

# The Kelsey Museum of Archaeology Newsletter

Fall 2023





# On the Cover

The current civil war in Sudan has displaced millions of Sudanese from their homes, and many communities are now housing 2–3 times their usual population. This has resulted in much larger numbers of visitors to the archaeological site of Jebel Barkal than

usual, which poses both challenges for site preservation and opportunities for engagement and education. This photo shows a large gathering of people (and cars) at the base of the Jebel.

For more information, see “Collaborative Archaeology and

Conservation at Jebel Barkal: Protecting Heritage during the Civil War in Sudan” by Suzanne Davis and Geoff Emberling (pp. 7–9).

*Cover photo by Sami Elamin, June 2023.*



## Save the Date!

The Kelsey Museum of Archaeology looks forward to welcoming its members and friends to the Annual Saturnalia Celebration and Open House. This event will take place on Wednesday, December 13, 2023, from 4 to 6 p.m. in the Kelsey Museum’s galleries.

Invitations will be sent in mid- to late November. Join us for an evening filled with festivities, food, and fun!

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# The Kelsey Museum of Archaeology Newsletter

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Brendan Haug	Arthur Verhoogt
Sharon Herbert	Robert Wenke
Artemis Leontis	

## INFORMATION

Web: [lsa.umich.edu/kelsey](http://lsa.umich.edu/kelsey)  
Phone: (734) 764-9304  
 @kelseyuseum

## GALLERY & GIFT SHOP HOURS

The Kelsey Museum galleries are open to all visitors Tuesday–Friday 9 a.m.–4 p.m. and Saturday–Sunday 1–4 p.m. We offer both in-person tours and a variety of virtual programs.

## UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN REGENTS

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# From the Director

Dear Friends,

At the Kelsey Museum, the fall semester truly serves as a period of homecoming. Archaeological research and fieldwork often take Kelsey faculty, staff, and students to various locations around the Mediterranean. After a summer of suspended meetings and people working in different time zones, it is often a comfort to reunite with colleagues and friends in Ann Arbor and begin another academic year with renewed energy and purpose.

As usual, I spent the summer directing fieldwork for the Gabii Project, as well as other smaller projects in Italy. Much like the past 15-plus years at Gabii, the season was very productive, with eight different universities represented at the site. I was particularly struck this year by the sheer growth in the number of former graduate students at Gabii—people whom I once taught are now professors with their own students! It was remarkable to witness this intergenerational collaboration and to reflect on the significant role that the Gabii Project played in those former students' trajectories as archaeologists. It makes me proud to see how the training they received as students at Gabii had such an impact that they would return and continue their research there as highly trained, professional archaeologists.

When I returned to the United States from abroad in late summer, my arrival was met by a different sort of homecoming—new members joining our university and museum community, from the hiring of an associate director (AD) and an executive secretary to a visiting curator who will help drive progress on the Byzantine and Islamic Gallery over the next academic year. What a transformative time this is for the institution! The Kelsey Museum has several staff and faculty members who have contributed to our activities and mission for many years and who possess deep wells of institutional knowledge, but having new people on board offers unique opportunities for growth and fresh perspectives. I am especially excited about the arrival of Jennifer Kirker, the new AD, whose vast knowledge about anthropological archaeology, development and outreach, and university museum leadership will certainly prove a boon to our exhibitions, research, and programming for many years to come. I look forward to seeing the ways in which the Kelsey Museum branches out in new directions, both culturally and organizationally. More hires are on the horizon!

Of course, I would be remiss if I didn't mention a devastating loss that impacted the Kelsey community earlier this year: Dr. Richard W. Redding, who passed away on May 22, 2023. Richard was a research scientist at the Kelsey Museum since 2012—notably contributing to the establishment of our Bioarchaeology Lab—but his influence extended far beyond the walls of this institution. His generosity, mentorship, teaching, and archaeological and anthropological research across numerous locations and projects are sorely missed by all whose lives he touched.

We thank you for your interest in and support of the Kelsey Museum and its activities, and we invite you to visit our galleries to view some of the exciting exhibitions changes happening this fall!



# The BIG Object Spotlight Series: Snapshots of a Permanent Gallery

Artifacts from the Byzantine and Islamic world—including textiles, coins, wooden architectural elements, ceramics, glass, manuscript folios and fragments, decorative and functional household items, and funerary artifacts—make up a large portion of the Kelsey’s collection. These artifacts illustrate the rich multiculturalism and interconnectedness of the Mediterranean region from the 3rd century onward—a period characterized by the development and spread of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. With the support of U-M’s College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, the Kelsey is currently working on a new gallery that will highlight ancient and medieval centers of learning and explore the intercultural dialogue of the Byzantine and Islamic worlds through artworks and objects that have never before been permanently exhibited at the museum.

Over the next two years, a series of “Object Spotlights” will provide entrée into some of the themes and artifacts

planned for the Kelsey Museum’s permanent Byzantine and Islamic Gallery (BIG). The first Object Spotlight was installed in late June, under the guidance of lead curator Janet Richards, and will be on display through the end of November. It featured pilgrimage flasks from Egypt and Iraq, a carved wooden door lintel from Egypt, and textiles from Egypt and Yemen. Taken together, these items highlighted the themes of personal piety, pilgrimage, status display, and beliefs about death; they also demonstrated the continuity of such concepts across different regions, religions, and cultures.

Curated by Christiane Gruber, BIG Object Spotlight #2 will be installed in late November and on view through early May 2024. This spotlight case will feature artifacts relating to bread, prayer and protection, and personal treasures, including wheat, bread stamps, bracelets, and amulets.



