

Welcome to this month's NMDC newsletter, a briefing on our activities and developments in the museum sector in the UK and beyond.

www.nationalmuseums.org.uk

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NMDC Activities

Promoting Philanthropy

Non-Domicile Tax - New Rules for Works of Art

Responding to requests by museum directors and others, the Chancellor announced changes to the rules regarding works of art in the new arrangements for taxation of non-domicile residents. Under the new rules announced in the Budget, there will be exemptions for works of art brought into the UK for public display, either temporarily or indefinitely, in an approved establishment. Works of art not on display, but held by approved establishments for the public to see or for educational purposes, will also be covered by the scheme.

Other changes to the rules provide exemptions for any assets brought in the UK for repair or restorations, assets valued less than £1,000, assets brought in to the UK for less than 9 months, or assets acquired on or before 11 March 2008. Where art works owned by offshore trusts are sold in the UK, tax will only be paid when the trust remits the gain to the UK.

In a letter in this month's Museums Journal, NMDC Chair, Mark Jones, said he was delighted that changes have been made to the proposals which mean that important donors can continue to play a key role in support Britain's museums and galleries. He also reiterated that NMDC believes it is absolutely right that those who live in this country should contribute to the cost of services and that NMDC sought the changes to ensure that the draft legislation did not have unintended and damaging consequences for our sector.

For details see BN104 and BN105 on the HMRC website:

www.hmrc.gov.uk/budget2008/master-notes.pdf

The April edition of *The Art Newspaper* has a good summary of the issue prepared by Philip Munro and Samantha Morgan of the law firm, Withers. www.theartnewspaper.com

Comment:

Magnus Linklater in *The Times* (2 April) on treatment of donors and need for more tax incentives for lifetime giving.

www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/magnus_linklater/article3663124.ece

Related news...

£20m Donation for National Maritime Museum

The National Maritime Museum has received a donation of £20m from shipping magnate and philanthropist Sammy Ofer, towards the creation of a major new wing. It is believed to be the largest single donation by an individual to a cultural project in the UK. Mr Ofer, who is Israeli, has strong links with Britain and served in the Royal Navy in the Mediterranean during World War II. www.nmm.ac.uk

£2m Legacy for National Museums Scotland

National Museums Scotland has received it's biggest ever legacy: a bequest of £2m from Miss Adèle Stewart, a long-standing visitor and supporter of the museum. The museum will name the new World Cultures galleries at the Royal Museum of Scotland in her honour. www.nms.ac.uk/press_release_legacy_boost0308.aspx

Arts Sponsorship Grants

Linda Fabiani, Scottish Executive Minister for Culture, has announced a further £600k for Arts & Business in 2008-10 to encourage new business sponsorship for the arts on a £1 for £1 matching basis. www.aandb.org.uk/scotland/

Gift Aid

The Government published its response to the consultation on Gift Aid with the Budget, setting out a package of measures including:

- Payment of Gift Aid claims at a transitional rate of 22% in 2008-11
- reform of the auditing process including aggregating donations under £10 in claims up to a total of £500
- redesign of HMRC guidance launch of a new Gift Aid website for donors and charities www.direct.gov.uk/giftaid
- making available a Gift Aid toolkit to 5,000 new charities and 20,000 existing registered charities in the autumn
- a comprehensive programme for bringing more smaller charities into Gift Aid

The Government will continue to work with donors and charities to develop understanding of donor behaviour and use that to inform further thinking about Gift Aid.

www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/budget/budget_08/documents/bud_bud08_giftaid.cfm

The HMRC publication 'Gift Aid - Administrative Changes and Proposals' can be found at www.hmrc.gov.uk/budget2008/gift-aid-admin.pdf

NMDC's response to the Gift Aid consultation can be found at: www.nationalmuseums.org.uk/gift_aid_consultation.html

Digitisation

NMDC is taking a leading role in the debate on the future direction of digital technology in museums, libraries and archives. Jane Finnis, Director of Culture 24, met NMDC members on 14 March to discuss the potential, options and impetus for the sector in developing a digital offer. Jane's presentation can be found at:

www.nationalmuseums.org.uk/digitisation.html

The V&A, National Maritime Museum and Science Museum are working with Culture 24 and NMDC on the National Collections Online project. The first step is a feasibility study investigating the potential for developing a central, national, online resource that will provide the foundation for future joint educational, research, creative and other public initiatives open to other partners. The Online Learning Project, an Invest to Save project involving a consortium of national museums, will report to NMDC later this year. NMDC, MLA and Culture 24 will convene a seminar later this year to reflect on lessons learned and discuss next steps.

