The Kelsey Museum of Archaeology Newsletter

Fall 2025

Warps & Wefts: Egyptian Textiles in Focus

On the Cover

On September 17, 2025, Dr. Elizabeth Dospěl Williams—a curator at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston—led a textile workshop at the Kelsey Museum. "Late Antique Egyptian Textiles in Focus" highlighted 10 textiles from Egypt that are seldom seen by Kelsey audiences. A collaboration with the U-M Department of the History of Art and the Kelsey's Conservation and Education Departments, this workshop introduced attendees to a range of structures and functions rarely observed in the museum's better-known textiles.

The object featured on the cover (KM 22731) was one of the textiles explored in Dr. Williams' workshop. Flip to **pp. 20–23** to learn more and get a closer look at these unique textiles in a photo essay by Suzanne Davis, senior associate curator and head of conservation at the Kelsey.

Dr. Williams leads the textile workshop at the Kelsey Museum. Photo: Shannon Ness.

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INFORMATION

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GALLERY HOURS

The Kelsey Museum galleries are open to all visitors Tuesday–Friday 10:00 AM–4:00 PM and Saturday–Sunday 11:00 AM–4:00 PM. We are open until 7:30 PM the third Thursday of each month, and we offer both in-person tours and a variety of virtual programs throughout the year.

From the Director

Dear Friends,

In last fall's newsletter, I began my message introducing the launch of the Kelsey Museum's strategic-planning efforts. From the spring of 2024 onward, Kelsey staff, faculty, and students engaged in retreats, interviews, collaborative conversations, and working groups with the facilitation of the wonderful Gail Anderson. Along the way, we received input from every facet of our community, from stakeholders on campus to colleagues at museums as far afield as Cairo.

This level of large-scale planning can be a daunting task, especially since it requires buy-in from so many individuals. However, we felt the time was right. The strategic-planning process coincided well with external reviews by U-M and with our reaccreditation efforts with the American Alliance of Museums. Beyond that, a number of areas in the museum have been recently reorganized—there was no better time to take stock of where we were and determine where we wanted to go in the next decade.

Now, a year later, I am pleased to say that the strategic plan was completed in February. This robust 64-page living document not only lays out our specific goals but also introduces a high level of accountability, ensuring that the work we pledged to do gets done. The large amount of energy the Kelsey put into this plan is evident across every page, as is our commitment to reparative collaboration, inclusivity, and broader and fairer modes of outreach.

Of course, just because the plan is complete doesn't mean our work is over—in fact, we are just getting started. But I wanted to take a moment and reflect on how proud I am of the Kelsey Museum community for devoting its time to making this happen.

Although the strategic plan has occupied much of our focus, that certainly isn't the only thing that has been happening. I am pleased to report that we are entering the home stretch for our Crossroads of Culture gallery with the exhibit firm Solid Light as a partner. Well-known for its creativity, interactive displays, and visitor engagement, Solid Light is just as thrilled as we are to implement new museum methodologies to explore a period of Mediterranean, North African, and Middle Eastern history that has never before been covered in depth at the Kelsey.

I also eagerly anticipate Nicola Barham's *Ancient Abstractions: Roman Visual Trends Beyond the Natural*, a special exhibition that will open to the public next fall. As a Roman archaeologist who has looked at figurative art for decades (half of what you do as a student is study marble heads...), I am excited to experience this show's emphasis on nonfigurative works. While figurative art sometimes requires the viewer to be well-versed in specific iconography, Nicola's exhibition will focus on abstract ancient works that are just as appealing today as they were 3,000 years ago.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't once again express my excitement about the Klinsky Expeditions. Since our kickoff event a few months back, the expedition leaders have hit the ground running, with many already carrying out full or partial seasons over the summer. From Lake Huron to Kazakhstan, I am proud to see archaeologists in so many parts of the world working side by side, pooling resources, and sharing results. There are five cool new projects going on, in addition to the many Kelsey ones already ongoing, but more than that, this program has brought Michigan archaeologists closer together and invigorated our work—as you will see in the pages that follow.

Tracing the Unseen: New Findings from Vigna Murata

In the last newsletter, I reported on the excavation of a Republican-era chamber tomb at Vigna Murata, Italy. This intact burial included the remains of four individuals, along with many grave goods and funerary offerings. After completing the excavation of the tomb last summer, the team has turned its attention to analyzing what we found.

The objects recovered from the chamber tomb mostly consisted of vessels associated with funerary rituals. However, we don't know much about these practices in the Republican period. Although plates, bowls, and cups recur in burials of the era, the great majority of them are found empty, and only on rare occasions can we assume that these objects had actually been used in some specific way. One of the issues might stem from the preservation or visibility of the content. Flowers, food, and other organic materials such as honey or perfumes do not stand the test of time. But they do leave invisible traces—chemical and physical markers—that can be found through various analytical techniques.

In December 2024, I worked with Dr. Rosaria Avella (University of Naples Federico II) to sample 35 of the Vigna Murata vessels for Organic Residue Analysis (ORA), which allows us to look at lipids, blood, and other markers of organic compounds; phytoliths, or microscopic silica plant remains; and starch content.

While four of the plates contained visible offerings of a cut of meat—the bones of some birds and very young lamb were preserved in the mud covering the pottery—most of the vessels were found empty, though it is not clear if they contained offerings that did not preserve or if they had a different function in the ritual. We are also trying to understand if the pottery deposited as grave goods was used during the buried individual's lifetime. Since some of the small bowls were found stacked one on top of the other, we are testing the hypothesis that some of the vessels might have been brand-new and thus deposited in the burial as a symbol of abundance.

As Dr. Avella and I got to work in the storeroom, we cleaned the Vigna Murata vessels with demineralized water and—using a sonicating brush—collected the thin patina of dirt attached to the inside of the container for phytoliths and starch. ARCHAM alum and previous Archaeobiology Lab member Nicholas Cullen, now a PhD candidate at Stanford, is analyzing these materials.

ORA sampling involved scraping the inside surface of the vessel with a drill to collect the top of the ceramic core. Cooked clay is porous and absorbs chemical compounds, so with chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS), we can detect lipids and get information on waxes, resins, and fatty acids to differentiate between vegetal and animal fats. With carbon isotopes ($\delta^{13}C$) and fatty acids (palmitic and stearic), we

Left: A selection of the vessels from the Vigna Murata grave goods that were sampled for micro-residue analysis.

Right: Laura Motta and Rosaria Avella at work. Laura uses a sonicating brush to sample for phytolith and starch analysis.

are able to look for ruminant subcutaneous fat (meat) and for milk and cheese, as well as determine the latter's animal of origin (cow versus sheep or goat). Other acids—tartaric, malic, succinic—are markers for wine. Such analysis was conducted in collaboration with Professor Giuseppe de Benedetto at the University of Salento's Analytical Chemistry Lab in the Department of Cultural Heritage during the spring and summer.

So far, we have received preliminary results from the Analytical Chemistry Lab. Dairy products were completely absent from the vessels, but some of them held resins and incense. Still others contained millet—a plant often dismissed by Romans as a minor cereal but one that likely formed an important part of their diet. Recovering the sub-millimetric millet particles in archaeological contexts can be difficult, so the cereal's presence here is exciting in itself, but further analysis will help us understand if the deceased individuals had consumed it in life or whether millet was merely used as part of a funerary ritual.

As we await the full results, the Vigna Murata tomb continues to illuminate the intricacies of Republican-era funerary practices. By uncovering traces of everyday substances, we are gaining a deeper understanding of how Romans navigated the boundary between life and death.

—Laura Motta, Archaeobiology Lab

Shake, Rattle, and Roll: Studying Musical and Sound Objects from Karanis

In May 2025, two scholars, Sibylle Emerit (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique) and Christophe Vendries (Université Rennes 2), visited the Kelsey Museum to carry out a study of objects in the collection. Dr. Emerit is an Egyptologist who is a specialist in music in ancient Egypt and a member of the Tebtynis mission since 2019, while Pr. Vendries' research focuses on music in the Roman Empire. Their work aims to catalog the musical and sound objects from the Ptolemaic and Roman periods that were unearthed in the 1930s at the village of Karanis—including cymbals, clappers, auloi, panpipes, clay trumpets, bells (such as KM 10735 at left), and rattles—to compare them with over 100 sound-producing artifacts discovered over the past 30 years at the nearby site of Tebtynis in the Fayum.

Supported by the French Institute of Oriental Archaeology in Cairo and the research program *Soundscapes and Urban Spaces in the Ancient Mediterranean*, the project seeks not only to analyze the materials and manufacturing techniques of these objects but also to situate them within their spatial, historical, and social contexts. At the crossroads of material culture studies and sound studies, this research aims to understand the soundscapes of these villages and to highlight the distinctiveness of local musical practices compared to those known from Alexandria and other provinces of the Roman Empire.

Advocacy, Action, and AIC: An Interview with Suzanne Davis

Suzanne Davis, senior associate curator and head of conservation at the Kelsey Museum, recently concluded her tenure as president of the American Institute for Conservation (AIC). As Suzanne steps out of this role, Kelsey Museum editor Emily Allison-Siep asked her to reflect on her eight-year journey leading the world's largest membership organization for conservation professionals.

EAS: To start, can you tell us about AIC and its mission?
SD: AIC is the national professional association for conservators in the United States. It includes not only conservators but also conservation scientists and technicians, imaging specialists, archivists, tribal historic preservation officers, and many others, with members based in more than 40 countries. AIC's mission is to preserve cultural heritage by establishing professional standards, promoting research, and providing educational opportunities.

EAS: Can you describe your pathway to the presidency? What drew you to this role?
SD: I was elected to the role of vice president (which is also the president-elect) in 2017 and served on the boards of AIC and its philanthropic affiliate, the Foundation for Advancement in Conservation (FAIC), for eight years.

I was drawn to these roles for several reasons. As vice president and program chair for AIC's annual conference, I wanted to make it easier for members to propose cross-disciplinary sessions, and I wanted to improve the abstract review process. As president, I wanted to participate in creating the organizations' strategic plans and in hiring their next executive director. While the boards guide the organizations' work, the executive director leads the 12-member staff team and directs daily operations. Being part of the group that hired this individual was an opportunity to influence the organizations for years to come. Last but not least, my favorite role models believe in the value of service and have dedicated portions of their careers to it.

EAS: What were some initiatives you oversaw? Which are you most proud of?
SD: As vice president, I led an initiative to remove as much bias as possible from abstract review for the annual conference and to make the review rubric clear and easily accessible. I also led the conference program teams through a quick pivot to an all-virtual meeting when the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns hit the United States in March of 2020, with the conference only two months away in mid-May.

As president, I participated in a four-year collaboration with the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) that investigated the current state of conservation in the United States and articulated a vision for its growth. As part of this initiative, I spoke at a national convening that included the Librarian of Congress and the chair of NEH. I also led AIC and FAIC's first-ever stakeholder-engaged strategic-planning process and co-chaired the search committee for the organization's new executive director, Lissa Rosenthal-Yoffe.

Suzanne speaking at the national convening of *Held in Trust* at the Library of Congress, 2023. All photos courtesy of AIC & FAIC.

EAS: Looking back, is there a particular moment or achievement from your presidency that you feel captures the spirit of your time in office?
SD: My favorite moment was probably the 2022 conference, held in Los Angeles at the iconic Bonaventure Hotel. This was the first in-person conference after two years of being virtual and my first year in office as president. Lissa had just been hired and attended the conference, where we were also honoring Eryl Wentworth, the executive director who had recently retired.

There was a great sense of history but also of opportunity and possibility. It was AIC's 50th anniversary, and there were AIC birthday cakes everywhere. As an opening event, the Getty hosted nearly 1,000 attendees for an al-fresco

dinner and dance during a lunar eclipse. People were delighted to be back together after two years apart, and the whole event felt magical.

EAS: How does AIC foster collaboration across institutions and specialties?

