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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. www.nationalmuseums.org.uk

NMDC News

NMDC Seminar on Identity, Diversity and Citizenship: Lessons for our National Museums

At the end of May the National Museum Directors' Conference (NMDC) hosted an expert roundtable in association with ippr to explore *Identity, diversity and citizenship: Lessons for our national museums*. The event was held at the British Museum and chaired by Sandy Nairne, Director of the National Portrait Gallery and Chair of the NMDC Cultural Diversity Working Group.

National museums and archives have long been concerned with enabling the public to explore their heritage and identity and to understand different cultures. As holders of the national collections, they also provide a British narrative that spans time and disciplines. National museums and archives provide a vital source of learning for other public bodies concerned with identity, diversity and citizenship.

The discussion highlighted that museums and archives are viewed as neutral, non-religious public spaces which people trust and where they feel 'safe'. They offer expert, non-partisan interpretation of their collections and provide an impartial space for open engagement and debate. Museums and archives provide an invaluable educational tool in understanding identities, and unique opportunities to bring different people together.

The report and the ippr presentation given at the seminar are available at the NMDC website: www.nationalmuseums.org.uk/identity_seminar.html

NMDC Submission to Conservative Arts Taskforce

In July 2007 NMDC made a submission to the Arts Taskforce led by Sir John Tusa, an independent body set up to inform Conservative cultural policy development ahead of the next general election.

The NMDC submission can be read at: www.nationalmuseums.org.uk/arts_taskforce.html

Members' News

National Maritime Museum Director Appointed

Dr Kevin Fewster, currently Director of the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney, Australia, has been appointed Director of the National Maritime Museum. Dr Fewster was previously the first Director of the Australian National Maritime Museum in Sydney from 1989-1999, President (1996-9) of the International Congress of Maritime Museums and Chairman of the Council of Australasian Museum Directors. Dr Fewster will take up his post at the National Maritime Museum in September 2007.

Dr Margarette Lincoln, currently Acting Director at the National Maritime Museum, will become Deputy Director. She joined the Museum in 1988 and was most recently Director of Research and Planning. www.nmm.ac.uk/server/show/ConWebDoc.21760

New Science Museum Director

The Science Museum has appointed Professor Chris Rapley CBE, currently Director of the British Antarctic Survey, as its new Director. Professor Rapley is an expert on climate change science and architect of the International Polar Year 2007-2008. He will take up the post on 1 September.

Professor Martin Earwicker, Director of the National Museum of Science and Industry said: "Chris will concentrate on leading the Science Museum's cultural agenda, building the international reputation of the museum brand with sponsors, government and the public, and becoming the public face of the museum." www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/about_us/press_and_media/press_releases/2007/07/484.aspx

The National Archives and Microsoft Join Forces to Preserve UK Digital Heritage

Microsoft and The National Archives have announced a Memorandum of Understanding to ensure the preservation of UK digital records. Microsoft will make available to The National Archives a system combining previous versions of Windows and Office, to allow access to historical documents based on legacy Microsoft file formats. This will also enable the National Archives to improve access to these documents by converting the information to new, open file formats.

The National Archives will contribute expertise in digital preservation to the development of future releases of Microsoft products. www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/news/stories/164.htm

Lord Browne and Monisha Shah appointed Tate Trustees

Lord Browne of Madingley and Monisha Shah have been appointed Tate Trustees for four years from 1 August 2007. Lord Browne, former Group Chief Executive of British Petroleum plc, is a supporter of the arts and encouraged the sponsorship of Tate's BP British Art Displays. Monisha Shah joined BBC Worldwide in 1999 and has been its Director of Emerging Markets since 2005. She previously worked in the media industry in India. www.tate.org.uk/about/pressoffice/pressreleases/2007/11233.htm

Your Tate Track

Your Tate Track is a competition for 16-24 year olds to create music inspired by art from the Tate Collection. It is part of *Tate Tracks*, which aims to encourage young audiences to experience visual art by promoting the connection between modern art and music. Entrants can visit Tate Online, choose an art work on display at Tate Modern and write a music track in response. The public will have until 31 August to vote for their favourite track. The winner, chosen from the 20 most popular tracks by a judging panel including musicians and DJs, will be announced on 17 September. The winning track will be installed in the gallery next to the work that inspired it. www.tatetracks.org.uk