Social Impact of Museums

NMDC's UK Affairs Committee is undertaking a critical analysis of thinking and research on social impact, with a view to developing a framework for expressing and evaluating social impact. The work will review existing research, build on initiatives such as MLA's Generic Social Outcomes, and draw on a range of methodologies and contexts across the UK. The study should inform future policy, facilitate future delivery and help our sector and its constituents better understand their impact and potential, and better plan and deliver their work.

As a first step, Caroline Collier (Tate) and Alec Coles (Tyne and Wear Museums) led a seminar to discuss social impact research at Tate Britain on 18 March. Contributors included Sara Selwood (City University), John Holden (Demos), Ann Fletcher and John Hentley (Tyne & Wear Museums) and Munira Mirza (Tate). A small working group will be meeting to reflect on issues raised at the session and to create a brief for commissioning further work.

Directors in the News

Nicholas Penny

Nicholas Penny, Director of the National Gallery, gave interviews to coincide with the publication of his second volume of the National Gallery catalogue of 16th-century Italian paintings. He told *The Art Newspaper* he wanted to acquire 19th century works, particularly American artists. In the *Guardian* interview he spoke about his passions as connoisseur-director, and the need for balancing the role of temporary exhibitions with the needs of permanent collections.

<http://arts.guardian.co.uk>
www.theartnewspaper.com

Jack Lohman

Professor Jack Lohman, Director of the Museum of London, has been appointed by Bogdan Zdrojewski, Poland's Minister of Culture, as Chair of the Board of the National Museum in Warsaw. This is a four year appointment. Jack will spend one day a month in Warsaw. He said: "The National Museum in Warsaw needs transformation and I believe that in 5-6 years time it can become one of Europe's leading museums. The first task will be to appoint a director who can drive forward a vision of a more inclusive national museum"

Gordon Rintoul

The Glasgow Herald has published a profile of Gordon Rintoul, Director of National Museums Scotland, along with details of the major renovation project at the Royal Museum. The Museum closes this month for three years.

www.theherald.co.uk

Neil MacGregor

In an interview with *Time Out* magazine, Neil MacGregor described his vision of the British Museum's role as a centre of world collections and gave examples of the Museum's global activities. www.timeout.com

Forthcoming NMDC Meetings

Marketing Group

Tuesday 22nd April, time TBC, British Library

HR Forum

Friday 6th June, 11am, English Heritage

Learning & Access Committee

Thursday 5th June, 1.30pm, venue TBC

NMDC Meeting

Friday 11 July, 11am, Victoria & Albert Museum

National Museum Jobs

NMDC jobs website this month includes details of almost 50 vacancies at national museums around the UK including: Finance and Operations Director at the Wallace Collection; Managing Curator: Artists Rooms, Tate and National Galleries of Scotland; Formal Learning Officers at the National Maritime Museum; Curator of Physical Anthropology at the British Museum; Community Development Manager, Imperial War Museum North; and Director of Learning and Partnerships at National Museums Northern Ireland.

Visit www.nationalmuseumjobs.org.uk for details.

Current Issues

DCMS Transformation and New Director of Culture

Mick Elliott, currently Chief Executive of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, has been appointed as the new Director of Culture at DCMS. Formerly Chief Executive of the Heart of England Tourist Board and of West Midlands Arts, Mr Elliott, who is also Associate Cultural Director of Liverpool Capital of Culture, will take up his post in June. He replaces Alan Davey, who is now Chief Executive of Arts Council England.

DCMS is undertaking an internal restructuring following last year's Capability Review. The aims of the DCMS Transformation Programme are to make the Department more focused, so that it can deliver more added value; be more flexible, so that it can respond quickly to new opportunities and challenges; and be more influential both within Government and with other key stakeholders.