SD: Our member base is incredibly engaged, and members from across the discipline serve together on committees and task forces that develop programming and explore and articulate policy on issues relevant to the field. At any given time, we have several hundred volunteers engaged in this kind of work. During my presidency, for example, task forces updated AIC's peer-reviewed member designations, bylaws, and code of ethics.

AIC is also made up of creative, collaborative people who want to be in community with each other. I have had the experience, in other professional groups, of senior colleagues being condescending or unkind to people who are perceived to be of lower status. In contrast, AIC actively pursues a culture that is supportive and kind to all.

EAS: What challenges does the field of conservation face today? How did these play out during your presidency?

SD: One challenge is a very basic question about what conservation is. There is a perspective that says conservation is only interventive treatments like cleaning, deacidification, or restoration. But what about a tribal historic preservation officer working to rehouse a collection, an archivist digitizing ephemera, or a chemist analyzing the deterioration of polymers used in modern art? I think all of these activities are conservation, but not everyone agrees.

A significant new challenge is the loss of federal funding for conservation, and this happened in the last few months of my term as president. This loss leaves a gaping hole in what was already a tiny bucket of resources dedicated to preserving cultural heritage. Whether individual donors and nonprofit foundations can make up the difference remains to be seen, but if they cannot, it will result in damage to collections and heritage sites worldwide.

EAS: How does your participation in professional service influence your approach to conservation work at the Kelsey?

SD: It has helped me build a large network of colleagues across the globe and exposed me to ideas I wouldn't have otherwise encountered. If I have a challenging project, I can pick up the phone and get advice from a colleague at any major museum or library in the United States or many other countries.

EAS: As you transition out of this leadership position, are there any projects you are next interested in focusing on?

SD: I currently serve on the board of the United States Committee of the Blue Shield, which is dedicated to preserving cultural heritage during armed conflict and natural disasters. Right now, I'm part of a task force that is inventorying and mapping national resources for preserving tangible heritage, and I look forward to devoting more of my free time to this. At the Kelsey, Carrie and I have several research projects that need to be finished and published. And I spend much of every weekend working in my garden and would happily focus all my time on this!

Suzanne with AIC's incoming president Cory Rogge (left) and VP Abed Haddad (right), May 2025.

The opening session of the 2018 annual conference in Houston, Texas—Suzanne's first year as vice president and program chair.

Dr. Mauro Rizzetto checks the horns of a hartebeest in the Kelsey's collections storage. Visible in the front are equid skulls.

Revelations in Bone: Karanis Animal Remains

In February 2025, Dr. Mauro Rizzetto (Vrije Universiteit Brussel) came to the Kelsey Museum to look at animal bones from Karanis. Mauro is a specialist in zooarchaeology and a postdoc for AGROS, a multidisciplinary project that examines agriculture, diet, and nutrition in Graeco-Roman Egypt.

Unlike the plant remains from Karanis, the animal bones from the site are far less numerous. Grain was stored close at hand in the courtyards of Graeco-Roman Karanis, but the remains of animals from butchery or meal residue were disposed of outside of the home. When University of Michigan researchers excavated Karanis in the 20th century, they focused on domestic structures—collecting entire storage vessels full of seeds—rather than on middens and trash mounds.

The Karanis bones, despite their comparatively limited number, still hold the potential to tell us much about life in Graeco-Roman Egypt. During his time at the Kelsey, Mauro identified all the animal remains, which consist of an astonishing array of local and imported shells; domestic species like cattle, pig, sheep, and goats; a variety of fish such as Wahrindi, sharptooth catfish, mudfish, Tilapia, and Nile perch; and even wild fauna, including a crocodile and a bubal hartebeest (a now-extinct subspecies of antelope).

The Kelsey collection also contains a number of equid skulls. These are usually difficult to identify on a species level, but if enough collagen has been preserved, the AGROS team will be able to determine whether they are horses, donkeys, or mules using mass spectrometry—an analytical technique that identifies species based on differences in the amino acid composition of collagen protein.

A selection of specimens is currently being radiocarbon-dated at the Chrono Centre (Queen's University Belfast) to ascertain their antiquity, since we suspect that some of the animals collected from Karanis were surface finds from later dates. We are also conducting various analyses on the bones and teeth of the domestic livestock. With the bones, nitrogen and carbon stable isotope analysis allows us to look at the animals' diets, from which we can conclude information about management and foddering practices. In contrast, we can use carbon and oxygen stable isotope analysis to sequentially sample different layers found on animal molars and draw conclusions about seasonality, water stress, and herd mobility.

Taken together, these isotopic values help us understand how animals lived and were managed in Karanis.

But these results have wider implications as well, since animal husbandry, agricultural practices, and the human diet were inextricably linked. As the former are revealed in bone and tooth, we can learn how ancient people sustained themselves—the inquiry that lies at the heart of AGROS.

—Laura Motta, Archaeobiology Lab

Investigating a Nitrogen-Rich World

Recent research on Karanis plant remains has revealed that they are extremely rich in nitrogen. While there are several reasons why this may be, the prominent hypothesis is that agricultural practices resulted in a circular enrichment process: farmers manured the land, the growing crops were enriched, people and animals ate the crops, their nitrogen-enriched excrement went back into the fields, and so on. If nitrogen and carbon stable isotope analysis on the Kelsey's animal remains reveals high levels of nitrogen that are not explicable with their diets, we may have proof of this circular enrichment problem in the agricultural practices of Karanis.

Dr. Mauro Rizzetto identifying shells from the Kelsey Museum. Shells produce seasonal growth rings that can be used to estimate harvesting practices.

New Exhibition Brings Karanis Colors into Focus

Since 2021, IPAMAA PhD candidate Laurel Fricker has worked with Kelsey Museum conservators on *Investigating Color in Roman Egypt*, a project funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. During this time, she has studied pigments and dyes on artifacts from Karanis—mainly terracotta figurines and textiles—using various analytical techniques, allowing her to reconstruct the colorful world that ancient people created and inhabited.

This research forms the basis of the Kelsey Museum's newest Kelsey in Focus case, which opened in mid-October. Curated by Laurel, "Through the Lens: Examining Colorful Objects from Karanis" takes a close look at three figurines uncovered from domestic contexts at Karanis: a dog, the god Harpocrates, and the goddess Isis-Aphrodite. The mini-exhibition demonstrates how pigments—often invisible to the naked eye—can be investigated using digital microscopy and multispectral imaging.

"In museums today and on archaeological sites, statues and preserved remains are often presented without any traces of their original polychromy," Laurel explained. "In this Kelsey in Focus case, I show how colorful the ancient world was and how our modern techniques can bring these pigments into focus."

"Through the Lens" features not only the three household objects from Karanis but also 3D models and printed color reconstructions revealing the surprising ways that ancient pigments were used. To learn more and view this exhibition online, visit **myumi.ch/qZ2pE**.

Graduate student Laurel Fricker photographing a figurine.

After the Looting: International Task Force Mobilizes for Sudanese Cultural Heritage

In March 2025, the Sudanese Armed Forces recaptured the capital city of Khartoum from the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) after nearly two years of war. The RSF had controlled the Sudan National Museum for much of that time, and when the army regained control, photos and videos confirmed a grim reality that had been suspected since the early months of the conflict: the Sudan National Museum had been looted. Thousands of artifacts—both those on display and those in storage—were revealed to be broken or missing, and the building, its equipment, and its grounds were heavily damaged.

In response to these devastating losses, as well as damage to other museums around the nation, individuals and groups from both within and outside of Sudan have stepped up. Sudan's National Corporation of Antiquities and Museums (NCAM) asked the International Society for Nubian Studies (ISNS) to form a task force not only to investigate the extent of the looting but also to develop plans to rehabilitate the museum and support cultural heritage recovery efforts across Sudan. This work follows initial support from the French Archaeological Unit for Sudanese Antiquities (SFDAS), the British Museum, and the National Museum in Prague.

The task force, called the Sudan Cultural Emergency Recovery Fund, is led by Geoff Emberling, codirector of the Jebel Barkal Archaeological Project and research scientist at the Kelsey Museum. It also includes Dr. Ekhlass Abdellatif and Ikhlas Elyas from NCAM, Dr. Maria Carmela Gatto of the Polish National Academy of Sciences, and Professor Angelika Lohwasser of the University of Münster. Other individuals provide further levels of support for the group's work, such as the Kelsey's Suzanne Davis and Chris Motz, who offer support for conservation and digital data, respectively. Together, the members of the Sudan Cultural Emergency Recovery Fund are working to coordinate international support, mobilize fundraising, and provide strategic assistance to help safeguard Sudan's invaluable cultural heritage.

The task force has been active in fundraising. So far, the team has received grants from the Michela Schiff Giorgini Foundation to repair shelters over archaeological monuments on the museum's grounds and from the ALIPH Foundation to pay for several months of emergency stabilization, documentation, and conservation of the building and its collection. Task force members have also applied for funding for much-needed structural repairs for the building.

There is a long road ahead, but the work of the Sudan Cultural Emergency Recovery Fund helps ensure that the recovery efforts are Sudan-led, transparent, and sustainable. "Sudan's archaeological legacy is important not only for the region but for the world," Geoff said. "In the face of the looting and damage to the Sudan National Museum, we are committed to standing with our Sudanese colleagues to recover, protect, and rebuild."

To make a donation in support of Sudanese cultural heritage projects, please visit **amsarc.org/support**.

View of the Sudan National Museum's "Storeroom Z," which shows ceramic vessels and stone blocks—some remaining on their shelves and others on the floor, with several broken.

Nature as Inspiration: Latest Object Spotlight Maintains Momentum for Crossroads Gallery

As you climb the stairs to the Kelsey Museum's second floor, the sounds of birdsong and running water faintly fall on your ears. These noises form the backdrop of the newest Crossroads of Culture Object Spotlight, which explores how communities in the Middle East and North Africa lived with, adapted to, and reimagined their environments.

"The Inhabited World: Living with Nature" was curated by a group of dedicated graduate students: Heidi Hilliker (MES), Sam Ross and Bailey Franzoi (IPAMAA), and Kara Larson (UMMAA), with support from visiting curator Katherine Burge. Organized into three overlapping themes, this exhibition considers how the environment influenced artistic expression, domestic life, and spiritual experience from 400 to 1800 CE through objects both functional and decorative. From oil lamps to water filters, textiles to architectural elements, these objects demonstrate how nature served not only as a resource but also as an inspiration in the Byzantine and Islamic worlds.

"To develop this spotlight, my co-curators and I first decided the kinds of human stories we wanted to tell and then took inspiration from the beautiful Kelsey collection," described Heidi. "Our hope is that visitors will walk away with an appreciation for our continued interaction with the natural world around us."

This Object Spotlight—the final temporary Crossroads exhibition before the permanent gallery is installed—will be on view through the end of 2025. Construction begins on the permanent display during the winter semester, with an anticipated opening of May 2026. See the objects in this exhibition online at **myumi.ch/pVPzz**.

Digital Dentistry Meets Karanis Archaeology

Checking the CBCT images before they are assembled in a 3D model.

As part of the effort to establish the chronology of datasets not otherwise datable, we are running a series of radiocarbon tests on the molars of four individuals excavated at Karanis, Egypt, during the 1930s. This process involves extracting a molar from each jawbone and sending the specimens for destructive analysis—ultimately allowing us to determine the dates for these remains.

The removal of these teeth can have unintended consequences, since the process of extraction can alter physiognomic elements and affect the availability of information needed in the future. The solution to this was to create 3D models of the molars prior to extraction, allowing us to document jaw morphology and assess potential pathologies related to the root of the tooth.

Creating these models was no easy task, and it was certainly not something the Kelsey Museum could do in-house. Luckily, I found two wonderful collaborators: Dr. Fabiana Soki and Dr. Erika Benavides from the School of Dentistry's Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology team. With the help of Veronica Slayton, they used advanced imaging techniques—specifically Cone Beam Computed Tomography (CBCT), which provides detailed images of a person's teeth, jawbone, and tissues using a cone-shaped X-ray beam—to create 3D models of the molars before extraction. They also produced follow-up imaging after removal to preserve a comprehensive record of the process.

