

# *Caravan Kingdoms: Yemen and the Ancient Incense Trade*

*A Study of Visitors*



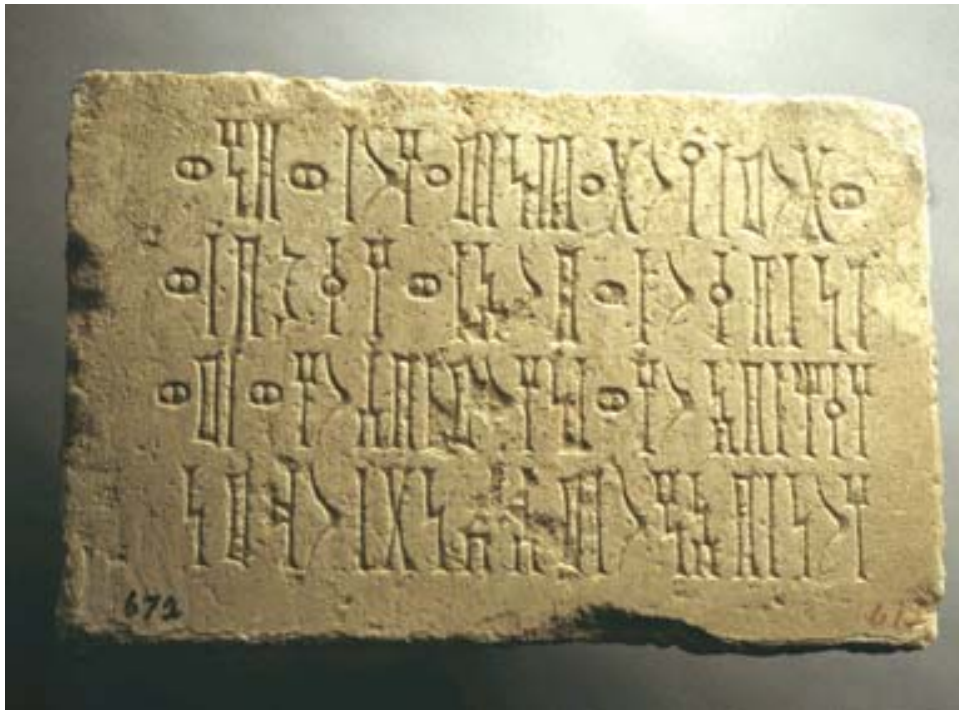
**Office of Policy and Analysis  
Smithsonian Institution  
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# Foreword

An important part of the Office of Policy and Analysis's (OP&A) broad mandate is to study visitors and their experiences at Smithsonian museums. Julian Raby, the director of the Freer Gallery of Art and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery (FSG), has given OP&A the opportunity to study an array of exhibitions to learn more about the interests, needs, and perceptions of the public. Although the methods of conducting these studies vary, understanding visitors' reactions to exhibitions, attempting to determine what exhibitions mean to them, and ultimately changing a museum's relationships with its audiences are always challenging.

*Caravan Kingdoms: Yemen and the Ancient Incense Trade* sought to make connections with and build bridges between visitors and impressive objects from a lost civilization. The OP&A study has resulted in deeper understanding of first-time visitors as well as repeat visitors, and illustrated what a single exhibition can do: provide aesthetic pleasure, increase knowledge, place objects in their cultural context, lead to discoveries, and stimulate interest.

Plumbing these results could not have occurred without the assistance of FSG staff members Theresa Esterlund, manager of in-gallery interpretation, as well as Ann Gunter, curator of the exhibition, and Massumeh Farhad, chief curator at FSG. The docents made time available to give us their insights on visitor responses to *Caravan Kingdoms*. I thank them all. I am also grateful to my multi-skilled staff. Whitney Watriss led this effort. Zahava Doering and Ioana Munteanu, who practice research as a beloved discipline, assisted with the collection and analysis of data and the development of conclusions and observations. Finally, I thank Julian Raby for capturing the attention of many visitors, including OP&A staff, who regard working at the FSG as an engaging, rewarding, and relevant partnership.

Carole M. P. Neves  
Director  
Office of Policy and Analysis



# Conclusions and Observations: “Atlantis of the Sands Rediscovered”



*Wow!*

*That was the biggest surprise—just the development of the art.*

*Who would have imagined?*

*What a great sample of a unique aesthetic.*

*A past I never dreamed of...*

*Nice to see something a bit more unusual.*

*Atlantis of the sands rediscovered.*



These quotes are typical of the many favorable comments visitors made about *Caravan Kingdoms: Yemen and the Ancient Incense Trade*, curated by and exhibited at the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery between June 26 and September 11, 2005. The main conclusion from a study of *Caravan Kingdoms* is that visitors of all types found the exhibition very satisfying. The study was conducted by the Smithsonian Office of Policy and Analysis (OP&A), as part of the ongoing program at the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery of Art (FSG) to improve the experience of visitors. The study focused on who visited the exhibition and why, what they thought of it, and how they responded to its cultural and archaeological focus. In addition, the study explored visitor interests relative to exhibitions at FSG in general. The study included a survey of 417 visitors to *Caravan Kingdoms*, personal interviews with 40 visitors, an analysis of the visitor comment book, and conversations with docents. This section presents the conclusions and observations from the study.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix A for the study findings, Appendix B for the methodology, satisfaction scale, and description of the exhibition, and Appendix C for a copy of the questionnaire and the frequencies of the numerical responses to each question.

## High Overall Level of Satisfaction

*Caravan Kingdoms* appealed to and satisfied a preponderance of survey respondents, based on their overwhelmingly positive comments and the high number—77 percent—who rated the exhibition “excellent” or “superior.” What most sparked visitors’ appreciation of *Caravan Kingdoms* was that the exhibition dealt with an ancient culture that was new and surprising, offered opportunities for learning, and combined interesting and unique artifacts with the context for their existence.

Visitors commented in particular on:

- Learning about the sophistication of the four little-known ancient kingdoms in the Southern Arabian Peninsula.
- The unique, interesting, and beautiful artifacts and surprising quality of the bronze and stone workmanship.
- The very unusual writing script and extent of the inscriptions on the artifacts.
- The value of the contextual information on the area’s history, culture, and economy. The positive comments, combined with the many suggestions that there be more information, and the absence of any complaints about too much information, strongly point to this audience having a desire for in-depth and multifaceted context for the artifacts.
- When visitors had critical comments, they typically referred to specific aspects of the exhibition or to a desire for more of what was there. Many visitors would have liked more information on a varied number of topics such as geography, religion, society, concurrent events elsewhere in the world, links to modern Yemen, and how the artifacts were used. And visitors often followed their critical comments with the disclaimer that the point was a small one and that overall the exhibition was great.