The first BIG Object Spotlight, featuring textiles, pilgrimage flasks, and a door lintel.

# Call for Kelsey Prize Submissions

We are excited to announce that the 2024 Kelsey Prize for Excellence in Archaeological Research and Interpretation is now accepting submissions. This contest is open to all undergraduates from any of the three U-M campuses and from any field of study.

The Kelsey Prize is intended to promote the study of archaeology and to encourage students both within and outside the discipline to explore the many ways it connects to other fields. To apply, students can submit a project—including an essay, artwork, or online exhibition—that examines or is inspired by a Kelsey Museum artifact. Professors may also nominate a student if they feel that a project demonstrates excellence in archaeological research and interpretation.

The deadline for submission is January 22, 2024. Winners will be notified in mid-February and receive their award during a ceremony in late March. For more information and detailed application instructions, visit [myumi.ch/qGWGd](https://myumi.ch/qGWGd).



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## From “IPCAA” to “IPAMAA”: A New Name for an Established Program

The Interdepartmental Program in Ancient Mediterranean Art and Archaeology (IPAMAA), located within the Kelsey Museum, is excited to announce its new name. The renaming of the program, formerly called the Interdepartmental Program in Classical Art and Archaeology (IPCAA), was effective at the beginning of the 2023–2024 academic year.

Read the statement on the name change from IPAMAA leadership below:

*The decision to rename the program is one of several changes instituted over the last two years, following an exhaustive survey of current and former students on a wide range of topics. These reforms include the elimination of the GRE requirement for admission, modifications to our language and course distribution requirements, new mentoring and advising procedures, and a redefinition of the dissertation to include other formats besides the traditional monograph.*

*We undertook these and other changes in an effort to promote diversity in our field and to address the colonial heritage of our discipline. While the members of our academic community—including*

*both faculty and current and former students—certainly believe in the continued value of the study of the cultures of the ancient Mediterranean world, including those of ancient Greece and Rome, we feel that the term “classical” has become increasingly problematic. It summons up notions of racial and ethnic superiority and of elite and exclusive social and academic traditions that the other changes we have made are all designed to combat.*

*We also feel our new name describes our field more accurately. At Michigan and most comparable universities, the cultures of ancient Greece and Rome are studied alongside those of the prehistoric Mediterranean world and of neighboring regions, such as Anatolia. What unites our communities is a geographical and chronological focus and a specific set of research methods, rather than the valuation of the cultures we study as “classical.” By replacing “classical” with “ancient Mediterranean” and with the other changes noted above, we hope to make our program more welcoming to a wider array of students and to send a message to the broader community of our awareness of the need for change.*



# Kelsey in Focus Installment #7: Examining the Life Cycle of the Roman Soldier



The latest installment of the Kelsey in Focus case is now available for viewing at the Kelsey Museum. For this display, Museum Director Nic Terrenato and IPAMAA student Amelia Eichengreen are showcasing research and artifacts relating to the experience of Roman soldiers. The installment opened in early November to coincide with the observance of Veterans Day on Saturday, November 11, 2023.

Building on an existing self-guided tour produced by the Education Department for its Blue Star Museums programming, the new Kelsey in Focus case highlights artifacts pertaining to the life cycle of Roman soldiers—from their recruitment to their 16–25 years of service to their leaving the army, whether by death (through combat) or by discharge. Visitors can see objects such as a diorama of a Roman-Celtic skirmish, a military diploma from Graeco-Roman Egypt, an inscription about a navy officer, a horseman figurine (see left), and the head and torso of a Roman soldier from the Templum Gentis Flaviae.

The Kelsey in Focus program was developed in 2018 to display seldom-seen objects in the museum's collection of more than 100,000 artifacts. It also allows curators, staff, and students to share their research with the museum community. The Kelsey in Focus case is located on the first floor of the museum, near the ancient glass.

Left: A horseman figurine from the Fayum region of Egypt, dating to the 3rd–4th century CE (KM 6504).

## Kelsey in Focus Online

Did you miss a previous Kelsey in Focus display? All past installations are available to view on our website. Explore topics and artifacts such as ducks from Seleucia, fans from Karanis, and abstract artistic representations from Roman Egypt. Visit [myumi.ch/5JVxV](https://myumi.ch/5JVxV) to see more.

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## Statement on Zoombombing Incident

On Friday, October 6, the Kelsey Museum's Flash Talk with Geoff Emberling was the victim of Zoombombing. Explicit sexual video and audio interrupted an important talk about how Kelsey archaeologists work with and on behalf of the people of Sudan. While we regret that we could not prevent the zoombombing, we proudly support

the important research of Dr. Emberling and his team at El-Kurru and Jebel Barkal, Sudan. To learn more about this project and what team members are doing to mitigate potential damage to Sudanese people and cultural heritage sites, visit the Jebel Barkal Archaeological Project website ([sites.lsa.umich.edu/jbap](https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/jbap)) and sign up for the blog.

# New Technologies, New Challenges

## Continuing Work on the DiSKO Project

By Taylor Tyrell

This past summer, I had the pleasure of continuing the work of other graduate students and Director of Education Cathy Person on the DiSKO (Digital Study of Kelsey Objects) project. This educational outreach project, which began in 2019, intends to make select objects from the Kelsey available online to professors and students outside of the museum setting. To do this, we are creating a website that will house 3-D models of objects and accompanying information that can be used for teaching and research purposes. The experience I have gained working on this project has been invaluable to me, particularly the opportunity to work toward making these objects accessible to more people. Also, it is pretty awesome to be able to work with objects in this way—something I do not often have the chance to do as a historian.