Rehang at Tate Liverpool

To celebrate Liverpool European Capital of Culture 2008 key works of art from the Tate Collection, including Rodin's *The Kiss* (1901-14), Degas' *Little Dancer Aged Fourteen* (1880-1), Picasso's *Weeping Woman* (1937) and Andy Warhol's *Marilyn Diptych* (1962), will go on display at Tate Liverpool as part of a major rehang, sponsored by DLA Piper. The new displays, over three floors of the gallery, will include a focus on the work of Bridget Riley and Stanley Spencer.

www.tate.org.uk/about/pressoffice/pressreleases/2007/11273.htm

Inspired - The Science Museum at Swindon

Inspired: Science Museum Swindon is one of six projects short listed for a £50 million grant from the Big Lottery Fund under the Living Landmarks: the People's Millions competition. A public vote will decide the winning project and the outcome will be announced in December.

Inspired aims to make science and engineering accessible to all and to engage children and young people, with quarter of a million artefacts on display in a 545-acre site, design and build workshops, science shows and science experiments. If it wins the grant, *Inspired* will open in three years time.

www.voteinspired.org.uk Support for the project can be registered by texting 'SMS Inspired' to 88833

New Chairman of the Victoria and Albert Museum

Paul Ruddock has been appointed Chairman of the Victoria and Albert Museum from 1 November 2007 for a period of four years. Mr Ruddock is co-founder and Chief Executive of Lansdowne Partners Ltd, an investment management company. He was previously Managing Director at Schroder & Co Inc, and worked at Goldman Sachs. Mr Ruddock has been a Trustee of the Victoria & Albert Museum for five years, during which time he has helped secure significant capital sums for Museum projects.

Sir John Tusa will not take up the post of chairman of the V&A, due to his prior appointment as chairman of the University of the Arts London. www.pm.gov.uk/output/Page12550.asp

National Portrait Gallery Summer Young People's Programme

Launched last year, the National Portrait Gallery's Young People's Programme for 14 to 21 year olds is a mix of workshops, discussion groups, taster sessions and a 'Youth Forum', where participants can have their say about what the National Portrait Gallery does for young people.

For 2007 the Young People's Programme has introduced a performance strand. In July, The Devotional Choir performed songs by women celebrated in the art installation *Devotional*. On 10 August Union Too, Union Dance's youth group will perform *Standing Bye*, inspired by paintings and sculptures on the Balcony Gallery, in front of the works of art. www.npg.org.uk/live/preyoungpeoplesummer2007.asp

Srebrenica Memorial Room Opens

The Srebrenica Memorial Room has opened in Bosnia Herzegovina. It was proposed by Lord Ashdown, former High Representative in Bosnia-Herzegovina, who visited the Imperial War Museum London's Holocaust Exhibition and felt that 'something similar was needed' at Srebrenica to commemorate the events of July 1995, when more than 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys were killed by Bosnian Serb forces. Suzanne Bardgett, Director of Imperial War Museum London's Holocaust Exhibition, advised the Bosnian team who created the Memorial Room, which consists of two black towers, one presenting a continuously-running film, the other telling the stories of twenty of those who died. www.iwm.org.uk

Behind the Scenes at the Natural History Museum

Two students were chosen from the audience of one of the Natural History Museum's Nature Live events to spend time working behind the scenes at the museum. They spent a day with the Head of Zoology Collections, seeing some of the scientific work undertaken in the Museum. A short video on the museum website gives a snapshot of their day. www.nhm.ac.uk/about-us/news/2007/july/news_11908.html

Symposium: Natural History Museums and Institutions in the 21st Century

This International Symposium will explore the role of natural history museums and institutions in the understanding and management of biodiversity. The symposium will highlight the contribution that natural history institutions can make to policy development on environmental issues and discuss research and communication for raising public awareness of ecological issues. Dr Michael Dixon, director of the Natural History Museum, will chair the session on Natural History Institutions and Society.