In addition to the dates revealed during radiocarbon testing, these molars may also yield information about their owners' lives and diets through other modern techniques, from isotope analysis to evaluating the calculus that remains on the teeth.

—Laura Motta, Archaeobiology Lab

New Undergraduate Educators Shape K–12 Programming

In mid-August, the Kelsey's education team welcomed to its ranks the museum's first cohort of undergraduate educators (UGEs). Intended to augment the visitor programming provided by the Kelsey's community docents, these seven U-M undergrads eventually will provide the bulk of our K–12 programs. Indeed, during the 2025–2026 school year, these new members of the Kelsey team will lead tours and educational activities for some 2,000 K–12 students. In addition, these undergraduate students will assist the Kelsey Museum as it seeks to expand its community engagement efforts through off-site programming.

Over the course of a week of intensive training, the UGEs received instruction in both content and delivery. Their training included classroom sessions and gallery tours from faculty, museum curators, and staff; firsthand experience with the Kelsey's various hands-on activities; and even a session with an improv instructor who coached them in active listening and positive, responsive engagement. While their education in the Kelsey Museum and its collections is just beginning, they are off to a great start.

The students making up this first cohort of undergraduate educators come not only from our traditional academic partner departments (Classics, History, History of Art, Middle East Studies) but also include majors and minors in fields like political science, fine arts, and museum studies. The diverse academic perspectives and life experiences these students bring to their tours and programs will create a variety of new touchpoints for the young students visiting the Kelsey. Conversely, the UGE program enhances these students' undergraduate experience at U-M as they gain direct practice leading education and outreach endeavors for children in the museum, across the region, and throughout the state.

The addition of the UGEs serves several goals of the Kelsey Museum and the Education Department by providing further engagement with university students, broadening the stories we tell and the people who tell them, and providing training and experience for a new generation of museum professionals.

—Will Pestle, Director of Education

Community and Youth Educator Stephanie Wottreng Haley stands with a group of new undergraduate educators.

Conservation Intern Advances Imaging Research at the Kelsey Museum

This summer, we were thrilled to host U-M junior Hannah Magnus as an undergraduate intern in the Conservation Department. Hannah is majoring in anthropology, with a sub-major in archaeology, and she has a particular interest in ancient textile production—a perfect fit given our current textile research projects.

During her internship, Hannah investigated a group of block-printed textiles that were produced in India for the Egyptian market. Although the dyes in these textiles were previously analyzed and reported in Ruth Barnes' 1993 catalog in the Kelsey Museum Studies Series, our goal is to correlate those findings with results from multiband imaging. Hannah used imaging techniques that she learned during her internship to produce new ultraviolet, infrared, and false-color images of each textile. This will allow us to infer which dyes were used across the collection without needing to sample and analyze each textile using chromatography—a type of chemical analysis that is more precise but very time-consuming.

Hannah also participated in a 3D scanning session with Manager of Digital Assets Chris Motz in collaboration with the Taubman College of Architecture, where we captured a three-dimensional model of a rare 7th–8th century architectural wooden panel from Cairo, now preserved at the Kelsey Museum.

Hannah brought enthusiasm and curiosity to all these projects, and we were pleased to offer her hands-on experience with collections research that will strengthen her academic toolkit at the University of Michigan. We wish her the best as she continues her studies!

—Carrie Roberts, Conservator

Above right: An Indian block-printed textile Hannah photographed during her conservation internship. Likely dating to the 12th–17th century, this object (KM 94139) was purchased from antiquities dealer Phocion Tano.

In Search of Lost Histories

Over the last 18 months, assistant curator Nicola Barham has been leading a project to research the history and provenance (chain of ownership) of sculptures in the collection of the Kelsey Museum that were accessioned during the 1970s and early 1980s. Works accessioned during this period in museums across North America and Europe typically did not have the history of documentation that would be expected today. Shortly after this time, the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology moved to a stricter policy on accessions. It has since developed a practice to only accession works with an ethically excavated context, documented before 1970.

Professor Barham collaborated closely with PhD candidate and experienced provenance researcher Abigail Staub to establish detailed summaries of the known history of works from clues that can be gleaned from our files, as well as other archives and available records. But this is just the beginning of the project. The Kelsey Museum has committed to funding further research into the history of the parts of the collection that came to us in these years in the later 20th century.

Sharing the Wonder: How Connie Powers Connects Kids with Ancient History

All throughout the year, families and young visitors to the Kelsey Museum are greeted by the infectious energy and kind smile of volunteer docent Connie Powers. Whether she's reading tales of ancient Rome at a "Read and Look" event, handing out replica artifacts at a Discovery Cart, or quite literally lying down (and inviting children to imagine what ancient Egyptians might bring to the afterlife), Connie brings warmth, enthusiasm, and a sense of wonder to the programs she leads.

A four-year veteran of the Kelsey's docent program, Connie had a nonlinear path to ancient cultures. She attended Beloit College, where she majored in history and general education. Although she became certified as an elementary teacher, life took her down a different path: she attended law school and went on to practice for about 20 years in Indiana, Michigan, and New Hampshire. When she returned to Michigan in the early 2000s, Connie reconnected with her educational roots, working as a teacher and volunteer in various Michigan schools—most recently as a reading assistant at Thurston Elementary in Ann Arbor.

She first became acquainted with the Kelsey Museum about five years ago when she and her loved ones showed up for Family Day. There, a docent-led tour on ancient coins left a lasting impression: "I was just fascinated by how much information and insight somebody could gain by looking at a coin....I was hooked right there." Not long after, Connie inquired about joining the docent corps. She's been a steadfast presence ever since.

Connie's passion for teaching kids runs through all she does at the Kelsey. "I truly enjoy being around children," she said. "I think it's life-giving and joyful, and I get so much energy and enthusiasm and insight from them." For Connie, working with young visitors isn't simply about conveying facts—it's about building connections between ancient and modern people. "The more I'm involved in archaeology and human cultures, the more I realize just how similar we are," she emphasized. Whether discussing votive offerings, toys, sandals, or coins, her goal is to help visitors see the continuity of human hopes, fears, and joys across the millennia: "If that doesn't bring us all together, I don't know what does."

The spirit of connection not only shapes Connie's programming content but also drives her approach, and she delights in making space for kids' creativity to flourish. Programs such as Discovery Carts are especially useful in bringing learning to life: "I try to engage all the five senses," she explained. "The more they can pick something up and feel it, the better." Connie recalled a moment when a group of children looked at a replica gladiator cup and connected the dots between ancient fighters and modern heroes such as Captain America or the Hulk. "And you know, I'm just kind of going crazy," she laughed. "Like, 'Yes, yes, yes! Do you have something similar at home?'"

Connie strives to provide playful, imaginative environments for young visitors—encouraging them to think like an archaeologist, create stories around objects, and put themselves in the shoes of ancient people. "The best is when you get children to the point where they're not afraid to guess, and they're open to taking risks," she noted. Connie also seeks to create a safe, encouraging environment by asking open-ended questions, assuring participants, "You can't fail here." And she extends that same grace to herself: "I'm not afraid to be silly. I'm willing to try things, even if I bomb. It helps me grow."

Her favorite moments often come when she sees visitors making truly personal connections with the objects on display. One episode continues to resonate with her: while leading a tour for middle schoolers on Copley Latin Day, she saw nervous students transform before her eyes.

"As we were waiting to get our tour going, I heard some comments from students like, 'I've never been at the University of Michigan,'" Connie described. "And then I heard somebody say, 'I've never been in Ann Arbor.' And then a third: 'I've never been out of Detroit.'" But as soon as one of the students recognized a word on a Latin inscription, "the whole mood started to change. It was like a tsunami—they came alive."

From the funerary inscriptions to the Roman baths to the Villa of the Mysteries, the students regaled Connie with information they had learned in class. And, by the end of the tour, she heard one say, "Maybe I'd like to go to the University of Michigan." Between that comment, witnessing the students recognizing the value of their education, and them taking what they had learned and applying it to what they saw in the Kelsey, "I was just like, 'Go home, Connie, because it doesn't get any better than this,'" she said.

Looking back on her time so far as a docent, Connie sums up her experience with characteristic humility and gratitude:

Connie helping a child with a scavenger hunt at Family Day, 2025.

"I just feel I have gained so much from being a docent at the Kelsey," she said. "I've made some friends, I've been challenged, and I'm learning all the time. And to have this opportunity is a real gift."

Learning That Lasts: Camp Kelsey's Impact

The impact of the Kelsey Museum's educational programming is measured not just by the number of tours offered or students served, but by the ways that those offerings shape the minds and lives of those who take part.

During the summer of 2025, we hosted two sessions of Camp Kelsey—one focused on mythology and the other on archaeology—and the surest sign of the program's effect can be found in the words of Eddie, one of our archaeology campers: "The camp gave me a very complete experience on all the steps an archaeologist goes through, while teaching me more about history," he said. "I was interested in history and archaeology before, but now that I know more about it, I love it."

Eddie, a Camp Kelsey participant, standing with the exhibition he helped curate focusing on everyday life in the town of "Kelsepolis."

Updates from Kelsey Field Projects

Gabii, Italy

The Gabii Project had another great field season this summer, which lasted from June 8 to July 12. This year, the team made major progress in understanding how the part of Gabii we are digging is structured. As a result of this work, the team was able to draw a map of half a dozen city blocks in the city's center, defining such roles as marketplaces, residential areas, and public buildings.

The team also finished exposing a huge pool cut into the bedrock of a city block, parts of which were initially uncovered during the 2024 season. Measuring approximately 50 by 15 feet, with a considerable depth, this pool is filled with votive objects that have not yet been excavated. The find is especially notable because it's completely undisturbed. Normally, these votive deposits are disrupted by urban activities. In this particular case, however, the pool was covered by two feet of compacted road metal that had been in use for centuries.

Though we have only just scratched the surface (literally—in cleaning the surface at the site, whole pots started popping up), we estimate that there are more than 100 cubic meters of fill, resulting in thousands of artifacts. We look forward to continuing the excavation of the pool next year and launching what is sure to be a massive recovery of remarkably preserved pots, metals, and other votive objects.

Emptyscapes Project, Gabii, Italy

This year saw the launch of a new project in Gabii, Italy. Unlike other studies of urbanism in pre-Roman and Roman Italy—which focus on city walls, roads, and other built elements—the Emptyscapes Project aims to uncover and interpret the invisible evidence of human activities in seemingly open areas of settlements during their transition to urban forms in the Iron Age and Archaic period. The project employs methods such as coring, test trenches, sediment micromorphology, and soil analysis to explore these "areas in between" at Gabii.

While the team members were not able to collect and study all the boreholes they had planned, the preliminary results they gathered are very promising for the next season of investigation. With the help of Gabe Key (IPAMAA) and undergraduates Naomi Allen and Angelina Siu, the cores retrieved from the southern portion of the site were cleaned and photographed. The students also recorded the cores' stratigraphy, which showed the whole sequence of the site, from the plow zone down to the original morphology.

It is difficult to look for "nothing," but between the hut levels and imperial structures present in the core, we could also see the empty spaces—the non-structures before Gabii's big urban boom of the Republican period. After an illuminating season, the team looks forward to continuing its study of these emptyscapes next year.

