



# newsletter

Issue Thirty-One

February 2004

Welcome to this month's NMDC newsletter which contains an update on our activities and the latest news from the museum sector in the UK and beyond. This newsletter, along with past editions, can be found on our website at:

[www.nationalmuseums.org.uk](http://www.nationalmuseums.org.uk)

## NMDC News

### NMDC's Research Reports

NMDC will publish three major research reports next month. Valuing Museums, written by Tony Travers of the London School of Economics and Stephen Glaister of Imperial College, looks at the scale of the national museums, their economic impact and trends in government funding.

National Dimensions, written by AEA Consulting, examines the many forms of collaboration between national museums and the rest of the sector and sets out proposals to enable more. The report was written following a series of consultation days around the country. The report looks at different types of collaboration, from one-off projects to long-term strategic partnerships and includes a wealth of case studies on all areas of museum activity.

Creative Engagement, written by Ricky Burdett of the LSE Cities Programme, sheds light on the capacity of museums and galleries to create social capital, educating and empowering individuals and groups alike, creating networks and stimulating dialogue. The report examines how museums inspire creativity in their audiences, thereby enhancing both individual fulfilment and, through their contributions to the creative industries and broader economy, the well being of the nation. It uses case studies to highlight some of the many creative links between NMDC members and the wider world that are often overlooked.

All three reports will be launched on 9 March and will be available on our website. If you would like to receive printed copies of one or all of these reports, please contact Alex Baker ([abaker@iwm.org.uk](mailto:abaker@iwm.org.uk)) to be added to our mailing list.

### Manifesto for Museums Launch

NMDC are working with MLA, GLLAM, AIM and the Museums Association on plans for a day of museum advocacy events on Tuesday 9 March. The day will begin with a press conference at the National Gallery, setting out the needs of the sector in the run up to the Spending Review (SR2004). In the afternoon there will be a seminar, organised by IPPR discussing the issues arising out of NMDC's three research reports. MLA are organising a parliamentary reception for the evening.

### NMDC PR Group

Press Officers from across the National Museums met at the Museum of London on 23 January. As well as sharing information about up-coming projects at the national museums, the group discussed the problems caused by recent major museum events clashing on the same date. The group appealed to everyone planning press releases, private views and other events to enter them in the clash diary maintained by the Arts Council.

Philip Spedding, from Arts and Business attended the meeting and led a discussion on Corporate Social Responsibility and the role press officers can play in highlighting stories about how business are already using the arts to improve the community and benefit themselves.

If you are a Press Officer in a NMDC member institution and would like to attend the next meeting of this group, please contact Alexander Baker ([abaker@iwm.org.uk](mailto:abaker@iwm.org.uk)).

# Members News

## £3/4m for Conservation Technology

The pioneering research at Liverpool's Conservation Centre has received a major boost with a grant of £750,000 from the Government's Public Sector Research Exploitation (PSRE) initiative.

The Conservation Centre is already a recognised world leader in the development of laser technology for cleaning sculpture and other delicate artefacts. Another application for this expertise is three-dimensional computer modelling using laser scanning, which can produce replicas of complicated items that are accurate to within a fraction of a millimetre. Both of these areas of research will benefit from the new funding, which was announced last month by Science and Innovation Minister, Lord Sainsbury. The PSRE initiative was set up 3 years ago to help capitalise on the cutting edge research taking place in the public sector. For more information about the work of the Conservation Centre visit: [www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk)

## £2m for Submarine Museum

The Royal Navy Submarine Museum has been awarded nearly £2m from the Heritage Lottery Fund to fund the cost of a major expansion at the museum. The new submarine shaped building, which will cost £3.1m in total, will provide a new reception, lecture and entertainment area and exhibition halls.