Symposium Buffon 18-19 October, French National Museum of Natural History, Paris

More information at: [symposium website](http://symposium-website). www.nhm.ac.uk/about-us/news/2007/july/news_12064.html

AHRC Grant for V&A to Research Computer-generated Art

The V&A and Birkbeck College have been awarded £410,000 by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) to undertake research into the Museum's Patric Prince Collection of computer-generated art. The Museum has also recently acquired the archives of the Computer Arts Society, which includes key works by early pioneers in the field. Together, the two collections form the basis for the national collection of computer art. www.vam.ac.uk

Current Issues

Roy Clare is New Chief Executive of MLA

The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) has appointed Roy Clare CBE as its new Chief Executive. Formerly a Rear Admiral in the Royal Navy, Roy was Director of the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich from 2000 to 2007. He will take up his post at MLA in September, replacing Chris Batt OBE, who is retiring after four years as Chief Executive.

[www.mla.gov.uk/webdav/harmonise?Page/@id=82&Section\[@stateld_eq_left_hand_root\]/@id=4289&Document/@id=28963](http://www.mla.gov.uk/webdav/harmonise?Page/@id=82&Section[@stateld_eq_left_hand_root]/@id=4289&Document/@id=28963)

Making Collections Effective

The Museums Association (MA) has published *Making Collections Effective*, which launches the Effective Collections programme of work designed to make better use of museum collections. The report also provides an update on *Collections for the Future*, two years after its publication. *Making Collections Effective* sets out action points to enable collections to be used more effectively, including:

- the establishment of a Collections Strategy Group;
- a brokering service for borrowing and lending;
- reviews of stored collections;
- revised guidance on disposal;
- online resources for loan administration, disposals and collection reviews; and
- staff training in object care and skills relating to lending and borrowing.

Effective Collections is currently undertaking a two year pilot with funding from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. Some of the pilot projects are outlined in the report, including:

- long term loans from Tate's collection of items that have not been requested for loan in the past 20 years, to borrowers who have 'engaging ideas for the objects';
- a project with MLA South East to share collections across museums in Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire; and
- long term loans by the National Portrait Gallery of portraits that have not been displayed or loaned for ten years, focusing on portraits of people with connections to borrowing museums.

[To download the Making Collections Effective report, click here \(pdf\)](#) [For more information about Effective Collections, click here](#)

Setting the Pace - MLA Programme for the Cultural Olympiad

The Museums, Libraries and Archives (MLA) Partnership has launched *Setting the Pace*, which outlines the sector's engagement with the Cultural Olympiad. MLA's ambition is that *Setting the Pace* "will lead to a transformation in the way people experience the inspiration, learning and creativity that museum, library and archive collections generate"; increase participation by non-traditional audiences; and strengthen the partnership between museums, libraries and archives and between the sector and other cultural and voluntary organisations. *Setting the Pace* projects include:

- **International Exhibitions Programme:** To tell 'Stories of the World' through the re-interpretation of UK collections involving international curators and local communities, with museum and gallery exhibitions in the years leading up to 2012. A programme director will be appointed in the autumn.
- **The Record:** To provide a comprehensive archive of London 2012, including *The People's Record*, in which communities across the UK will create their own archive projects which will be shared and stored.
- **Literature and Story Telling:** Inspiring young people by celebrating 'London and the UK welcoming the world' with the written and spoken word. Encompassing existing reading and literacy campaigns, the project will generate new work on the themes and aims of the Olympiad.
- **Information Hubs:** A network of media centres in London and the English regions to provide information about the Cultural Olympiad and the culture, heritage and society of London and the UK.

The *Setting the Pace* document is at: www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets//S/setting_the_pace_11937.pdf

Senior Policy Advisor for MLA 2012

Isobel Siddons has been appointed Senior Policy Advisor for MLA 2012 Programme. She was MLA London's Archive Development Officer from 2004-7 and developed the MLA Partnership's Action for Archives Programme while on secondment to MLA.

