



Media release  
28/06/2022

## Virtual museum brings the wonders of ancient Israel to life

Australian Catholic University (ACU) is partnering with The Israel Museum to create a virtual showcase that will take audiences into the ancient past.

The pioneering new venture will use 3D scans and photogrammetry to create an immersive experience featuring the Museum's impressive collection.

Viewers will be able to explore artefacts dating back thousands of years, from everyday objects to rare treasures – a stela that proves the existence of King David, silver amulets bearing the oldest copy of a biblical text, ancient artworks and royal inscriptions and seals.

Viewers will be able to interact with these ancient artefacts close-up in 360-degrees and use virtual reality technology to explore how the objects were used in ancient times.

Director of the Ancient Israel Program at ACU, Associate Professor Gil Davis, said the idea was inspired by the need to teach across the university's many campuses in Australia.

"The Israel Museum has one of the world's greatest archaeological collections of the Ancient Near East," he said.

"The Virtual Museum will make use of this vast collection to provide an immersive educational experience for our teaching and outreach into the wider Australasian community.

"It's an exciting opportunity to pioneer a new approach to teaching and it makes the Museum's collection accessible to audiences around the world."

Pirchia Eyall, Curator of Iron Age and Persian Period, is leading the project at The Israel Museum.

Her team has partnered with the Hebrew University Computational Archaeology Laboratory to produce 3D scans of a dozen artifacts as part of the virtual museum pilot program.

"We've scanned objects of different sizes and materials including figurines, jugs and jars. It's been a learning curve for the team at The Israel Museum, but the results are beyond our expectations," Ms Eyall said.

The Israel Museum Tamar and Teddy Kollek Chief Curator of Archaeology Dr Haim Gitler said the project would make the Museum's collections accessible to audiences around the world.

"It is wonderful to collaborate with my colleague Gil Davis and our Australian partners to showcase the Israel Museum across Australia," Dr Gitler said.

"The importance of this project is that it will not only enable our colleagues around the world to virtually bring these amazing objects to their classroom, but it will also permit us to share our collection with people everywhere by creating virtual exhibitions."

**Associate Professor Gil Davis is available for interview.**

**Images are available on request**

**Media Contact: Louise Crossen, +61 477 675 772, [Louise.Crossen@acu.edu.au](mailto:Louise.Crossen@acu.edu.au)**