## 'Moving Here' Makes Confident IT Users

'Moving Here' - [www.movinghere.org.uk](http://www.movinghere.org.uk) - the major digitisation project led by the National Archives, has released a new training manual to enable learners of all ages to become confident IT users. The manual uses the award-winning website to make learning sessions both interesting and fun. It will help trainers running IT skills workshops, particularly in public libraries, as well as being an easy-to-use self-help tool to take new IT learners through basic skills required to get the most out of the Internet. The training session takes users through some of the 170,000 images, documents, film and sound clips on the movinghere website. By the end of the session they will have learned basic skills such as how to use a mouse and navigate around the site, as well as more interactive skills such as sending an e-postcard and adding your own story to the site. The training manual can be downloaded from [www.movinghere.org.uk](http://www.movinghere.org.uk)

## Gifted and Talented

The Victoria & Albert Museum, British Museum and British Library are among those participating in a new scheme announced by the Department for Education and Skills to encourage young people to boost their academic skills by teaching them in inspiring environments such as museums and galleries. GATE A, the Gifted and Talented Arm of London Challenge, is intended to enable young people from London's refugee and asylum communities to learn in inspiring new ways in partnership with cultural institutions.

The scheme was launched by Stephen Twigg, Minister for London Schools, at the V&A on 21 January. GATE A will work across London to raise education standards across the city, ensuring that different local education authorities collaborate to develop specific projects. A new website will provide a programme of live and online activities, tasks and events, access to challenging, interactive learning activities and promoting collaboration between boroughs, schools, universities, cultural bodies and individuals across the city.

## Their Past, Your Future

A UK-wide education scheme that will give young people the opportunity to learn first-hand from veterans about their experience of the Second World War was launched last month with funding from the New Opportunities Fund for the Imperial War Museum. The project, Their Past - Your Future, is being developed by the Imperial War Museum, which has been awarded development grant of £200,000 to take the programme forward. It is expected that the full programme funding will be £5 million.

The project will enable school children to research and learn about the personal experiences and roles played by forces personnel and civilians in ensuring British security during the Second World War. A competition will enable schools to take part in Second World War related visits with veterans. The scheme also includes the development of a website D-Day and Beyond ([www.d-dayandbeyond.org.uk](http://www.d-dayandbeyond.org.uk)) which will support curriculum learning, exhibitions, publications, a wide range of partner projects delivered by museums across the UK and a collection of written, recorded and photographic materials and artefacts.

## National Maritime Museum

This summer, the NMM will open *William Hodges 1744-1797: The art of exploration* - an international premiere of works by the 18th-century landscape painter, William Hodges, whose career as an artist took him to New Zealand, the South Pacific and India, travelling at different times with Captain Cook and the East India Company. The exhibition will be opened by Sir David Attenborough and runs from 6 July to 21 November 2004 in the Queen's House.

## Freud Shows New Work at Wallace

The Wallace Collection is to be the venue for a new exhibition of more than fifteen new paintings by Lucian Freud. This is the first time these new works have been on public display, as they have all been completed since his retrospective at Tate Britain in 2002. The exhibition reflects the Wallace Collections' commitment to showing outstanding contemporary work and is a tribute to Freud's long-standing affection for the Wallace Collection. Freud is keen for his new work to be seen in London before it is exhibited in New York (at the Acquavella Galleries in May) and he regards the top-lit galleries of the Wallace Collection as the ideal setting.

This exhibition coincides with two others running at the same time. The National Portrait Gallery will be hosting *Lucian Freud In The Studio: Photographs By David Dawson*, from 30th March – 1st August (admission free). The Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art will also be hosting an exhibition; *Lucian Freud: The Complete Graphics*, which will run from 3rd April – 13th June 2004.

## Tate Magazine

Following last year's decision to take over the publishing of its magazine, Tate has announced the appointments of Bice Curiger as Editorial Director, Simon Grant as Editor and Matt Watkins as Publisher. The magazine will be launched in May and will be published by Tate three times a year to coincide with the natural seasonal rhythm of Tate's programme. Distributed to over 55,000 Tate Members, the magazine will concentrate on the visual arts and will be available at galleries and art bookshops internationally. It will be complemented by a bi-monthly guide providing listings and information relating to the wide programme of exhibitions and events at all Tate galleries. This free guide will be sent to Members and widely distributed throughout London at major tourist and visitor attractions.

