Notes from the Director

This winter at the Kelsey has witnessed a great deal of activity and a certain amount of gear shifting. Elaine Gazda began a year-long duty-off-campus leave in January. I am serving as Acting Director through June, with Sharon Herbert assuming the position from July through December of 1992.

The SAFE Box

As I write, the Museum seems truly to be approaching a crossroads. Our programs in teaching, research, exhibition, publication, excavation, collections conservation, collections acquisition, and public outreach continue at a lively pace while we are simultaneously working hard on plans in these areas for next year and beyond. I should add that fundraising efforts for all of these areas of activity are at a record high. At the same time, however, we are caught up in a very special agenda, which—like all home improvements—will involve extraordinary disruption of routines and some uncertainties of scheduling in order to achieve results that will be well worth all the trouble. This special agenda is the planning and construction of our SAFE Box. I’d like to fill you in on details of the SAFE Box initiative first—and then proceed to brief commentary on the state of the Museum at this juncture in its history: current programs, future goals, and prospects.

SAFE is an acronym for Sensitive Artifact Facility and Environment. The SAFE Box is a structure conceived of by our conservator, Geoffrey Brown, which will essentially create a building-within-a-building on the second floor of the Museum. This structure (made of prefabricated panels marketed by Marne Industries, Inc.) will be equipped with its own climate-controlled environment. Those portions of our collections that are most at risk because the Kelsey as a whole is not climate-controlled will be stored within the SAFE Box. Our large and important collections of ancient glass, textiles, basketry, and wood implements will be housed within the SAFE Box—which will provide research as well as storage space.

The SAFE Box has been made possible through the generosity of New York City residents Eugene Grant (Michigan '38) and his wife Emily Grant, who have pledged $250,000 to the project. Their willingness to support this urgently needed, but admittedly unglamorous, endeavor is a wonderful thing. The Kelsey Museum, the University, and the Michigan community thus have good reason to feel genuine optimism even in these rather bleak financial times. People like the Grants will be making the difference in the coming years between stagnation and superiority of creative initiatives within the Museum. For although our programs and our curatorial staff have an outstanding track record in funding from competitive federal and foundation sources, such monies available for the humanities tend to be very small in relation to the amount of effort needed to acquire them. Unlike many museums, the Kelsey has no endowments to fall back on, either for operating expenses or for special projects.

In effect, Eugene and Emily Grant have thrown down the gauntlet. Their large gift is a noble challenge to all of us who care about the heritage of human experience that the Kelsey collections and programs are all about. For some, the challenge will best be met through contributions of time, energy, and ideas; for others, it will be met through special gifts of important artifacts and art works to enhance our collections; and for others still, the challenge will be met through monetary continued

Three photographs illustrate the rapid deterioration of the Kelsey’s collections that installation of the SAFE Box is intended to forestall. A basket is shown as found in 1925 in the lower lefthand corner of a Karanis house (left), in good condition in 1981 (middle), and in 1992 (right) after a mere decade of decay.
Research on the Bay View and Goudsmit Collections

Although the Museum cannot be open to visitors during the construction period, work will continue behind the scenes. I want particularly to highlight the fact that we will have a most distinguished visitor in our midst from September through May of 1992-93. Dr. Edna Russmann is an eminent Egyptologist who specializes in Egyptian sculpture (and particularly portraiture) of the late Dynastic and Roman periods. She will teach one course in Egyptian art each term and pursue a research agenda at the Kelsey focusing on the study of select material from our Bay View and Goudsmit Collections of Egyptian antiquities. Dr. Russmann has written several books on Egyptian art—the most recent being the masterful and beautifully illustrated volume *Egyptian Sculpture: Cairo and Luxor* (1989).