Notion, Türkiye

One of the main objectives of current research at Notion is the excavation of the Bouleuterion (council house), a roofed auditorium next to the Agora (town square). Prior research had shown that the building was constructed in the 2nd century BCE, then renovated in the late 1st century BCE, apparently in connection with a city-wide program of urban renewal following the end of the Roman civil wars. In 2025, we found out who was responsible; when we turned over a block fallen in front of the stage building of the Bouleuterion, we saw that it bore a Greek inscription:

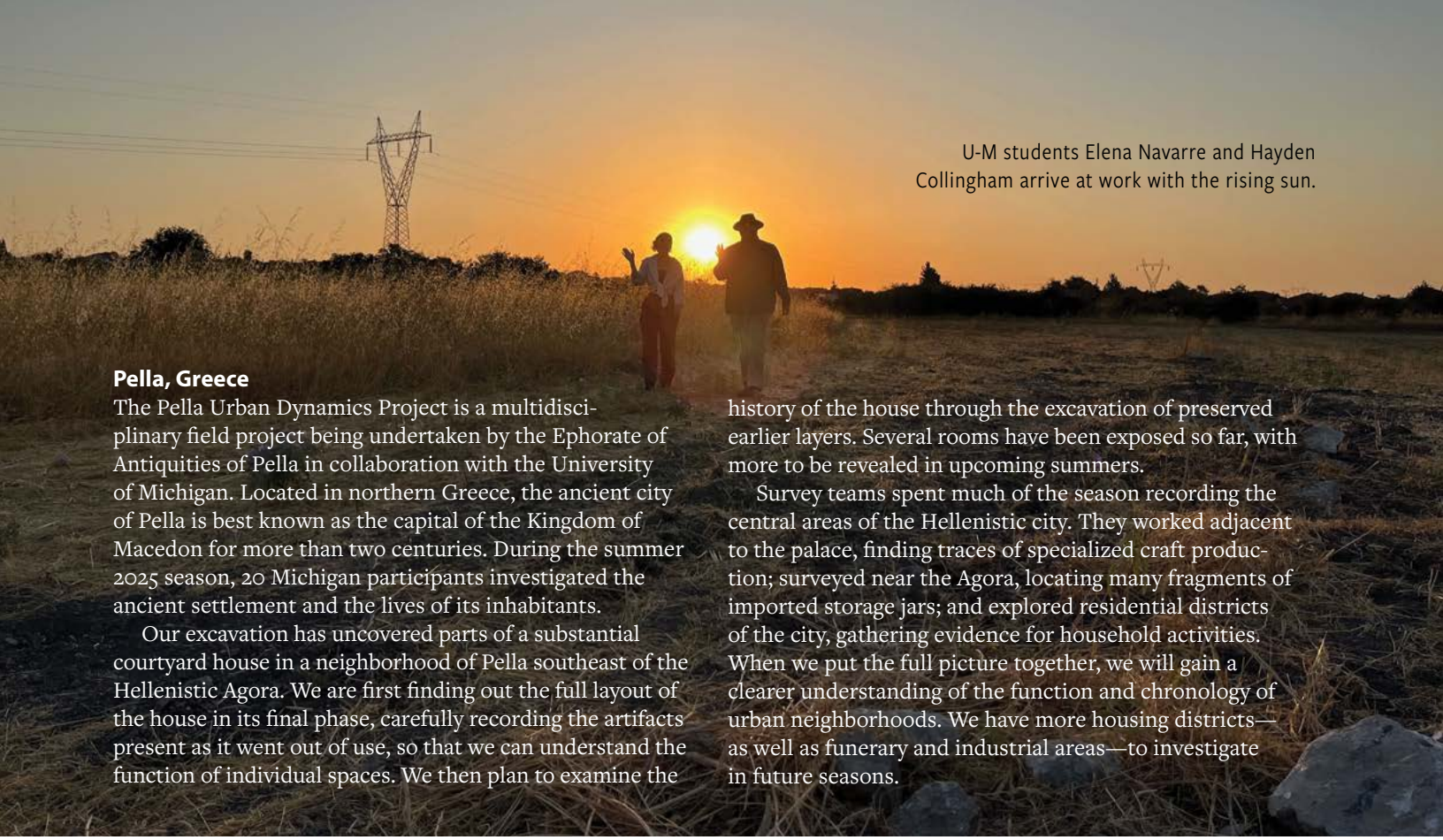
> The people (of Notion) dedicated (a statue of) the proconsul Sextus Appuleius, benefactor of the entire province, and their (the people's) savior and founder.

A nephew of the emperor Augustus, Sextus Appuleius was a powerful and well-connected Roman public figure, who served as governor of the province of Asia in 23–22 BCE. The location of the statue and the honorific titles bestowed on Appuleius indicate that he helped finance the renovation of the Bouleuterion and perhaps also other buildings at Notion. It was not uncommon for Greek cities in Asia Minor to honor Roman officials in this way, and similar programs of urban renewal were undertaken at the same time in neighboring cities such as Ephesus and Aphrodisias. In those cities, this was the beginning of a long period of unparalleled prosperity. Notion, by contrast, was largely abandoned only a generation later, in the early 1st century CE.

Why was the urban renewal of Notion so short-lived? The answer may lie in its proximity to Ephesus—a much larger and more important place—only 10 miles away. Ultimately, we suspect that the lure of the big city proved to be stronger to the inhabitants of Notion than the attractions of the old hometown.

Left: Students excavating at Gabii, Italy. Right: Naomi Allen, Gabe Key, and Angelina Siu discussing the stratigraphy of the core and recording the different phases of habitation (structures) and "emptiness" (natural sediments) at Gabii.

Lifting the inscribed block excavated from the Bouleuterion at Notion, Türkiye.



U-M students Elena Navarre and Hayden Collingham arrive at work with the rising sun.

Pella, Greece

The Pella Urban Dynamics Project is a multidisciplinary field project being undertaken by the Ephorate of Antiquities of Pella in collaboration with the University of Michigan. Located in northern Greece, the ancient city of Pella is best known as the capital of the Kingdom of Macedon for more than two centuries. During the summer 2025 season, 20 Michigan participants investigated the ancient settlement and the lives of its inhabitants.

Our excavation has uncovered parts of a substantial courtyard house in a neighborhood of Pella southeast of the Hellenistic Agora. We are first finding out the full layout of the house in its final phase, carefully recording the artifacts present as it went out of use, so that we can understand the function of individual spaces. We then plan to examine the history of the house through the excavation of preserved earlier layers. Several rooms have been exposed so far, with more to be revealed in upcoming summers.

Survey teams spent much of the season recording the central areas of the Hellenistic city. They worked adjacent to the palace, finding traces of specialized craft production; surveyed near the Agora, locating many fragments of imported storage jars; and explored residential districts of the city, gathering evidence for household activities. When we put the full picture together, we will gain a clearer understanding of the function and chronology of urban neighborhoods. We have more housing districts—as well as funerary and industrial areas—to investigate in future seasons.

Kephala and Ayia Irini, Kea, Greece

Located on the northwest coast of the Cycladic island of Kea, Kephala and Ayia Irini provide evidence for village life, including specialized production of crafts like metallurgy, as well as participation in shifting exchange networks over the course of the Final Neolithic and Bronze Age periods. These two major prehistoric sites were excavated by Jack Caskey (University of Cincinnati) in the 1960s–1970s. The project is now working toward the final publication of several artifact classes and sectors of Ayia Irini—including a shrine building (the "Temple") visited and used until at least the Classical period—that have not yet been fully studied.

The team returned to Kea in May–June 2025. We have now examined every bag of pottery and generated an initial description of the dating and character of the pottery collected in most excavation units, which will provide a solid basis for the next stages of work, clarifying the stratigraphy and depositional history of the different areas of Ayia Irini. Having finished this initial study of context pottery, we are now confident that we have located all relevant objects to conduct a targeted study of metal and metallurgical assemblages from both sites. (Fragments of crucibles, tuyeres, and other metallurgical ceramics were not always cataloged by the previous team and had been stored with the rest of the context pottery.)

We also found a substantial number of objects with ancient mend holes or lead mending clamps, including not only expected types like pithoi but also unexpected ones, such as an Archaic kantharos from the Temple and two marble Early Bronze Age Cycladic figurines.

Overall, it was a very productive season, and we are grateful to the Kelsey Museum and its staff for all of their support!

Classics student Rebecca Sanders and IPAMAA students Lauren Alberti and Felicity Sorenson carefully lifting boxes of pottery to be studied.

Klinsky Expedition Updates

In late 2024, businessman and U-M alum Steve Klinsky gifted $1.15 million in support of archaeological research and K–12 programming at Michigan. These projects—headed by archaeologists at the Kelsey and the Museum of Anthropological Archaeology—stretch across the globe, from Lake Huron to Kazakhstan. Almost a year after the generous gift was announced, many of these Klinsky Expeditions have had successful field seasons or have otherwise made tremendous strides in examining the inquiries that lie at the center of their cutting-edge archaeological work.

David Stone looks at a sling bullet at the Kelsey Museum.

Battlefields of the Punic Wars

David Stone (PI)

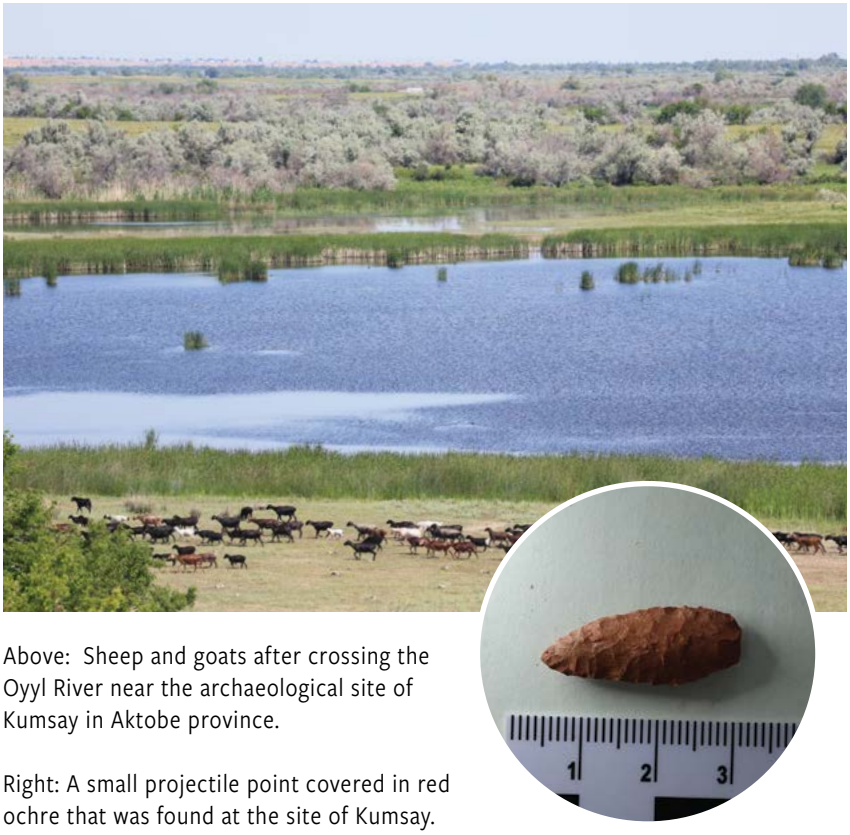
There is always a lot of excitement at the start of a new research project, and this Klinsky Expedition is no exception. Very few battlefield locations from the 3rd century BCE are known since ancient historical sources were generally not specific, but in the last 20 years, archaeologists have identified the Battle of the Aegates Islands (241 BCE) and the Battle of Baecula (208 BCE). PI David Stone is trying to take an outside-in approach to narrow down other battlefield locations. This involves starting with a wide area and using satellite imagery, road networks, and the position of ancient settlements. It means talking to colleagues with experience of the research questions and approaches. It requires bibliographic research to rule in—or out—previous suggestions. And it means familiarizing the team with the latest discoveries in battlefield archaeology. Plans are being made to visit locations and to talk with Michigan high school classes about the project.

The Northern Masters of Eurasia: Nomadic Elites at the Dawn of the Silk Roads

Bryan Miller (PI) and Alicia Ventresca-Miller (Co-PI)

In June and July, Co-PI Alicia Ventresca-Miller laid significant groundwork for this Klinsky Expedition. The team recently wrapped up a field season in Aktobe province in western Kazakhstan, in collaboration with local archaeologist Arman Bisembaev (Zhubanov Aktobe Regional University).