### ***OP&A Observation: Addressing the Desire for More Information***

*The questions visitors had about the exhibition, and the additional information they wanted, were often similar (a pattern that holds true for other exhibitions OP&A has studied). FSG could provide a valuable “trademark” service to visitors by making answers available after the fact. For example, FSG could provide a means at the end of exhibitions for visitors to register their questions. Within a week, FSG could make answers to the questions available on the exhibition website. Such a system might not require a great deal of labor since there is so much commonality across visitor questions.*



## Differences by Categories of Visitors

When looking at visitor responses about specific experiences or aspects of *Caravan Kingdoms*, differences emerge across various categories of visitors in terms of: the likelihood of a superior rating for the exhibition; the extent to which certain experiences were satisfying; and preferences/interests for FSG exhibitions in general. The study team was interested in the responses of

- ∞ First-time visitors (31% of those completing the questionnaire), since they are a potential future audience
- ∞ Sackler-specific visitors (48%), since they tended to be repeat visitors and accounted for a significant share of *Caravan Kingdoms* visitors
- ∞ Visitors who indicated a somewhat stronger preference for exhibitions whose interpretation approach emphasizes *art for art's sake*, with limited information about the objects and their cultural context, or that emphasizes *art in its cultural context*, with more extensive information on both the objects and their context.

### **OP&A Observation:**

#### ***Visitors' Preferences for Interpretation Approach***

*Museums, including FSG, often struggle with finding the appropriate balance between interpretation approaches that place a somewhat stronger emphasis on displaying art for art's sake or on displaying art in its cultural context. Where the emphasis is on art for art's sake, the focus of the information is on identification of an object's maker/place of origin and sometimes a large wall panel providing general context. Where the emphasis is on art in its cultural context, more extensive interpretive text is provided on at least a selection of the objects and on the context for their production, for example, why the objects were produced, how they were used, and where they fit in the broader historical and cultural context surrounding their production. There is concern at museums that overemphasis on one type of interpretation might cause some visitors to stay away.*

*In general, visitors fall along a continuum between a somewhat stronger preference for art displayed for its own sake, on the one hand, and for seeing art in its cultural context, on the other. In both cases, seeing excellent art is very important. The difference is in the amount of information visitors want to accompany the art. Thus, even where visitors have a preference for one interpretation approach, they can still appreciate exhibitions using the other approach. In the case of Caravan Kingdoms, the exhibition proved*

*almost equally satisfying regardless of the preference of visitors. The implication, based on this exhibition, is that finding the right balance in the level of information to present may not be that knotty an issue. One way to test this observation is to query visitors about this issue as they enter FSG, before they are influenced by the style of a particular exhibition that they may have liked or not liked.*

## First-time Visitors

Compared to repeat visitors, first-time visitors, who accounted for 31 percent of survey respondents, were

- Equally as satisfied *overall*
- Somewhat less likely to be highly interested in the type of topic—ancient cultures and Middle Eastern history, culture, and art
- Somewhat less likely to prefer the interpretation emphasis in *Caravan Kingdoms*—art in its cultural context, as opposed to an interpretation emphasis of art for art’s sake
- Somewhat less likely to be surprised by something in the exhibition
- Somewhat less likely to find gaining information and knowledge a satisfying experience
- Less likely to have come specifically for *Caravan Kingdoms* and more likely to have come upon the exhibition as they were walking by
- Younger—by 14 years on average

### ***OP&A Observation: Understanding First-time Visitors Better***

*The Caravan Kingdoms study yielded interesting findings about its first-time visitors and revealed some gaps in understanding them. Why did the exhibition attract a lower percentage of first-time visitors than have other exhibitions that OP&A has studied (31% as compared to the average of 48% for three other FSG exhibitions studied by OP&A)? What exactly drew first-time visitors, particularly local ones, into Caravan Kingdoms? For example, what were their expectations? Did they get what they wanted or expected? Although first-time visitors expressed a similar level of satisfaction with their overall experience, they were less satisfied when it came to specific experiences such as gaining information and knowledge. Why is that? Did their younger age influence their responses, perhaps because they had different expectations or ways of engaging with exhibitions? Was that age difference an anomaly or a true characteristic of first-time Sackler visitors? To what extent does overall*

*experience influence the decision of first-time visitors to return to the Sackler at some point?*

*As FSG looks to build its visitorship, it might want to consider a series of studies of first-time visitors to fill in some of these information gaps so that it is better able to provide what visitors want and thereby encourage them to come back.*

## Visitors Who Came Specifically to the Sackler

It is clear that the Sackler gallery is a destination in and of itself: 48 percent of respondents said they were coming to visit only the Sackler, and 69 percent of respondents were repeat visitors to the Sackler. Compared to all other visitors, those coming specifically to the Sackler were

- More likely to be repeat visitors (82% of Sackler-specific visitors)
- More likely to have highly satisfying experiences
- More likely to find something surprising
- More likely to prefer an exhibition that presents art in its cultural context, the interpretation approach of *Caravan Kingdoms*

### **OP&A Observation: Branding with a Signature Exhibition Series?**

*Caravan Kingdoms attracted a high number of repeat visitors to the Sackler. But how many times a year do they visit? What exhibitions have they seen in the last few years and why? Why do they return—what are they looking for from the Sackler?*

*Based on the results of the Caravan Kingdoms study, it seems that repeat visitors to the Sackler enjoy temporary exhibitions that present an ancient culture, offer something surprising, provide new learning, and combine interesting artifacts and their context. The Sackler might consider a signature temporary exhibition series that features little known ancient civilizations and combines interesting art and its context. Given that other visitor groups to Caravan Kingdoms had these same interests, although to a lesser extent than the Sackler-specific visitors, such a series might be attractive to other people as well. Again, the validity of this observation, based here on only one exhibition, can be further assessed through surveys of visitors as they enter FSG.*

## Visitors with a Stronger Preference for Art for Art's Sake or Art in Its Cultural Context

Compared to all other visitors, those with a somewhat stronger preference for *art in a cultural context* were

- More likely to be attracted to a *Caravan Kingdoms*-type exhibition
- More likely to find such experiences as gaining information or knowledge particularly satisfying and to prefer those types of experiences for FSG exhibitions in general
- More likely to have expressed considerable interest in exhibitions that provide more extensive information on a range of topics, such as the meaning of objects and the culture of the society producing the objects

Compared to all other visitors, those who were somewhat more interested in *art for art's sake* were

- Less likely to be repeat visitors
- Less likely to find gaining information a satisfying experience
- More likely to find beauty in the art
- More likely to be interested in the ways the artwork of one culture is influenced by other cultures

At the same time, the overall level of satisfaction (excellent and superior ratings) of this group of people was only slightly lower than that of other visitors.