Dr. Russmann's research project is part of a long-term initiative to publish the material in these two collections. The Bay View antiquities came to the Kelsey from the Bay View Association of Bay View, Michigan—through the efforts of the late Dr. Louise Shier (see the memorial notice on page 7). They are intrinsically important works of Egyptian culture, which also offer us a window onto the antiquarian interests of the late nineteen-century missionaries, intellectuals, and travelers who donated their Egyptian collections to the Michigan association. The Goudsmit collection is an impressive corpus of Egyptian art (much of which graces our galleries now) brought together over a lifetime of keenly informed interest by the late Dr. Samuel Goudsmit, a great physicist who served on the Michigan faculty from 1927 to 1946 and maintained an enduring affection for the University. This wonderful material is on permanent loan from Mrs. Irene Goudsmit, pledged to the Museum in her will. Mrs. Goudsmit's permanent loan is a vital mode of Museum support. It has provided hundreds of Michigan students every year with an opportunity to study works of Dynastic Egyptian art at close range. For many of these undergraduates, nonhumanities majors enrolled perhaps in the large introductory survey course in History of Art, the very fact that the material was collected by a scientist gives it a special resonance.

The Adams Collection

I am pleased to be able to announce here the recent arrival of yet another gift of antiquities. Dr. John Adams of San Diego has donated a collection of 163 prehistoric stamp seals from Mesopotamia and Iran in memory of his wife, Mrs. Jane Ford Adams (Michigan '25). This corpus was originally collected by the famous Orientalist Ernst Herzfeld during the course of his travels and excavations between 1905 and the 1930s. Mrs. Adams purchased the collection in 1947 from the Gans Gallery in New York City. The objects were presented for sale as a collection of the earliest buttons ever known. In fact, they are an important collection of the earliest seals ever known. The collection is on a par with the prehistoric stamp seal collections in the Louvre and the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. These seals give the Kelsey a complete cross-section of the art of seals—from the most remote preliterate period in which societies first began to feel the need for mechanisms for visual ratification and identification of commodities down through medieval times in the Near East. The Adams Collection is particularly fine because it was brought together by Herzfeld. These very seals formed the basis of Herzfeld's pioneering studies of early Near Eastern glyptic production. Thanks to the generosity of Dr. Adams, they have resurfaced and are installed in a home where they can again inform scholarly endeavor. Aided by an impressive catalogue prepared by my Research Assistant Mariana Giovino, a graduate student in the Department of the History of Art, I have already made one trip to Washington, D.C., to examine Herzfeld's field diaries at the Freer Archive of the Smithsonian Institution. It was thrilling to find the pages in one journal from 1905 covered with meticulous drawings of "our" early stamp seals and peppered with Herzfeld's notes about site location in his Gothic German script!

Space does not permit me to go on any further. Let me close by thanking all friends of the Kelsey Museum for your support in every way. 1993 will bring us to the centennial year of the founding of our collections by Professor Kelsey. Turnings of centuries and millennia seem to have a special charisma about them, evoking mixed messages of nostalgia, excitement about the future, and—yes—trepidation. Lest trepidation win out, the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology will continue to need your involvement as it moves forward—beyond the SAFE Box into a new century of programs and possibilities in the exploration of human history.

Margaret Cool Root
Acting Director
Satyr Playing the Flute

The ancient pieces of sculpture we encounter in museum galleries often have had intricate lives. They may have been broken and repaired in antiquity, broken in some disaster that caused their burial and preservation, reworked by Late Antique sculptors of the fifth and sixth centuries A.D., reworked, “restored,” or “cleaned” by eighteenth-, nineteenth-, even twentieth-century art dealers or collectors.

The Torso of a Young Satyr (a mythological follower of Dionysus) Playing the Flute displayed in the Museum’s Roman gallery exemplifies the variety of such alterations an ancient sculpture may undergo. Today, the satyr is missing its head, neck, right arm from below the shoulder, left arm from before the wrist, right leg from above the knee, left leg from the middle of the knee, and genitalia. While many of the breaks may have occurred when the piece was buried, four spots show reworking.

The front of this sculpture has a good deal of yellowish-brown discoloration—probably iron oxides—a sign that it may have rested front-down in the earth for many years and acquired mineral encrustations. The surface of these encrusted areas, however, is polished, not rough and gritty, indicating that some later owner or dealer may have tried to smooth the work before displaying or selling it. There are also slight chips or scratches in and through some areas of the discolored layer, evidence that someone has tried to clean the piece by scraping off the encrustations.

A careful look at the break of the left arm reveals a small cylindrical hole at its center. This deliberate hole suggests that the left arm may have been broken and repaired in antiquity. To repair the piece, an ancient sculptor may have drilled a hole to receive an iron tenon or pin that would secure a new forearm to the statue.