Towards a UK National Heritage Science Strategy

In its report on Science and Heritage published last year, the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee warned that UK cultural heritage is under threat as the knowledge and skills to preserve physical artefacts are being lost. To address this, the report recommended the establishment of a UK national heritage science strategy, with English Heritage providing organisational support. On 17 July the organisations that gave evidence to the Lords reconvened, with colleagues from Scotland and Wales, at the British Library Conservation Centre to start work on the strategy.

All heritage organisations are invited to join the contact group which will support the steering group taking this strategy forward. To do so please email amccapra@icon.org.uk

Further information and notes from the meeting are available at:

www.icon.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=509&Itemid=16

Heritage Lottery Fund Strategy 2008-13: *Our Heritage, Our Future*

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has set out the key elements of its future strategy, from April 2008 to 2013, in *Our Heritage, Our Future*. HLF will remain the biggest funder of heritage in the UK, with £1.9 billion to distribute over 12 years, and all main funding programmes will continue. HLF will introduce:

- **Simpler and faster application and assessment process.**
- **More Help for Applicants:** HLF will offer mentoring by specialist advisors to reduce risks in project development, improve the overall quality of projects and assist inexperienced applicants.
- **Minimising Environmental Impacts:** HLF will ask applicants to minimize environmental impacts, encouraging innovative thinking and developing practice on sustainable use of resources.
- **Champions of the Future:** a new youth participation strategy, engaging more with young people, helping them gain skills and experience of heritage.
- **Heritage Heroes:** to celebrate the role of volunteers, HLF will launch an annual awards scheme, giving the public a chance to nominate their local 'heritage hero'.

The new application materials will be introduced in April 2008 with the first round of decisions in December 2008. www.hlf.org.uk/English/MediaCentre/Archive/New+Vision.htm

Culture on Demand: Ways to Engage a Broader Audience

This report, commissioned by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) from FreshMinds, aims to identify ways to engage a broader audience by exploring what drives demand for culture among DCMS-defined priority audiences: Black and Minority Ethnic communities, disabled people, and lower socio-economic groups. The report highlights important drivers of demand; suggests tactics to address these drivers; and outlines practical ways to engage a broader audience.

www.culture.gov.uk/Reference_library/Research/research_by_dcms/cultureondemand.htm

Acceptance in Lieu Report

Heritage treasures worth more than £25 million came into public ownership during 2006/07 under the Acceptance in Lieu scheme administered by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council on behalf of the government. The scheme allows items deemed to be national treasures to be given to the nation in place of inheritance tax.

Artefacts donated include works by Turner, Goya and Rembrandt, Mozart scores, historic papers, coins and contemporary posters. The value of objects acquired exceeds the combined purchase grants of all the country's museums and galleries. 32 separate transfers to the nation were completed, with a value of £25.3m, writing off £13.8m of tax. www.mla.gov.uk/website/news/press_releases/ail2007

New Shadow Ministers

Jeremy Hunt is the new Conservative Shadow Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. Hugh Robertson and Ed Vaizey remain on the front bench and are joined by Tobias Ellwood. The culture spokesman in the House of Lords is Lord Howard of Rising and for the Olympics Lord Glentoran.

www.conservatives.com/tile.do?def=people.shadow.cabinet.page

Don Foster remains the Liberal Democrat Shadow Minister for Culture Media and Sport and the Olympics, with Dan Rogerson Shadow Minister for the Arts, Culture and Heritage, Tom Brake as Shadow Minister for London and the Olympics, and Richard Younger-Ross. Lord Clement Jones continues as spokesperson in the Lords with Baroness Bonham Carter. www.libdems.org.uk/party/people/spokes.html

£70m Funding for Youth Volunteering

Funding has been announced for the first element of the new National Youth Volunteering Programme, which aims to transform youth volunteering in England. More than £70 million is available over three years for organisations to develop and deliver innovative volunteering opportunities for 16-25 year olds across the country.