A new departmental structure will become effective from Tuesday 15 April, and will involve the following changes:

- The merger of three divisions (Arts; Museums Libraries and Cultural Property; and Architecture and Historic Environment) into a single Culture Directorate, led by Mick Elliot as Culture Director, and by Claudia Kenyatta and Harry Reeves as Deputy Directors. The Culture Directorate will retain responsibility for developing and supporting strategic policy for museums;
- The creation of a programme team of around 100 people to work on defined projects that cut across sectoral 'silos', in order to maximise the department's impact;
- The creation of a Public Engagement and Recognition Unit (PERU) to handle all Ministerial correspondence, briefings, appointments, Parliamentary Questions and Freedom of Information requests. The new team will absorb the current appointments unit and DCMS's internal correspondence handling unit, and will rely more on the direct input of sponsored bodies in briefing Ministers;
- The rationalisation of all finance functions within the Finance Division, to promote more effective handling of finance-related issues. This team will become responsible for funding arrangements for museums funded by DCMS.

More information on the new structure will follow shortly.

www.culture.gov.uk

New Director of Public Services at HM Treasury

HM Treasury has appointed Helen Bailey, currently Chief Executive of Islington Council, as Director, Public Services, following a full external competition. She will have overall responsibility in the Treasury for oversight of public spending on education, children and culture; health; housing, communities and local government; and the UK's devolved countries and regions. Simon Ridley, Head of the Education, Children & Culture team will report to her.

www.hm-treasury.gov.uk

Shadow-DCMS Website

The Conservative Culture, Media and Sport team have launched a website. The site includes media releases and policy documents, which registered users can comment on and update in the same way as Wikipedia. The site also contains links to blogs by Shadow Culture Secretary, Jeremy Hunt MP, and Shadow Arts Minister, Ed Vaizey MP. The website can be found at:

www.shadowdcms.co.uk

Cultural Olympiad: Getting Involved

The London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG) has announced that it is now accepting proposals for exceptional one-off projects to use the newly-launched *Inspire* mark as part of the Cultural Olympiad. Ideas for projects running between September 2008 and 2012 which meet all three core values of the Cultural Olympiad and address three of the seven themes of the Cultural Olympiad can now be submitted to Creative Programmers in every nation and region. A limited number will form part of the Cultural Olympiad in September and will be able to use the *Inspire* mark branding to show they were inspired by the Olympics.

Access All Areas, the project which Heritage Link has been developing on behalf of the heritage sector over the last nine months, has been accepted on to the list of Major Projects in development for the Cultural Olympiad. The ideas will now be developed in partnership with LOCOG and sector partners, and a Project Co-ordinator is also being appointed.

www.london2012.com/beinspired

Cultural Olympiad values:

- welcome the world;
- inspire and involve young people; and
- leave a lasting and positive legacy.

Cultural Olympiad themes:

- bring together culture and sport;
- encourage audiences to take part;
- animate and humanise public spaces - through street theatre, public art, circus skills, live big screen sites;
- use culture and sport to raise issues of environmental sustainability, health and wellbeing;
- honour and share the values of the Olympic and Paralympic Games;
- ignite cutting edge collaborations and innovation between communities and cultural sectors; and
- enhance the learning, skills and personal development of young people by linking with our education programmes.

Spoliation

National Gallery Appeals for Information on Painting in Hitler's Private Collection

The National Gallery is again calling for information about the provenance of 'Cupid Complaining to Venus' by Lucas Cranach the Elder, after new information that it was once part of Adolf Hitler's private collection. Dr Birgit Schwarz, who has been carrying out research on Hitler's art collecting, has identified the painting in a photograph of Hitler's private gallery.

The Gallery has been seeking further information about the provenance of this painting since 1999, when a list of works in the Gallery's collection with uncertain provenance between 1933 and 1945 was published. The National Gallery bought 'Cupid Complaining to Venus' in 1963 from the New York dealers E & A Silberman, who told the Gallery the painting was sold to them by 'family descendants' of the buyer at the 1909 auction. In 2006, the Gallery received information that the painting had actually been acquired in 1945 by Mrs Patricia Hartwell, then an American war correspondent, from a warehouse full of art then controlled by US forces in Southern Germany.

www.nationalgallery.org.uk/about/press/2008/cranach.htm

Details of all the works of art on which national and regional museums are seeking further information on 1933-45 provenance can be found at: www.culturalpropertyadvice.gov.uk/spoliation_reports

Dutch Restitution Committee Orders Return in Exchange for Payment

The Dutch Restitution Committee has instructed the Rotterdam Municipal Museum to return the painting *Thames at London* by Jan Toorop to the heirs of its former owners, upon payment of €30,397. The committee concluded that the painting was the subject of a forced sale. The claimants offered to make the payment, which is the amount their grandfather, Ernst Flersheim, received for the painting in 1937 (NLG 3,500), indexed according to the general price index figure. This is the first time the Committee has used its power to issue binding advice in a dispute over an item that is not in the possession of the national government.