This season served as a trial run for next year's investigations. Undeterred by the heat, researchers set up camp and excavated three kurgan mounds—each containing several burials from the time when people first began to herd domestic animals in north-central Asia. The season concluded with a visit to the Aktobe Regional Museum, where the team examined objects excavated from similar mounds in the area, providing a sense of the artifacts they expect to uncover next year and their conservation needs.



Above: Sheep and goats after crossing the Oyyl River near the archaeological site of Kumsay in Aktobe province.

Right: A small projectile point covered in red ochre that was found at the site of Kumsay.

Finding Ancient Napata: Lost City on the Nile

Geoff Emberling (PI)

Excavations in April 2025 led by Tohamy Abulgasim (left).

It is a challenging time to be advancing archaeology in Sudan since the war that started in April 2023 is still active, but thanks to Steve Klinsky's support, the Jebel Barkal Archaeological Project (JBAP) has managed to continue its work and indeed has been one of only two international projects to be able to do so. As a joint project of the Kelsey Museum and Sudan's department of antiquities, the National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums, JBAP is structured so that all key positions are jointly held by Sudanese and international scholars.

This year's fieldwork was carried out entirely by Sudanese team members, while the international team has worked to support them—and also do advanced analytical work. JBAP allows us to provide critical financial support for our colleagues in Sudan and their families while also making sure the site remains monitored during the war.

We held a season in April, during which our team (directed in the field by Tohamy Abulgasim) opened two trenches at the site that aimed to connect the cityscape of the temple and palace area with what we have called the East Mound—the focus of much of JBAP's recent work. Tohamy and his team, working particularly with our friend and colleague Sami Elamin, opened one trench that recovered some architecture of the Meroitic period (ca. 200 BCE–100 CE). A second trench was 3.5 meters deep and recovered...nothing! That was interesting in itself, partly because the landscape is now almost entirely flat and also because it showed that a wadi had run through the city, which helps us understand how the archaeological site was built up.

In addition to excavating, we have been working with a mass of data that a team from National Geographic gathered while filming a documentary at the site in 2023. This team collected data on the topography of the site using LiDAR and did a comprehensive drone survey of the entire site. Our colleague Pawel Wolf, working in Germany, draped the drone photography over the topographical data to produce a new, highly accurate image of the site. One unexpected result of Pawel's careful work was the discovery of at least one unexcavated royal tomb! This would originally have been a pyramid, but the stones were robbed long before archaeologists first arrived at the site in the 19th century. We hope to begin work on this pyramid in January.

A Moonshot Under Water: Discovering Ancient Hunting Sites Beneath the Great Lakes

John O'Shea (PI)

This research is focused on the very earliest (and deepest) occupation of the now-submerged landscape beneath Lake Huron, dating back 11,500 years. Discovering these early sites poses particular challenges as they are likely to be found in the deepest water or be buried by later lake sediments.

The first step in the research plan was to employ an acoustic sub-bottom profiler, an instrument that can not only reveal buried strata representing the earlier lake stages but also identify areas containing the debris from stone tool production. These surveys will be followed up by inspection of promising targets via a remotely operated vehicle (ROV) and direct archaeological sampling via SCUBA.

The sub-bottom surveys encompassed a wide swath of Lake Huron, from immediately within Thunder Bay to more than 90 kilometers offshore. In total, the survey collected data along 235 kilometers of lake bottom within 12 research localities. As hoped, the survey identified a series of locations with deeply stratified deposits that will provide an unrivaled picture of the post-glacial Early Holocene environment. Survey likewise produced locations suggestive of buried—but accessible—land surfaces that would have been available for the earliest Lake Stanley human occupation. Several of these surfaces occur on the shores of paleolakes and river channels, which would have provided an

ideal setting for human habitation. Acoustic resonance patterns, potentially indicative of stone tool working debris, were observed in a number of locations, both on the exposed lake floor and in buried contexts.

The remainder of the working season on Lake Huron this year will focus on examining promising locations identified via the sub-bottom survey. In the coming year, the team hopes to collect cores with datable material from several of the deep deposits and to document potential early site areas in deep water using photogrammetry and sampling from the ROV platform. Intermediate depth targets will be directly investigated through SCUBA.

Left: The ROV and dive crew ready to go to work: Brendan Nash (UMMAA PhD student), Tyler Schultz (project dive coordinator), and Mya Welch (U-M alum and current MA student at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee). Right: The sub-bottom profiler installed on the *SV Blue Traveler* and deployed on Lake Huron.

Above: The rockshelters known as Spitzkloof in Namaqualand, South Africa, with sequences spanning more than 60,000 years.

Left: Project geoarchaeologist Mike Morley (left) and his student, Declan Miller, remove intact micromorphology blocks from 75,000-year-old deposits in highland Lesotho.

Dust, Beads, and Genes: Pinpointing Our African Origins with Ancient DNA

Brian Stewart (PI)

Brian Stewart's team recently wrapped up a fieldwork season at Spitzkloof B in Namaqualand, South Africa. This is one of a series of coastal desert rockshelters they are excavating not far from the border with Namibia—an arid region resulting in generally excellent organic preservation. The project's geoarchaeologist, Dr. Mike Morley (Flinders University in Australia), removed a series of eight micromorphology blocks from levels dating 40,000–65,000 years before present to evaluate for human ancient DNA (aDNA) preservation. The team is hoping that the region's extreme dearth of precipitation will compensate for its high temperatures in this regard.

These sites have also yielded some of the subcontinent's earliest ostrich eggshell beads, which will be evaluated for preserved aDNA as well. Team members have also recently confirmed that a previously extracted micromorphology block removed from one of Stewart's high elevation sites, Sehonghong Rockshelter in Lesotho, contains mammalian aDNA. This is exciting, especially given that none of the African samples included in the initial benchmark study establishing resin-impregnated micromorphology blocks as viable sources of aDNA yielded preserved biomolecules. The Sehonghong block extractions still need to be converted to an indexed and hominin-enriched aDNA library to determine whether human material is present, but this preliminary result suggests that temperate environments like the Maloti-Drakensberg Mountains are promising places to search for ancient human biomolecules in an otherwise tropical/subtropical continent.

Warps & Wefts

Egyptian Textiles in Focus

By Suzanne L. Davis

Are you ever nostalgic for shag pile carpets? Do you love delicate embroidery, fine linens, or classical mythology? If the answer to any of these questions is yes, then you are in for a treat.

The treat comes courtesy of a recent textile workshop hosted by the Kelsey Museum and taught by Dr. Elizabeth (Betsy) Dospěl Williams, who is the Penny Vinik Chair of Fashion, Textiles, and Jewelry at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Titled "Late Antique Egyptian Textiles in Focus," the workshop was planned in collaboration with U-M's History of Art Department and was meant to introduce attendees to textile structures and functions through close object study. In it, Dr. Williams featured 10 textiles that were gifted to the Kelsey in the early to mid-20th century.

I frequently work with the collection of textiles excavated at Karanis, Egypt, and Kelsey Museum visitors and newsletter readers are probably fairly familiar with these objects, which receive a lot of scholarly attention due to their excellent provenience. But the museum is also home to many more textiles that do not originate from excavation contexts. All of the textiles featured here came from either Phocion Tano, a prominent Cypriot-Egyptian antiquities dealer active in Cairo in the early to mid-20th century, or Aziz Atiya, a prominent Egyptian historian, papyrologist, and collector (to learn more about either Tano or Atiya, readers are invited to explore the book *Passionate Curiosities* at **myumi.ch/bEEgV**). The 10 textiles in this photo essay all come from Egypt, but they demonstrate a range of techniques rarely (or never) seen in the Karanis textiles, such as block-printing, appliqué, complex compound weaves, and weft-loop pile.

Suzanne L. Davis is senior associate curator and head of the Conservation Department at the Kelsey Museum.

Dimensions: 59 x 35 cm

Tunic fragment KM 94272 is made from thick, tightly woven wool and is decorated with two intricate vertical bands that would have run over the wearer's shoulders. Called clavus bands, these decorative stripes were linked to social status, and Dr. Williams showed the workshop participants how the style and shape of the bands changed over time. On this tunic, the bands are produced with dovetail tapestry weaving in a range of colored wool yarns. Bright white highlights are added in undyed linen.

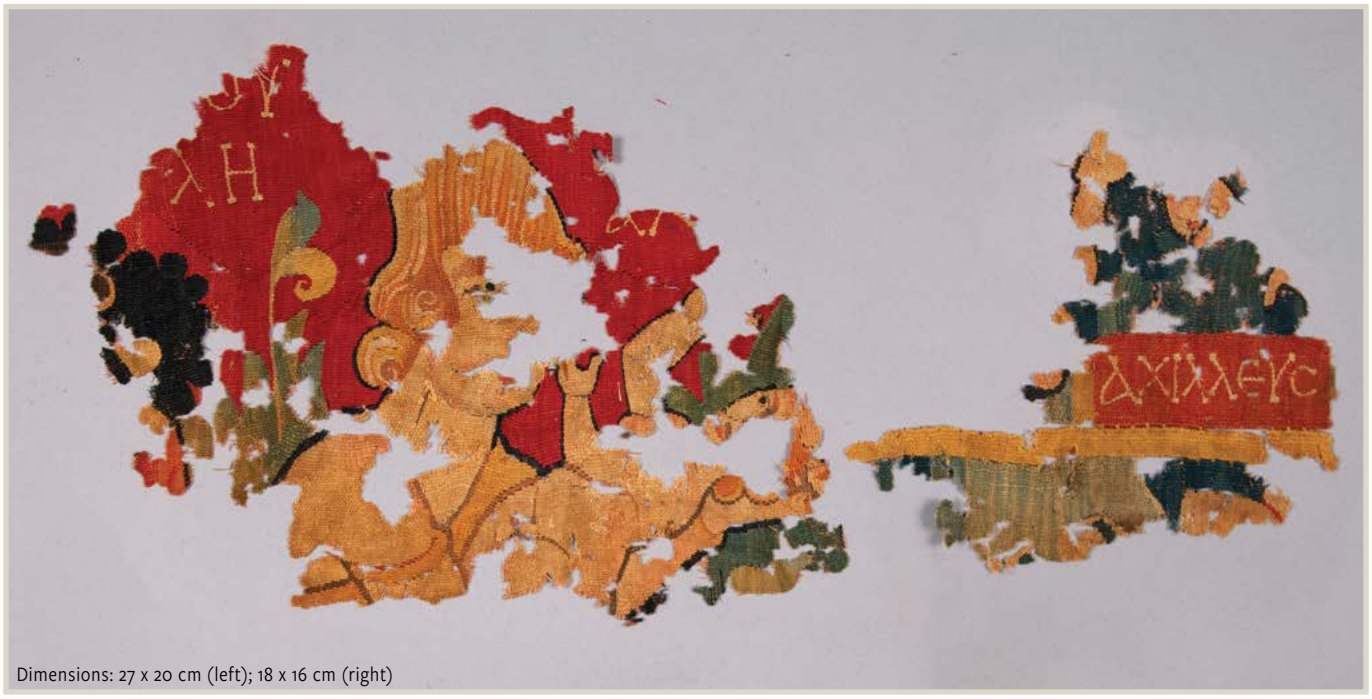
Dimensions: 70 x 36 cm

Made from finely woven, tissue-thin cotton, KM 22731 is a colorful textile that was produced in India for trade to the Egyptian market. It is decorated with flowers, geometric patterns, and animals that look like tiny donkeys. The design was produced by block-printing.

Dimensions: 33.5 x 28.5 cm

Dimensions: 41.5 x 31.5 cm

Textiles KM 94315 (above) and 90926 (right) also feature tapestry weaving in wool and, like KM 94272 to the left, come from garments. Though they both are from the cuffs of sleeves, these textiles feature very different styles. On 94315, the brightly colored tapestry panels depict Christian imagery and vining floral designs that have been sewn onto the surface of the wool sleeve. In 90926, the wool tapestry panel has been woven into the structure of a linen garment. The pattern depicts animals and floral designs in a single color—a rich, dark brown-purple. The edge of the sleeve is graced with a long, delicate fringe.