## Humanoid Robot Debuts at Science Museum

ASIMO, the world's most advanced walking robot will be making his first UK appearance at Science Museum this month. ASIMO (Advanced Step in Innovative Mobility), developed by the Honda Motor Company is described as a real-life C-3PO. As well as responding to voice commands, ASIMO recognises and respond to a range of postures and gestures, such as a wave or handshake. ASIMO will be giving live performances from 16-22 February. For more details visit: [www.sciencemuseum.org.uk](http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk)

## BAFTA Nomination for Titian's Venice

*Titian's Venice* the ground-breaking art historical interactive developed for the National Gallery's Titian exhibition in 2003, has been nominated for a BAFTA Interactive Award in the Official Factual category. *Titian's Venice* was developed by the Gallery's in-house New Media team in conjunction with NYKRIS Digital Design Ltd, and brings to life characters, including Titian and his friends, as they introduce contemporary Venice. The project was made possible by Barclays PLC as part of their *Invest and Inspire* sponsorship.

## Beaton Centenary

The National Portrait Gallery and The National Archives are both marking the centenary of photographer Cecil Beaton's birth. The National Portrait Gallery's major new Beaton retrospective opened on 5 February. The National Archives have an exhibition of pictures of ordinary life taken when Beaton worked as a 'Special Photographer' for the Ministry of Information during the Second World War. For more information visit: [www.npg.org.uk](http://www.npg.org.uk) and [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)

## NPG Complete Illustrated Catalogue

The National Portrait Gallery has published a new edition of their *Complete Illustrated Catalogue*. The newly updated and greatly expanded edition is a culmination of years of research and provides a comprehensive listing of every painting, drawing, miniature, print, photograph and sculpture in their main collection. It is the first full catalogue of the Gallery's collection in more than 20 years, and includes over 10,500 entries.

For a full list of NMDC members, visit:  
[www.nationalmuseums.org.uk/members.html](http://www.nationalmuseums.org.uk/members.html)

# Current Issues

## New name for Resource

The Council for Museums, Libraries and Archives has announced that it is dropping the name 'Resource' from its title. The organisation will be known in future as the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council abbreviated to MLA. Explaining the change, MLA Chair, Mark Wood said: "The name Resource has always been a source of some puzzlement and confusion. The Board felt unanimously that we needed a name which is concise and spells out clearly what the organisation does. The name change had been achieved at a cost of £12,500, including design and printing work. There has been no expensive rebranding exercise." The change came into effect on 9 February. MLA's new web address is [www.mla.gov.uk](http://www.mla.gov.uk)

## Gulbenkian Prize Shortlist

The shortlist for The Gulbenkian Prize for Museum of the Year has been announced. The £100,000 award is given annually to one museum or gallery, large or small, anywhere in the UK. The four finalists for the 2004 prize will be announced at the end of March. The winner will be announced May 11th at the Royal Academy during Museums and Galleries Month. For full details visit:

[www.thegulbenkianprize.org.uk](http://www.thegulbenkianprize.org.uk) The shortlist is:

- Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh for *Landform* by Charles Jencks
- Royal Armouries, Leeds for *The Knight is Young / Princely Weapons and Armour of Childhood*
- National Gallery for *Titian and Titian After Dark*
- Gallery of Modern Art, Glasgow for *Sanctuary*, a project that used contemporary art to address human rights and the plight of asylum seekers
- National Trust, Sutton House, Hackney for Black History Month 2003
- Henry Moore Institute, Leeds for *Sculpture in 20th century Britain*
- Thinktank, Birmingham for its *Futures Gallery*
- Prescott Museum, Merseyside for *Creating History*
- Museum of Antiquities, Newcastle upon Tyne for Reticulum, an innovative partnership between local schools and museum staff
- Pembrokeshire Museum Service, Wales for *Varda*, a travelling exhibition based in a Gypsy caravan
- Clifton Park Museum, Rotherham for its Heritage Education Project
- Norton Priory Museum, Runcorn for *Positive Partnerships*, working with people with learning disabilities
- Tyne & Wear Museums, Segedunum, for *Pontis*, an innovative public art project

## Museums & Galleries Self-

## Generated Income

The National Audit Office has published its report on Museums and Galleries Self-Generated Income. The report concludes that, while there is scope to do more, the museums and galleries have become increasingly successful at generating their own income, with over £100m generated by DCMS sponsored museums in the last year. The National Audit Office report covers 17 museums and galleries sponsored by DCMS.

The report gives examples of the many ways museums and galleries generate income including: wide range of activities including retailing, catering, e-commerce, corporate entertainment and special exhibitions. Fundraising is the primary source of income, generating £68 million in 2002-03, which was mainly tied to specific campaigns and projects. Trading activities generated £22 million and other income, for example from charges for admission to temporary exhibitions, totalled a further £18 million.