## Visitors' Suggestions for Enhancing *Caravan Kingdoms*

The suggestions visitors made for enhancing the exhibition include:

- Providing still more contextual information. Visitors mentioned a range of topics that overall can be characterized as how people lived in ancient times. Visitors also desired more detail on the artifacts, such as how they were used and their role in society.
- Using a greater variety of communication means: maps, timelines, audio devices, visual elements such as videos and photographs, and some type of written material to take away
- Improving the readability of labels and text in terms of size, contrast, and placement

### ***OP&A Observation: Addressing Visitors' Different Learning Styles***

*Visitors to Caravan Kingdoms showed significant interest in information in general. Given this interest in contextual information, as*

*part of exhibition development it may be useful to assess what kinds of information people would find desirable for a given exhibition topic (e.g., through such means as formative evaluation, interviews, and prototyping).*

*Consistent with different styles of learning, visitors suggested a range of means of communicating information. FSG might explore in greater depth how visitors like to gain information and the costs and benefits of greater use of varied means of communication.*

*Docents can be an invaluable source of information on what is and is not attractive to visitors and could be included on exhibition development teams and/or debriefed after exhibitions close.*

### **Visitor Preferences for FSG Exhibitions in General**

In the case of this study, the OP&A study team decided to try asking a narrow set of questions about visitor preferences for FSG exhibitions in general (questions 10-12 of the questionnaire). It is impossible to draw definitive conclusions based on visitors' comments about one exhibition, particularly when queried after leaving that exhibition and because the response options were limited. Nevertheless, the study team believed it would gain insight into how visitors respond to hypothetical questions about their preferences, such as would occur with surveys of visitors as they enter a museum, before they experience a particular exhibition. When visitors to *Caravan Kingdoms* were asked, for example, what emphasis they would prefer in FSG exhibitions generally, those who indicated that they found "gaining information and knowledge" particularly satisfying (57 percent of visitors) had a slightly stronger preference for art in its cultural context.

Again, it cannot be said whether the preferences expressed by *Caravan Kingdoms* visitors hold true for FSG audiences more generally. A series of studies of visitors as they enter FSG would allow the galleries to collect data on what visitors are looking for in general, rather than after they have seen an exhibition and are responding specifically to it.



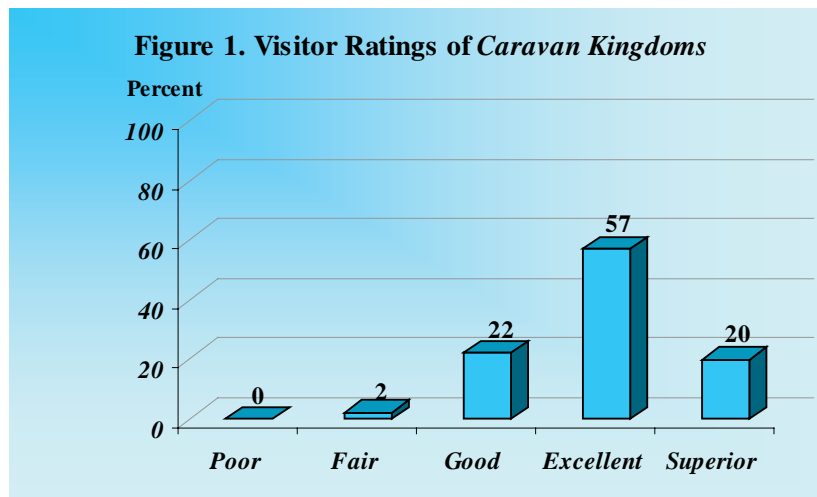
# Appendix A: Study Findings

## Visitor Opinions about *Caravan Kingdoms*

### Were They Satisfied?

Comments and data from all sources<sup>2</sup> showed a high level of visitor satisfaction with *Caravan Kingdoms*.

- Just over three quarters of visitors responding to the survey rated the exhibition “excellent” (57%) or “superior” (20%), about one fourth rated it “good” (22%) or “fair” (2%), and no one rated it poor (Figure 1).
- Typical words that visitors used to describe the exhibition were “fascinating,” “great,” “beautiful,” “impressive,” and “interesting.”
- Docents mentioned that a number of people had visited *Caravan Kingdoms* more than once.
- All sources indicated that only a handful of visitors did not like the exhibition. When visitors suggested a change or criticized some aspect of the exhibition, they often added a comment like “but it was still a great exhibition!” The vast majority of suggested changes fell into the “we wanted more of ...” category rather than the “we didn’t like it” category.



<sup>2</sup> Survey data (quantitative and qualitative), interviews, and comment book data.



Visitors who indicated that they tended to prefer exhibitions that emphasize art for art's sake were less likely to give *Caravan Kingdoms* excellent and superior ratings than were all other visitors (69% and 81%, respectively).

### *Ratings of Two Other FSG Exhibitions*

*The combined “excellent” and “superior” ratings for Caravan Kingdoms were the same (77%) as those for the Sackler’s Return of the Buddha<sup>3</sup> and higher than those of Asia in America: Views of Chinese Art from the Indianapolis Museum of Art, both recent exhibitions that OP&A studied.<sup>4</sup>*

### **What Did Visitors to *Caravan Kingdoms* Find Satisfying?**

A high level of satisfaction correlated with certain experiences and personal interests. Of the visitors who said they gained information and knowledge, 87 percent rated *Caravan Kingdoms* excellent or superior. Of the visitors who said they were surprised by a particular aspect of the exhibition, 84 percent gave those ratings. People who said that they had a personal interest in Yemen (20% of all visitors) or that they were very interested in ancient cultures (57%), Middle Eastern culture and history (42%), and Middle Eastern art (37%) also gave *Caravan Kingdoms* the highest ratings.

❧ ***The information/learning factor.*** Based on all data sources, one thing that visitors particularly liked about the exhibition was the historical and cultural context provided for the artifacts on display. Visitors referred, for example, to such information as the influence of Greek, Roman, and Abyssinian cultures, the Jewish presence, and the comprehensive coverage of the different aspects of the region’s history and culture. There were no complaints about too much information.

When visitors were asked whether they were aware of specific themes or messages in the exhibition, most could not articulate any. However, when they talked about what they liked or what surprised them, their comments showed that they had picked up on several points that were central to the exhibition—the cultural and technological sophistication of the ancient kingdoms, the varied geography of the area, the well-developed economy and political systems, and the interconnectedness of ancient cultures.

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3 “The Return of the Buddha: Two Studies of Visitors Responses to the Exhibition,” Office of Policy and Analysis, Smithsonian Institution, October 2004, [www.si.edu/opanda](http://www.si.edu/opanda).

4 “Asia in America: Views of Chinese Art from the Indianapolis Museum of Art, Two Studies of Visitor Responses to the Exhibition,” Office of Policy and Analysis, Smithsonian Institution, April 2005, [www.si.edu/opanda](http://www.si.edu/opanda).



### *What Visitors Said...*

*Well done. Covered geography, politics, interaction with those who influenced and conquered. Good explanations of “why,” “when,” and “where.” Good connecting of economy and trade to the art. Good explanation of language and religions. A good show which gives a coherent history!*

*What impressed me the most was the fact that you had a range of eras for a given area...I just loved to be able to walk through there and see how culture changes with time...the different influences.*

*Yeah, because I am from Yemen, and I don't know much about, like, the history, and I learned about ancient history.*

*You can't do the art without knowing some of the history or/ and the culture of the people because that is the reason they did the art.*

*Rather than “a terrible desert and nothing happening” and “just tribes and nomads,” there were “full civilizations in this area.”*

∞ ***The surprise factor.*** According to all data sources, a substantial number of visitors were surprised by something: 61 percent of the survey respondents answered “Yes” to that question. Comments from other data sources confirmed this element of surprise. What most surprised visitors, according to all data sources, was:

- \* Seeing the unexpected sophistication of the culture and interesting history of a region about which many visitors knew little or nothing or had mistaken assumptions. To a lesser extent, people mentioned the region's power and wealth, cultivation of frankincense and myrrh, damming of rivers for irrigation, and dynamic trade with other regions.
- \* The unique art, advanced level of the bronze and stone work, and quantity and unusual appearance of the writing.
- \* The outside cultural influences on the art and architecture.