Dimensions: 27 x 20 cm (left); 18 x 16 cm (right)

Also featuring tapestry weaving, KM 94405 was the textile that engaged workshop participants the most. This example is the most fragmentary of the group; its stiff and brittle wool fibers have a texture like the world's most fragile potato chip. But if you look carefully, you can see that the colorful tapestry weaving depicts two human figures against a deep red background. The face and shoulders of a large figure, whom Dr. Williams thought was likely a woman based on her dress and jewelry, are visible at the left of the fragment, and this figure seems to cradle the head of an infant, who is held at her proper left shoulder. A smaller, now-detached fragment of the textile is inscribed with the name Achilles. Dr. Williams showed workshop attendees examples of similar textiles, all of which seem to have been highly colorful, luxurious furnishing fabrics or wall hangings depicting mythological and maybe religious scenes.

Dimensions: 18 x 9.5 cm (left); 9 x 6.5 cm (right)

Unlike the previous tapestry-woven examples, the delicate design of KM 94088 was produced by embroidery and appliqué. The fabric is a woven linen even lighter and finer than the cotton fabric of 22731 (see p. 18). On top of this, embroidery in undyed linen has been applied to the surface and anchors beautiful appliquéd patches decorated with embroidery in blue silk and brown linen. The brown color is barely visible—I needed a microscope to make sure I wasn't imagining it—but is used to delicately outline the blue elements, helping delineate the geometric design.

Dimensions: 57.5 x 54 cm

Cushion cover KM 94086 also features embroidery, but in wool and at a much larger scale. This complete furnishing piece, made from plain-woven wool and decorated with navy blue, pink, green, and gold wool yarns, is embellished with a different (but coordinated!) geometric design on each side.

Fragment KM 94141 is a compound weave in red, green, and gold wool. In a compound weave, multiple wefts are used simultaneously to form patterns. Compound weaves require more sophisticated looms with multiple harnesses to carry and manipulate the warp yarns. This particular fragment, which is woven in wool, seems to replicate a Sasanian silk textile in its colors and repetition of roundels. Luxurious and expensive, Sasanian textiles had a distinctive visual style, reflecting artistic developments and practices that occurred along the Silk Road trade route.

Dimensions: 35 x 24 cm

Dimensions: 127 x 50 cm

Textile KM 94180 is also a compound weave, but with something extra—a very long weft-loop pile. This textile speaks to me of the shag carpet of my 1970s childhood, but weft-loop pile is an ancient technique. In it, supplemental, nonstructural wefts are added while the fabric is woven. These can be looped at various lengths, from short to long, and can be cut (as in velvet) or uncut, as you see here. While I might know this texture best in carpet, in the ancient world, it was used to add warmth and loft to fabrics. This large textile is woven in wool and represents the full width of the loom it was produced on, with selvedges at both sides and a fringe at one end. I was surprised to learn from Dr. Williams that the looped wefts on textiles like this one were not usually meant to be seen. This fabric has a floral pattern in alternating bands of color, and the smooth side of the textile showcasing this pattern would have been the "right" side, while the weft-loop pile was meant to add hidden warmth. A textile like this might have been used as a blanket or other furnishing fabric.

Dimensions: 58 x 52 cm

Last but not least is the textile that was the favorite in the Conservation Laboratory, KM 94445. Also featuring weft-loop pile, this textile is woven with thick linen yarns and has both linen and wool weft-loop decoration. The linen weft-loop pile adds flair throughout the fabric, while the weft-loop decoration in wool is concentrated in a large roundel and skillfully manipulated to depict a concentric geometric pattern with a human face at its center. The colors of the hair, cheeks, lips, and eyes are all executed in weft-loops! The weft-loop pile on this textile is tighter and shorter than that of 94180 (see above), making it better for the painterly approach required to create a realistic face. Yet like KM 94180, Dr. Williams thought this fragment was likely to have come from a very large, relatively heavy textile meant to add warmth or softness to a space.

A Mummified Child at the Kelsey

History, Display, and Reflection

By T. G. Wilfong

Visitors to the Kelsey Museum in recent months may have noticed a change in the Egyptian gallery: where there was once a window that looked into a display of a mummified child in a simulated burial context, there is now a panel with the following text (FIG. 1):

> The Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, as part of a crucial debate throughout the museum world, is reviewing its policies on the display of human remains in our galleries. In light of this review, we have decided to pause the display of a mummified child from the Ptolemaic period for the present time.

This brief text is followed by a QR code linking to a longer write-up about the history of the exhibit, the decision to pause it, and the ongoing conversations surrounding the display of human remains in museums—currently accessible on the Kelsey Museum website at **myumi.ch/y1dJy** and reproduced throughout this article.

Since the William E. Upjohn Exhibit Wing opened in 2009, the Kelsey Museum has displayed the mummified child from Egypt in a simulated burial context with period-appropriate grave goods. The purpose of the display has, from the beginning, been educational: to present an important and characteristic part of ancient Egyptian culture and religion—the preservation of the dead through the process known as mummification—while also addressing the lives and vulnerabilities of children in ancient Egypt. The display was developed with a view to a respectful and educational installation, in keeping with the museum's practices of treating human remains with dignity, the position

Figure 1. The paused display of the mummified child in the Kelsey Museum's Egyptian gallery.

of (modern) Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities and Museum Sector, and the ancient Egyptians' original intentions of a safe, quiet place for the preservation of their dead.

In recent years, however, it has become clear that there are increasing concerns about this display: concerns that visitors are not alerted of the display of human remains in advance; concerns about issues raised by the display about the deaths of children in ancient Egyptian (and modern) culture; and wider concerns about the display of human remains (albeit visible only as a wrapped body). Far from serving the museum's original educational purpose, this display has become an obstacle to many visitors' experience of the ancient Egyptian gallery in the museum.

As the curator who originally advocated for the display and came up with its basic concept, I was actively involved in the discussion that led to the pause and wrote—in collaboration with colleagues—the text that has taken its place. I'm aware that, while some visitors will be pleased that the mummified child is no longer on exhibit, some may be unhappy with the fact that they can no longer see this display, and others may feel that not enough has been done here altogether. As we consider the future of this display, I hope that some history behind it might be of use as we consider what to do next.

For many people, the concept of "mummies" serves as the basis for their interest in Egypt's history and culture. That was certainly the case for me: you could say that I am at the Kelsey Museum—as a curator, professor, and Egyptologist—because of a mummified person. Back in 1975, a 6th-grade class field trip to the Saint Louis Art Museum introduced me to Petemenekh, a mummified priest of the Ptolemaic period, displayed in his brightly decorated and inscribed coffin. Like many kids, I became obsessed with ancient Egypt, but I took my obsession to unusual lengths. I became a volunteer tour guide at the museum at the age of 12, undertaking an intensive self-taught study of ancient Egypt that ultimately led to more formal education.

Although I was certainly aware at age 12 that a dead human was underneath all the decorated bandages, that wasn't my primary interest, and I certainly had no awareness of any ethical issues with the display of Petemenekh. I first began to be aware that people had such concerns around 1990. My graduate program was housed in a museum that had several mummified humans on display, one of them unwrapped, about which people had started to voice concerns. I vividly remember being in the Egyptian gallery with my mentor, whose opinion I valued very much. He expressed his discomfort with the mummy display, and I unthinkingly dismissed his concerns. He turned to me and asked, "Would you feel like that if it was someone you knew lying there?"

This struck me. Although I had, of course, been aware that what we called "mummies" were dead human beings, embalmed and wrapped, I had never, until that moment, really thought of them as people. And after this conversation, it was something I could never forget—and something that changed my approach to thinking and learning about ancient Egypt.

When I first came to the Kelsey Museum in 1994, I was aware that there were two mummified children in the collection, both acquired legally by collectors in Egypt in the later 19th century and subsequently donated to the Kelsey Museum. One of these is badly damaged, and there was never any question of its display, but the other was in good condition—an intact, undecorated anonymous mummified child about 2,000 years old.

The display of the mummified child in the Kelsey Museum's previous galleries in Newberry Hall went through several different configurations, exacerbated by challenges such as temperature, humidity, and light control. At one point, it was displayed in a large case alongside some mummified animals to illustrate the various practices of mummification. This was a popular display, but it also garnered some complaints—that the child was being treated with disrespect by showing it with animals. This display also sometimes created a hectic and noisy atmosphere, partly because of the layout and acoustics of the room. When a tour group came in, especially a group of children, the feeling was not particularly respectful to the mummified child at the center, although I did occasionally observe momentary silences on such crowded occasions, as if the kids suddenly became aware that this was a dead child—that is, one of their own.

It came as something of a relief when ongoing humidity issues led to the removal of the display. Visitors still asked

"Mummy" vs. "Mummified Person"

In recent years, there has been a move away from the use of the term "mummy" to separate it from associations that are not respectful of ancient Egyptian tradition. Mummies are often depicted as objects of terror in popular culture, which is entirely opposed to the ancient Egyptians' intention. Increasingly, there is a trend to refer instead to "mummified people" or similar terminology to emphasize these individuals' human origin and humanity. In this article, I use "mummy" generically but show preference to "mummified person/child" when talking about the treated bodies of specific individuals.

about the mummified child, and there was occasional discussion about the possibility of a return.

In 2003, the mummified child became a centerpiece of my exhibition, *Archaeologies of Childhood*, but only in absentia (FIG. 2). A year or two earlier, an undergraduate engineering student, Grant Martin, had pursued a research project to have a CT scan made of the mummified child. This involved complex preparations by the Kelsey Museum conservators and an equally logistically complex trip to the U-M Hospital (FIG. 3). My colleague Janet Richards and I accompanied the mummified child on the journey and stayed with it through the entire procedure. I remember feeling very protective of the child, anxious about its safety, and relieved when we returned safely to the museum.

I had been looking at artifacts relating to children in the museum's collection with the idea of doing an exhibition, and this experience with the mummified child gave me further impetus. I wanted to include the child in the exhibition, but we were still in Newberry Hall, and conditions were not ideal. Our exhibit designer, Scott Meier, came up with an elegant solution: we used a life-size, high-resolution image of the mummified child, set in a coffin-like case under glass. The wider exhibition used artifacts to show what the life of an ancient child might have been like and featured materials from the CT-scan project.

Archaeologies of Childhood was one of the last in the Kelsey Museum's old Newberry Hall galleries, as plans were already beginning for the construction of state-of-the-art exhibition and storage facilities, thanks to a major donation from Kelsey supporters Ed and Mary Meader. The curators were thrilled—the new Upjohn Exhibit Wing would bring over five times the space for the permanent galleries and a greatly expanded temporary exhibition area.

In spite of the improved facilities, due to space constraints, there was initially no plan to display the mummified child in the new wing. But I noticed on the preliminary plan an unused space in the Egyptian gallery, located under the stairs leading to the second floor. It was walled off because it wasn't high enough to accommodate a regular case. However, it *could* accommodate something that seemed an ideal solution to the old problems of displaying the mummified child—a simulated tomb space visible through a window that would not only create a respectful, quiet area but also approximate the original conditions of burial (FIG. 4).

There is a basic fact about mummified ancient Egyptians in museum displays and storage: they have been taken from their intended burials—specifically designed to help them in the afterlife—and placed in alien, decontextualized settings that do not necessarily have the same provisions for the dead. Although Egyptian burial practices varied widely over time and across socioeconomic levels, they usually had common elements: protected space for the dead body to ensure the survival of its spiritual elements, a means to provide food, drink, magical texts, and other symbolic offerings for sustenance in the afterlife, and a point of contact between the living and the dead. The ancient Egyptians were social, gregarious people; aloneness was seen as a bad thing in Egyptian culture, so such contact was essential.