One of the most exciting things we did this summer was purchase the CR-Scan Lizard, which uses LiDAR to scan objects with software that builds 3-D models. After extensive research, the student working on the project before me, recent alumna Zoe Ortiz, decided that the Lizard was an appropriate option for scanning since it is both accurate and less time-consuming than photogrammetry, another method that has been employed in the DiSKO project.



The Lizard set up to scan an artifact in the Kelsey's collection.

Once the Lizard arrived, I spent a couple of weeks engaging in trial and error with some replica objects, working out the kinks in the technology using YouTube videos, help from people on Reddit, and my own problem-solving skills. While I found some helpful tutorials, I had to learn how to use the scanner and resolve issues that came up along the way mostly on my own. The process has been rewarding, especially now that I can successfully produce scans of the Kelsey Museum's real pieces—seeing an object come to life on screen is incredible. Still, there were many times when I joked that I thought I was good with technology until working with 3-D modeling software. Nonetheless, I have found a setup that helps the process run smoothly, and my favorite days are when I get to spend hands-on time scanning the objects.

In the age of AI and virtual reality, I often feel daunted by how to best utilize these new technologies in my own research and classrooms. In a field in which access—to resources, objects, knowledge, and more—has historically been limited, it gives me hope to be able to use some of that technology to improve opportunities to study objects. Although working with these tools has been frustrating at times, it has not been impossible. I have no background in computer science, but I have found that learning how to use the software for the models uses many of the skills I have developed as a researcher—having to think about things from different perspectives, being resourceful when looking for information that seems nonexistent, and most importantly, having *a lot* of patience.

I am continuing to work on the DiSKO project throughout the Fall 2023 semester as we enter the final stages of getting the website up and running, and I cannot wait to share the models I have helped create with others. ▲

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**Taylor Tyrell** is a PhD candidate in the Interdepartmental Program in Ancient History.

The **DiSKO project** was made possible with funds from the University of Michigan Office of the Provost and by the dedicated staff and curators at the Kelsey Museum. Digitization and object research was conducted by University of Michigan students Matt Junker, Sarah Snyder, Talia Gangoo, Emani Hunter, Jade Peng, Zoe Ortiz, and Taylor Tyrell.

# Relaunch of Discovery Carts Program

The Kelsey Museum's Education Department relaunched its Discovery Carts program this fall for a trial period. With replica artifacts, games, pottery reconstruction, and other activities, the Discovery Carts provided opportunities for hands-on learning and access to information about the Kelsey's collection and Mediterranean history. Trained interpretive guides ensured that visitors learned about the objects on the carts and their significance in the ancient world.

The Discovery Carts were available within the Kelsey Museum's permanent galleries on Friday afternoons throughout most of the fall semester. In December, the Education Department will evaluate visitor attendance and engagement to determine whether Discovery Carts will become a permanent addition to the Kelsey's community programming.



Interpreters stand with a Discovery Cart in the Kelsey's galleries.

## Become a Kelsey Attendant!

The Education Department recently inaugurated a new volunteer program at the Kelsey Museum. The Kelsey Attendant program provides assistance with and support for various projects and activities headed by the Education Department, including outreach events, Family Days, and the Discovery Carts program.

Although becoming a Kelsey Attendant is not as intensive as our docent-training program, prospective volunteers receive instruction on museum content, educational theories, and teaching techniques so they can engage in meaningful ways with visitors of all ages and backgrounds. The Education Department hopes that the Kelsey Attendant program will provide flexible scheduling and volunteer opportunities for people with full schedules, such as students, full-time employees, and retirees—anyone who wants a less time-intensive commitment than our docent program but would still like to be actively involved at the Kelsey Museum to share their passion for the ancient world.

For more information and to apply to be a Kelsey Attendant, visit [myumi.ch/dkzxq](https://myumi.ch/dkzxq).



Kelsey Attendants assist with educational programming such as Family Day.



# Collaborative Archaeology and Conservation at Jebel Barkal

## Protecting Heritage during the Civil War in Sudan

By Suzanne Davis and Geoff Emberling

**I**n March 2023, we had just returned from a successful field season at Jebel Barkal, Sudan. Going in, we had an unusually ambitious work plan—in addition to advancing a wide range of archaeological research at the site, we would welcome new foreign and Sudanese team members; start *and* finish most of the conservation work for a major temple (FIG. 1); increase our community engagement efforts in and around Karima, the city adjacent to the site; begin to sift and clear large piles of backdirt left by the American archaeologist George Reisner when he excavated at the site in 1916–1920; and develop and co-teach a conservation and site-management planning workshop with key Sudanese colleagues. Check, check, check, check, check, and

check! We accomplished all that we set out to do and more.

Our time in Sudan ended with the workshop, which was held in the capital city of Khartoum and engaged high-level leaders in Sudan's National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums (NCAM). In addition to productive discussions with this group, the workshop gave us the opportunity to hear from NCAM colleagues about exciting new work happening across Sudan and to see NCAM's brand-new headquarters in downtown Khartoum. We were riding high, and the future looked bright.

A month later, Khartoum was under attack as rival factions of Sudan's military fought for control of the country. The conflict developed quickly, with virtually no warning. Our colleagues

who lived in Khartoum texted us photos of the city on fire, sent audio clips of bombs being dropped, told us about the horrific things they were witnessing, and tried to figure out how to get themselves and their families to safety. NCAM headquarters was commandeered, and the National Museum was occupied by soldiers. Fighting even briefly spread as far north as Jebel Barkal—about 500 kilometers away—as the military took over a military airfield across the Nile.

