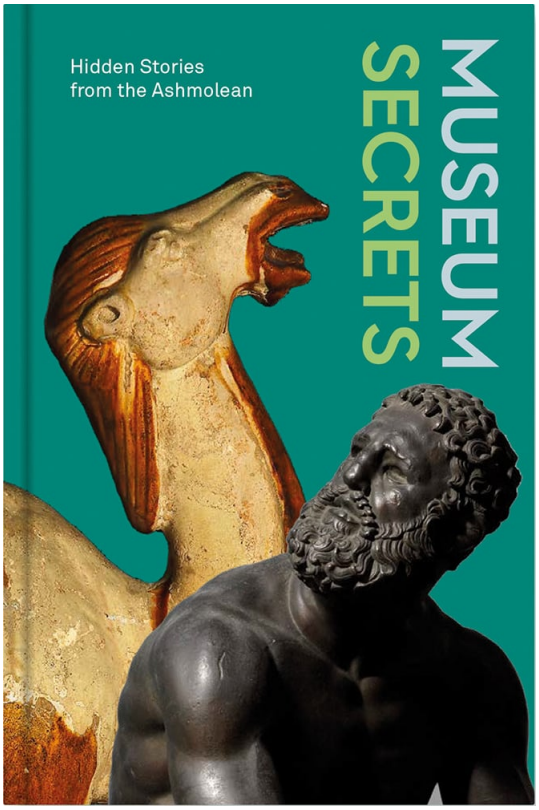
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Museum Secrets

Hidden Stories from the Ashmolean

Lucie Dawkins

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- Untold and unusual stories from the Ashmolean's successful podcast series *Museum Secrets*
- Previously unpublished material
- Intriguing and often moving short stories
- Original podcasts were heard by hundreds of thousands of listeners
- Bite-sized tales of the wonderful, and sometimes unexpected, life of a museum

In December 2020, spirits were low. The first tentative visitors had only just made it back through the doors of the Ashmolean after months of isolation, only for another lockdown to come crashing into view. The galleries went dark for a second time in a year. There's something uncanny about standing in the Museum when it's empty of visitors. You can sense a million human stories all around you, clamoring to be told to… no-one. So, we had to change tack. If we couldn't get people into the building, we could get the stories out. I started calling around curators, asking for their most uplifting tales in the collections. From bedrooms and garden sheds and kitchen tables, the Ashmolean team started recording themselves, sharing stories of joy and resilience to help keep us all going through the dark winter months of quarantine. The result was a podcast, Museum Secrets, which you can find on the Ashmolean's website. This book contains the highlights. These are stories you won't find on the labels. These are stories of the human experiences hidden in the Museum's cases and frames. They are stories that cheered us up when we needed it most, and I hope will continue to do so.

Lucie Dawkins is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama, where she was the Cullman Directing Scholar 2018, and was generously supported by the Cameron Mackintosh Foundation. She has assisted at the Yale Repertory Theatre on *Happy Days*, and directed extensively at the School of Drama and the Yale Cabaret. Lucie began as an actor at the Junior Guildhall School of Music and Drama, before going on to take an undergraduate degree at Oxford University, where she was elected President of the Oxford University Dramatic Society. During her time in this position, she founded the Oxford Shakespeare Festival. Lucie won awards for her directing at Oxford's Short Play Festival in 2010, and New Writing Festival in 2011. As well as directing, Lucie's theatrical portfolio includes designing puppets for productions of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, His Dark Materials*, and Kandinsky's opera *Der Gelbe Klang*, adapting Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and Edgar Lee Master's *Spoon River* for the stage, and acting in Oxford University Dramatic Society's UK national tours. Lucie collaborated in the founding of the Ashmolean Museum's 'LiveFriday' programme, a series of free late night performance events for audiences of up to 6,000, involving commissioning artists, musicians, playwrights, dancers, and speakers to respond to the collections and bring them to life in innovative ways for young people. Starting as student advisor and guest curator, Lucie became the programme co-ordinator for the 2014-5 'LiveFriday' season.







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