

Working with Japan

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Oriental Museum



- The Oriental Museum is part of Durham University
- Founded in 1960 to support teaching
- Now also a popular visitor attraction for local people, tourists and schoolchildren (30,000 pa)

Collections

- The Oriental Museum's collections of over 23,500 objects range in date from prehistoric artefacts to contemporary arts.
- They cover the history and arts of the great cultures of Near & Middle East, South Asia, East Asia & SE Asia.
- The Chinese and Egyptian collections received Designated status in 2008.



First Contact

- In 2006 the Oriental Museum, in collaboration with Eton College, approached *Tokyo Shimbun* newspaper to explore whether they would be interested in sponsoring a multi-venue tour of Egyptology
- Long process, but eventually agreed to tour 300 objects to 6 venues over a 10 months period
- Lending institutions to be paid £120,000



Downside

Great plan, but...

- We would 150 objects for an extended period of time
- Gallery would be closed: so would have to develop low-cost alternative to support schools engagement
- Some key items would be unavailable for University teaching (need to modify teaching delivery)

Lots to Do...

Major undertaking for a small institution:

- Research and object selection (inc catalogue)
- Condition checking, conservation & photography
- Mount-making
- Documentation & legal (contracts, insurance, permits CITES etc)
- Packing
- Liaison with partners, sponsors, borrowers and shippers

More Things to Do

- Also needed to ensure that the museum's ability to meet needs of visitors and other users not compromised whilst 150 key objects overseas
- Created new gallery (spend anticipating income), with focus on support of Outreach & Learning Team
- Whole process was very time consuming and stretched limited staff resources
- Team coped (just!) however ...

First Venue: Utsunomiya



Visitor Numbers



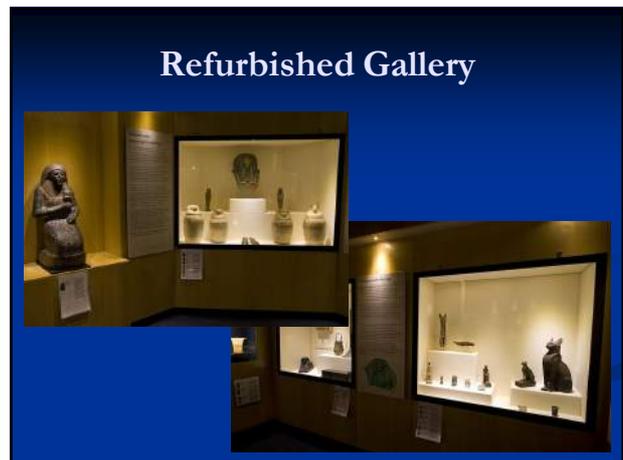
| | |
|--------------|----------------|
| ■ Utsunomiya | 15,092 |
| ■ Atami | 29,697 |
| ■ Hamamatsu | 41,145 |
| ■ Nagoya | 66,684 |
| ■ Kobe | 21,183 |
| ■ Tokyo | <u>11,891</u> |
| TOTAL | 185,692 |



Hard Work - but Many Benefits



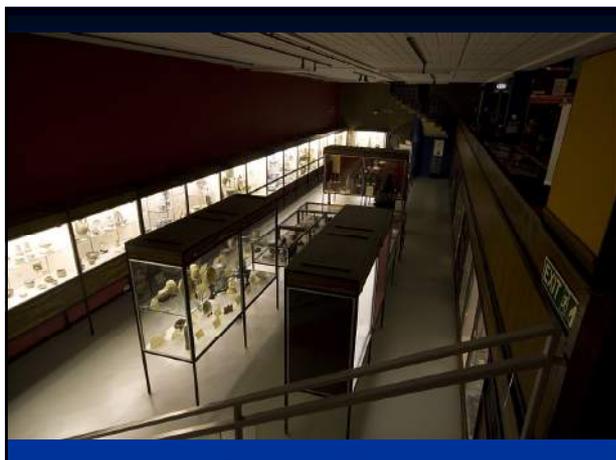
- Great experience for staff
- Great research opportunity
- New partnerships
- Raised profile
- New audiences
- Raised museum's status
- Raised funds: gallery
- Catalogue



