; that of the Foundry Painter's Lewis Collection cup draws attention to iconographic details to stress the questions raised for ancient drinkers; that of the Flaxman Apollo points both to John Flaxman's late-eighteenth-century restorations and the way Victorian collectors such as John Disney (who gifted his collection to the Fitzwilliam) responded to such restorations.

The overriding aim was both to engage visitors with the Fitzwilliam's collection, and to help them understand how museums arrive at the range of objects on show and the claims in their labels, why different museum collections vary, and why all of them offer only partial views of (the remains of) the Greek and Roman world. The new display was to be an object lesson in museology, as well as antiquity. This aspect was particularly noted in the *Museums Journal* (May 2010, 52–53): 'In terms of the way the objects are organised and the narratives constructed by the displays there is a clear engagement with new scholarship... the redisplay attempts to construct a biography of each object or group by highlighting the role of people in the creation of meaning. The redisplay also focuses on making the processes of the museum transparent....'

"I feel much more enthused about Greece and Rome." There is clear evidence, both from such reactions and from a statistical survey, that this emphasis has made an impact on visitors. An evaluation exercise in 2010 by the Project's Curatorial Research Associate demonstrated the high level of use and appreciation of the information in the new Greek and Roman gallery. Almost all visitors (96%) claimed to have looked at one or more of the types of information on offer. Most indicated that the amount of information given was just right (87%), commenting that the labels "were well done" and "cater for both the lay person and the intellectual", providing "just the right amount of detail to inform me but not bore me!" while they "did not talk down to the reader" and proved "Interactive – engaging labels made me think".

But had the new display impacted on visitors' understanding? 86% of visitors surveyed indicated that the gallery had affected their views, 30% reckoning that they had a better understanding of the ancient world as a result of their gallery visit. 74% demonstrated that they had gained an understanding of issues such as the function of objects, and/or could remember particular information about a range of objects – and the comments of 19% of visitors showed that they had assimilated such complex themes as cross-cultural influences or the survival, collection history and afterlife of the objects.

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Study days and other events in Cambridge and outside (e.g. Dr Burn talking at the Metropolitan Museum in New York) during 2009–12 acquainted the public more closely with the aims of the re-display. In September 2011, a major conference, attracting a large number of museum professionals from the UK and abroad, explored issues of the public display of antiquities. The Universities of Leicester, Newcastle upon Tyne and Reading have incorporated the display into their professional training programmes, bringing their Museum Studies students to study the galleries, which have also been the subject of MA dissertations at the Universities of Bournemouth (Lauren Papworth), Leicester (Helen Parkin), and St Andrew's (Sophie Caie). A special number of the *Journal of the History of Collections* (2012) about the Greek and Roman antiquities in the Fitzwilliam Museum, included contributions from Beard and Vout.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

Some of the resources themselves can be accessed at

- <http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/dept/ant/greeceandrome/display/index.html>
- <http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/dept/ant/greeceandrome/onlinegallery/index.html>

Lucilla Burn describes the rationale of the re-display at

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nZudKguocsjA>

Reviews indicating impact are found at

- *Museums Journal* (May 2010) 52–53
- *Antiquity* 86 (2012) 235–240
- <http://www.archaeology.co.uk/blog/andrew-selkirk/fitzwilliam-review.htm>

Report by the Project's Curatorial Research Associate of visitor survey and questionnaire returns

- Available from the University of Cambridge.