



**Invitation to background talk
19 March 2010, 11 a.m.**

**Afghanistan. Surviving Treasures
A selected Collection of the National Museum of Afghanistan
11 June – 3 October 2010
Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany, Bonn**

The spectacular gold, silver and ivory objects bear witness to the significance of the kingdom of Bactria in ancient Afghanistan, a thriving crossroads on the Silk Road that became a melting pot of a wide range of cultural influences from both East and West. In the wake of Alexander the Great's military campaign of around 330 BC, more and more Greeks and Macedonians were drawn to settle in the area, where they helped establish the Bactrian civilisation.

The objects shown in this exhibition were long thought to have been stolen or destroyed by the Taliban. In view of the unstable security situation towards the end of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in the late 1980s, a few forward-thinking members of staff of the Kabul National Museum hid the most important pieces of the collection, shielding them from the decades of disorder and armed conflict that followed. It was not until after the fall of the Taliban regime in 2004 that the vaults of the presidential palace of Kabul were opened and the treasure could once more be shown. Since its safety cannot be assured in present-day Afghanistan, 230 of the most valuable items can now be presented in Bonn.

Highlights of the exhibition are finds from four important archaeological sites. From the Bronze Age site of Tepe Fullol in ancient Bactria (c. 2000 BC) come delicately wrought gold and silver objects – the oldest pieces in the exhibition. From Ai Khanum, a city founded by Alexander the Great (4th-2nd century BC), come objects that illustrate the tremendous reach and impact of Graeco-Hellenism. At the heart of the exhibition are the magnificent gold finds from a group of six graves discovered at Tillya Tepe (1st century AD). The presentation closes with the outstanding finds from Begram.

**The background talk will be held on 19 March 2010 at 11 a.m. in the
Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany, conference room, 1st floor**

Participants:

- Robert Fleck, *Director, Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany*
- Pierre Cambon, *Curator, Musée Guimet, Paris, Conservateur en Chef*
- Susanne Annen, *Exhibition Manager, Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany*
- Sven Bergmann, *Press Officer, Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany*

Please register by fax: +49 (0)228 9171-211 or email: presse@kah-bonn.de. Extensive essays and photo material are available at the press office or www.bundeskunsthalle.de. Please direct all requests for interviews to this office.

We are looking forward to your visit.

Sven Bergmann
Press Officer

Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany
Executive Directors: Dr. Robert Fleck, Dr. Bernhard Spies
Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 4, 53113 Bonn · Postfach 12 05 40, 53047 Bonn
HRB Nr. 5096, Amtsgericht Bonn · Umsatzsteuer ID Nr. DE811386971
Head of Corporate Communications/ Press Officer: Sven Bergmann
Telefon +49 (0)228 9171-204/5/6 Telefax +49 (0)228 9171-211
www.bundeskunsthalle.de / email: bergmann@kah-bonn.de



Fax Reply

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