### *What Visitors Said...*

*What a treat to discuss the riches of a past I never dreamed of.*

*When I said I was surprised, it is because we travel all over the world, and we know a lot, and we come here all the time.*

*And when I saw those frescoes, I never saw that before...and I said, Wow! That was really interesting.*

*I was really surprised to see how much they wrote on everything. It was really quite interesting.*

*We had absolutely no idea that the Southern Arabian Peninsula was home to such incredibly sophisticated cultures!*

➤ **The artifact factor.** The artifacts received many enthusiastic comments for ...

- \* Their quality—beauty, sophistication, detail, design, age, uniqueness, and extraordinary state of preservation; most often referenced were the bronze pieces, especially the horse, the alabaster pieces, and the stelae
- \* Their distinctive style, including the influence of external cultures
- \* The amount of inscriptions
- \* The variety of what was displayed

### ***What Visitors Said...***

*The size of that one figure I couldn't believe...it was a collaborative effort between a Greek artist and a local artist. It showed that the local artist had great skill because maybe the Greek artist modeled it in clay, but then the local artist cast it, and they were able to do that kind of bronze casting and that large...it's incredible, very impressive.*

*The wide variety of artifacts that you were able to obtain.*

*We were impressed, too, by the faces of some of the alabaster statues. You could really see the human beings behind them, which is not always the case. Sometimes it's sort of models. But these were really impressive.*

*How old things were. The nature of the society at the time that was reflected in the art or the piece you're looking at.*

➤ **The design factor.** A small number of people were sufficiently impressed by the design of the exhibition to comment on its comfort, ease of movement, clear displays of artifacts, lighting, and logical flow, and they liked the second map showing the trade routes.

## What Changes Would Visitors Make?

The most common ideas visitors had for enhancing the exhibition were to:

- ∞ Provide even more contextual information, for example...
  - \* More in-depth details about the kingdoms' histories, societies, and religions, the region's geography, and the artifacts on display
  - \* What was happening elsewhere in the world in the same timeframe
  - \* The relationship between the ancient kingdoms and modern-day Yemen
  - \* The language, including translations of the inscriptions
  - \* Discussion of specific personal interests, such as "the symbolism of the bull throughout ancient Mediterranean religious culture"

### *What Visitors Said...*

*How does it relate with what is going on elsewhere at the same time?*

*It would be interesting again to relate it to modern times. What do sculptors do now, and how is that different, and what makes it different, and why is it different? So I am also looking for a relationship between then and now.*

*I, too, sympathize with the desire for more translations in English of the inscriptions on various tablets—otherwise, much of their significance and meaning are lost.*

- ∞ Use additional means of communication
  - \* More and better maps—on the one hand, visitors complained about the failure of the first map to show all the places mentioned in the accompanying wall text and to identify Yemen's modern boundaries, and on the other hand they called for additional maps, e.g., showing the influx of cultural influences
  - \* Timelines
  - \* Audio guide
  - \* Videos (introductory and other) and photographs (of modern day Yemen and the archaeological site), and some type of free/inexpensive brochure
  - \* Improve the readability of the labels—larger type, greater contrast between background and type color, more accessible placement

- \* Provide greater accessibility for people with strollers and who have difficulty with stairs, which at the Sackler are also slippery

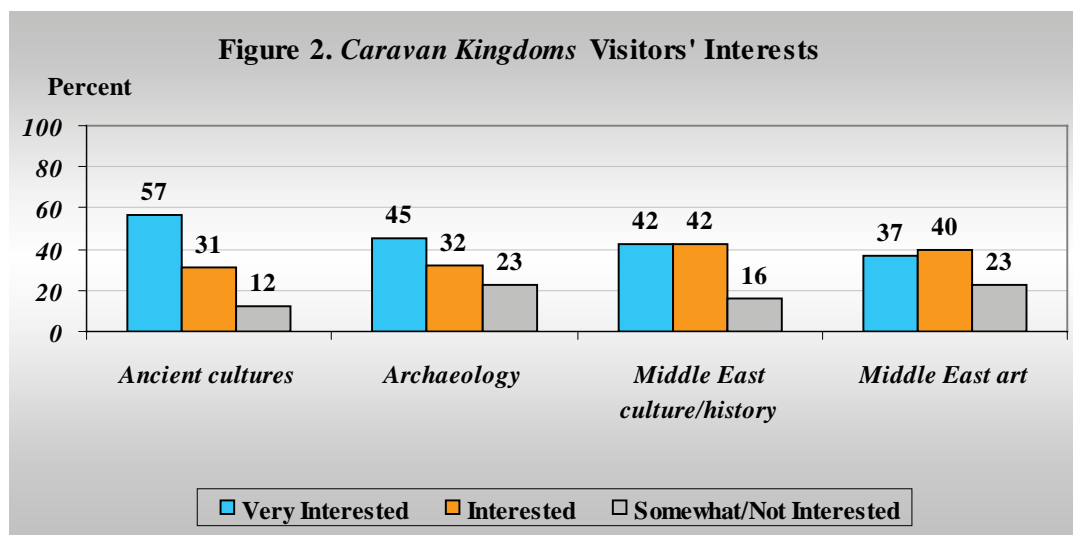
## Demographic Characteristics of Visitors

Almost three out of five visitors responding to the survey (56%) lived in the Washington, DC metro area, compared with the 42 percent local visitorship to the Sackler in general in the summer of 2004<sup>5</sup>, the 38 percent at *Return of the Buddha*<sup>6</sup>, and the 40 percent in the 1994-95 year-long study<sup>7</sup>.

When asked in the survey what they came to visit on the Mall, 48 percent came specifically to the Sackler, 21 percent to the FSG, and 11 percent to the FSG and other museums if possible; the remaining 20 percent came for a general Smithsonian visit. When respondents were asked why they came to the Sackler, almost three in five said they came specifically to see *Caravan Kingdoms* (Appendix B).

Of visitors to *Caravan Kingdoms* responding to the survey, 31 percent had come to the FSG for the first time, a low percentage compared with the 40 percent measured during the Institution-wide Survey of 2004 (IWS), the 52 percent at *Return of the Buddha*, and the 51 percent recorded in the year-long study. Of all visitors who had been to the Sackler before, close to half had been more than four times. Of repeat visitors, 70 percent had come specifically to see the exhibition.

In terms of personal interests, the exhibition attracted people who were “very interested” in ancient cultures (57%), archaeology (45%), and Middle Eastern cultures and history (42%) (Figure 2).



5 “Results of the 2004 Smithsonian-Wide Survey of Museum Visitors,” Office of Policy and Analysis, Smithsonian Institution, September 2004, [www.si.edu/opanda](http://www.si.edu/opanda).