Definite evidence of much later reworking of the piece may be seen where the figure’s genitalia once protruded. Marks of the chisel used to remove the genitals are clearly visible on the inner thighs.

Further reworking of the piece can be noticed in the underside of the heavy animal-skin that hangs from the satyr’s left shoulder. We know from looking at other similar works that this drape would have continued further along the figure’s left side and that, because of the sharp thrust of his hip to the right and consequent lean to the left, the figure could not have stood up without leaning on something. Similar pieces have tree trunk supports, attached to the satyrs by large struts at the back of the left thigh. It is likely that this tree trunk was broken away from the Kelsey Satyr and not found with the piece (notice the rough area on the back of the left thigh where the strut may have been attached). To make the remaining drape look somewhat finished and balance the rest of the figure, its underside has been rounded off (notice the rough but not broken nature of this surface).

The modern mounting, present when the Museum acquired this piece, introduces another alteration. Originally the satyr stood with his weight on the right leg, as shown by the slightly bent left knee and the curve of the torso and hip. The close position of the two thighs shows that the right leg would have crossed behind the left. Yet the black strut currently used to support the figure and anchor it to a modern base is placed in the non-weight-bearing left leg. This alters the stable axis of the figure, which should run through the right leg to the floor. The incorrect mount also tilts the figure forward by placing the center of the body’s weight on the front leg rather than the back one. The resultant imbalance stresses the left leg and risks damage to it.

Although we have been conditioned to think that museum pieces still look more or less the way they did when an ancient sculptor added his final touches, the Kelsey Satyr makes it clear that the form of an ancient sculpture contains years of reworking and can reveal traces of the statue’s life after it left the ancient sculptor’s workshop.

Elise Friedland

Textile Exhibition

Opening in 1993 (exact date pending final SAFE Box scheduling) to coincide with the reopening of a refurbished Kelsey Museum, the exhibition “From Riches to Rags: Indian Block-Printed Cotton Textiles Traded to Egypt” will introduce a collection of Indian textile fragments of great historical interest. These block-printed cotton cloths from the Kelsey Museum collection were brought from northwestern India to Egypt as part of the medieval Indian Ocean trade. Fragments such as these are among the earliest surviving examples of one of India’s most prolific and skilled crafts. The Kelsey Museum’s collection was acquired from a Cairo dealer during the 1930s and early 1950s but has never before been displayed in its entirety.

Textiles of this type have usually been referred to as “Fustat textiles,” after Fustat, the site of Old Cairo, but this attribution is misleading. Certain patterns have exact equivalents in recent archaeological finds from the Egyptian Red Sea port Quseir al-Qadim, dated to the thirteenth century. Furthermore, large textiles with very similar designs have also come to light from eastern Indonesia. The exhibition will therefore emphasize the wide geographic distribution of the material and place the fragments within the general context of Indian Ocean trade.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue, to be published by the University of Michigan Press. Private donations are currently being sought to underwrite the cost of including color plates in the catalogue.

The exhibition is being planned by Guest Curator Ruth Barnes and Kelsey Assistant Curator Thelma K. Thomas.
The Tokyo Connection

In 1990 Kelsey docent Anna Laura von Büren moved to Tokyo, carrying with her an assortment of ancient replicas, archaeological books, slides, and games—clones of our traveling educational kits. She has since been extraordinarily successful in extending our outreach project to Japan.

As Anna Laura explains in her January 1992 yearly report, she decided to target the dozen or so international schools between Tokyo and Yokohama because their curricula lend themselves to the kits better than those of the Japanese schools. The first school to use the kits (in December 1990) was the Christian Academy of Japan. The middle school teachers were extremely pleased with them, and Anna Laura writes that she was "deliriously happy" with her first success. Several months later the kits found their way to the Sesien International School. Anna Laura describes her next victory:

"To my delight the Japan International School was staging a summer school program, and the curriculum coordinator asked to view the kits. By this time I had realized that viewing the kits was not a viable option. The schools are miles away, the kits too heavy to lug around on public transportation, and most teachers are too busy or live too far away to pick them up. My solution was to explain the function and usage of the kits on the phone, then hire the local transport fleet Yamato, whose logo is a mother cat carrying her kitten. Their vans are not always on time, and I spent one nightmarish weekend during a terrible typhoon imagining the worst while floods were sweeping the town. That Monday the school called to say the transport company had not yet picked up the kits!"

