

CONNECTIONS: Communication in Ancient Egypt

www.birmingham.ac.uk/connections

connections@contacts.bham.ac.uk

Between January and June 2012 postgraduates, undergraduates, alumni, staff and associated academics of Egyptology contributed to an exhibition of artefacts from the Eton College Joseph William Myers Collection of Egyptian Antiquities – their aim was to better understand how the ancient Egyptians communicated between each other and those around them, and to increase awareness of the Eton Myers Collection at the University of Birmingham.



The Exhibition



The Mingana Room,
OLRC, Selly Oak Campus

The exhibition consists of almost 100 ancient Egyptian objects from the Eton Myers Collection, allowing visitors to explore 'CONNECTIONS' through both object and text. Through posters displayed around the room the exhibition aims to engage with visitors by asking questions based on sub-themes such as:

- How do you express your cultural identity?
- Do we still communicate through symbols and images?
- How is music used to communicate today?
- How will you choose to be remembered?

Funding provided essential materials for exhibiting objects, including magnifying glasses, mirrors and labelling. Further funds contributed to an inauguration and networking event attended by University of Birmingham staff and students, and representatives from Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery and the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Coventry. The latter two institutions were both kind enough to provide exhibition workshops for those involved in the project. The skills learnt from these workshops have now been incorporated into undergraduate student teaching modules within the College.

Carl Graves, Department of Classics and Ancient History

Dr. Martin Bommas, Academic Project Supervisor

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Left: The messenger, Neferhotep from the tomb of Khnumhotep II at Beni Hasan. Mascot for 'CONNECTIONS'.

The Catalogue



Photogrammetry Workshop

Those involved in the project were also required to submit a 2000 word essay relating to the topic of their display. Each essay was subject to editing and peer-reviewing processes before eventual upload into the online exhibition catalogue.

- The scope of these essays (shown below) covered many aspects of communication including; interaction, writing, exchange/trade, technology, gestures and worship.
- All of these studies found that, although the technology of communication has changed since the Pharaonic Period, the issues affecting communication and the nature of the information conveyed has not.

SKILLS: All student contributors were also given opportunities to gain training and skills in; editing, IT and Contensis CMS, photography, three-dimensional photogrammetry, presenting and exhibition creation. This subsequently allowed the inclusion of 3D rotating images of the Eton Myers objects in the website, which has already resulted in feedback from institutions around the UK and allowed greater engagement with our virtual visitors.

Right: The varied selection of essays available (as they appear) in the online catalogue

Connections: Communication in Ancient Egypt	Essays
Essays	Contents:
Blue Faience Bowls and Social Practice, by Dr Martin Bommas.	Innovation through Interactions: A tale of three 'pilgrim flasks', by Dr Carla Gallorini
Communication Through Music, by Eleanor Simman.	'Actions speak louder than words': Gestures of Communication in Ancient Egypt, by Millward
Gestures of Communication, by Emily Millward.	Communication Through Music in Ancient Egyptian Religion, by Eleanor Simman
Innovation Through Interactions, by Dr Carla Gallorini.	Petitions to the Divine: Communication through Votive Offerings at Egyptian Shrine, by Gabrielle Heffernan
Intercultural Communication, by Carl Graves.	Intercultural Communication: Egypt and Nubia c. 2543-1076BC, by Carl Graves
Petitions to the Divine, by Gabrielle Heffernan.	Blue Faience Bowls and Social Practice: New light on their use and function, by Dr Bommas
Scarabs: Appeals for Protection and Resurrection, by Dr Nicola J Adderley.	Writing - Image - Material: On Media and Communication in Ancient Egypt, by Dr Luiselli
The Dead and the Living Interacting Through Text, by Valentina Pasquali.	The Lost Art of Egyptian Lithics, by Meagan Mangum
	Scarabs: Appeals for Protection and Resurrection, by Dr Nicola J Adderley
	Visualizing Ideology: the message of the crowned-falcon amulets, by Steven R. W. Gregory
	The Dead and the Living Interacting Through Text: An Inscribed Funerary Cone, by Valentina Pasquali