6 “The Return of the Buddha: Two Studies of Visitors Responses to the Exhibition,” Office of Policy and Analysis, Smithsonian Institution, October 2004, [www.si.edu/opanda](http://www.si.edu/opanda).

7 “America Meets Asia,” a report based on the 1994-1995 Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Visitor Study, Office of Institutional Studies, Smithsonian Institution, March 1996.

*Caravan Kingdoms* visitors were older (an average of 47 years) than those at *Return of the Buddha* (42 years) and *Views of Chinese Art* (40 years) and than visitors who responded to the IWS (42 years).

The gender makeup of visitors (52% female and 48% male) was similar to the audiences found in the year-long study and the IWS.

### Finding out About Caravan Kingdoms

Just over one in three of all survey respondents (35%) found out about *Caravan Kingdoms* in “*The Washington Post*,” 16 percent when they were “walking by,” 12 percent from “word of mouth,” and the rest from a variety of sources (Table 1).<sup>8</sup>

**Table 1. How Did You First Find out About *Caravan Kingdoms*? (n=354)**

Source of information	Percent	Source of information	Percent
<i>Washington Post</i>	35	Sackler website	5
Walked by	16	Mailing	4
Word of mouth	12	Other	2
Other publications	9	<i>Archaeology Magazine</i>	1
Museum banners	6	Critic’s review	1
Metro poster	5	Radio talk	0
Smithsonian Associate catalog	5		

One-third of first-time visitors found the exhibition as they were “walking by.” Among local visitors (56% of all visitors), 53% found out about *Caravan Kingdoms* from *The Washington Post*.

### Caravan Kingdoms Visitor Preferences for Future FSG Exhibitions

Visitors responding to the survey were asked about certain preferences for FSG exhibitions in general (see Appendix B for the questions):

- ∞ In terms of five possible “*emphases*” in FSG exhibitions, 66 percent of survey respondents most preferred objects in their cultural context (see Appendix B).

<sup>8</sup> The results from this question may not be generalizable to the total population of visitors to *Caravan Kingdoms* if promotion of the exhibition varied greatly in quantity and location over the period it was open.

- In terms of five possible choices relating to “*information*” that enhances appreciation, the top three selections were:
  - \* Use of the object or role in society (77%)
  - \* Meaning of the objects or its elements (64%)
  - \* Significance of the objects (63%)
- In terms of eight possible choices of things that would “*enhance a visitor’s experience*” in a FSG exhibition, 52 percent indicated an interest in timelines showing key concurrent world developments.



Table 2. Visitor Preferences for Future FSG Exhibitions

<b><i>Survey Question 10. In Freer and Sackler exhibitions, which <u>two</u> of the following emphasizes interest you the most? (n=349)</i></b>	<b><i>Percent</i></b>
Objects in their cultural context	66
Lesser known geographical areas	40
Archaeological discoveries	39
Objects as art	32
Individuals collections	9
Other	3
<b><i>Survey Question 11. In looking at objects in Freer and Sackler exhibitions, which <u>three</u> types of information <u>most</u> enhance your appreciation? (n=349)</i></b>	<b><i>Percent</i></b>
What the object was used for/role in society	77
Meaning of the object and/or its elements	64
Significance of objects	63
Technique/how the object was made	33
The maker or makers	21
History of ownership	16
How it came into the museum's collection	4
Other	4
<b><i>Survey Question 12. Which <u>two</u> of the following would most enhance your visit to Freer and Sackler exhibitions? (n=344)</i></b>	<b><i>Percent</i></b>
Timeline of key concurrent world developments	52
Ways cultures influence each other	42
Linkages between earlier and contemporary culture	37
Maps with current geopolitical boundaries	37
Maps illustrating exhibition content	24
Other	3
<i>Note: The percentages do not sum up to 100 percent because respondents could enter more than one choice.</i>	



## Analysis of Responses by Three Categories of Visitors

As indicated above, the OP&A study team looked at the data from different perspectives, such as whether certain groups of visitors had higher or lower levels of satisfaction and what contributed to their responses or showed a different pattern of satisfying experiences. The responses of three groups of visitors are reported here: first-time visitors, Sackler-specific visitors, and visitors who indicated a greater interest in art for art's sake or art in its cultural context.

### First-time Visitors

About one-third (31%) of *Caravan Kingdoms* visitors responding to the survey had come to the FSG for the first time. Compared with all other visitors, the first timers were:

- ≈ Equally as satisfied overall
- ≈ Somewhat less likely to report “gaining information and knowledge” (46% vs. 61%) or being “surprised” by the exhibition (50% vs. 66%) as satisfying
- ≈ Very interested in “objects as art” (38% vs. 28%)
- ≈ Considerably less likely to be very interested in “ancient cultures” (45% vs. 62%), “archaeology” (30% vs. 52%), and “Middle Eastern culture and history” (32% vs. 47%)
- ≈ More likely to live outside the Washington metropolitan area (67% vs. 32%)
- ≈ Less likely to have come specifically to the FSG (56% vs. 90%) (but 56 percent is still high) or to *Caravan Kingdoms* (32% vs. 70%)
- ≈ More likely to be younger (average age of 38 years vs. 52 years)

### Sackler-specific Visitors

About half (48%) of visitors to *Caravan Kingdoms* said they came specifically to the Sackler. Compared to all other visitors, Sackler-specific visitors were more likely to

- ≈ Be repeat visitors (82% vs. 57%)
- ≈ Have come specifically to see *Caravan Kingdoms* (77% vs. 41%)
- ≈ Have enjoyed something in the exhibition (77% vs. 62%)
- ≈ Have found something surprising (66% vs. 56%)
- ≈ Have been satisfied by gaining information and knowledge (63% vs. 51%)
- ≈ Live in the Washington metropolitan area (73% vs. 41%)
- ≈ Have been interested in Middle Eastern culture and history (49% vs. 37%)
- ≈ Be older (average age of 51 years vs. 43 years)
- ≈ Have heard about the exhibition from *The Washington Post* (56% vs. 20%)



## Interest in Objects in a Cultural Context and/or Art for Art's Sake

Those visitors who indicated that they had a somewhat stronger preference for art presented in a cultural context were, as compared to all other visitors

- More likely to have come to see *Caravan Kingdoms* specifically (64% vs. 46% respectively)
- More likely to have reported finding gaining information or knowledge as satisfying (62% vs. 47%)
- Less likely to have said the beauty of the objects was satisfying (37% vs. 47%)

Those who indicated a stronger preference for art for art's sake were, as compared to all other visitors

- More likely to have found the beauty of the objects satisfying (57% vs. 32%)
- Less likely to have come specifically to see *Caravan Kingdoms* (47% vs. 63%)
- Less likely to have especially liked something in the exhibition (56% vs. 75%)
- Less likely to have reported gaining information and knowledge as satisfying (43% vs. 63%)
- Less likely to have been a repeat visitor (62% vs. 72%)





## Appendix B: Background to the Study

The Arthur M. Sackler Gallery developed the *Caravan Kingdoms: Yemen and the Ancient Incense Trade* exhibition to display artifacts from a large collection of materials from the Southern Arabian Peninsula, an area that later became the country of Yemen. The Sackler had never displayed any of the material from this collection, which it acquired in 1992 as a long-term loan from the American Foundation for the Study of Man. The collection contains nearly 300 objects from explorations of the region's ancient kingdoms that Dr. Wendell Phillips, an American archaeologist and explorer, began in the early 1950s, financed by his American Foundation for the Study of Man. The Sackler believed that an exhibition on this period might appeal to its audiences, who respond well to shows on ancient cultures. An exhibition of like artifacts, *Queen of Sheba: Treasures from Ancient Yemen*, developed by the British Museum from other collections, had traveled successfully in Europe and at one US museum in the previous year. The Sackler found willing partners in the American Foundation for the Study of Man and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Yemen, both of which loaned objects from their large collections. Participating museums in Yemen were the Sana'a National Museum, Sayun Museum, Bayhan Museum, and Aden National Museum. Also providing loans were Dumbarton Oaks and the British Museum.

