

Press Release



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Ancient Mediterranean Collection Given New Gallery Space, Visibility at Newark Museum ***Art of the Ancient Mediterranean: Egypt, Greece and Rome* Opens December 8**

NEWARK – After 28 years, Newark Museum’s Ancient Mediterranean collection is getting a new home. The Newark Museum’s classical collection of art from Egypt, Greece and Roman is comprised of nearly 4,500 objects dating from 3000 BC to 600 AD. It was relocated from its original gallery space as part of the Museum’s renovation project that includes the relocation and reinstallation of the Arts of Global Africa galleries to flagship space on the first floor. *Art of the Ancient Mediterranean: Egypt, Greece and Rome* will open on December 8.

“We made the decision to move the collection to the South gallery, which will not only afford it greater visibility, but will make it the starting point for the Museum’s permanent collection galleries,” said Steven Kern, the Museum’s Director and CEO. “Telling the story of art in everyday life in the ancient world, the *Art of the Ancient Mediterranean* will offer a preamble to the newly reinstalled Arts of Global Africa across the Engelhard Court. From there, visitors will explore the rest of the permanent collections in the Museum’s North Wing.” The guest curator for the reinstallation is Clare Fitzgerald, PhD., senior manager of education programs at the Michael C. Carlos Museum at Emory University in Atlanta.

The classical collection has been part of the Museum since its early history. First represented by plaster casts, the collection grew in 1924 when Mrs. Samuel Clark gave the Museum a large group of objects representing daily life in the ancient world. By 1928, a significant group of ancient ceramics and limestone sculptures from Cyprus were purchased with funds from founding trustee Louis Bamberger.

In 1950, the Museum received the collection of Eugene Schaefer, a New Jersey chemist, whose love of ancient glass drove him to amass nearly 2,000 objects. More than half of the Museum’s ancient Mediterranean collection is glass, making it one of the most comprehensive in the United States. Dating from 1500 BC to 1400 AD, the Schaefer glass collection offers a visual history of the evolution of glass technology in Egypt, Greece, Rome and the Islamic world. The collection further grew through gifts and purchases focused on ancient glass and the art of Christian Egypt.

In the newly designed gallery, everyday objects will tell the stories of three distinct cultures—Egyptian, Greek, and Roman—defined by maritime connections to Africa, Europe, the Near East and Asia. While each culture had its own distinctive values and artistic traditions, all developed in conversation with one another in an early version of a global economy over hundreds of years. The groups of objects illuminate the role of glass-making, sculpture, funerary art, metalwork, and ceramics in homes and temples across the greater Mediterranean region. One of the core themes of the collection is the importance and meaning of materials,

from luxury goods made for members of the aristocracy, to more commonplace objects that were part of daily life across empires.

“I took the Museum’s renovation projects as an opportunity to bring new relevance to one of my favorite collections,” said Chief Curator Ulysses Grant Dietz. “Originally, tucked away in its little suite of galleries in the northeast corner of the Bamberger building, the antiquities collection had become overlooked by much of the Museum’s audience. Now it will be front and center for every visitor.”

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