NAO found that although the museums and galleries are involved in a number of creative schemes they may need to do more to encourage an entrepreneurial culture. The report makes a number of recommendations aimed at encouraging better management and planning and improving museums financial information so that they are better able to identify and grasp opportunities, measure the profitability of their activities and manage risk. The NAO also recommends that museums and galleries should collaborate more on trading activities and share information between themselves. NAO suggests DCMS has a role to play in facilitating this. The report can be downloaded from

[http://www.nao.gov.uk/publications/nao\\_reports/03-04/0304235.pdf](http://www.nao.gov.uk/publications/nao_reports/03-04/0304235.pdf)(705KB)

The Public Accounts Committee will be considering this issue next month. Sue Street, Permanent Secretary, and Robert Crawford, Director-General of the Imperial War Museum, and Roy Clare, Director of the National Maritime Museum will appear before them on 8th March.

## MLA Board Appointments

Four new members have been appointed to the Board of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. They are: Virginia Tandy, Director of Manchester City Art Galleries, Sir Geoffrey Holland, Chair of South West Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, David Henshaw, Chief Executive of Liverpool City council, and Nicholas Kingsley, Chair of the National Council on Archives.

## Goodison Calls for a Boost for Gifts to Museums

HM Treasury have published *Securing the Best for our Museums: Private Giving and Government Support*, Sir Nicholas Goodison's review of museums' and libraries' ability to compete in the market place for works of art and culture. The review calls for a boost to private giving and a new emphasis on collections and curation, arguing the cultural and economic case for new acquisitions by museums and other public collections. Sir Nicholas discusses the threat of continuing sales of important objects from private collections and their possible export, the sources of public funding available to museums, the need for a new look at the care of collections, and the difficulties that museums have in providing money for acquisitions. He places particular emphasis on the strengthening of regional collections and their curatorial skills, and increasing the availability of important cultural objects in the regions, in order to widen people's opportunities for enjoyment and learning. Sir Nicholas makes 43 recommendations, including:

- New tax reliefs to tempt owners to donate works of pre-eminent importance to public collections during their lifetimes. If adopted, a donor would be able to set the gross value of the object against income before the assessment of income tax, and any capital taxes due on sale would be eliminated. The donor would be able to spread the income tax saving over a number of years.
- Changes to the Acceptance in Lieu system that will (1) enable executors to offer objects of pre-eminent importance against not just inheritance tax but all forms of tax liability due on a deceased estate, and (2) enable owners of objects, during their lifetimes, to arrange offers in lieu of tax liabilities following their deaths.
- A new one-stop shop for museums and owners to get impartial advice and guidance on buying and selling works of art. MLA could house an executive function to deal with most of the programmes to do with the retention of works of art and other cultural objects. This will enable MLA to provide a much needed professional advice and guidance service to owners and their representatives, and to strengthen its advice and guidance services to museums. The service would include a comprehensive and clear written guide to the many options available to the owner of an object
- Raising the annual grant to the National Heritage Memorial Fund to at least £20million.

The review can be downloaded at:

[www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/consultations\\_and\\_legislation/goodison\\_review/consult\\_goodison\\_index.cfm](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/consultations_and_legislation/goodison_review/consult_goodison_index.cfm)

## Overseas Visitors Figures Up

VisitBritain have announced that there was a significant increase in the number of visitors to the UK towards the end of 2003 compared to the previous year. Visits from North America were up by 16% in December 2003 compared to December 2002. The total number of overseas visitors in 2003 was £24.7m, up 2% on 2002.

VisitBritain estimates that the volume of inbound tourism will increase by 3.3 per cent in 2004, compared to 2003, which would take the total number of visitors to 25.5 million. The value of inbound tourism is forecast to grow by 3.4 per cent in 2004 to £12.3 billion.

## London Top City Break Destination

London is Europe's top city break destination according to new figures released by the market intelligence company, MINTEL. The report shows that in 2002 11.6 million foreign visitors and 16.1 million UK tourists visited London. The other cities in the top five were: Paris with 9m foreign visitors, Amsterdam 5 million, Rome 3.9million and Dublin 3.5 million.