### The Visitor Study

**Purpose.** As part of the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery's (FSG) ongoing program of improving the experience of visitors, the Smithsonian Office of Policy and Analysis (OP&A) conducted a study of *Caravan Kingdoms* to know who visited and why, and to ascertain what they thought of the exhibition and how they responded to its cultural and archaeological focus. In addition, the study explored visitor interests relative to exhibitions at FSG in general. An OP&A study team conducted the study from the beginning of August to December 2005.

**Study Methodology.** In conducting this study, the OP&A study team decided to do a combination of a quantitative survey and in-depth interviews. In addition, it reviewed the comment book placed in the exhibition. It also met with the docents, who have on-the-floor experience with visitors.

The data collection took place between early August and September 10, 2005. Based on other studies, FSG audiences differ at different times of the year. Summer months, for example, bring more out-of-town visitors; fall months bring more overseas visitors, etc. Thus, the findings from a study conducted at one particular time of the year might differ from those obtained at another time. In conducting the study close to the time the exhibition closed, the OP&A study team may have encountered a high proportion of repeat visitors to the exhibition and those especially interested in the material who wanted to see it before it closed.

*The Interviews.* The OP&A study team interviewed 40 visitors as they left *Caravan Kingdoms*. The purpose of the interviews was to get more in-depth information and understanding of visitors' experiences with the exhibition. The information could be used to expand on the survey responses. In conducting the interviews, staff used a question guide, but permitted visitors to talk about whatever was on their minds about the exhibition. The study team did not attempt to select an accurate representation of some larger group or population, although it did look for diverse types of visitors. The interviews were conducted on different days, including weekends, and at different times of the day. OP&A interviewers taped and transcribed the interviews except in a few cases where they took notes.

*The Survey.* OP&A designed and pre-tested the one-page self-administered questionnaire used in the study (see Appendix C). Part of the questionnaire asked exiting visitors to rate their overall satisfaction with the visit and to give opinions on various aspects of the exhibition. Another part asked about preferences for FSG exhibitions more generally. Other parts collected information about the visitors—the number of previous visits to FSG, how they learned about the exhibition, their interests in topics related to the exhibition, and their demographic characteristics.

The OP&A study team conducted the survey on weekdays and weekends, using standard survey procedures. The team intercepted 417 individuals, 55 of whom declined to participate for a variety of reasons (such as lack of time and language issues). The overall cooperation rate was 87 percent. The study team analyzed the data using standard statistical methods.<sup>1</sup>

*The Comment Book.* The Sackler set a large book on a bench in the last room of the gallery where visitors could write comments. The study team reviewed the comments and coded them into categories. It used the same categories to code the narrative responses on the survey questionnaires. The comment book data cannot be interpreted as representative of visitor attitudes because the visitors making the comments were self-selected. They can be reviewed for consistency with the results of the survey and interviews, and they are indicative of the range of visitor attitudes.

*Discussion with the Docents.* The study team met with docents to solicit feedback on what visitors were saying to them, what they observed about visitors' passage through the exhibition, and their overall impressions of exhibition materials. Some 20 docents participated in the meeting.

*Additional Materials.* In planning the study and writing the report, the study team looked at the small number of reviews of the exhibition appearing in local and non-local newspapers, as well as the material on the website and some exhibition planning and development documents Sackler staff provided.

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<sup>1</sup> The 362 completed questionnaires tabulated in this report are statistically representative of all visitors exiting *Caravan Kingdoms* during the period August 27 through September 10. The reported percentages have a 95 percent probability of being within a margin of error of plus or minus 5 percent.

## A Description of Caravan Kingdoms<sup>2</sup>

**A Little Known History.** *Caravan Kingdoms* was a temporary exhibition of about 200 architectural artifacts and statuary from four powerful, wealthy kingdoms that dominated the Southern Arabian Peninsula—Awsan, Qataban, Saba (biblical Sheba), and Himyar—that reigned from the eighth century before the common era (BCE) to the sixth century CE. Different kingdoms were the dominant power at different times in this period. The kingdoms occupied four major valleys that flowed from the tall surrounding mountains that ran along the west and southwestern coasts of the peninsula and bordered a great desert, the Ramlat as-Sabatayn, which occupies the interior of today's Yemen. They derived their wealth from control over the caravan routes that crossed the Southern Arabian Peninsula, and later from maritime routes. Of particular importance was the international trade in frankincense and myrrh. The region was one of the few places in the world where the valuable frankincense and myrrh grew. Cultivation of these and other spices and plants was possible because of elaborate irrigation systems that flowed from dams in the valleys. The fortunes of these caravan kingdoms rose and declined along with the demand for their resources and shifting trade routes, and ultimately on their ability to control flooding of the rivers.

Excavations at the capitals of the ancient kingdoms have uncovered monumental architecture, distinctive stone funerary sculpture, elaborately carved inscriptions, and sophisticated metalwork. These artifacts are evidence of the highly sophisticated culture of the four kingdoms. Objects shown in the exhibition included technically advanced bronze work, alabaster and other stonework, stelae, altar pieces, temple friezes, and jars, many of them with extensive inscriptions in the very distinctive and unusual script used in that period. Also evident in the artifacts was the artistic influence of surrounding cultures, most notably Abyssinia, Greece, the Roman Empire, and southeast Asia, with which the kingdoms traded.

In addition to displaying unique and rarely seen artifacts, one objective of the exhibition was to show visitors an ancient, little-known, and highly sophisticated culture from a region of the world about which there are many misconceptions, for example, that it is nothing but desert with no cultural history.

**The Exhibition.** The orientation of this exhibition was toward archaeology and the cultural context of the artifacts on display, as well as the artifacts themselves. The artifacts, which were remarkably well preserved, were shown along with considerable contextual information on the history and culture of the area in that period. The exhibition was organized and flowed thematically and chronologically, the latter consistent with the change in outside cultural influences.

The Sackler mounted the exhibition in the east gallery that begins on the first floor and descends via stairs to the second floor below. It opened with a slow moving video of the region as it looks today, intended to show the variations of topography and vegetation in a country that most people think of as completely desert; an introductory text panel that

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<sup>2</sup> The information on the content and design of the exhibition comes from internal FSG exhibition development documents and the exhibition website.

summarized the history and time period covered by the exhibition; and a large map of the region as it was at the time of the kingdoms.