www.restitutiecommissie.nl/en/rc_3.48/persbericht_rc_3.48.html

Insurance for Spoliation Claims

The Art Newspaper reports that certain US banks and finance companies are requesting that clients purchase title insurance before agreeing to arrange bank loans secured against art. Art title protection insurance became available in the US about ten months ago, through the New York-based Aris Corporation. Since then increasing numbers of private collectors, dealers, museums, and banks have been buying policies to protect their assets. One insurance company, Chubb, has also started offering insurance to cover costs of litigation in the event of a claim.

www.theartnewspaper.com/article.asp?id=7683

Myplace - £190m for Places for Young People

Beverley Hughes, Minister for Children, Young People and Families has launched Myplace, a £190m capital investment scheme to create exciting and safe places for young people to go in their leisure time where they can get involved in a range of activities. Grants of up to £5m are available. The BIG Lottery Fund will administer the scheme.

www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/youthmatters/aiminghigh/myplace/

Developing Children's Services Survey

The Children's Workforce Development Council is undertaking an online survey on learning opportunities, barriers and leadership development for managers delivering services to children or young people aged 0-19 in England. The Council is particularly keen to hear the views of managers in museums, libraries and archives.

www.hayinsightsurvey.com/run/cwdc2008

Trustee Appointments

The Prime Minister has made the following appointments:

- **Eric Sorensen**, Chief Executive of Thames Gateway London Partnership, and **Jennette Arnold**, Member of the Greater London Authority and chair of the Mayor's Cultural Strategy, as Governors of the **Museum of London**;
- **Matthew Saunders MBE**, Secretary of the Ancient Monuments Society, reappointed as a Trustee of the **National Heritage Memorial Fund**;
- **Nick Williams**, Principal of The Brit School, Croydon, as a Trustee of the **Imperial War Museum**;
- **Lady Heseltine** and **Michael Hintze** as Trustees of the **National Gallery**. Lady Heseltine has previously been a Trustee of both the Victoria and Albert Museum (1997-2002) and the Imperial War Museum (1991-1998). Mr Hintze is a businessman and philanthropist, founder of the Hintze Family Charitable Foundation.

<http://www.pm.gov.uk/output/Page2517.asp>

Museum of London Transfers to Greater London Authority

From 6 April governance of the Museum of London will be shared equally by the Greater London Authority (GLA) and the City of London Corporation. The GLA will take over responsibilities previously held by the DCMS, including funding and the appointment of members to the Board of Governors. The arrangements are part of the wider transfer of powers to local government in GLA Act 2007. The Museum of London Board of Governors supported the transfer.

The Museum's Director, Jack Lohman, said 'The move allows the Museum of London to tune in to the beating heart of London and be part of London's core identity. It will give us a stronger platform from which to develop the Museum in years to come and will provide better synergy with tourism, marketing and promotion.' To mark the move, the Museum will host a two month exhibition in the GLA on its role in the Capital over the summer and will hold a photographic exhibition in Beijing to coincide with the Beijing Olympics.

www.museumoflondon.org.uk

Culture in London Leads the World

The London Development Agency has published the first quantitative overview of London's cultural environment, and comparing London with other four world cities - New York, Paris, Tokyo and Shanghai. According to the report by BOP Consulting and Experian, London is leading the way internationally, with more museums and galleries, more theatres and concert halls, and more music venues and cinemas.

The Mayor of London has announced a £1.4 million fund for organisations to develop new cultural projects across the capital, which will be delivered by the LDA in partnership with Arts Council England over the next 18 months. It is envisaged that more funding will be made available to support cultural projects, to help sustain London's pre-eminence in cultural and creative activity amongst great world cities in the run up to 2012.

www.london.gov.uk/view_press_release.jsp?releaseid=16173

The Guardian Award 2008

The shortlist for the 2008 Guardian Family Friendly Museum Award has been announced:

- Dulwich Picture Gallery
- Manchester Art Gallery
- Wolverhampton Art Gallery
- Shetland Museum
- Weston Park Museum, Sheffield

The shortlist was selected from public nominations by a judging panel. The five shortlisted museums will now be road-tested by families, arriving unannounced. The families will use the Kids in Museums Manifesto to help assess their welcome. The winner will be announced on 1 May. www.kidsinmuseums.org.uk/the-guardian-award/