Yasmin Razak, editor of MINTEL's Travel & Tourism Intelligence said, "London has put a lot of effort into promoting itself in the UK and abroad and it seems to have paid off. Many visitors are now coming to see the city's new and redeveloped attractions, as well as the old favourites, many of which are now free." Figures for the first half of 2003 show that the number of visitors to London is up on the first half of 2002. During this time some 5.3 foreign tourists came to London, while in 2002 this figure was nearer 5.2 million. For details visit: [www.mintel.com](http://www.mintel.com)

## Clore Leadership Programme

The Clore Leadership Programme has invited applications for the 24 Fellowships starting this September. The Programme is a new initiative designed to help develop the knowledge, skills, networks and experience of potential leaders across a wide range of cultural activity. Each Fellow will have an individually tailored year-long programme which will include two intensive residential leadership courses; professional development through mentoring, tuition and group learning; time for reflection, research and debate; and experience of managing a high level project. The closing date for applications is 20 February. For further information and online application forms visit [www.cloreleadership.org](http://www.cloreleadership.org)

The NMDC newsletter is compiled by Emily Adams, NMDC Research & Communication Manager. To contribute to future editions email: [eadams@iwm.org.uk](mailto:eadams@iwm.org.uk)

### **James Cuno Leaves Courtauld**

James Cuno, currently head of the Courtauld Institute of Art, has been appointed as the new director of the Art Institute of Chicago. Mr Cuno has been at the Courtauld Institute for just over a year but said; "The call to Chicago was just too great an opportunity to pass up." He will take up the post in Chicago at in September, after completing the Courtauld's academic year. He succeeds James N. Wood, who is retiring after 24 years as director.

### **Chief Executive for London Regional Agency**

ALM London, the new regional agency for London's archives, libraries and museums, has appointed Graham Fisher as its first Chief Executive. Graham has been Director of the London Libraries Development Agency for the past year and was previously the Regional Planning and Partnership Manager for the Legal Services Commission. ALM will formally start operation on 1 April 2004, taking over the work of the LMAL partnership (made up of the London Archives Regional Council, London Libraries Development Agency and London Museums Agency).

### **Teacher Training In Museums**

MLA has published research into the relationship between Initial Teacher Training providers and museums, libraries and archives. The research by Information Management Associates (IMA) was commissioned following changes to the Initial Teacher Training requirements which broaden the scope for teaching practice to occur in settings other than museums. The research found that almost all Initial Teacher Training providers felt that education provision within museums, libraries and archives was an integral part of their training course. However there was little evidence of student placements in museums, libraries and archives for any length of time and activity tends to take the form of one-off visits or attendance of workshops. The research identified areas of good practice and suggested that regional partnership building would lead to effective planning and mainstreaming of activity. The full report is available at: [www.mla.gov.uk/action/learnacc/itt.asp](http://www.mla.gov.uk/action/learnacc/itt.asp)

### **Disability Guides Published**

The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council has published four new Disability Guides. The topics covered are: Disability Discrimination Act; Inclusive Information; Using Technology and Access on a Shoestring. Four more guides will be published at the end of this month. These guides can be found at: [http://www.mla.gov.uk/action/learnacc/00access\\_03.asp](http://www.mla.gov.uk/action/learnacc/00access_03.asp) .

### **Clore Small Grants Programme For Museum And Gallery Education**

The Clore Small Grants Programme for museum and gallery education, which was launched in 1998 for a five-year period, is now nearing completion. The final round of grants awarded through the Programme will be announced shortly. Museums or heritage sites still wishing to submit education applications to the Foundation should now do so through the Main Grants Programme.

The £1m Programme has supported almost 150 projects, through grants ranging from £2,000 to £20,000. Funded projects have included a range of loan/handling collections, outdoor learning trails, outreach programmes, living history projects and the refurbishment of around 40 education rooms. The full summary of all the projects funded can be found on the Foundation website at [www.cloreduffield.org.uk](http://www.cloreduffield.org.uk). When all the funded projects have been completed, a series of detailed project case studies will be published, identifying innovative ideas and good practice.

The Clore Trustees have confirmed that a new five-year Small Grants Programme – for the performing arts education sector – will be launched in 2005. More details will be available on the Foundation's website in due course.

