

British Museum to Lend Ghana Looted Treasure

Gold and silver objects to go on show at the Manhyia Palace Museum in Kumasi as part of Asante king's silver jubilee celebrations

LONDON - Gold and silver treasure looted from west Africa by the British army in colonial wars are to be lent to Ghana in a three-year deal, the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum have announced.

The precious regalia, which had belonged to the Asante royal court, is regarded as part of the "national soul" of Ghana. Under the deal, 17



British Museum will return gold artefact to Ghana in historic loan

objects from the V&A and 15 from the British Museum, will go on show later this year at the Manhyia Palace Museum in Kumasi, the capital of As-

ante region. Many of the items have not been seen in Ghana for 150 years.

Most of the objects involved in the Ghana deal

with Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, the current Asante king, were looted from Kumasi during Anglo-Asante wars in the 19th century. Some formed

part of an indemnity payment forcibly extracted from the asantehene (king) at the time. But they also include a gold lute-harp that was presented to the British diplomat Thomas Bowdich during a trade treaty in 1817.

Nana Oforiatta Ayim, a special adviser to Ghana's culture minister, welcomed the deal as a "good starting point" in righting the wrongs of the UK's violent colonial past. Speaking to the BBC, which first reported the deal, she said: "They're not just objects, they have spiritual importance as well. They are part of the soul of the nation. It's pieces of ourselves returning."

Ayim described the deal as a "sign of some kind of healing and commemoration for the violence that happened". Tristram Hunt, director of the V&A, said the items were the equivalent of "our crown jewels".

"The Mother" Staged at the Experimental Theater

TIRANA - The National Experimental Theater "Kujtim Spahivogli" has brought to the stage Florian Zeller's drama, "The Mother," skillfully directed by the renowned Mehmet Xhelili. The cast includes Ema Andrea, Helidon Fino, Juliano Brisku, and Enisa Hysa.

Described by its author Florian Zeller as a black farce, "The Mother" provides an extraordinary and insightful experience rather than a simple narrative. The play revolves around the mother's drama, encompassing illness, crisis, and pain, with other characters either causing or falling victim to these elements. At the core is the portrayal of a mother's love for her son, whose departure from home is perceived as betrayal, ac-



Photo from the play 'The Mother'

companied by possible pathological deviations. Simultaneously, the play explores a marriage undergoing decadence due to these and other factors. The potent messages within the performance do not offer clear answers but instead articulate the existential

question voiced by the mother at the piece's conclusion: Why did it have to happen like this?! The production will continue its run at ArTurbinia for four consecutive nights, providing audiences with an opportunity to engage with the powerful themes the play explores.

"Tandem" Invites Albanian Writers and Translators

TIRANA - The Institute for Advanced Studies "New Europe College", in Bucharest, opened applications for the TANDEM program - "Author with Translator, Translator with Author," which will take place during the academic year 2024-2025.

This program is support-

ed by S. Fischer Stiftung Berlin, part of the Traduki network of which Albania is also a part, through the National Book and Reading Center. The purpose of this program is to deepen the knowledge about the literary landscape in the countries around the Black Sea as well

as to strengthen the sense of respect and understanding between people from different cultures.

The NBRC invites Albanian authors and translators to apply for a beautiful experience of creation. The deadline for applications is March 10, 2024.

Greece 'Will Insist' on the Parthenon Marbles

NEW YORK - Greece will insist on the reunification of the Parthenon Marbles, Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis reiterated in a videotaped statement at the opening of the exhibition "Cycladic art: The Leonard N. Stern collection on loan from the Hellenic Republic" at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Mitsotakis did not attend the event as he has been infected by H1N1.

"For two years now, we have enjoyed positive dis-

cussions with the Chair of the British Museum on a possible new partnership that brings the two parts of the sculptures together, as one, in Athens," he said in his message.

"Let me be clear, we will insist on their reunification for many reasons, but one, in my mind, is the most important. Because only by being seen together, in situ, in the shadow of the Acropolis, can we truly appreciate their immense cultural importance for Western civilization," he added.

Special German Edition with Lasgush's Work

VIENNA - A special edition of the renowned Austrian literary magazine "Lichtungen" is exclusively dedicated to the literary works of the timeless Albanian poet Lasgush Poradeci (Lazar Gusho). While previous efforts by translators have introduced some of Poradec's poems to German readers, this marks the first comprehensive presentation of his work to Austrian audiences.

Robert Pichler, a member of the Academy of Vienna and a proficient scholar of the Albanian language,

shared his journey of discovering Lasgush Poradeci's work and the profound connection he feels with the poet's creativity. This publication is just the beginning, as the Albanologist is currently working on another scholarly project focused on Poradeci.

To commemorate the 125th Anniversary of the birth of the lyric poet who spent a decade of his life in Graz, Austria, Robert Pichler presented this significant project in Tirana at the National Library.