ICOM UK Seeks Board Members

ICOM UK is currently looking for new members for its board from Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and would welcome contact with any members who might be willing to stand. ICOM UK will be holding its AGM at the British Library Conference Centre at 2pm on Monday 21 April. For more information, contact Lucy Watts, lwatts@museumoflondon.org.uk

Improvement Strategy for Cultural Services Launched

DCMS and the Improvement Development Agency have published *A Passion for Excellence: An Improvement Strategy for Culture and Sport*. The strategy is the result of collaboration between MLA, Arts Council, Sport England, English Heritage and DCMS with input from local government representatives. It sets out the principles for improvement and efficiency in the delivery of culture and sport by local authorities and their partners. It also clarifies the respective roles and responsibilities in delivering the strategy of all the major stakeholders in the culture and sport sector, in line with the National Performance Framework and the National Improvement and Efficiency Strategy. www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets//P/passion_excellence_12832.pdf

Arts Council of Wales Chief Executive Resigns

Peter Tyndall will be stepping down as Chief Executive of the Arts Council of Wales after 6 years in the post, to take up his appointment as Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. He takes up his new duties on April 21.

www.artswales.org.uk/viewnews.asp?id=796

Executive Director of Arts Council England Appointed

Moira Sinclair has been appointed the Executive Director of Arts Council England, London. Moira was previously Director of Development at the Arts Council's London office and has been Interim Executive Director since December 2007.

www.artscouncil.org.uk

EU Funding for cultural cooperation projects with Brazil and Russia

The European Commission has announced a new call for "third country" projects for the Culture Programme with a focus on Brazil. In last year's call for 'third country' projects involving China or India, 5 of the successful 12 projects were led by UK partners. The deadline for proposals is 1 June 2008.

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/culture/calls2008/strand_1_3/index_en.htm

The European Union has launched the second round of the Institution Building Partnership Programme (IBPP), supporting intercultural dialogue between EU and Russia with €2 million in 2009-2010. IBPP supports innovative and creative projects between Russian and European cultural organisations, enhancing the mobility of arts and artists, and supporting the intercultural dialogue objective of the new European agenda for culture in a globalizing world.

www.delrus.ec.europa.eu/en/p_340.htm

Museums and the Internet

ArtShare: Museum Collections on Facebook

The Brooklyn Museum has made an application for the social-networking site, Facebook, which allows users to add selected objects from museum collections to their Facebook profile. Participating institutions now included Corning Museum of Glass, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Picture Australia, Powerhouse Museum, Royal Ontario Museum, Museum, Walker Art Center, Walters Art Museum and the V&A. The idea is that it will promote collections and drive traffic to participating museum websites. Museums wishing to participate can find out more at:

www.brooklynmuseum.org/community/network/facebook/importing.php

To add museum pieces to your Facebook profile:

www.facebook.com/apps/application.php?id=7723691927

Museums Visits and Internet Use

The Institute of Museum and Library Services in the United States has published research on the use of museums, libraries and the internet. The research found that adults who use the internet are more likely to visit museums and libraries, and to visit them more frequently. There were 701m visits to US museums by adults in 2006, and 542 web visits.

<http://interconnectionsreport.org/>

Google Grants: In-kind advertising for non-profit Organisations

The Google Grants program supports organisations sharing Google's philosophy of community service to help the world in areas such as science and technology, education, global public health, the environment, youth advocacy, and the arts.

<http://www.google.com/grants/>

Getty Images bought by Private Equity firm

The picture library, Getty Images, has been bought by a private equity firm, Hellman & Friedman, for \$2.4bn. The new owners intend to further the evolution of Getty Images into a global digital media company.

http://media.gettyimages.com/article_display.cfm?article_id=171

Museums Galleries Scotland - New Name for SMC

The Scottish Museums Council has become Museums Galleries Scotland. The new identity and brand is intended to reflect the role the organisation plays in widening access to and care of Scotland's collections. www.museumsgalleriescotland.org.uk

Unlocking Local Treasure

The Museums Association and Local Government Association have published 'Unlocking Local Treasure', aimed at helping elected members and non-specialist staff in local authorities to make the most of their museums. It explores the benefits that a well-managed museum or gallery collection brings to a local authority and local people. www.lga.gov.uk/lga/aio/337576

Research on Museum Catering

MLA London has published research, undertaken by Visit London, on food and drink in museums, libraries and archives. The research found that venues need at least 20,000 visits a year to justify extensive catering provision, and that special events are the most profitable form of catering. www.mlalondon.org.uk/lmal/index.cfm

EU Research Into Role Of Culture In Fostering Creativity

European Commissioner Ján Figel announced the launch of a study on the role of culture, and the EU's cultural industries, in promoting and stimulating creativity, innovation and growth in the EU. <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/08/96>

In Parliament...