Most of our colleagues are now safe, although many are refugees in Egypt or are displaced inside Sudan. None of them have a paycheck any longer, since Sudan currently has no functioning government. As it became clear that the country would remain in the midst of a civil war for some time, we began



**Figure 1.** From left to right, conservator Elmontaser Dafalla with an assistant, conservation builder Sefian Mutwakil, archaeologist El-Hassan Ahmed Mohammed, and conservation architect David Flory discuss resetting fallen column drums in Temple B700—a temple dedicated to the Nubian god Osiris-Dedwen—at Jebel Barkal. Photo by Suzanne Davis.



**Figure 2.** People touring the site of Jebel Barkal in May 2023. Photo by Sami Elamin.

to wonder what we could do to support our Sudanese colleagues and to protect and preserve the sites where we have all worked together. As it turns out, we have been able to do a lot.

We are currently receiving support through the Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP) large grants program for our work at Jebel Barkal. Funded by the U.S. Department of State, our AFCP project aims to improve conservation, site protection, and community engagement at Jebel Barkal and to do so in a fully collaborative way, with projects led jointly by Sudanese and foreign team members. The AFCP award is extremely competitive, and our application to the program was successful in part because of the collaborative structure of the project team. We established this structure primarily so that we could work in a reparative way in Sudan, a country with a long history of exploitative, extractive archaeological research. We wanted to invest in existing

cross-cultural collaborations and develop new relationships. For us, this work builds on collaborative practices we have developed with colleagues and residents at the nearby site and village of El-Kurru, Sudan, where we have worked for a decade.

When we established the collaborative structure for the AFCP project, we were not planning for a civil war. Yet now that foreigners have no real entry path into the country—there is no civil aviation and land borders are effectively closed to nonnationals—the collaborative nature of our team has immediate, practical benefits.

All the AFCP grant projects we had planned can continue without the foreign team members on-site, since each one already has a Sudanese lead. Our colleagues who would otherwise not have any paid work in archaeology or conservation are still able to be paid with grant funds. With only slight adjustments to the project budget, we have been able to allocate even more

money for on-site work, since we are not paying for foreign team members to travel to Sudan.

At the same time that the civil war has displaced millions of people in Sudan, it has also changed the priorities and possibilities for ways we can help. Huge numbers of internally displaced people (IDPs) have traveled north, and many are seeing sites like Jebel Barkal, which is a UNESCO World Heritage site, for the first time (FIG. 2). Outreach, education, and community engagement were already high priorities for us, but we are now focusing even more effort on them, with learning activities for children, on-site walking tours, and multiple community events held each month.

Activities with children have a special place in our work right now because our colleagues are regularly welcoming children from the many IDP refugee shelters in Karima. These children explore the site museum and pyramids with archaeologists, watch a



short film about ancient Kush, spend time relaxing and drawing together, and are fed a meal (FIGS. 3–4). We plan to repeat these activities over the next six months so that all the children in the camps have a chance to visit the site.

Archaeological work also resumed in October of this year, particularly continuing to screen backdirt from the old Reisner excavations (as shown on season 11, episode 2, of the documentary *Expedition Unknown* when Josh Gates and his crew visited the site earlier this year). Archaeologists are documenting small finds discovered during this work, removal of the big piles of dirt is improving visibility and legibility of the site for visitors, and visits by schoolchildren are planned so that they can see archaeological work in action. The dramatically increased foot traffic from IDPs does pose risks to site protection and preservation, but site-protection projects have also sped up.

Our Sudanese colleagues are, of course, leading all this work, with key local archaeologist Sami Elamin at the helm. Here in Ann Arbor, we provide as much administrative and financial support as we can, assisted by multiple U-M coworkers, including Tamika Mohr, the Kelsey Museum’s chief administrator.

Jebel Barkal is only one site in Sudan, and our grant funding will not last forever. Both now and in the future, Sudan’s cultural heritage sites and the archaeologists, conservators, and curators who care for them need more support. But at this moment, we are glad that our project is able to do what it can. Fully collaborative archaeological work matters, not only because it’s the right thing to do but also because—as we so clearly see demonstrated here—without it, you might just be completely stuck. ▲

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**Suzanne Davis** serves as the Kelsey’s senior associate curator and head of conservation.

**Geoff Emberling** is an associate research scientist at the Kelsey Museum.



**Figure 3.** Children touring the Jebel Barkal museum with archaeologist Sami Elamin (at right). Photo by Mohammed Ahmed Abbas.



**Figure 4.** Children holding hieroglyphics worksheets and the Sudanese flag at the Jebel Barkal pyramids. Photo by Mohammed Ahmed Abbas.

For more information and updates on the Jebel Barkal Archaeological Project, visit [sites.lsa.umich.edu/jbap](https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/jbap).



# Roman Wall Painting on the Bay of Naples

## A New Immersive Experience at the Kelsey Museum

By Nicola Barham

Six fragments of ancient Roman wall painting were installed in the Roman galleries of the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology during the last week of October 2023. The new installation takes fragments that were previously exhibited in a small case on Roman wall decoration and combines them with others that until now have been held in storage (FIGS. 1–2). Together, they form the focus of a light-projection installation that reconstructs the kind of full-scale wall painting to which each fragment would have once belonged.