Strand One will expand support for organisations and young people (£42.6m). Strand Two is for direct delivery of new volunteering opportunities (£30m). Organisations and projects are invited to submit expressions of interest by **10 August**. Further information at: www.wearev.com/grants/index.php

DCMS Response to Select Committee Report on New Media and the Creative Industries

The Government has published its response to the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee Report into New Media and the Creative Industries. Welcoming the report, DCMS reiterates its commitment to implementing recommendations made by the Gowers Review on Intellectual Property and its plans to publish the Creative Economy Programme Green Paper later this year. The response is available at:

Government Response to the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee Report into New Media and the Creative Industries

Museums Discuss Transatlantic Slave Trade Collections

At a conference on international co-operation between British, African and Caribbean museums held at the Museum in Docklands on 23-24 July 2007, sector leaders from Angola, the Bahamas, Barbados, Ghana, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa outlined the support that they need to improve their Museum collections relating to the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

The event, sponsored by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), was part of the legacy programme from the Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade. British museums presented their work on Bicentenary-themed exhibitions and on the partnerships they are developing with African collections.

www.mla.gov.uk/website/news/press_releases/Museums_to_improve_transatlantic_slave_trade_collections

Demos Paper on Museums and Intercultural Collaboration

Following on from the pamphlet *Cultural Diplomacy* this paper argues that, in an age where culture is more important than ever, skills in reading culture are a vital part of education. This sets a new agenda for collaboration between cultural providers such as museums and other sectors, including education.

www.demos.co.uk/publications/buildingculturalliteracy

Consultation Policy Review

The Cabinet Office has launched a review of the Government's consultation policy to explore how consultation exercises could be improved. The consultation document discusses how Government currently consults and presents options for consultation policy, to address issues raised and stimulate discussion. The deadline for responses is **28 September 2007**.

The consultation document is at: www.consultations.gov.uk.

Schools Duty to Promote Community Cohesion

From 1 September 2007 all schools in England will have a duty to promote community cohesion: "working towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; ...and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community".

Schools can promote community cohesion in different ways. Guidance for schools, and case studies, are available at: www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/Communitycohesion/

Report on Publicly Funded Culture and the Creative Industries

This paper, commissioned by the Arts Council, explores the relationship between publicly-funded culture and the creative industries and calls for a better understanding of connections and economic linkages between them, as a basis for more effective policy.

www.demos.co.uk/publications/publiclyfundedcultureandthecreativeindustries

New Wandsworth Museum Aims to Open in April 2008

Following the local authority's decision to close Wandsworth Museum earlier this year, and the Hintze Family Charitable Foundation's offer £2m towards the setting up and running of a new museum, the Board of the new Wandsworth Museum company met for the first time on 11 July. Dorothy Hintze was elected chairman. The company is working towards opening the new independently-run museum, which will be housed in the West Hill library building, in April 2008. Negotiations are being held with the council on a lease for the premises and a lending agreement for artefacts.

www.wandsworth.gov.uk/Home/MyWandsworth/Pressreleases/newspage_detail.htm?id=5170

Conference: Are Museums about Stories or Objects?

This conference will explore how to understand the museum experience from the visitor's point of view; how new technology can broaden access, but also has the potential to contest the authority of museum interpretation; and the idea that storytelling is what museums should be about.

Speakers include: David Fleming, Director, National Museums Liverpool; Steph Mastoris, Head of The National Waterfront Museum, Swansea; Christina Bagatavicius, Head of Interpretation, Tate Britain; and Gina Koutsika, Audience Advocate, Natural History Museum.

24 September 2007 National Portrait Gallery, London

For further information visit: www.heritage365.com/comment/are-museums-about-stories-or-objects-.asp

Collect: The Collections Management Exhibition

Collect: The Collections Management Exhibition is a free national trade fair, organised by Collections Link, highlighting the best in current practice, services and technologies for collections management. It offers collections staff the chance to meet leading suppliers, find out about developments and to meet fellow museum, library and archive professionals and discuss current issues.