Following the entrance was a room that highlighted a trio of alabaster funerary statues depicting three generations of kings of Awsan, one of the kingdoms that competed for control over the lucrative trade in incense and spices. Other artifacts were also on display.

Next came the section, “Desert Kingdoms,” which began with Saba. Displayed was a group of statuettes showing a characteristic design, as the text explains: “small heads, arms folded in front, and an incised line at the waist. Scholars have interpreted them as idols, perhaps protectors of the dead or symbols of fecundity.” The most striking object was a smiling bronze figure that looks like a soldier, with “a skirt wrapped in front; the lion skin draped over his back with paws crossed over its chest resembles statues of the Phoenician god Baal Melquart and the Greek hero Herakles.”

The subsequent section, “The Incense Trade,” illustrated the economic underpinning of the kingdoms and their eventual collapse:

*Initially, camels transported incense across the Arabian Desert to the eastern Mediterranean coast or the western shores of the Persian Gulf. From the beginning of the Common Era, maritime routes predominated. Ships ferried their precious cargo from ports along the southwest Arabian Peninsula to Egypt’s Red Sea coast, the Gulf of Aden, and the Indian Ocean.*

Jars and lids, incense burners, and measuring buckets provided examples of what the region created and used.

The fourth section, entitled “Temples,” underscored the immense construction projects made possible by the lucrative incense trade: city walls, palaces, and religious sanctuaries. Architectural ornaments and details, temple altars, a libation table, and decorated pillars were all displayed. Renditions of bulls and ibexes appeared on pillar capitals, friezes, gutter spouts, and religious furnishings such as altars and libation tables. The accompanying text stated that these images “very likely... served as powerful symbols to define and protect sacred space.”

The exhibition continued with “Writing and Literacy.” Inscriptions on the artifacts showed the gradual evolution of the script used over a period of some 1,300 to 1,400 years.

Two other sections were devoted to the “Mountain Kingdoms” and the dynasty of Himyar, which controlled access to the ports along the peninsula’s southern coast. A magnificent bronze horse, discovered in 1929, as well as other bronze pieces dominated.

Just before exiting, the visitor was confronted with the massive stela of the general Abraha. Through extensive script that completely covers the stela, Abraha described his considerable efforts to repair the great dam at Marib and the emissaries he received from the great powers acknowledging him as the legitimate ruler of Yemen. The end of the



dominance of this region came around 600 CE, when the Marib dam broke for the fourth and final time, resulting in the total destruction of Saba's ancient capital.

In designing the exhibition, the intent was to provide a clear and logical path through the history of the region. Attention was paid to displaying objects in a manner that made them easy to see, including from multiple sides. The space was quite open to permit easy movement and comfort.







# Appendix C: Frequencies of Survey Responses and the Questionnaire

*Note: Frequencies are presented in rank order of responses.*

## About *Caravan Kingdoms*...

### **Q1. Is this your first visit to this museum (the Freer and Sackler Galleries)? (n=356)**

- 48% No, I've visited more than 4 times previously
- 31% Yes
- 21% I've visited 1-3 times before

### **Q2. Today, did you come to the Mall to visit the Sackler, the Freer, or the Smithsonian in general? (n=356)**

- 48% Sackler only
- 21% Freer and Sackler
- 20% General Smithsonian visit
- 11% Freer and/or Sackler, other museums if time

### **Q3. What led you to visit the Sackler gallery today? (n=356)**

- 58% Came to see this exhibition about Yemen
- 19% Came for a general visit
- 9% Yemen performance
- 7% Other
- 6% Wandered by
- 1% Other publications

### **Q4. How did you first find out about the *Caravan Kingdoms*? (n=354)**

- 35% *Washington Post*
- 16% Walked by
- 12% Word of mouth
- 9% Other publications
- 6% Museum banners
- 5% Smithsonian Associate catalog
- 5% Metro poster
- 5% Sackler website
- 4% Mailing
- 1% *Archaeology Magazine*
- 1% Critic's review
- 0% Radio talk
- 2% Other

**Q5. Overall, how would you rate the *Caravan Kingdoms* exhibition on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is poor and 5 is superior? (n=352)**

57% Excellent  
22% Good  
20% Superior  
2% Fair  
0% Poor

**Q6A. Is there anything that you especially liked about this exhibition? (n=308)**

69% Yes  
\*15% Interpretation  
15% Design  
41% Content  
18% Concept  
4% Unrelated  
7% Other  
*\*OP&A classifications applied to written responses.*  
31% No

**Q7A. Is there anything that you would add or change in this exhibition? (n=327)**

51% No  
49% Yes  
\*61% Interpretation  
26% Design  
8% Content  
1% Other  
4% Unrelated  
*\*OP&A classifications applied to written responses.*

**Q8. Which two of these experiences did you find most satisfying in this exhibition? (n=352)\***

57% Gaining information or knowledge  
57% Seeing unique, old artifacts  
40% The beauty of the objects  
31% Experiencing a culture different than my own  
1% Experiencing my own culture  
2% Other  
*\*A few visitors marked only one response; total equals less than 200%.*

**Q9. Did anything in *Caravan Kingdoms* surprise you? (n=323)**

61% Yes  
\*55% Little known or unknown culture  
20% Artifacts  
13% Interplay or influence of culture  
3% Incense  
8% Other  
*\*OP&A classifications applied to written responses.*  
40% No

## About Freer and Sackler exhibitions in general...

**Q10. In Freer and Sackler exhibitions, which two of the following emphases interest you the most? (n=349)**

- 66% Objects in their cultural context
- 40% Lesser known geographical areas
- 39% Archaeological discoveries
- 32% Objects as art
- 9% Individual's collections
- 3% Other

*\*A few visitors marked only one response; total equals less than 200%.*

**Q11. In looking at objects in Freer and Sackler exhibitions, which three types of information most enhance your appreciation? (n=349)\***

- 77% What the object was used for or role in society
- 64% Meaning of the object/or its elements
- 63% Significance of objects
- 33% Technique/how the object was made
- 21% The maker or makers
- 16% History of ownership
- 4% How it came into the museum's collection
- 4% Other

*\*A few visitors marked only one response; total equals less than 300%.*

**Q12. Which two of the following would most enhance your visit to Freer and Sackler exhibitions? (n=344)**

- 52% Timeline of key concurrent world developments
- 37% Maps with current geopolitical boundaries
- 37% Linkages between earlier and contemporary culture
- 24% Maps illustrating exhibition content
- 42% Ways cultures influence each other
- 3% Other

*\*A few visitors marked only one response; total equals less than 200%.*

## About you

**Q1A. Which of the following statements apply to you? [Mark all that apply] (n=351)**

- 47% I am a travel enthusiast
- 42% None of the above
- 20% I have a personal interest in Yemen
- 3% I have family links to Yemen
- 1% I am a Yemeni