In September the kits went to the Yokohama International School and St. Joseph's, both in Yokohama; in November to the prestigious St. Mary’s International School. Yet Anna Laura had made no headway with the American School. Her report continues:

"Just before the Christmas holidays, I decided to attack the American School on home ground and secured a booth at the school fair. It was a brilliant success: we had a constant stream of visitors from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The booth caught the eye of the librarian and the media specialist, who decided then and there to use the kits at the beginning of January! Finally, a positive reaction from the one place I had naively thought would be the easiest to reach!"

Back in Ann Arbor the Kelsey staff is extremely grateful for Anna Laura's energetic outreach efforts. We applaud her goal of distributing the kits as far as Osaka.

Lauren Talalay displays suitcase items: (from left) a bronze replica of Hermes, a replica of the "Priest King" fresco from the palace at Knossos, a mythology game designed by a local game company, and a brightly colored mummy mask.

Outreach Program

On March 11 the University's News and Information Services aired a segment on our traveling suitcase project during halftime of the Michigan-Purdue basketball game. This engaging televised report generated a number of new inquiries about the kits, which continue to travel throughout the state and have even been to Utah and California. Response from teachers and students has been overwhelmingly positive. We hope the television spot will get the word out to even more teachers. The kits resulted from the vision and dedication of Janice Beatty, Vivette Bursley, Carol Carzon, Steve Ferris, Sheila Ingersoll, Meredith Klaus, Mike Kotowicz, Susan Loomans, Becky Loomis, Folly McDonough, Jim McLean, Dorothy Rehak, Barbara Riordan, Jane Schwenk, Dottie Sims, Sonya Supulska, Katie Tuma, Anna Laura von Büren, Janet Vavra, and Esther Warzynski.

Forging Links

One aim of the outreach program has always been to forge links with other museums and educational organizations in Ann Arbor. Last October, the Kelsey offered an all-day teachers' workshop in conjunction with the Museum of Art. That session was part of a larger plan envisioning a series of teachers' workshops by six different Ann Arbor museums. The consortium—which consists of the Kelsey, the Museum of Art, the Exhibits Museum, Matthaei Botanical Gardens, the Handson Museum, and the Leslie Science Center—is now known as the Ann Arbor Area Educational Resources. The group is applying for funds to support more workshops for local teachers and enrichment programs.

Other new links with Ann Arbor organizations include a series of lectures and behind-the-scenes tours for a large group of seniors from the Turner Center's Learning in Retirement program and a presentation to the Burns Park Senior Center. We also donated materials to Angell School for a display on ancient writing, lent materials to the Ann Arbor Art Association for their week-long session on ancient civilizations, and gave a replica to support the Haisley Elementary School raffle.

Meredith Klaus has been working hard to assemble a special lecture on ancient voyagers, illustrated by slides and artifacts. She conceived the idea as part of the quincentennial Columbus celebrations. The presentation features four pre-Columbian explorations: Wenhutop of Egypt, the Greek voyagers on the Argonaut, St. Brendan of Ireland, and the Vikings. Meredith's maiden voyage will occur at a Mt. Clemens conference entitled "Reinterpreting the Columbian Encounter: A Challenge for the Humanities."

Finally, there are some new faces at the Museum. Seven new docents are now being trained and will begin giving Museum tours in April: John Brent, Steve Ferris, Linda Herrick, Barbara Leonard, Arona Pearlstein, Susan Peterson, and Josephine Shaya.
The 1991 Season at Leptiminus

As a major outlet to the Mediterranean region for surplus African olive oil, Leptiminus (Lamta) was one of the most important harbors in eastern Tunisia. The second season of work at this ancient site, funded by the National Geographic Society and the National Endowment for the Humanities, took place in June 1991 under the direction of Principal Investigators Hedi Slim (INAA) and John Humphrey (University of Michigan) and Field Directors Nejib Ben Lazreg (INAA) and David Mattingly (University of Michigan).