### **Urbis Removes Admission Fee**

Urbis has removed its £5 admission.. Visitors to Urbis have increased by over 300% since the decision was made to drop admission charges on 27 December 2003. Over 200,000 people have now visited the museum since it opened in 2002, but it failed to reach its visitor targets for the first year. The decision to drop the admission fee was made by the Millennium Quarter Trust and supported by Manchester City Council, which last year announced that it would be increasing its annual grant to the museum from £1m to 1.5m. For more information visit: [www.urbis.org.uk](http://www.urbis.org.uk)

### **www.show.me.uk**

The 24 Hour Museum has relaunched it's kid's zone [www.show.me.uk](http://www.show.me.uk) The site, funded by the Clore Foundation, showcases the great interactive content being created for children by UK museums, galleries, heritage and science centres. Although [www.show.me.uk](http://www.show.me.uk) has been designed primarily to appeal to children, the content has been organised so that it relates directly to the national curriculum and the site has a dedicated teacher's section which will pull together all of the Key Stage 1 resources being produced by the UK's museum sector.

**[www.nationalmuseums.org.uk](http://www.nationalmuseums.org.uk)**

# International Issues

## Global decline in Exhibition Figures

The Art Newspaper has published its annual survey of international exhibition attendance figures. The survey ranks exhibitions by average daily attendance figures. Over 800 international museums were contacted for the survey. The survey reveals a decline in visitor numbers compared to 2002. In 2003 only 190 exhibitions attracted more than 1000 visitors per day, compared to 215 exhibitions in 2002. The most popular exhibition of 2003 was *Leonardo Da Vinci, master draftsman* at the Metropolitan in New York, with an average of 6,863 visitors a day, a total 401,004 visitors. Full details and figures for all the top exhibitions can be found at:

[www.theartnewspaper.com/news/article.asp?idart=11556](http://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/article.asp?idart=11556)

## President's Budget Proposes \$10m for Museums

President Bush's proposed budget for 2005 includes an additional \$10m for the museums programme at the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The proposed total grant of £41.4m represents an increase of 32% over the fiscal year 2004 appropriation of \$31.4m. Barbara Bush announced the proposal at the IMLS National Awards Ceremony, last month.

The President's budget recommends significantly increased support for IMLS's National Leadership Grants. These grants advance library and museum leadership activities in support of a nation of learners. A total of \$28,500,000 is requested (\$16,500,000 for libraries and \$12,000,000 for museums) as compared to \$18,154,000 in fiscal year 2004 (\$11,263,000 for libraries and \$6,891,000 for museums.) For full details visit: [www.ims.gov](http://www.ims.gov)

*The Washington Post* reports that the proposed budget would also provide a 5% increase in funding for the Smithsonian Institute, giving the museum complex \$628m in fiscal year 2005, an increase of \$32m from the current year. This includes \$20m.

The President's proposals will now be considered by the appropriations committees of the House and Senate and then by the full Congress.

## The Art Newspaper Archive Online

*The Art Newspaper's* archive, containing all articles ever published in *The Art Newspaper* is now available online and access is currently free. For detailed coverage of wide range of international museum issues visit: [www.theartnewspaper.com](http://www.theartnewspaper.com).

## Museum Chief Admits Trafficking

Lawrence Small, head of the Smithsonian Institute, has pleaded guilty to wildlife trafficking charges after endangered bird feathers were found in his private collection. *The Telegraph* reports that Mr Small bought the collection in 1998 from a private dealer who signed a legal guarantee that the objects contained nothing endangered. The charges were brought after ornithologists thought they saw remnants of some of the Amazon's rarest birds in photographs for an article about Mr Small's collection in the Smithsonian Magazine. Mr Small, who is due to plead guilty to "one-count, non-intentional misdemeanour", is not expected to lose his post or suffer any fine or jail after surrendering his collection to the government.

## Stolen Ivories Returned

Five small ivory sculptures stolen from the Art Gallery of Ontario on 17 January have been recovered. The palm-sized sculptures by David Le Marchand, valued at \$1.5m, which belong to billionaire art collector Ken Thompson, were on loan to the Gallery. They were stolen from a locked glass case just before the Gallery closed. *The Canadian Press* reported that they were returned to police by Toronto lawyer Dennis Morris, who acted as a mediator for the unknown person or persons involved in the theft. It is not clear where the statues had been or how they were kept during their two-week absence. Following the theft, the Art Gallery of Ontario has upgraded security and initiated a comprehensive internal review of their security operations.