Creative Scotland Bill Published

A bill to establish Creative Scotland, a new body to support Scottish arts and culture was introduced to the Scottish Parliament on 12 March. The new body will replace Scottish Arts Council and Scottish Screen. Creative Scotland's functions will be to:

- promote understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the arts and culture
- identify, support and develop talent and excellence in the arts and culture
- realise the value and benefits of arts and culture
- support activities which involve the application of creative skills to the development of products and processes.

The Bill is currently being considered at Stage 1 and has been referred to the Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture Committee. The deadline for Stage 1 consideration is 20 June 2008.

Bill can be found: www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/07-CreativeScotland/index.htm

Cultural Offer for Young People

MPs held a debate on the creative industries on 20 March. During the debate, Margaret Hodge said she did not yet know the form in which the Youth Culture Trust will emerge from Creative Partnerships, though it is likely to be a Non-Departmental Public Body. The Youth Culture Trust will be responsible for delivering the programmes in schools from 2009. The Minister said she wants the Youth Culture Trust to take responsibility for the £120-130m Creative Partnerships budget, but is not yet clear in what form Creative Partnerships will continue beyond 2009. The full debate can be found at:

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmhansrd/cm080320/halltext/80320h0001.htm#08032073000178

During Oral Questions in the House of Commons on 10 March, Culture Secretary, Andy Burnham said there had already been more than 50 expressions of interest in the Find Your Talent programme. 10 local partnerships will be selected to pilot the scheme. The closing date for applications is 7 April.

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmhansrd/cm080310/debtext/80310-0001.htm

Draft Heritage Protection Bill

The Government has published the draft Heritage Protection Bill for England and Wales, which will create a single system for designation - to be called the Heritage Register - which will replace listing, scheduling and registering, and involve greater public consultation. Responsibility for designating land-based assets in England will transfer from DCMS to English Heritage. The Bill also includes reform of the marine heritage protection regime in England and Wales, and a duty for local authorities to maintain a Historic Environment Record.

www.culture.gov.uk/NR/exeres/D35A903F-5BB7-45B9-8559-A9827DEF37C3.htm

International Issues

New Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution

The Smithsonian Institution's Board of Regents has announced that G. Wayne Clough, president of the Georgia Institute of Technology, has been unanimously elected the 12th Secretary of the Smithsonian. He will officially assume the office on 1 July. Clough succeeds Lawrence M. Small, who resigned as Smithsonian Secretary in March 2007. *The Art Newspaper* reports that the acting Secretary, Cristián Samper will return to his job as Director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History. Also last month, Ned Rifkin, the Under Secretary for Art at the Smithsonian Institution, announced he would resign with effect from 11 April.

The Smithsonian Institution runs 19 museums and the National Zoological Park, as well as nine research facilities. It has an annual budget of nearly \$1 billion, 70% of which is funded by the Federal Government.
http://newsdesk.si.edu/releases/si_Clough-named-Secretary.htm

Whitney Museum Chair donates \$131m

The Whitney Museum of American Art has announced a donation of \$131m. The donation comes from The American Contemporary Art Foundation Inc, the president of which is Leonard A Lauder, the Estee Lauder heir, and Chair of the Whitney's Board of Trustees. \$125m will go to the Whitney's endowment. The rest will be used for Museum operating expenses.

www.whitney.org/www/information/press/whitney_gift.pdf

Major donation to Art Gallery of New South Wales

Art collector and businessman, John Kalder has given his entire collection of contemporary art - some 260 works valued at Aus\$35m - to the Art Gallery of New South Wales. Mr Kalder is a trustee of the Gallery and also Chair of its neighbour in Sydney, the Museum of Contemporary Art.

www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/media/current/kalder_gift

