

# Unlocking Charles I's Vision of Rome

Reference: 2018-6-MYR

<b>Supervisor</b>	Felicity Myrone, Lead Curator, Western Prints and Drawings
<b>Department, Location</b>	Western Heritage Collections, St Pancras
<b>Start date/timeframe</b>	Ideally this placement would be held at some point during the period June 2018 – December 2018
<b>Duration</b>	<b>3 months</b> (or part-time equivalent – see below) <i>The placement would need to be undertaken on a full-time basis initially. However, there would be scope for the placement to be done on a part-time basis after a period of full-time training</i>
<b>Remote-working</b>	After an initial period of full-time office-based training, there is the potential for the placement student to work from home for 1-2 days a week, if required.

<b>Context for placement</b>
<p>The Speculum Romanae Magnificentiae was a publishing venture by the Rome-based French engraver Antonio Lefreri, who published prints of Rome and its antiquities from around 1540. Lefreri issued a title-page in the mid-1570s and thereafter collections of his prints came to be known as Speculum Romanae Magnificentiae or the 'Mirror of Roman Magnificence'. This is now widely recognised as a hugely important contribution to the history of topography and antiquarianism. However, its nature as a publication is easily misunderstood. The title-page gives the impression of a book, but this is misleading: it is an album, and each example is unique. Accordingly, all surviving examples are individually important for print scholarship and the history of collecting.</p> <p>This PhD placement project aims to research and enhance the catalogue records of a copy of the historic Speculum Romanae Magnificentiae previously owned by Charles I (British Library shelfmark C77i11). This example of 133 prints is listed in the inventory of his collection as number 50, "Given to the King by the Earl of Exeter A very great book in folio of prints, being of several antiquities of Statues and Roman buildings". It remains intact at the British Library, with the original binding stamped with his arms and initials. Its importance has scarcely if ever been identified for the public, however, having been classified since the nineteenth century as simply 'another copy'. The collection was highlighted at a research workshop hosted by the British Library in October 2015, <i>Prints and Drawings: image, evidence and history</i>, and was subsequently suggested for loan to the Royal Academy for their major 2018 exhibition re-uniting Charles I's collections (<i>Charles I: King and Collector</i>). The album has been fully digitised in preparation for this exhibition. We would like to take this opportunity to create full catalogue records for the prints for the first time, so that we can unite the digital images with full analytic records for each print.</p> <p>The British Library's prints collections as a whole are vast, far outnumbering the holdings at the British Museum. But they are largely unknown, primarily due to their relative inaccessibility. The Library appointed its first curator for prints and drawings in the rare books, manuscripts and maps collections in 2015, and the PhD student would be supervised by this curator, in the Printed Heritage section of the Western Heritage Collections department. The British Library supervisor is leading a temporary specialist project team who are cataloguing George III's maps and views, and the placement student would work alongside this team and with the guidance of colleagues from the Library's Metadata Services and Processing teams.</p>
<b>Expected tasks and outcomes</b>
<p>Supervised by the Lead Curator of Western Prints and Drawings, the PhD research placement student will use specially designed spreadsheets to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enrich the cataloguing data for the album</li> <li>• create a short analytic record for each print</li> <li>• ingest the records to the Library's core catalogue, <i>Explore</i></li> <li>• ingest the digital images to our Digital Library System, linking them to the new records</li> </ul> <p>This will involve working alongside other colleagues in Printed Heritage Collections (particularly the King's Topographical Collection cataloguing team), Collection Metadata Systems, Metadata Processing and Heritage Made Digital.</p> <p>Depending on their interests and experience, we would encourage the placement student to apply their research skills to highlight their work, through writing at least one 1-2,000 word article on the collection for the Library's <a href="#">Picturing Places</a> website, contributing to the <a href="#">Maps and Views</a> or <a href="#">Untold Lives</a> blogs, tweeting at @BL_prints, giving a lunchtime talk or organising a study day. Specific outputs along these lines will be</p>

discussed and agreed with the BL supervisor at the start of the project. The placement student would also be able to compare this collection with two others – the British Library holds another set collected by Cassiano dal Pozzo (1588-1657) and owned by George III which has recently been catalogued and digitised as part of a research project on dal Pozzo’s prints in partnership between the Royal Collection Trust and British Library. A published catalogue listing these prints is forthcoming (end of 2018) and we will be uploading these records and digital images to our online catalogue in 2019-20. Another Speculum owned by Hans Sloane was broken up between Prints and Drawings at the British Museum and Maps at the British Library in the mid-twentieth century, with the majority of Sloane’s prints now catalogued individually on the British Museum online catalogue.

#### **Training and experience expected to be gained by student through the placement**

The placement student would be trained in how to use the British Library’s catalogues and handle collection items. To undertake the cataloguing tasks they will be trained to use a specially-designed spreadsheet to create records for each print and to then ingest both the records and the digital images into the British Library’s main catalogue, *Explore*.

They would be encouraged to meet and potentially work-shadow colleagues in Digitisation, Printed Heritage Collections, and Culture and Learning, gaining understanding of how our collections are being made more accessible through current cataloguing, digitisation and display projects. In contributing the anticipated blog posts, they will receive support and feedback regarding the use of social media tools and the development of writing skills, in accordance with departmental guidelines and practice.

As this project relates directly to a major exhibition at the Royal Academy in 2018, this is a particularly promising opportunity for both public and scholarly engagement. The placement student would have the opportunity to visit the RA to meet the exhibition’s curators and learn about their experience in putting the exhibition together.

More broadly, the placement offers an opportunity to gain experience of:

- applying research skills for a practical purpose that supports the needs of a national library
- identifying and describing 16th-century prints
- creating and enriching MARC catalogue records via an Excel spreadsheet
- taking part in daily curatorial life at the Library, including attending staff meetings, training courses etc. as appropriate
- writing for a broad public audience
- using social media to engage audiences in research

#### **Required knowledge and skills**

The placement would suit a student with Excel skills and an interest in collections-based research. A demonstrable interest in printmaking, Renaissance architecture and/or sculpture and a working knowledge of Latin or Italian would be advantageous but are not essential.

This is a training and development opportunity open to current PhD students only. It is not intended to lead to a permanent post at the Library. Please note that the Library is unable to provide a stipend for PhD research placements. Applicants must obtain the support of their PhD supervisor and Graduate Tutor (or someone in an equivalent senior academic management role) in advance and, as part of their process, consult their HEI to ascertain what funding is available to support them.