**Q2A. How interested are you in each of the following? (percent of n)**

	Very Interested	Interested	Somewhat Interested	Not Interested
Ancient cultures (n=338)	57	31	10	2
Archaeology (n=329)	45	32	22	1
Middle Eastern culture/history (n=339)	42	42	13	3
Asian culture/history (n=333)	41	39	18	2
Asian art (n=335)	40	35	23	2
Middle Eastern art (n=338)	37	40	20	3

**Q3A. Where do you live? (n=349)**

92% US  
8% Other countries

**Q3B. Zip code (n=341)**

56% Metro Washington  
14% Mid Atlantic  
11% Southeast  
8% Country other than U.S.  
4% Midwest  
4% West  
2% New England  
2% Mountain Plains

**Q4A. What is your age? (n=345)**

24% 55 to 64  
21% 45 to 54  
17% 25 to 34  
14% 35 to 44  
12% 65 to 74  
10% 11 to 24  
3% 75 to 99  
Mean 47  
Average 50

**Q5A. What is your gender? (n=348)**

52% Female  
48% Male

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**Visitor Opinions: Caravan Kingdoms**

**1. Is this your first visit to this museum (the Freer and Sackler Galleries)?**

- Yes
- No, I've visited 1-3 times before
- No, I've visited more than 4 times previously

**2. Today, did you come to the Mall to visit the Sackler, the Freer, or the Smithsonian in general?**

- Sackler only
- Freer and Sackler
- Freer and/or Sackler, other museums if time
- General Smithsonian visit

**3. What led you to visit the Sackler gallery today?**

- Wandered by
- Came for a general visit
- Came to see this exhibition about Yemen
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**4. How did you first find out about the Caravan Kingdoms? [Mark ONE]**

- Metro poster
- Washington Post
- Walked by
- Archaeology magazine
- Museum banners
- Smithsonian Associate catalog
- Mailing
- Word of mouth
- Sackler website
- Radio talk
- Critic's review
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Overall, how would you rate the Caravan Kingdoms exhibition on a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 is poor and 5 is superior?**

- 1            2            3            4            5  
 Poor    Fair    Good    Excellent    Superior

**6. Is there anything that you especially liked about this exhibition?**

- No
- Yes. What would it be?

**7. Is there anything that you would add or change in this exhibition?**

- No
- Yes. What would it be?

**8. Which two of these experiences did you find most satisfying in this exhibition?**

- Gaining information or knowledge
- Seeing unique, old artifacts
- Experiencing a culture different from my own
- The beauty of the objects
- Experiencing my own culture
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Did anything in Caravan Kingdoms surprise you?**

- No
- Yes: \_\_\_\_\_

**About Freer and Sackler exhibitions in general...**

**10. In Freer and Sackler exhibitions, which two of the following emphases interest you the most?**

- Objects in their cultural context
- Individuals' collections
- Lesser known geographic areas
- Objects as art
- Archaeological discoveries
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**11. In looking at objects in Freer and Sackler exhibitions, which three types of information most enhance your appreciation?**

- Technique/how the object was made
- What the object was used for/role in society
- The maker or makers
- History of ownership
- Significance of object
- Meaning of the object and/or its elements
- How it came into the museum's collection
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**12. Which two of the following would most enhance your visits to Freer and Sackler exhibitions?**

- Maps with current geopolitical boundaries
- Timeline of key concurrent world developments
- Linkages between earlier and contemporary culture
- Maps illustrating exhibition content
- Ways cultures influence each other
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**About you...**

**1. Which of the following statements apply to you?**

**[Mark ALL that apply]**

- I have a personal interest in Yemen art/history/culture
- I have family links to Yemen
- I am a travel enthusiast
- I am a Yemeni
- None of the above

**3. Where do you live?**

- US (specify zip code) 

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- Other country (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**4. What is your age?**

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**5. What is your gender?**  Female  Male

*Please use the back of this sheet for additional comments.*

**2. How interested are you in each of the following?**

	Not Interested	Somewhat Interested	Very Interested
Asian art.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Asian culture/history.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Middle Eastern art.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Middle Eastern culture/history.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ancient cultures.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Archaeology.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**THANK YOU!**

Administrative use only:			
Session	Status		
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# Image Credits

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Cover

*Ibex frieze*  
Marib, 5th Century B.C.E. Alabaster, H 39 x W  
53 x D 35 cm  
Lent by the Marib Museum, BAR 906

Page iii:

*Stela commemorating the digging of a well*  
Wadi Akhirr, mid-1st Century C.E.  
Limestone, H 35 x W 53 cm  
Lent by the Bayhan Musuem, BAM 672

Page iv, Upper:

*Rearing horse with Himyaritic inscriptions*  
Ghayman, 2nd–3rd Century C.E.  
Bronze, H 1.02 x L 1.06 m  
Lent by Dumbarton Oaks, BZ 1938.12

Page iv, Lower:

*Temple altar*  
Kamna, circa 8th Century B.C.E.  
Limestone, H 40 x L 80 x TH 50 cm  
Lent by the Military Museum, Sana'a, MiM  
3630

Page vi, Left:

*Jar and lid*  
Hajar ibn Humayd, mid-1st Century B.C.E.–  
2nd Century C.E.  
Alabaster, H 10.4 x D 9.5 cm  
Lent by the American Foundation for the Study  
of Man, Falls Church, Virginia, TC HI 11

Page vi, Upper Right:

*Female head*  
Tamna, 1st half of 1st Century C.E.  
Alabaster, stucco, and lapis lazuli, H 36.5 x W  
18 x TH 17.2 cm  
Lent by the American Foundation for the Study  
of Man, Falls Church, Virginia, TC X 21

Page vi, Lower Right:

*Face stela*  
Tamna, 1st half of 1st Century C.E.  
Limestone, H 14.9 x W 21 x TH 7 cm  
Lent by the American Foundation for the Study  
of Man, Falls Church, Virginia, TC 40

Page 8, Left:

*Statue of Maadil Salhan, king of Awsan*  
Wadi Markha, 1st Century B.C.E.  
Alabaster, H 88 x W 28 x TH 15 cm  
Lent by the National Museum, Aden, NAM 612

Page 8, Right:

*Fragment depicting a military victory*  
Marib, Baran temple, 5th Century B.C.E.  
Bronze, H 46 x W 38 x TH 1 cm  
Lent by the National Museum, Sana'a, YM  
13981

Page 16:

*Statue of Madikarib*  
Marib, Awam temple, 7th-6th Century B.C.E.  
Bronze, H 93 x W 27  
Lent by the National Museum, Sana'a, YM  
262.2

Page 19:

*Statuettes*  
Highlands and Marib, and Hadramawt  
3rd-2nd Millennium B.C.E. Granite, H 17.5-33  
cm  
Lent by the Sayun Museum, SM2644, SM2645,  
the National Museum, Sana'a, YM 12964, and  
the Marib Museum BAR 1

Page 25:

*Inscribed hand dedicated to the god Talab*  
Provenance uncertain, 2nd–3rd Century C.E.  
Bronze, L 18.5 x W 11 x TH 3.6 cm  
Lent by The British Museum, ANE  
1983-6-26,2=139443



# Smithsonian Institution

Office of Policy and Analysis

Washington, DC 20560-0405

[www.si.edu/opanda](http://www.si.edu/opanda)