Pompidou Budget Cuts Delay Exhibitions and Renovations

The Art Newspaper reports that the Pompidou centre in Paris has postponed a major temporary exhibition, due to open next month, following a €3.2m cut in its annual government funding. The total budget for this year is now €106m. The 6% budget cut has been applied to all state-funded French museums, and is part of President Sarkozy's pledge to reduce public spending. The exhibition, *Alexander Calder: the Paris years, 1926-33*, organised in conjunction with the Whitney Museum, New York will now come to the Pompidou in March 2009.

www.theartnewspaper.com

Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum Reissues Offer of \$5 million Reward

On the 18th anniversary of the major art theft, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston has reissued its commitment to a \$5m reward in return for information leading directly to the return in good condition of 13 major works of art. The missing pieces include three Rembrandts, a Vermeer, a Manet and five Degas drawings. The museum is offering a guarantee of complete anonymity to anyone coming forward with information. Empty frames now hang in the 'Dutch Room' where the Vermeer and Rembrandts used to hang.

www.gardnermuseum.org/press_releases/theft/theft_18th_anniversary_release_mar2008.pdf

New Cultural and Art Authority in Dubai

His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Ruler of Dubai, has issued a decree creating a Cultural and Art Authority in Dubai. The authority will supervise the establishment of a developed culture and art infrastructure in Dubai and will also enhance export of Dubai's culture and art to the rest of the world.

www.gulfnews.com/nation/Heritage_and_Culture/10195834.html

Netherlands and Flanders Adopt SPECTRUM Standard

The Dutch and Flemish versions of SPECTRUM, the international standard for collections management developed in the UK by the MDA, were launched last month. This marks the culmination of two years of collaboration, coordinated by MDA in the UK, the Landes Consulenten Muselijk (LCM) in the Netherlands and new cultural organisation FARO in Flanders. Over the next 4 years, MDA will be coordinating an active programme of international collaboration focussed around the development

www.mda.org.uk/pr080320

More information about NMDC activities can be found on our website at:

www.nationalmuseums.org.uk

National Museums' News Round Up

The Royal Armouries at Fort Nelson has been awarded £2m from the Heritage Lottery Fund, towards the £3.5m redevelopment of heritage site in Hampshire. £750,000 of match funding has already been secured. The project will include a new 355sq m visitor centre and facilities outside the walls of the fort, a new 450sq m entrance gallery and a state of the art education centre. Building work is due to start in 2009 and completed by 2010. www.royalarmouries.org/extsite/view.jsp?sectionId=3847

The Science Museum has been awarded a place in the Design Week Awards Hall of Fame 2008, and the **V&A, Natural History Museum and Imperial War Museum** were also commended. Design Week said "Most national museums are patrons of great design. The Science Museum stands out though for its innovative use of design to convey abstract scientific concepts to an enthusiastic but non-scientific audience to create award-winning installations." The **V&A Café** designed by MUMA won the Hospitality Environment category. The Imperial War Museum's **Duxford Airspace** and the **V&A Porter Gallery** were shortlisted in the Museum, Galleries and Visitor Attraction category. The **V&A's Golden Age of Couture** exhibition was shortlisted for the Temporary Exhibition Design category. The **Natural History Museum's** Discovery Guides were shortlisted for the Print Design category. www.designweek.co.uk/Awards/AwardStage.aspx?liAwardTypeID=1

Tyne and Wear Museum, Tate Britain, Museums Sheffield and Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery have been awarded £1.15m by the Heritage Lottery for the *Imagine a Nation* project. The project, which will run for 4 years, will use collections to explore a vision of Britain, and what it means to be British in the 21st century, and will culminate in events and exhibitions during summer 2012. The project aims to reach over one million people across the country, from a wide range of backgrounds, and allow them access to some major British artworks. One of the highlights of the project will be a series of major exhibitions featuring masterpieces of British art drawn from collections around the country. Communities will have the opportunity to enjoy and contribute to the exhibitions, which will include great art works from the four key venues. www.twmuseums.org.uk

President Sarkozy visited the **National Maritime Museum's Royal Observatory** at Greenwich during his trip to London. M. Sarkozy is a collector of chronometers. www.nmm.ac.uk

Big Pit: National Coal Mining museum has launched a new learning space as the museum celebrates its 25th Birthday. The new building has been funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the £100,000 awarded to Big Pit as winner of the Gulbenkian Museums and Galleries Prize in 2006.

