

# Ancient Artifacts and Contemporary Connections

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PRAXIS: Museum Studies

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## Background: Penn Museum

### General

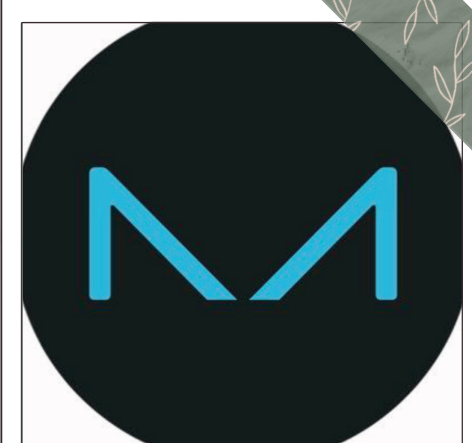
- Established in 1887 after a groundbreaking excavation of the Ancient Mesopotamian City, Nippur.
- The Penn Museum aims to "Make archaeology and anthropology accessible to all".

### Key Institutional Goals

- Tell the powerful stories that come from excavation and research.
- Apply historical knowledge to broad contemporary questions:
- What does the Code of Hammurabi have to do with the U.S. Constitution?
- How can archaeology help to predict climate change?

### Major Achievements Includes

- 5,000+ Penn undergraduate students benefit from Academic Engagement program.
- 35,000 K-12 students, including 6,000 Philadelphia Title I public school students, visit galleries onsite. (Unpacking the Past Program)
- 250 award-winning distance learning programs are delivered in classrooms worldwide.



Penn Museum Mission  
"Transforming understanding of the human experience."



## Rehousing Project: Near East Department

1. Inventory artifacts (primarily from the site of Beth Shean)
2. Identify which objects need photographs to be included in the online database
3. Two Photography Orientations: Shot Down & Shot on
4. Arrange and photograph the objects to capture essential details (i.e., Engravings, distinct design elements, coloration)
5. Rehouse individual artifacts, re-write labels, reorganize in new (secure plastic container), and re-shelve in storage space.



## Findings & Personal Takeaways

### Strides & Challenges Throughout

- Deepened critical understanding of the role of online catalogs for researchers and academics.
- Grew a strong appreciation for historical artifacts/Many finds and discoveries sparked broader conversations and led to contemporary connections.
- Overcame the learning curve by strengthening communication skills and improving attention to detail.
- Had the opportunity to meet with the education department - enlightening dialogue.

### Personal Learning Goals: Large Scale

- Explore various potential future career fields in the Museum sector.
- Better understand the ethics behind the museum industry and, specifically, learn about their responsibility to educate through a nuanced yet transparent lens.

### Final Takeaways

- Better understand where I fit in Museum work - future career and internship prospects.
- Found deep interest in the public-relations component of Museum work (Primarily through education development & Community Engagement).
- Our published online catalogs will be significant in supporting the work of researchers, improving global accessibility to artifacts, and posing as a learning outlet for current and future academics.