The wall painting fragments trace the history of the development of the

medium of interior mural painting through the four styles seen in the Roman town of Pompeii, which date between the 3rd century BCE and 79 CE—the year Mount Vesuvius erupted (FIG. 3). The volcano that famously destroyed Pompeii sealed its homes—with their vibrant wall decoration—under a thick layer of volcanic debris and rock.

I developed the new installation working in collaboration with Eric Campbell, the museum graphic designer, and Scott Meier, the museum exhibition coordinator. My vision was to allow the fragments at the Kelsey Museum to tell the story of the

changing fashions of Roman painting before the cataclysmic eruption of Mount Vesuvius. That volcanic eruption was a disaster for the Bay of Naples region and brought sudden tragedy to the many towns and settlements within its compass. Yet by sealing whole towns under a thick layer of debris, the volcano preserved many thousands of Roman homes as they looked at that moment, until their rediscovery and gradual excavation some two millennia later. As a result, the well-excavated towns of Herculaneum and Pompeii offer unparalleled evidence for the brightly painted murals that were favored in Roman interiors.

There is a very extensive body of evidence for the development of the “four styles” of wall painting in this period, which stands in stark contrast to even the best surviving examples of interior fresco from other periods and contexts. Beyond one or two outlier sites with a number of well-preserved painted buildings—notably the late imperial *insulae* (apartment blocks) of Rome’s harbor town of Ostia and the terraced houses of Ephesus in modern Turkey—only isolated examples of Roman wall painting from other periods and contexts survive to date. This means that the “four styles” of interior fresco at Pompeii have become the central, and by far the best understood, chapter in the history of Roman painting.

The new Kelsey Museum installation allows us to present the history of this medium of painting to visitors, including university students and K–12 groups encountering this material in their classes. It further allows us to take the strikingly colored, finely



**Figure 1.** Wall painting fragment from a Second Style fresco. Pompeii, Italy, late 2nd century–mid-1st century BCE (KM 29514).

**Figure 2.** Wall painting fragment from a Third Style fresco. Probably Italy, late 1st century BCE–early 1st century CE (KM 1977.3.11).



**Figure 3.** A colored etching depicting of an eruption of Mount Vesuvius. Pietro Fabris, 1776. Image courtesy of the Wellcome Collection.

detailed fragments in our collection and imaginatively answer some of the questions they raise for visitors: What kind of walls did they come from? How big were these frescoes? What designs did they include? Were the details and patterns preserved on the fragments repeated, or were they surrounded by other motifs? What was it like to stand in a room decorated with such bold colors and rich designs and to live in a space like this?

The installation was born out of a desire to present the answers to these questions as something that visitors could experience for themselves—rather than simply read or view on a panel. It builds on work employing light-projection technology at other museums of art and archaeology. The evening light shows of the Museo dell’Ara Pacis in Italy—that project a reconstruction of the original colored paint on the emperor Augustus’ Altar of Peace—formed one important source of inspiration. These special events provided a great example of the power of projected colored light to restore the full visual effect of a fragmentary ancient work, without

changing, or risking any damage to, the artifacts themselves.

A visit to the Hornstein Pavilion for Peace at the Montreal Musée des Beaux-Arts before the COVID-19 lockdowns provided a second source of inspiration. Here, a gallery of largely 19th-century paintings and sculptures, which might feel remote at first glance to some visitors, is transformed by the projection of carefully coordinated painterly iconography of trees that gently sway against a dark blue wash, creating an immersive environment that allows museumgoers to feel like they are walking within an enchanted canvas world—even as they view the spotlight paintings that appear between the leaves. Much like the immersive van Gogh exhibitions that so caught the public imagination over the last few years, such immersive installations hold the power to magnify a painting’s effects and bring its visual strategies into sharp focus.

In the case of the recreations of Roman wall painting at the Kelsey Museum, the projected images are not mere quotations, nor extrapolations of painterly iconography. The images

projected are of Roman wall paintings that have survived to the modern day largely intact or in good archaeological drawings. We chose examples preserving features that fit well with the motifs and color choices that also appear on the Kelsey Museum fragments. The challenge was to start from the iconography of the fragments in our collection and identify ancient frescoes with closely parallel details in each case. In this process, I worked closely with my research assistant Allison Grenda, a PhD student in the Department of the History of Art, who identified very close parallels for several of the Kelsey painting fragments in surviving schemes of Roman wall painting.

Once we had identified a range of iconographic parallels, Eric Campbell, the Kelsey Museum’s graphic designer, and I workshopped these together to see which arrangements would work well in the galleries. This was the most difficult stage of the process. In the installation, the six wall painting fragments are fixed in permanent mounts in the museum wall. A light projector then casts the colored design onto the wall around them, completing the



design for each fragment in turn, in rotation. The light beams projecting the colored designs are very precise in their focus and illuminate the fragments at a safe level, protecting them from any risk of damage due to extended exposure to light.

The Kelsey's exhibition coordinator, Scott Meier, collaborated closely with our museum conservators, Suzanne Davis and Caroline Roberts, to arrange the ambient lighting of the room to be at a low level to provide further protection for the artifacts, while maximizing the optic effect of the light projection. We chose a gray paint for the projection wall and a dark purple for the flanking walls (which we extended into the adjacent galleries) to keep a darkened effect and increase the impact of the projection. Eric Campbell then worked to recalibrate the color levels and tones for the projection so they would be true to his on-screen designs when projected on the gray surface.