## Artists Heirs Sue Amsterdam

The heirs of Russian avant-garde artist Kasimir Malevich are suing the city of Amsterdam in an attempt to recover 14 works of art. *The Washington Post* reports that a suit was filed in the United States District Court in Washington last month. The paintings were the subject of an exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum in New York and the Menil Collection in Houston last year. Lisa Dennison, Deputy Director of the Guggenheim, told the *The Washington Post* that at the time of the show the US Government had given the museum immunity from seizure. This is not the first claim made by the 35 grandchildren, nieces and nephews of Malevich. In 1999 the Museum of Modern Art in New York agreed to make a payment, reported to be \$5m, for one painting in exchange for keeping 15 works by Malevich, which had been taken there for safe-keeping in 1935. The Busch-Reisner Museum at Harvard returned a painting and drawing to the heirs in 1999.

## Smithsonian Reshuffle Elevates Art

A new post has been created to oversee the five art museums run by the Smithsonian Institution: the African Art Museum, the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, the American Art Museum, the Archives of American Art, the National Portrait Gallery, and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery and the Freer Gallery of Art which together form the National Museum of Asian Art. *The Art Newspaper* reports that Ned Rifkin, director of the Hirshhorn, has been appointed to the post and will also continue to lead the Hirshhorn. The Smithsonian's art museums were previously overseen by two under-secretaries. The change is part of a wider restructuring by the Secretary, Lawrence Small, to "improve coordination, cooperation and communication throughout the institution." Mr Small has also appointed Sheila P Burke, former chief of staff to Senate majority leader Bob Dole, as deputy chief secretary and chief operating officer. For more information visit: [www.theartnewspaper.com/news/article.asp?idart=11555](http://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/article.asp?idart=11555)

## Museum Employee Admits Theft

A man who stole \$19,777 from the Otago Museum in New Zealand, while working there as a security guard has admitted a charge of theft. *The Otago Daily Times* reports that over four days at Labour Day weekend, during the museum's Chinese Dinosaur exhibition, Michael Scott Sutherland and another security guard secured the cash and cheques in a locked cabinet in the administration area. Later while other staff were securing the premises, Sutherland unlocked the cabinet, removed all the cash and left by the building by a side door.

## Parliamentary Report

### DCMS and MoD Funding in Real Terms

In response to a question from Shadow Culture Minister, Julie Kirkbride about 'real terms' total Government funding for museums since 1992.. Estelle Morris provided the following figures:

#### DCMS and MoD funding in real terms (£ million)

1992-93	218.7	1999-2000	197.7
1993-94	214.4	2000-01	203.7
1994-95	220.5	2001-02	213.9
1995-96	215.4	2002-03	230.6
1996-97	201.6	2003-04	248.3
1997-98	188.6	2004-05	254.0
1998-99	181.1	2005-06	263.4

Total increase £43.6m

The figures exclude funding for the RAF museums at Hendon and Cosford, funds from DfES, the Arts Council of England and the National Lottery, funding in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. (Hansard, 5 January 2004)

### Renaissance in the Regions

Asked about the impact of free admission on non-national museums, Estelle Morris gave details of the success of Renaissance. Phase 1 Hubs have experienced a 40% increase in number of schools visiting and a 74% increase in contacts between those museums and community groups.

### Human Tissue Bill

The Human Tissue Bill, giving certain national museums the power to de-accession human remains passed its Second Reading on 15 January and is now being considered in committee. The Committee reported on 5<sup>th</sup> February.

## Forthcoming Meetings

### Museums Copyright Group Executive

3.30pm Tue 24 February - Farrers

### Museums Joint Advocacy Group

3.30, Fri 27 Feb, IWM

### Learning & Access Committee

9.00am, Wed 3 March, IWM

### Manifesto for Museums Launch

Tuesday 9 March 2004

### HR Forum

1.00pm, Fri 19 March, National Portrait Gallery

### National Museum Directors' Conference

11.00am, Fri 2 Apr, Imperial War Museum

### NMDC Executive Committee

11.00am, Fri 4 Jun, Imperial War Museum

### Museum Managers Consortium

10.30am, Friday 11 June 2004

### Contact details for the NMDC Secretariat:

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