Ceramic art of ancient Cyprus: significant ceramic assemblages recovered from Bronze Age tombs

21st April 2012 – 7th October 2012

To be officially opened by His Excellency, Mr Yannis Iacovou, High Commissioner, Republic of Cyprus, on Wednesday 2nd May, 2012

An extensive range of ancient Cypriot pottery selected from the University of Melbourne’s classics and archaeology collection will be on display in the exhibition, Ceramic art of ancient Cyprus.

Cyprus is well-known for the high quality, originality and exuberance of its ancient pottery, produced in large quantities for domestic and industrial purposes and for burial with the dead.

This exhibition is the result of collaboration between Dr Andrew Jamieson, classics curator at the Ian Potter Museum of Art, and Dr Jennifer Webb and Professor David Frankel, both from the Archaeology Program, La Trobe University.

Dr Jamieson said the University of Melbourne is fortunate to have such a significant collection of Bronze and Iron Age Cypriot pottery.

“Pottery-making began on Cyprus during the Neolithic period, c. 5,500 BCE, and retained a distinctively Cypriot character until the island was absorbed into the Hellenistic world in the 4th century BCE.

“Key pieces featured in the exhibition include several complete tomb assemblages from Karmi,” Dr Jamieson said.
Dr Jennifer Webb, a specialist in Cypriot archaeology from La Trobe University, says there is a long and proud history of Australian involvement in Cypriot archaeology.

“It began with James Stewart, who in 1937, at the age of 24, excavated an Early Bronze Age cemetery at Vounous on the north coast. With the outbreak of war Stewart joined the Cyprus Regiment and served in the Suez Canal before being captured in 1941. He spent the rest of the war in prisoner-of-war camps, where, with the help of books sent by the Red Cross, he worked on the publication of Vounous. After the war he accepted a position at Sydney University where he became Professor of Middle Eastern Archaeology. In 1955 he returned to Cyprus to excavate at Vasilia on the north coast and Ayia Paraskevi on the outskirts of Nicosia and, in 1960, at Karmi on the north coast,” Dr Webb said.


ENDS

Free Public Lecture
Thursday 10 July, 2012, 6pm, Theatre A, Elisabeth Murdoch Building, University of Melbourne

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Images available upon request
The Ian Potter Museum of Art The University of Melbourne, Swanston Street (between Elgin and Faraday streets), Parkville, 3010. T: 03 8344 5148 W: www.art-museum.unimelb.edu.au

Hours: Tuesday to Friday 10am - 5pm: Saturday and Sunday 12 - 5pm, Admission free.