The Excavation

The 1991 campaign continued excavations begun on the Roman cemetery in 1990. Impending development made it urgent to excavate a dense group of tomb markers that had been defined at the surface in 1990. Eight tombs and seven other less prestigious burials were uncovered here. Most were constructed with a small stepped tomb marker above a shaft filled with layers of soil and cobbles, which led down to the burial structure itself—most often a pitched structure of tiles over the body. These burials contained both adult and child skeletons. Many of the adults had died at around twenty years of age.

One interesting aspect of these burials was the apparent inclusion of footwear, detectable from the iron hob-nails that still remain in six of them. Presumably, many other graves included shoes without hob-nails and have thus left no archaeological trace.

The 1990 excavations had also uncovered the corner of an impressive mausoleum with an intact primary burial. Further work in 1991 unearthed the enclosure wall around the mausoleum and located many other burials within the precinct. Two more intact burials were located inside the mausoleum, which was completely excavated.

The mausoleum's thick walls, together with the substantial piers in its corners, suggest it stood to a considerable height. Most likely it was an example of the tower-type mausolea that are well attested in Tunisia. The original plan seems to have allowed for primary burials in specially constructed vaults built into two side alcoves. Some evidence suggests that each alcove was to contain two tiers, for a total of four burials. This plan was evidently later modified to accommodate secondary burials.

Most of the tombs at this site are placed roughly parallel to the aqueduct that ran nearby, implying that the aqueduct already existed when they were laid out. The orientation of the mausoleum and its precinct, however, is unrelated to the aqueduct. Thus the mausoleum may predate both the aqueduct and the other excavated burials.

The Survey

One of the chief objectives of the three-year Leptiminus project is to gather as much information as possible about the entire Roman city. During 1991 the field survey concentrated on two important areas of the ancient city. The first lay around what had provisionally been identified in 1990 as the site of the town's original harbor basin. Two geological sections revealed a deep build-up of alluvial silts and sands but no trace of ancient structures. An early harbor in this position might have become silted up; therefore a 600-meter-long jetty was needed to maintain access for deep-water vessels.

The second area of the 1991 survey was the very center of the city, where the density of all categories of material was very high. The type, amount, and functional nature of the marble found here clearly suggest the proximity of major public buildings.

Work anticipated for the 1992 season includes further structural analysis and collection of artifacts, as well as research on the kiln sites around the urban periphery and continued rescue excavations.

John Humphrey

Leptiminus mausoleum containing a burial from the third century a.c.
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Photo by Wood

The Rev’d. John D’Arms, Dean of the Kelsey Museum, leads the Olivia Street Stompers in the ninth annual benefit. "The Kelsey and All That Jazz," made possible through the generosity and hard work of the Associates.
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Staff News

With lab renovations now complete, Geoffrey Brown, Curator of Conservation, has supervised the cleaning of all coins collected during several seasons of excavation at Carthage. He is currently coordinating efforts to pad the collections stored on the second floor so that they can be safely moved during construction of the SAFE Box.

Director Elaine Gazda is in Rome from January through May of 1992, where she is living at the American Academy in Rome and doing research on Roman sculpture. Rumor has it that she is also studying advanced intensive Italian and has a lot of homework at night!

Robin Meador-Woodruff, Coordinator of Collections, is working on a technical publication for the Midwest Registrars Committee, a standing committee of the Midwest Museums Conference.

Margaret Root has been working on the Bay View and Goudsmit Collections of Egyptian antiquities while serving as the Museum's Acting Director for Winter and Spring Terms 1992. She continues her research project on the seal impressions ratifying the imperial archive from Persepolis in ancient Iran. She is completing revisions of her book Persia and the Parthenon: Comparative Studies in the Art of Empire for Cambridge University Press. She is also coediting a book of essays on The Persian Empire: Continuity and Change—based on the NEH-funded Achaemenid History Workshop held in Ann Arbor in 1990 in conjunction with her Kelsey exhibition "Crowning Glories: Persian Kingship and the Power of Creative Continuity." She and Mariana Giovino have been working on a resource book of female imagery in the Kelsey collections, which can be used in teaching about gender issues in ancient cultures. Curator for Educational Programs Lauren Talalay will lead the Museum’s "Greek Odyssey" tour in May. She then plans to spend the month of July in Greece on a survey project in the area around the Bronze Age palace of ancient Pylos.