www.museumwales.ac.uk/en/news/?article_id=421

The Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology held a topping out ceremony to mark a key stage in its £61m redevelopment: the construction of the external frame of the new extension. Due to open in 2009, the development comprises 39 new galleries, a new education centre, conservation studios, a walkthrough between the Museum and the cast gallery, and Oxford's first rooftop café.

www.ashmolean.org/news/news/index.php?id=71

Shipleigh Art Gallery, Tyne & Wear Museums has opened its new Designs for Life gallery, a new permanent gallery exploring craft and design over the last 2000 years. www.twmuseums.org.uk/news/article.php?id=829

The British Museum and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew will work together to create a China landscape in the forecourt of the British Museum this summer. Experts at Kew will select and provide the plants and design, the British Museum will provide curatorial expertise and the location. The landscape follows on from the successful Africa Garden created in 2005, and future collaborative projects are planned.

www.britishmuseum.org/the_museum/news_and_press_releases/press_releases/2008/china_landscape.aspx

The Royal Air Force Museum has launched a Podcast Series. The podcasts released monthly will examine in detail elements of the history of the Royal Air Force and the Museum's sites at London, Rossford and Stafford. This month's podcast recalls the thrills and spills of RAF Hendon's inter-war heyday.

www.rafmuseum.org.uk/podcasts/index.cfm

The National Portrait Gallery's new display has been sponsored by the UK Film Council as part of its drive to ensure people from all backgrounds can thrive and achieve their potential in the film industry. The display, *Want to see more of me?* is a striking new series of portraits of talented and successful black British film actors by photographer Donald MacLellan. It is a *Leadership on Diversity* initiative under the Equalities Charter for Film funded by the UK Film Council. www.npg.org.uk

The Royal Marines Museum has invited visitors to watch conservators at work on the restoration of the ornate ceiling in the Museum's Minstrel's Gallery. www.royalmarinesmuseum.co.uk

Natural History Museum palaeontologist, Chris Stringer, has won the Kistler Book Award for 2008 for his book *Homo britannicus: The Incredible Story of Human Life in Britain*. The award is given by the Foundation For the Future and recognises authors of science-based books that significantly increase public knowledge and understanding of the subjects that will shape the future of the human species. www.nhm.ac.uk/about-us/news/2008/march/news_13490.html

Natural History Museum scientist, Ralf Britz, has had a new species of catfish named after him. Called *Eutropiichthys britzi*, the fish comes from Myanmar in Southeast Asia and was described for the first time in December 2007. www.nhm.ac.uk/about-us/news/2008/march/news_13652.html

Tate Britain, with the help of The Art Fund, is actively seeking support to raise £6 million to save the first sketch Sir Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640) made for his ceiling paintings in the Banqueting House, Whitehall. The painting is valued at £11.5m but is on offer to Tate at £6m net of special tax concessions. Tate has so far secured £1.5m towards this sum including a pledge of £500,000 from The Art Fund and £300,000 from Tate Members. The Art Fund has built a dedicated website for the campaign. www.artfund.org/savetherubens/index.php

David Hockney has given his largest painting, *Bigger Trees near Water* 2007 to **Tate**. The oil painting, his largest ever, was made on fifty canvas panels and was executed outside, *en plein air*. Measuring 4.6 x 12.2 metres (15x 40 feet), its subject is a typical Yorkshire landscape.

Tate Modern has commissioned six internationally acclaimed Street Artists to create murals on the river facade of Tate Modern. The works, the first major public museum display of Street Art in London, will be unveiled on 23 May. www.tate.org.uk/about/pressoffice/pressreleases/2008/14784.htm

A poll commissioned by the **British Library** reveals nearly half the population don't know what the Magna Carta is. The poll by YouGov was commissioned to accompany the Library's new website which explains the origins of Magna Carta, provides a timeline and allows visitors to see the document close up through Turning the Pages and read an English translation www.bl.uk/treasures/magnacarta/

The John Murray Archive exhibition at the **National Library of Scotland** has won a major award for lighting. NLS won in the Public Buildings category at the Lighting Design Awards. The Jameel Gallery of Islamic Art at the V&A was also shortlisted. www.nls.uk/news/press/2008-03-19.html

The Family Records Centre (FRC) closed on 15 March and staff and services have been transferred to the **National Archives** in Kew. The National Archives building is being extensively refurbished and improved, enabling all the services to be provided in one location. When complete, additional seating, microfiche readers and computer terminals will be available to visitors, improving access to original records, research resources and the ever-growing range of online material. www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/news/stories/192.htm?news

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