Legacy

- Start-point for ongoing gallery refurbishment programme
- Key to success is planning and development of project linkages to maximise match-fund opportunities
- All projects externally funded: DDF; DCMS/Wolfson Gallery Improvement Fund; Arts Council Strategic Funding
- Has allowed us to totally refurbish Egyptian, Chinese, Japanese and Korean Galleries
- South Asia, SE Asia and Himalayas in 2015





Legacy

- Fired everyone's enthusiasm for Japan
- Decided to embark upon contemporary collecting programme & sought funding
- Supported by Art Fund RENEW (track record helped!)
- Worked with Teikyo University of Japan students to develop collections
- Also formed close relationship with NE Japanese Women's Association: volunteers



Legacy

- Personal links developed absolutely vital
- Opened significant doors for us at both business and diplomatic levels (good relations developed with Consulate General and Embassy)
- Currently finalising arrangements for two-week festival of Japan in association with range of partners including Japanese Embassy and Japan Foundation
- Also working with Nissan UK on photo-journalism project
- Significantly raised museum's standing nationally, internationally and with senior members of University

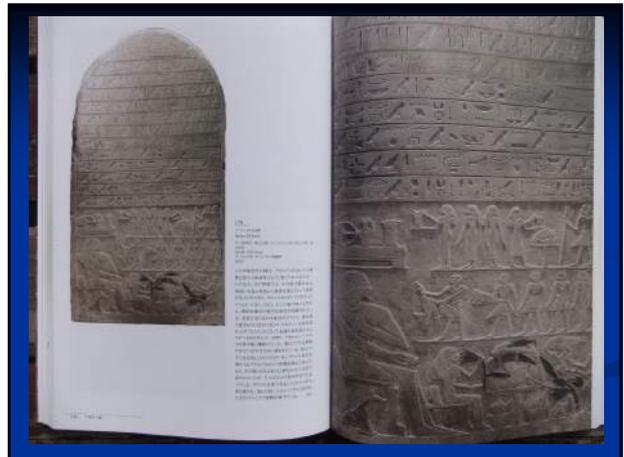


Legacy

- Tour raised profile with Japanese museums and the initial contacts made through exhibition opened doors for us in Japan
- Allowed us to become involved in international projects (for example programme to create on-line catalogue of Japanese Buddhist Art)
- Also allowed us to form collaborative links with major players in Japanese museum sector –colleague invited to visit Japan next year as Visiting Scholar at National Museum of Japanese History

Legacy

- Exhibition catalogue sold out and significantly raised profile internationally (beyond Japan)
- Egyptian artefacts recently toured Taiwan (commercial arrangement as part of *Quest for Immortality* exhibition): Seen by 1.3 million visitors: next stop USA
- Lending to exhibitions at National Museum of Japan in Tokyo and National Museum of Art in Osaka during 2015



Legacy

- Highly visible legacy of international engagement has been the development of new gallery of Japan (opened November 2013)
- Museum has benefitted from its position at heart of regional Japanese community
- Has allowed us to develop key team of volunteers who have helped us to add to and catalogue our collections and deliver loans and exhibitions (in house and externally)



Future

- This input has also fed into our online catalogue, which is due to go live in October
- Japanese collections development and enhanced collections knowledge and ability to support colleagues in sector through loans etc: mean that we will be in a position to pursue Designated Status for our Japanese collections in next round
- In short, international engagement has been a game-changer for us – and it all started with a conversation....

A Few Closing Remarks

- When working with Japanese partners, remember central importance of personal contact
- Business cards central
- Read up on etiquette
- Don't try to force decisions
- Remember that key to success is to think long-term and to build up contacts and networks



Thank You