Last summer Assistant Curator Thelma K. Thomas received a grant from the University’s Office of the Vice President for Research to complete the scientific analysis of the early Byzantine paint samples she had collected from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Brooklyn Museum, and the Kelsey. The grant allowed her to have the samples analyzed at Harvard University Art Museum’s Fogg Center for Conservation and Technical Studies. With funding from the History of Art Department’s Forsyth Fund she took an intensive course in “Microscopy for Art Conservators” offered by the McCrone Center for Microscopy at the Conservation Center of the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University. She is also coordinating a survey of all the Kelsey’s Karanis textiles, as well as archival documents about them. With the help of a Chester Dale Fellowship from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, she will spend the coming academic year traveling to New York, Washington, D.C., Egypt, and Europe to prepare a book on Byzantine Egyptian sculpture.

Bill Wood has just finished photographing the current exhibition, "The Beginning of Understanding": Writing in the Ancient World. His photos were published, along with a story about the Kelsey, in the Research News and Ann Arbor Observer. He will leave the Museum in August to move to Chicago and plans to marry in June 1993. Bill has done fine work for the Kelsey and will be sorely missed. We wish him the best of luck in future pursuits.

In Memoriam
Louise A. Shier (1906–1992)

Louise Shier joined the staff of the Museum of Art and Archaeology (later to become the Kelsey Museum) as a graduate student in the 1920s. She never left it and served the Museum the whole of her working life with enormous diligence, first as Assistant Curator, then as Curator, until her retirement in 1977. From 1971 to 1973 she served as Museum Director.

With the exception of four weeks each year spent with her family at Bay View, Michigan, she was to be seen every day of the year—come hail or high water—striding out purposefully from her house on Olivia Street to the Museum or on the return trip. She was never late; she never left early.

She was familiar with the Museum's beginnings and the growth of its collections, which expanded rapidly in an era when Michigan excavators in Mediterranean lands were entitled to bring half of their finds back to Ann Arbor for study and safekeeping. Centered on the excavations at Karanis in the 1930s, the collections were expanded by the contemporaneous and judicious purchase in Egypt of Coptic textiles and other materials of antiquity.

Louise Shier was the person who greeted these materials as they arrived, studied them, and catalogued them. She knew the collections inside out and was a firm believer in their use for teaching as well as for research. She was especially well versed in the collections of pottery and terracottas, and from this interest came her significant study, Terracotta Lamps from Karanis, Egypt: Excavations of the University of Michigan (Kelsey Museum Studies Series, vol. 3, 1978).

A longstanding servant and supporter of the Museum, she was a real stalwart, whose steadfastness was never to be questioned and whose sense of the importance of museum collections to the educational mission of the University was unshakable.

John G. Pedley
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Philip H. Power
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Nellie M. Varner
James L. Waters

James J. Duderstadt, ex-officio

The Museum is open to the public
September–April
Monday–Friday 9:00–4:00
Saturday and Sunday 1:00–4:00
May–July 26, 1992
Tuesday–Friday 11:00–4:00
Saturday and Sunday 1:00–4:00

Due to construction, the Museum must be closed to the public

Calendar of Events

Exhibition:
“The Beginning of Understanding: Writing in the Ancient World”
Extended through July 26, 1992

Lecture:
“Goltepe Excavations 1991: A Tin Processing Site in the Taurus Mountains, Turkey”
by Dr. K. Aslihan Yener, Smithsonian Institution.
March 31, 1992, at 4:00 p.m. in the Kelsey Museum. A reception will follow.
Co-sponsored by the Interdepartmental Program in Classical Art and Archaeology and the Archaeological Institute of America.

Annual Membership Meeting:
The Kelsey Associates annual membership meeting will include dinner, slide, and fashion presentations of ancient Roman attire by Professor Norma Goldman of Wayne State University.
May 1, 1992, at 6:30 p.m. in the Kuenzel Room of the Michigan Union.