10:00-16:00 27 September 2007 Wellcome Collection Conference Centre, London

For further information and to reserve a place, visit: www.collectionslink.org.uk/collect

Course: Leading and Managing Change

Leading and Managing Change is designed to help emerging cultural leaders operate more effectively in the context of rapid social, political, economic and technological change. The course, which is tailored to the cultural sector, consists of six, monthly, one-and-a-half day workshops from October 2007 to March 2008, at City University, London. Topics include: change and risk management; managing resources; building profile and partnerships; leadership; and planning for the future.

The deadline for applications is **24 August**. Details at: www.city.ac.uk/cpm/short_courses/leading_change.html

New Bursary Scheme for Heritage Skills

The Traditional Building Skills Bursary Scheme, launched by English Heritage, the National Trust, Cadw, Construction-Skills and the National Heritage Training Group, organises and funds work-based training placements for individuals to work in the built heritage sector. Skills targeted through about 80 bursaries over four years include brickwork, carpentry and joinery, stone masonry and conservation, leadwork and ironwork. The project has been funded by a £900,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund and contributions from the partners. www.buildingbursaries.org.uk

Electronic Library of Archaeology Publications

The Council for British Archaeology and the Society of Antiquaries of London have launched ArchLib: an electronic library of archaeology publications. Initially comprising papers and books from eight publishers, ArchLib will be expanded to include a greater range and number of publications. There are plans to link to the Archaeology Data Service and the British and Irish Archaeological Bibliography. archlib.britarch.net

Parliamentary Report

Questions to Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport

On 23 July, James Purnell, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport was asked about future support for Renaissance in the Regions. Mr Purnell said that culture in Britain is "truly world class, and my goal is to make sure that it stays that way". He agreed to meet speakers to discuss issues raised but would not make funding commitments ahead of the Comprehensive Spending Review.

[House of Commons Hansard Debates for 23 July 2007 \(pt 0001\)](#)

Questions for the Chief Secretary to the Treasury

Conservative MPs asked the new Chief Secretary to the Treasury, and former DCMS advisor, Andy Burnham when the Treasury would respond to the Goodison Review's recommendations for tax incentives to encourage support for the arts. Mr Burnham responded that the report's recommendations would be kept under review and warned that any tax changes would have to be funded. He gave an 'absolute guarantee' that the government would maintain the policy of free admission to museums and galleries. [House of Commons Hansard Debates for 12 July 2007 \(pt 0002\)](#)

Prime Minister Talking About Museum Admission Policy

In the House of Commons on 11 July, the Prime Minister attacked the Conservatives over their apparent change of policy on museum admission charges, amongst other things. He said:

"I hesitate to think what a Conservative Queen's Speech would look like in the present circumstances. "No more grammar schools" was a policy that was publicised one week, but abandoned the next; then there were to be museum charges—publicised one week, abandoned the next; then there was to be VAT on airline flights—publicised one week, abandoned the next.."

[House of Commons Hansard Debates for 11 July 2007 \(pt 0005\)](#)

Margaret Hodge's First Speech in Parliament as Culture Minister

In her first speech in the House of Commons as Minister with responsibility for culture, Margaret Hodge said how delighted she was to take on "such a stimulating and varied brief, covering a huge range of activities in which this country is a world leader" and paid tribute to her predecessors, David Lammy and Sean Woodward. [House of Commons Hansard Debates for 03 July 2007 \(pt 0022\)](#)

Lords Debate on Draft Legislative Programme

During a debate in the Lords on the Government's legislative programme, Lord Howarth of Newport called on the Government to "justify support for the arts frankly on the basis that they enrich the spirit". He proposed a number of measures to support the arts including: a statutory duty and funding for local authorities to support museums and galleries; tax changes to enable donors to offset the value of gifts of pre-eminent cultural objects against income tax; and a 10% increase in funding for the arts and heritage, which he said would be "indiscernible in the national accounts".