The purple paint of the adjacent walls has become a new hallmark of the Roman galleries—a natural choice given the enduringly popular use of the color as a symbol of high status in Roman culture. It provides a dramatic backdrop to the white marble sarcophagi exhibited in the adjacent gallery.

We needed to be able to arrange the fragments in the wall in such a way that they were relatively evenly spaced, neither overlapping nor interrupting central elements of the projected designs of the other fragments. The fragments also dictated the scale, palette, and spacing of the features in our reconstructions of the full fresco schemes. Eric accomplished a remarkable feat in designing the reconstructions. Starting with the fragments I had selected and the reference images of paintings I had given him, he consulted with me in the alteration of details of scale, arrangement, and color to adapt each design to fit neatly with

our fragments—all while staying true to the development of fresco styles in the interior painting of this period. It was a delicate process of reconstruction and faithful adaptation.

The result is a gallery that provides viewers with an immersive experience of the development of the four styles of Roman wall painting in the Bay of Naples, setting the six Kelsey Museum fragments into their vibrantly reimaged original context (FIG. 4). The light projections promise to function as a great educational tool, as well as a memorable museum and campus experience. We hope you enjoy them—please come and visit! ▲

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**Nicola Barham** is assistant curator of ancient art at the Kelsey Museum and assistant professor in the Department of the History of Art.



**Figure 4.** From left to right, Scott Meier (exhibition coordinator), Nicola Barham (curator), and Eric Campbell (graphic designer) testing the new projection equipment in the Kelsey Museum's Roman galleries.



# New Staff



We are pleased to welcome **Christiane Gruber** as a visiting faculty curator. During this academic year (2023–2024), Christiane will work on the conceptualization and implementation of the Kelsey Museum’s Byzantine and Islamic Gallery (BIG). She is excited to return to the Kelsey where, in 2014–2015, she curated an exhibition of its Islamic artworks (*Pearls of Wisdom: The Arts of Islam at the University of Michigan*), whose online catalog can be browsed on the Kelsey’s website.

In addition to serving as curator this year, Christiane is professor of Islamic art and former chair in the Department of the History of Art at the University of Michigan, as well as the founding director of *Khamseen: Islamic Art History Online*. Her scholarly work explores medieval to contemporary Islamic art, and her public-facing essays have appeared in *Newsweek*, *The Conversation*, *New Lines*, *Jadaliyya*, and *Prospect*, among other publications.



**Jennifer Kirker** is associate director of the Kelsey Museum, where she oversees institutional planning and operations to maximize impact. She brings more than 20 years of museum leadership experience and a passion for public education, centering on the idea of the museum as a dynamic cultural center for research, education, and empathy.

Prior to the Kelsey, Jennifer served as the chief development officer for the Michael C. Carlos Museum at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, where she led a team responsible for raising \$3 million annually. She also served as the director of the James B. and Rosalyn L. Pick Museum of Anthropology at Northern Illinois University—leading the development of award-winning, mission-driven exhibitions.

An anthropological archaeologist by training, Jennifer received her degrees in anthropology from the University of California at Santa Barbara and Pennsylvania State University, completing further coursework at Penn State and the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. A member of the American Anthropological Association and the Council for Museum Anthropology, she has studied and presented on social justice in museums, solidarity activism, and community co-curation.



The Kelsey Museum is excited to introduce **Anne Stevenson** as its new executive secretary. In this position, Anne will support the efforts of the Administrative Department, facilitating the dissemination of information within the admin team and the museum at large. She will also help coordinate the department’s initiatives and manage the Kelsey’s social media platforms.

Anne was born in Ann Arbor and graduated from the University of Michigan with a degree in theater design and production. She went on to get a master’s of historic preservation from Eastern Michigan University, with an emphasis on heritage interpretation and architectural history. Prior to working at the Kelsey, she was a program development manager for college and community development at Washtenaw Community College. Anne has many hobbies, including gardening, sewing, miniature making, and music.

# Staff Updates

Editor **Emily Allison-Siep** continues work on *From the Motor City to the Mediterranean: Travels of a Truck, a Sedan, and an Inquisitive Photographer, 1924–1926*, a forthcoming book by Curator Emerita Lauren E. Talalay. After another round of editing—and photo-editing by Eric Campbell (museum graphic designer)—the book will move into the layout stage and will hopefully be ready for publication in the first half of 2024. Emily looks forward to seeing this new addition to the Kelsey Museum Publications series in print!

Executive Assistant and Social Media Coordinator **Mallory Bower** accepted an offer to work as a planner in the City of Detroit’s Housing and Revitalization Department. After joining the Kelsey Museum in the summer of 2021, Mallory served in the administration office and led numerous operational, organizational, and project-management tasks, including promoting the activities of the Kelsey through social

media. A supporter of her colleagues, she enjoyed sharing their successes with the Kelsey’s audience. Mallory also stepped in as interim facilities manager when the museum was without a full-time chief administrator or associate director. Her last day was June 23. Congratulations, Mallory—we wish you all the best!

