



*Dream boats at  
ss Great Britain for  
MGM 2007*

... museums  
to produce  
their own print  
to suit them,  
echoing the vibrant  
branding created by Red Stone,  
our design agency. We will produce limited quantities of posters  
and postcards for those museums unable to do their own print  
and also for libraries and tourist information centres.

Last year we doubled the media coverage for Museums and  
Galleries Month and that was from quite a high base. So this  
year the emphasis on public relations continues with the  
reappointment of Colman Getty PR for the third year. The  
media campaign is well under way, targeting a wide range of  
media with ideas for features and, nearer the time, news and  
picture stories. We assist museums and galleries with their PR  
activities through a toolkit as well as regular PR bulletins.

**museums and galleries month**  
www.mgm.org.uk 1 May-31 May 2008



Our partnership  
with the 24 Hour  
Museum (shortly to  
be known as  
Culture 24) is also  
essential to  
success – last year,  
visits to this, the  
UK's leading  
cultural website,  
reached new record levels. As this website is transformed, a  
whole range of new media opportunities will open up to  
Museums and Galleries Month. We have set up our own  
MGM2008 Facebook Group and we will be launching our new  
feature, *Museum of Me*. Watch this space (or rather:  
[www.mgm.org.uk](http://www.mgm.org.uk))!

The Campaign for Museums relies on Museums, Libraries and  
Archives (MLA), through Renaissance, for its core funding. We  
work closely with hubs, regional and national agencies to make  
MGM a success. Loyd Grossman, Chairman of The Campaign  
for Museums is this year joined by Caroline Dudley, Head of  
Museums and Archives at Hampshire County Council as  
Co-Chair. They will welcome guests at the formal launch of  
MGM2008 at London Transport Museum at the end of April.

### About the author

As Executive Director of The Campaign for Museums, Ylva  
French organises Museums and Galleries Month with a small  
team of freelancers, supported by a Working Group and  
Strategy Group representing museums and gallery  
organisations across the UK.

THE PREMIUM STORAGE SOLUTION

# Museum

## STORAGE

System Store Solutions Ltd is experienced in meeting the specialised needs of  
museum, gallery and heritage clientele. With a huge range of innovative storage and  
display systems it has supplied art, photographic, geological, textiles, transport,  
historical, and armoury museums throughout the UK and Ireland.

Our product portfolio includes a comprehensive range of Drawer Cabinets,  
Adjustable Shelving, Visual Display Cabinets and Cupboards, Glass Plate and  
Negative Storage Systems, Mobile Roller Racking, Picture Racking Systems and  
Containers. We also provide project management, consultation, technical advice and  
no obligation site surveys to ensure the best solution possible for your storage and  
display needs.

**System Store Solutions Ltd**  
Ham Lane, Lenham, Maidstone, Kent ME17 2LH  
Telephone: 01622 859522 Fax: 01622 858746  
E-mail: [sales@systemstoresolutions.com](mailto:sales@systemstoresolutions.com)

[www.system-store.com](http://www.system-store.com)

## Modern storage displays ancient artefacts



Tenterden Museum in  
Kent noticed a significant  
trend in using innovative  
storage solutions for  
display purposes; it  
discovered one of the  
UK's best suppliers,  
System Store Solutions,  
on its own doorstep.

The Museum had the need, and foresight, to use the new  
storage system as an area where local collections could be  
viewed by the public, which would also give access to  
researchers. System Store installed display cases with  
drawers, two clear-fronted storage cabinets and one drawer  
unit to create easy public viewing, while also providing safety  
and protection for the historic collection.

A noticeable benefit of the storage system is that the units  
were not only functional, but also good looking. This was  
particularly important as they themselves form part of the  
display.

Debbie Greaves, museum manager, commented: "The glass-  
covered display units are very good and catered to our need.  
When funding is available, we will be purchasing additional  
cabinets".

For further information please contact System Store Solutions Ltd on  
Tel: +44 (0)1622 859522, Fax: +44 (0)1622 858746,  
e-mail: [sales@systemstoresolutions.com](mailto:sales@systemstoresolutions.com)  
or visit: [www.system-store.com](http://www.system-store.com)



# Cultural renaissance is already here for regional museums



**Margaret Hodge**  
Minister for Culture

Excellence and access in our cultural life should be complementary, not competing, objectives and nowhere more so than in our museums and art galleries. In his recent report *Supporting Excellence in the Arts*, Sir Brian McMaster said: "The notion that the arts are not for everyone must be tackled head-on, since excellent art is, by definition, for and relevant to absolutely everyone." I couldn't agree more. And I am delighted to say that *Renaissance in the Regions* – the government's programme to boost regional museums and galleries – is one of the examples McMaster gives of a scheme that achieves this, by providing excellent collections and engaging in outreach work to bring that excellence to local communities and schools.

*Renaissance* is now part of the cultural furniture, but it was not always so. Before 2002 there was a serious crisis hitting regional museums. For years they had been under-funded by local authorities, suffering cut after cut as money was channelled towards other council services. Some were on the point of closure, with deteriorating collections and falling visitor numbers.

My predecessor Chris Smith tackled the problem with an ongoing £292 million programme of investment in regional museums – *Renaissance in the Regions*. This was the first time Government had put direct investment into the 'non-national' collections. Its aims were to raise museums' standards and

make a real difference to learning and social inclusion, turning the regional museums into centres of excellence.

*Renaissance* money is allocated by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council to a 'hub' of up to five flagship museums and museum services in each of the nine English regions. This investment has helped to fund better facilities, relevant and enjoyable exhibitions and activities, which attract wide audiences.

And it's working. The statistics clearly show how successful the programme has been so far, with 13.8 million people visiting hub museums in 2006-7, an increase of 14 per cent since 2002-3; the numbers of school visits by 5-16 year olds increasing by 18 per cent, to 800,000 in the same period; and the numbers of disabled visitors, people from ethnic minorities, or those from disadvantaged backgrounds increased by 30.6 per cent since 2002-3, to over 3.2 million in 2006-7.

The wider access for children is a particular success of *Renaissance*. If youngsters find out that visiting museums is a fun and pleasurable activity, they'll continue to go to them when they are adults. And discovering museums is an important part of children's education, both in relation to the National Curriculum, and in terms of learning about other people and cultures, and their own history.

## High quality programmes

While the figures are impressive, it is the quality and diversity of the programmes that brings home to me the level of excellence achieved by the hub museums and their partners.

For example, children from two priority neighbourhood schools in Coventry experienced life on the Home Front in a highly ambitious project called *Coventry Kids in the Blitz*. It was set up by the Herbert Art Gallery and its resident theatre company, Triangle, along with other local services. Over 80 ten year olds worked with the performers to find out what life in wartime

*Above: Coventry kids in the Blitz project at the Herbert.*

*Conceived by Richard Talbot & Carran Waterfield, Triangle Theatre, Coventry Photograph: Gareth Lloyd Evans*