



A History of Afghanistan in 100 Objects

Treasures from the National Museum of Afghanistan

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Tells the story of this extraordinary country by highlighting significant pieces in the National Museum of Afghanistan, Kabul. The museum is the most important repository for the artistic masterpieces and objects of daily life that exemplify Afghanistan's 50,000-year history and role in world cultural heritage. Afghanistan is the quintessential "crossroads of cultures" where the civilizations of the Middle East, Central Asia, South Asia, and China met and interacted for millennia in a constantly shifting mixture of trade, cultural borrowings, migrations, and clashing empires. This complex history gave rise to outstanding treasures in world heritage, encompassing cultures as diverse as the Bronze Age cities of Bactria, the Persian empire, the easternmost Greek colonies founded by Alexander the Great and his successors, the Hellenistic-Indian fusion in Early Buddhist art, the Silk Road empires, and the monumental Buddhas of Bamiyan. The 100 objects presented here illustrate the creativity and connections that shaped Afghan culture through the millennia.

Gil Stein is Rowe Professor in Ancient Near Eastern Studies at University of Chicago and directed the Oriental Institute's large-scale projects of cultural heritage preservation in Afghanistan.