Conservators **Suzanne Davis** and **Caroline Roberts** each have exciting career news. Suzanne was promoted from associate curator of conservation to senior associate curator, and Carrie was elected to a key leadership position in the Objects Specialty Group (OSG) of the American Institute for Conservation (AIC), the world’s largest professional association for cultural heritage conservation professionals. OSG is one of AIC’s biggest internal groups, established to connect professionals who conserve and study three-dimensional objects from all time periods. Carrie will serve this year as the assistant program chair for OSG conference sessions, transitioning to program chair and then group chair in subsequent years. Suzanne serves as president of this organization, and summer AIC projects for her included developing a new “Board Strategic Plan for Advancing Diversity, Equity,

and Inclusion in AIC Leadership” and closely related work on revisions to AIC’s bylaws. Suzanne spoke (virtually) by invitation at workshops held in Bologna, Italy, and Cairo, Egypt, on the use of volatile binding media in archaeological conservation. Finally, Carrie was the lead author on a paper about the Kelsey Museum’s “Investigating Color in Roman Egypt” project, which she delivered at the AIC annual meeting in May. The talk was well-received, and colleagues were excited about the project’s website ([sites.lsa.umich.edu/color-roman-egypt](https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/color-roman-egypt)) which features case studies of Kelsey objects and includes resources to help other museums conduct similar research.

Curator **Terry Wilfong** continues his research on artist Hamzeh Carr, along with other ongoing research projects at the museum. He recently completed an essay, “Casting a Wider Net,” for the publication of artist Jim Cogswell’s recent work, *Hands, Nets, and Other Devices*, at the International Museum of Contemporary Sculpture in Santo Tirso, Portugal. Terry is continuing preparations for the installation of a Kelsey in Focus case celebrating the life and work of pioneering Black classicist William Sanders Scarborough.

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# Pedley Updates

*During the summer of 2023, two IPAMAA students received the John G. Pedley Travel and Research Award, a grant program that helps fund archaeological research and travel for graduate students.*

## **Ginevra Miglierina**

I am delighted to be one of this year’s recipients of the John G. Pedley Travel and Research Award. His generous

support made it possible for me to travel to Italy and Greece to participate in two research projects during the summer of 2023.

Given Dr. Pedley’s fieldwork, it was a particular honor to spend the month of June in Paestum, Italy, where I worked on objects from the collection of the National Archaeological Museum of Paestum with one of his former students, Dr. Rebecca Ammerman, and visited several nearby sites such as Foce del Sele, Velia, and Agropoli. It was a very productive experience as I examined pottery from the site, browsed through the storerooms, and surveyed the

landscape and environment of the area. The project helped me gather ideas and material to start crafting my dissertation, which will explore the embodiment of ritual in Greek sanctuaries. I was also able to network with some of the museum staff, the site’s superintendent, and other Italian scholars working in Paestum. I hope to be able to draw on these contacts as I gather data for my thesis.

In July, I returned as a trench supervisor to the excavations at Pella, Greece—the ancient capital of the Macedonian kingdom—with Dr. Lisa Nevett. It was both a challenging and stimulating experience, as I managed



Ginevra Miglierina during her summer travels.



Left to right: Laurel Fricker, Theodore Nash, and Joseph Frankl at Panopeus.

my team and provided an initial interpretation of the findings from my trench. I look forward to more field seasons at Pella!

With this work accomplished, I am currently in the process of writing my dissertation prospectus. I am grateful for the support of the Pedley Award that allowed me to have such a productive summer!

**Sam Ross**

This summer, I was fortunate enough to receive the Pedley Award. My summer began with a conference held in Rome, where I presented with

colleagues about a new interpretation of the Area H complex at Gabii, Italy, providing new insights into its form, function, and development.

In the intervening days before the field season at Gabii started, I went on several interesting site visits around Central Italy with fellow IPAMAA student Amelia Eichengreen, including to Falerii Novi, Acquarossa, San Giovenale, Fregellae, Satricum, and Palestrina, as well as a fun detour amid a Faliscan necropolis I hadn't known about. I then returned to Gabii for my second year to be an assistant supervisor for Area J North—a newly opened

extension of Area J at the intersection of the Via Praenestina and Via Gabina.

After cleaning the new area, we began excavating to uncover a large basalt-paved area with a fountain, which had an earlier phase with an interesting ashlar basin, whose function remains unclear. Last but not least, my summer included intermittent and continuing work on a Mid-Republican temple on the Quirinal Hill in Rome, where I and others are trying to determine the temple's history and development, untangle its excavation history, and prepare the site for eventual musealization.

## Grad Student Updates

**Laurel Fricker, Theodore Nash, and Joseph Frankl** are back on campus and ready to work on their dissertations after a fun and productive year together in Greece as Regular

Members of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens. They are pictured above after an invigorating hike up to Panopeus, a site situated along the Boeotia-Phocis border in Central Greece.

**Machal Gradoz** completed eight weeks of dissertation research in Albania and Greece in March and April, then in June served as assistant director for the Brač Island Project in Croatia. This

fall, she is an intern with the American Historical Association (AHA)—funded through the Rackham Doctoral Intern Fellowship Program and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation—working on the AHA's "Teaching Things" and "Teaching History with Integrity" initiatives. She presented on her dissertation research at the 6th Conference for the International Association for Research on Pottery of the Hellenistic Period in Catania, Sicily, in October.



## New Faces of IPAMAA



**Gabriel Key** graduated from Swarthmore College with a BA in Greek and minors in Latin and religion. While attending Swarthmore College, they were a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow. Gabriel cemented their passion for archaeology in 2017 while studying abroad at the Intercollegiate Center for Classical Studies in Rome. They completed the Bridge MA Program in Classical Studies at the University of Michigan in the spring of 2023.

Gabriel has been involved in fieldwork in both Greece and Italy. They participated in the Azoria Project on Crete (2017) and have spent four seasons working with the Gabii Project (2018, 2019, 2022, and 2023)—two as a volunteer and two as a staff member in the Environmental Lab. Gabriel’s research interests are centered around early Central Italy, particularly on identity formation, food, archaeobotany, and zooarchaeology.