[Lords Hansard text for 26 Jul 2007 26 July 2007 \(pt 0008\)](#)

Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Bill 2006-07

This bill, which includes provision for immunity from seizure for artefacts on loan to museums and galleries in the UK, received Royal Assent on 19 July. The Act can be read at:

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/pabills/200607/tribunals_courts_and_enforcement.htm

International Issues

French Private Donors Help Buy Poussin Painting for the Nation

Businesses in France have contributed to the purchase of the painting *The Flight into Egypt* (1657-1658) by Nicolas Poussin, for the French nation. The participation of private donors at an unprecedented level is attributed to tax incentives in the French Culture Ministry's announcement. The painting will go on display at the Louvre, Paris, before entering the collection of the Fine Arts Museum, Lyon.

www.iht.com/articles/ap/2007/07/17/arts/EU-A-E-ART-France-Poussin.php

www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/actualites/index-com.html (in French)

Appeal against Illicit Traffic of Cultural Property on the Internet

ICOM, UNESCO and Interpol have made an appeal against the illicit traffic of cultural property on the internet, stating that: "the harm caused by illicit trafficking has disastrous repercussions...illicit trafficking in cultural property has increased at an alarming rate over the past several years through the Internet, where it is difficult for the national authorities to effectively monitor all of the objects offered for sale".
icom.museum/release.common.initiative.html

The organisations have set out a checklist of *Basic Actions to counter the Increasing Illicit Sale of Cultural Objects through the Internet* for member states at: icom.museum/basic_actions.html

Consultation on a European Agenda for Culture in a Globalizing World

The DCMS is undertaking a UK-wide consultation on the Communication from the European Commission on a European agenda for culture in a globalizing world, which was published in May 2007. The Communication is likely to be the subject of a discussion at the proposed informal meeting of Ministers of Culture in Lisbon 26 September 2007. The communication outlines three sets of objectives:

- promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue;
- promotion of culture as a catalyst for creativity in the framework of the Lisbon Strategy for growth and jobs;
- promotion of culture as a vital element in the Union's international relations.

It aims to introduce more structured cooperation among Member States and EU institutions on cultural matters and to involve the cultural sector more closely in European affairs, through a new Cultural Forum.

The deadline for responses is **Monday 10 September 2007**.

www.culture.gov.uk/Reference_library/Consultations/2007_current_consultations/consult_globalizing.htm

Items from Netherlands National Art Collection for Sale on eBay

More than a thousand items from the Dutch national art collection are being offered for sale through online auction site eBay. The Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage (ICN) Central Museum, Industrion, Museum for Communication, MuseumGoudA and Stedelijk Museum de Lakenhal are deaccessioning works from their collections. The works have not been on display for many years or "do not fit in with the kind of exhibitions in museums" and have already been offered to other Dutch museums. The auction will continue until October and new items are added weekly. There will be a further auction of works from the museums by Venduehuis auction house in October.

eBay: stores.ebay.nl/kunstveiling www.herplaatsingsdatabase.nl/nieuws.php#anker5 (both in Dutch)
www.icn.nl www.cbc.ca/arts/artdesign/story/2007/07/09/netherlands-ebay-collection.html

Italian Ministry of Culture and J. Paul Getty Trust Reach Agreement

The Italian Minister of Culture, Francesco Rutelli, and the Director of the J. Paul Getty Museum, Dr Michael Brand, have reached an agreement regarding the Italian Ministry's claim for the return of objects in the Getty Museum's collection. The Getty will transfer some 40 objects to Italy, most over the coming months, but the *Cult Statue of a Goddess* will remain on display at the Getty Villa until 2010. Discussions on the disputed *Statue of a Victorious Youth* will be deferred until the outcome of legal proceedings currently underway. Italy and the Getty have agreed to collaborate on loans of significant art works, joint exhibitions, research, and conservation projects.

www.getty.edu/news/press/center/italy_getty_joint_statement_080107.html

Forthcoming NMDC Meetings

HR Forum

Friday 7 September, 11am, National Trust Head Office, Swindon

UK Affairs Committee

Wednesday 10th October, 2pm, Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle

Marketing Group

Wednesday 17th October, 2pm, venue TBC

If you have any comments on the NMDC Newsletter or would like to contribute to a future edition, please email the Editor, Zoë Nasatyr, at news@nationalmuseums.org.uk

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