The ideas for the display of the mummified child in the Upjohn Exhibit Wing sought to address these issues, along with necessary security and conservation protections. Since we did not know the exact circumstances of the original burial, the display created a nonspecific environment that evoked a rock-cut tomb, cave, or pit—all possible burial venues for our mummified child. Alongside the body, period-appropriate offering vessels from the collection were chosen as grave goods. These empty bowls and cups could, in themselves, evoke offerings for the dead, and an ancient lamp was included to provide light.

Figure 2. The entrance to *Archaeologies of Childhood*.

Figure 3. Grant Martin (left) and Terry Wilfong arriving at the U-M Hospital with the mummified child in its specially designed, protected box.

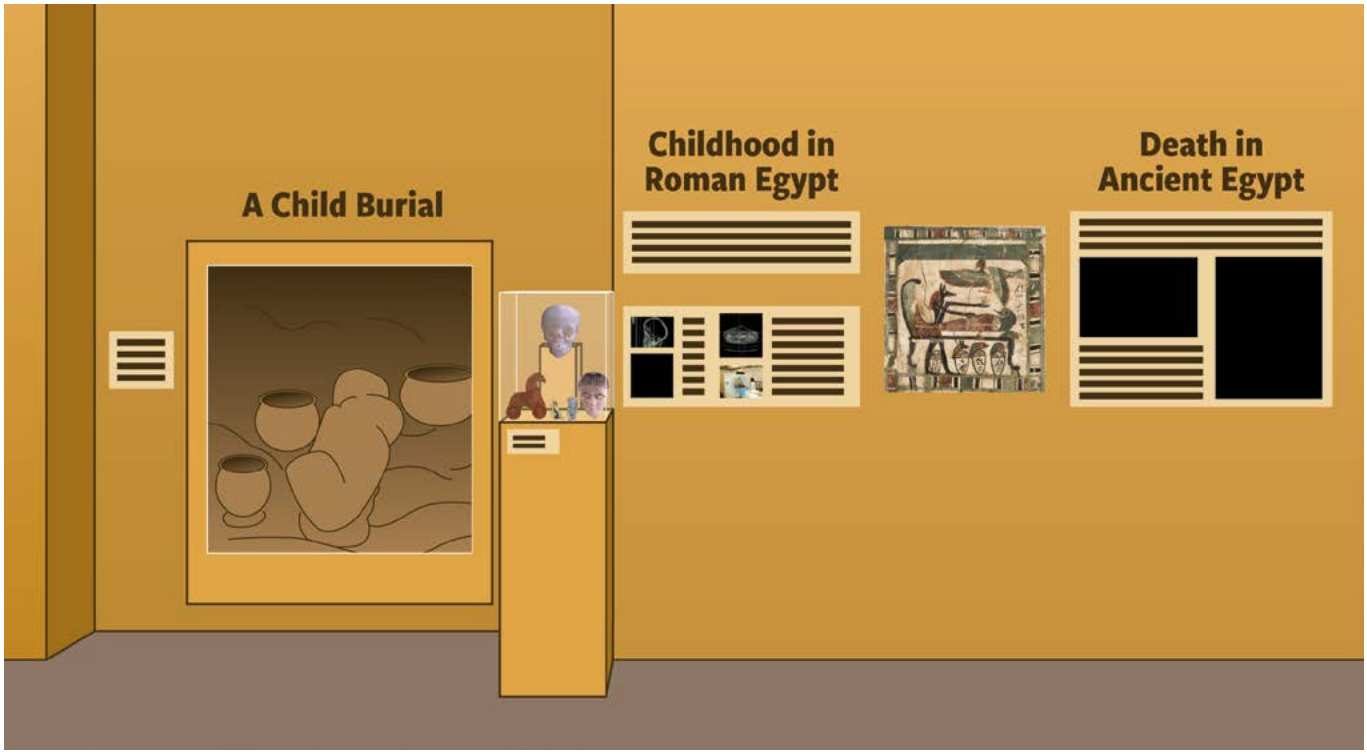


Figure 4. A graphic of the planned display of the mummified child in the Kelsey Museum's Upjohn Exhibit Wing based on the original mock-ups. Illustration: Bruce Worden.

To further address the issue of offerings, a neighboring case included funerary inscriptions that could help provide food and drink for the dead, as well as other items found in a burial intended to assist the deceased. In Egyptian tradition, even the nearby presence of such items could be useful to the dead, while museum visitors silently reading the provided translations of funerary inscriptions could provide further support.

Directly outside the environment, I included a case of artifacts specifically related to children—toys, amulets, and representations of children—that could potentially provide further protection and even entertainment for a dead child. Finally, the plexiglass window protecting the burial environment provided a point of contact between the living and the dead that might have appealed to the socially minded ancient Egyptians. The Egyptians had no taboos against living people seeing the mummified dead—indeed, mummies were designed for display in the context of funeral activities—and it is possible that they would have used a similar strategy to allow for viewing if they had access to the same secure, clear materials. The relatively low light required for conservation and the positioning of the case in the wider gallery also contributed to a quieter and more respectful space than in the older displays in Newberry Hall.

When the galleries of the Upjohn Exhibit Wing opened in 2009, the display of the mummified child was received with enthusiasm but little comment, as part of the larger whole of the open-plan first-floor gallery. However, in recent years, this situation has changed considerably, with the concerns I mentioned previously interfering with many visitors' experience of the museum.

As the Kelsey Museum pauses the display of the mummified child and continues its period of reflection, we will discuss whether this installation can be modified to address the concerns visitors have expressed while still allowing them to experience this simulated ancient Egyptian burial context with its occupant, accompanied by provisions for the afterlife, or whether the display must ultimately be discontinued. We plan to make these decisions not only through internal discussion and consultation but also through discussion with our constituents, our communities, and our public. In doing so, we hope to make the process and ultimate decisions as transparent as possible. This will allow us all to reflect on the presence of the mummified child in Ann Arbor and the complex journey that came before. All the while, we must take into account the ancient Egyptians' original intentions behind the practice of mummification and how we can best respect and honor those traditions.

T. G. Wilfong is the curator for Graeco-Roman Egyptian collections at the Kelsey Museum and professor of Egyptology in the University of Michigan's Department of Middle East Studies.

New Faces of the Graduate Student Community

We extend a warm welcome to the six students who are new to the Interdepartmental Program in Ancient Mediterranean Art and Archaeology and the Kelsey Museum graduate student community this fall. Pictured left to right, top to bottom, are Julius Arnold, Elena Echavarria Gil, Antonio Lau, Julian Skye McCoy, Felicity Sorenson, and Anton Strachan.

Julius Arnold received his BA in history and German language and literature from the University of Regensburg in 2023 and earned an MA in classics, along with a Certificate in College Teaching, from the University of Colorado Boulder in 2025. His undergraduate thesis examined Polybius' account of the early treaties between Rome and Carthage. During his MA, he was awarded the 2025 Mary E. V. McClanahan Essay Prize and a Best Should Teach Silver Award.

Julius received archaeological training through the Brač Island Project in Croatia and has since participated in the American-Egyptian excavations at Al Ashmunein/Hermopolis Magna and joined the Southern Etruscan Tomb Survey. Julius's research interests center on the role of memory in the ancient Mediterranean, especially how historical figures and events were commemorated through literature, art, and architecture. He is also interested in digital humanities and has coauthored two papers exploring new approaches to the Fruitbearing Society, Germany's first and largest early modern literary society.

Elena Echavarria Gil earned her BA with honors in archaeology, classics, and history of art from Johns Hopkins University in 2025. Her honors thesis focused on the dating, provenience, and use of an unpublished collection of Graeco-Roman lamps from the site of Deir el-Medina in Egypt. She will continue to work on this collection of objects with the Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale (IFAO).

Elena's academic and research interests center around Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt. She is interested in examining cross-cultural connections during this period and in investigating the relationships between material culture, memory, and identity formation in Graeco-Roman Egypt. She is particularly committed to studying these connections as indexed in objects

of daily life. Elena has participated in archaeological projects throughout the Mediterranean, including at the site of Deir el-Medina in Egypt, the Via Ostiense Necropolis in Rome, and the Domus Romana in Rabat, Malta.

Antonio Lau received his BA in classics and his MA in philology, history, and the literature of the ancient world from the University of Rome, La Sapienza. During those years, he developed a strong interest in archaeology, which led him to participate in international archaeological projects in Italy (Villa Adele, Villa Adriana, Naples, and Falerii Novi), Spain (Amposta), Kuwait (Failaka), and Saudi Arabia (AlUla and Riyadh). On one hand, he is drawn to the study of the formation and development of ancient urban settlements, with a particular emphasis on habitation dynamics and the reconstruction of urban areas and landscapes through plans and drawings. On the other hand, he is fascinated by the symbolic use of certain objects and images in funerary contexts in the ancient world, as a means to explore self-representation practices and their implications for identity mechanisms.

In 2025, a book based on Antonio's MA thesis (*La Piana del Sele, Poseidonia, Paestum: storia di un'area del Mediterraneo e dei suoi abitanti dal VI al III secolo a.C.*) was published by the Universitat Rovira i Virgili of Tarragona, where he completed both an Erasmus exchange (2021–2022) and an International Postdegree Scholarship (2024–2025).

Julian Skye McCoy received a BA in classics and environmental science at Northwestern University and an MA in social sciences with an emphasis on anthropology at the University of Chicago. His master's thesis focused on the representation of subadult burials in Etruscan necropoleis and the ritual significance of suggrundaria burials. While studying at the University of Chicago, he worked at the Center for Ancient Middle Eastern Landscapes using U2 and Hexagon imagery to map the preservation of ancient qanat systems in Oman.

Julian has participated in the Archeodig excavation at Poggio del Molino for three years, twice as staff. His research interests include bioarchaeology and ritual burial, human-environment interactions, and pre-Roman Italy. Julian is also interested in object conservation and museum ethics, particularly as they pertain to the preservation and exhibition of living remains.

Felicity Sorenson earned her bachelor's degree in classical studies from Tulane University in 2021. Her thesis, "Medea in Pots, Plays, and the Shared Imaginaire," examined interactions between various mediums of the ancient world, such as literature, performance, and vase painting.

Felicity's research interests center around ceramics dating from the Bronze Age to the Classical period in the Aegean, with questions about ceramic production and its cultural impact. She has worked on ceramic analysis at Knossos, Crete, and on the Cycladic island of Kea, Greece. Felicity has also excavated with the University of Michigan's Pella Urban Dynamics Project in Greece.

Anton Strachan received his BA in archaeology and classical civilizations from the University of Toronto in 2019, an MA in classical studies and archaeology from Queen's University in 2021, and a master's of museum studies from the University of Toronto in 2023.

Since 2018, Anton has been an active participant in the Caere Project, working at and publishing on the ongoing excavations in Cerveteri, Italy. His MA research focused on Caere, examining and publishing on water-management systems found during recent excavations. This project reconstructed the phases and use of space of an area within the heart of Caere's urban area to understand how the high concentration of water-management features interacted with the aboveground spaces over time. Anton's research interests include urban landscapes, water-management systems, cultural-heritage ownership, museum interpretation, and digital tools in archaeology.

Successful Dissertation Defenses

Congratulations to five members of the Kelsey graduate student community who successfully defended their dissertations during the fall 2024 and winter 2025 semesters!

- Andrew Crocker, "Body Politics: Female Portraiture and Local Politics in the Roman Peloponnese" (December 6, 2024)
- Amelia Eichengreen, "From Huts to Palaces: Archaic Domestic Architecture in Rome, Latium, and Etruria, c. 900-450 BCE" (February 21, 2025)
- Alex Moskowitz, "Fracturing Narratives of Colonization: Views of Early Iron Age Sicily Through Metals and Metallurgy" (March 12, 2025)
- Joey Frankl, "The Polis Economy in the Early and High Roman Empire: Three Case Studies from Southern Greece" (May 22, 2025)
- Caroline Nemechek, "Understanding the Market for Mosaics in 2nd c. CE Roman Britain" (May 23, 2025)

Pedley Reports

During the summer of 2025, three individuals received the John G. Pedley Travel and Research Award, a grant program that helps fund archaeological research and travel for graduate students.