**Julian Thibeu** received a BA in Near Eastern studies from the University of Michigan in 2017 and an MA in Middle Eastern studies from the University of Chicago in 2020. Their MA thesis dealt with the landscape of crocodile cults in the Graeco-Roman Egyptian Fayum Oasis. They participated in the University of Chicago excavation of Horvat Duvshan in Israel in 2019. Julian worked for three years at the University of Chicago’s Center for Ancient Middle Eastern Landscapes on projects using geographic information systems (GIS) to document archaeological sites in Iraq and Afghanistan. They also spent two years performing cultural resource management archaeology surveys in the United States.

Julian is a member of the Northeast Fayyūm Lakeshore Project. In 2023, they took part in the excavation of the site of Karanis in the Egyptian Fayum and carried out a field survey of Graeco-Roman canals. Julian’s research focuses on human interaction with the landscape in Egypt during the Graeco-Roman period. They have presented papers on irrigation systems and trade routes in the Egyptian Western Desert and its oases. In addition, they founded a local chapter of the American Research Center in Egypt—ARCE Detroit—in 2023 and served as its first president.



**Volkan Topal** received his bachelor of architecture and MA in history of architecture at the Middle East Technical University in Ankara, Turkey. His MA thesis essentially focused on assessing the role of the architectural language of the imperial cult and imagery in the transformation of the urban spaces in Roman Ephesus, which employed a kineshetic method that incorporates the dynamics of space and movement.

Volkan has participated in several archaeological projects in Turkey—in Ephesus, Teos, Lagina Hecate Sanctuary, Ayasuluk, and Notion. He is interested in cultural encounters, landscape, and urban studies, as well as the dynamic relationship between identity and the built environment.

# In Memoriam: Dr. Richard W. Redding

The Kelsey Museum community is deeply saddened by the loss of Dr. Richard Redding (1947–2023), who passed away on May 22. Dr. Redding joined the Kelsey Museum in 2012 as a research scientist, but his eminence in the fields of anthropology, bioarcheology, and zooarchaeology began long before that. A world-renowned researcher, professor, author, teacher, and humanitarian, he touched many lives at the University of Michigan, in Egypt, and elsewhere around the world.

Richard received his bachelor's, master's, and dual PhD in anthropological archaeology and biology from the University of Michigan. This education shaped his transdisciplinary approach to research. His long fieldwork career began in the 1970s, when he excavated in Iran—a favorite culture with which he worked. Although Richard dug most often to Egypt, he was part of numerous field projects across North Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and the Americas over the years. His investigations focused primarily on the origin of food production, human-animal interactions, and the evolution of complex societies. Dr. Redding's research was especially rich at Giza, where—during more than 30 years—he accumulated millions of animal bones that lend invaluable insight into the status, diet, and lives of those who built the pyramids.

Even with his extensive fieldwork, Richard's passion for teaching never waned. He held positions at several

institutions, including the University of Michigan, Hamilton College, Wellesley College, and Oakland University, and served as director of science at the Cranbrook Institute of Science in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, from 1986 to 1991. Furthermore, he was involved with the Ancient Egypt Research Associates—an organization devoted to the study of the Giza Plateau—since 1991, holding several instructive and leadership positions. At the Kelsey Museum, Dr. Redding, along with colleague and environmental archaeologist Dr. Laura Motta, established the Bioarchaeology Lab in 2019 to provide a dynamic space for the study of zooarchaeological and archaeobotanical material.

In addition to a rich professional history of collaboration with the communities in which he dug, Richard cultivated a strong legacy of mentorship and support, especially for the communities where he excavated. An innovator at heart, he challenged not only his students but also his colleagues to look at things in new ways and think critically—considering the “why” of their research, not just the “how.”

Dr. Redding's loss is felt by many, and he is profoundly missed by his friends and colleagues here at the Kelsey Museum. His contributions will continue to echo through the halls of academic and research excellence, inspiring and guiding future generations of archaeologists, researchers, and teachers.



Teaching students in the Kelsey Museum's Bioarchaeology Lab.



Redding working at the Giza pyramids.

## Contribute to the Dr. Richard W. Redding Graduate Support Fund

A fund was established in Dr. Redding's name to help provide tuition and travel support for graduate student research. For more information and to donate to this fund, visit [myumi.ch/n7m3r](https://myumi.ch/n7m3r).



**We invite you to visit the Kelsey Museum during the upcoming holiday season.  
Our 2023–2024 holiday hours are as follows:**

**NOVEMBER**

Thursday, 23rd . . . . . Closed  
Friday, 24th . . . . . 11 AM–4 PM  
Saturday, 25th . . . . . 1–4 PM  
Sunday, 26th . . . . . 1–4 PM  
Monday, 27th . . . . . Closed  
Tuesday, 28th . . . . . 9 AM–4 PM

**DECEMBER**

Sunday, 24th . . . . . Closed  
Monday, 25th . . . . . Closed  
Tuesday, 26th . . . . . Closed  
Wednesday, 27th . . . . . 11 AM–4 PM  
Thursday, 28th . . . . . 11 AM–4 PM  
Friday, 29th . . . . . 11 AM–4 PM  
Saturday, 30th . . . . . 1–4 PM  
Sunday, 31st . . . . . Closed

**JANUARY**

Monday, 1st . . . . . Closed

Regular hours resume  
Tuesday, January 2nd.

*We extend our sincere appreciation and  
thanks to the Kelsey donor who provides  
support to extend our museum hours.*

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