Cecilia Huang

Thanks to the generous support of Professor John Pedley, I had the opportunity to visit museums in several countries that allowed me to gather essential material for my dissertation. My doctoral research focuses on the representation of Syrian goddesses from the ancient Middle East during the Hellenistic, Roman, and Parthian periods and how these images illustrate the region's multifaceted cultural identities. While travel to the Middle East was restricted due to current circumstances, I was able to visit museums in Europe and the United States to gather my research data.

I began my trip at the archaeological site of Delos in Greece. There, I visited the Sanctuary of the Foreign Gods, where a temple of Syrian gods has been identified. This temple testifies to the establishment of the cult of the Syrian gods in Greece by the Hierapolitan diaspora from northern Syria. From Greece, I traveled to Paris and focused my time on the Louvre's holdings of ancient Middle East antiquities from the Hellenistic and Roman periods. After a productive stay in France, I continued to the Antikensammlung in Berlin, then to the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen, and finally to the British Museum in London. After returning to the United States, I concluded my summer museum trip at the Yale University Art Gallery, where I examined its remarkable collection from ancient Dura-Europos.

This trip has not only enriched the dataset of my research but also helped me build a dialogue among the wide array of artworks. Through my research, I hope to explore new intellectual avenues that connect the ancient Middle East with the broader field of ancient Mediterranean archaeology. While this trip has concluded, my academic journey continues—and more travels will follow. I am truly grateful to Dr. Pedley for his support, which has greatly enriched this journey.

Chloe Morris

Thanks to the generosity of the Pedley Travel and Research Award, I

Cecilia Huang visiting the Ancient Dura-Europos gallery at the Yale University Art Gallery.

Chloe Morris worked as a trench supervisor for the Pella Urban Dynamics Project in Greece.

Erica Venturo working with students and pottery at Gabii, Italy.

had the opportunity to go to Greece to participate in two archaeological excavations this summer.

First, I participated as a student in the excavations at Neo Rysio-Kardia in Thessaloniki. This project, through the International Hellenic University, aims to uncover a settlement inhabited during the Iron Age and Archaic period. I enjoyed working alongside Greek students as we uncovered the stone rubble associated with the abandonment of the site. This work was especially relevant to me as I now begin my dissertation research, which considers the early social organization of the Macedonian kingdom. The choice to settle on this plateau overlooking the modern airport of Thessaloniki is not a mystery—the site has an unmatched strategic view of the Thermaic Gulf and nearby Anthemous Valley. The reason for the abandonment of the site, however, is less obvious. Why did the inhabitants leave? Was it by choice or force? Where did they go? These are some of the questions that we seek to answer through the excavation.

In addition, the support of the Pedley fund allowed me to return to the University of Michigan's Pella Urban Dynamics Project as a trench supervisor. While there, I had the pleasure of working with many of my IPAMAA colleagues as we conducted the fifth season of excavations in the capital city of ancient Macedonia. We spent six weeks opening new trenches and continuing work in old ones as we investigate the urban form of the Hellenistic city, as well as conducting a survey in the wider area of the site. This project brings together students from the University of Michigan, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, and beyond, and it is my great pleasure to introduce them to field archaeology. I am very grateful for the support of the Pedley award, without which I would not be able to participate in these projects.

Erica Venturo

With support from the Pedley Travel and Research Award, I worked on five field projects over 11 weeks this past summer. Starting in May, I spent three weeks on the Gabii Legacy Data project, run by Professor Laura Banducci. There, I drew, sorted, and identified ceramics excavated by the superintendent of the archaeological site of Gabii from 1998 to 2000. I was responsible for all the amphorae selected for study. I then spent three weeks on the ceramics team for the Gabii 2025 Field School. I taught undergraduates about the different classes of pottery uncovered at the site, as well as how to both sort and draw ceramics.

In June, I was also a ceramics specialist on the Pompeii I.14 project, directed by Professor Allison Emmerson. For one week, I was able to study and catalog a series of amphorae that were found within the infrastructure of the insula. Aside from the amphorae, I also analyzed fineware and cookware that revealed interesting insights into commercial activity within domestic spaces and the reuse of ceramics in craft industries within domestic contexts (both topics that I will explore in my dissertation).

In July, I traveled to Tuscany, where I participated in the Marzuolo Archaeological Project, run by Professors Rhodora Vennarucci, Astrid Van Oyen, and Gijs Tol. I transitioned from a field supervisor to a member of the ceramics team for this summer's study season. I drew and cataloged the ceramics from the 2019, 2022, and 2024 field seasons, as well as some of the glass from the 2024 excavations. We also held a specialists' meeting, where I was able to present some of my preliminary findings on the amphorae within the site's assemblage.

Finally, the last project that I worked on this summer was the Pella Urban Dynamics Project, run by Professor Lisa Nevett. In Pella, I spent two weeks drawing select ceramics from the 2023, 2024, and 2025 field seasons, including fineware, plainware, and amphorae. I also held several drawing lessons for both undergraduate and graduate student participants on the project. Overall, this summer of fieldwork was very rewarding!

New Staff

Henrike Florusbosch serves as the Kelsey Museum's new chief administrator. Henrike received her PhD in anthropology from the University of Michigan, based on long-term ethnographic fieldwork with potters, blacksmiths, and other endogamous groups in Mali. She also received a graduate certificate in museum studies, which included an internship at the National Museum of Mali and community-engaged heritage work in Ghana. After teaching anthropology at Leiden University, the Netherlands, Henrike returned to U-M to manage the African Studies Center within the International Institute, before joining the e-Health and Artificial Intelligence program (e-HAIL). She currently serves as a co-lead of the staff-led Grant Development Network and previously supported the e-Health and GenAI-research task forces in the Medical School's Office of Research.

We were pleased to welcome **Christina Johnson** as the Kelsey Museum's executive secretary in early 2025. Christina received her BA in cultural anthropology and history from the University of Michigan. Her background is in post-secondary education access in both K–12 schools and higher education programs. In previous roles, Christina has built and maintained professional partnerships and contributed her knowledge to diversity-based initiatives. From beginning her career as an AmeriCorps volunteer to transitioning from the Education and Talent team at the Detroit Regional Chamber, Christina uses her professional skills to support Kelsey leadership, curators, staff, and student assistants in museum operations. Outside of work, she enjoys cooking, musicals, and reading. Christina also serves as a qualified mediator in general/civil disputes.

Staff Updates

Suzanne Davis, senior associate curator and head of conservation, recently coauthored a book chapter with several of her Jebel Barkal colleagues—Rebecca Bradshaw, Tohamy Abulgasim, Elmontaser Dafalla, Sami Elamin, El-Hassan Mohamed Ahmed, and Geoff Emberling. "Community-Engaged Archaeology at the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Jebel Barkal" appeared in the 2025 Routledge publication *Cultural Heritage, Community Engagement and Sustainable Tourism: Archaeological Sites in the Global South*. She was also a coauthor (with Geoff) on a second community-engagement article, this time focused on the archaeological site of El-Kurru, Sudan. Beyond that, Suzanne gave papers at the American Institute for Conservation (AIC) and the American Society of Overseas Research (ASOR) conferences.

Over the last year, **Geoff Emberling** has worked with his team and colleagues to publish a thorough summary of the last five years of archaeological research at Jebel Barkal, as well as two articles on community engagement around his archaeological projects at El-Kurru and Jebel Barkal in Sudan. He also worked with his Sudanese colleague Habab Idriss Ahmed to publish an overview of the situation of cultural heritage in Sudan, which just went to press in October 2025.

In May 2025, Geoff presented the keynote lecture at the Sudan Archaeological Research Society's symposium at the University of Cambridge. He presented papers at ASOR; in the conference "Bodies of Knowledge" in Cairo (remote, with Anawar Mahagoub); for the Friends of ASOR (online); and for the American Sudanese Archaeological Research Society (with Heidi Hilliker, Shannon Ness, and Anawar Mahagoub). He also completed his Archaeological Institute of America Joukowsky lecture series with talks in Richmond, Virginia; Portland and Eugene, Oregon; and Jacksonville, Florida.

After almost 24 years at the Kelsey, Exhibition Coordinator **Scott Meier** retired on August 1. Scott deftly oversaw more than 60 exhibitions since joining the museum in 2001, using his talents in design, fabrication, and project management to bring countless curatorial visions to life. An invaluable behind-the-scenes presence, Scott played key roles in the planning, installation, and ongoing care of the Upjohn Wing's galleries and the objects it houses—though, as he notes, "My favorite memories of the museum have less to do with the exhibitions and more to do with the people I came across along the way."

"Scott was the soul and the physical manifestation of the Kelsey for decades," Director Nic Terrenato said. "He leaves a hole that it will be impossible to fill entirely." Indeed, Scott's creativity and attention to detail resound throughout the museum and will continue to do so for years to come. Thank you for your many years of service, Scott!

The Kelsey Museum bids farewell to **Tamika Mohr**, our chief administrator for the past two years. During her tenure here, Tamika skillfully managed the Kelsey's finances, facilities, and more—bringing dedication, professionalism, and care to all aspects of the museum's operations. She fondly reflects on "memorable experiences working alongside truly remarkable teams" and is especially grateful for her collaborations with administrative staff, security officers, and students. As Tamika continues to transition to her chief admin role in U-M's Department of the History of Art, we thank her for her many lasting contributions and wish her continued success. Happy trails, Tamika!

From Protector to Parting Gift

Following more than two decades at the Kelsey Museum, Scott Meier has gotten up close and personal with thousands of artifacts. His favorite piece in the collection is a terracotta figurine depicting the ancient Egyptian deity Bes (KM 4960)—protector of households and families—standing on a lotus flower with his tongue sticking out, currently displayed on our first floor. This object has been a fixture of the permanent galleries for years and has appeared in several Kelsey publications. Yet Scott's fondness for this artifact comes not from its cultural significance and careful sculpting but from the way he has seen it engage young visitors and spark joy. "It holds a special place for me because a group of small kids came through once when I was working and they all stuck their tongues out at the statue when they walked by," he said. "Anything that can elicit that kind of response in a museum is great to me!"

To mark Scott's retirement, the Kelsey's digital archaeology team prepared a one-of-a-kind gift: a scale replica of this figurine. To 3D model the object, the digital team used a technique called photogrammetry. We took 117 photos of the object from all angles and fed them into a computer program. The software identified matching points across all the images and used the changing positions of those points to reconstruct the object in three dimensions and build a photorealistic texture. We then worked with Fabrication Underground at U-M's Duderstadt Center to 3D print the replica in resin at 1:1 scale.

This project exemplifies what makes the Kelsey a remarkable place: an exciting collection that inspires wonder in visitors, a dedicated and collaborative staff who bring all their skills to bear on challenging problems, and a world-class research institution applying cutting-edge techniques to the study of the past.

We hope that the replica brings Scott fond memories in his retirement and serves as a reminder of the lasting impact he has made on the museum and the tens of thousands of visitors who have passed through the galleries and temporary exhibits he designed, built, and installed.

You can view and rotate the 3D model at **myumi.ch/5k5Mg**, and be sure to stop by and stick out your tongue at Bes in person, in honor of Scott!

—Chris Motz, Manager of Digital Assets

Top: 3D printing in progress at the Duderstadt Center.

Above: Scott's final, mounted Bes model.

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NOVEMBER

- Thursday (11/27) . . . . . Closed
- Friday (11/28) . . . . . 10 AM–4 PM

DECEMBER

- Wednesday (12/24) & Thursday (12/25) . . . . . Closed
- Friday (12/26) . . . . . 10 AM–4 PM
- Saturday (12/27) & Sunday (12/28) . . . . . 11 AM–4 PM
- Monday (12/29) . . . . . Closed
- Tuesday (12/30) & Wednesday (12/31) . . . . . 10 AM–4 PM

JANUARY

- Thursday (1/1) . . . . . Closed

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