

## SCHOOL GROUP INFORMATION PACKET

### *THE LOST WORLD OF OLD EUROPE THE DANUBE VALLEY, 5000-3500 BC*

NOVEMBER 11, 2009 – APRIL 25, 2010



**Group of Anthropomorphic Figurines**  
Cucuteni Culture (Pre-Cucuteni II) 4900-4750BC

## ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

*The Lost World of Old Europe* on display November 11, 2009 – April 25, 2010 brings to the United States for the first time objects recovered by archaeologists from the graves, towns, and villages of Old Europe, located in the modern day Balkan region. Here, a cycle of related cultures achieved a precocious peak of creativity between 5000 and 4000 BC, then mysteriously collapsed by 3500 BC. These cultures existed long before Egypt or Mesopotamia rose to an equivalent level of achievement. Old Europe was, therefore, among the most sophisticated places that humans inhabited. Some of its towns grew to city-like sizes. Potters developed striking designs, and the terracotta goddess figurines found in houses and shrines have triggered intense debates about women's roles in society. Copper-smiths were, in their day, the most advanced metal artisans in the world. Intense interest in acquiring gold and Aegean shells created networks that reached surprisingly far. Such economic sophistication permitted chiefs to be buried with pounds of gold and copper in funerals without parallel in the Near East or Egypt at the time. The exhibition, in collaboration with museums in Romania, Moldova and Bulgaria, brings the exuberant art, enigmatic 'goddess' cults, and extravagant metal ornaments and weapons of Old Europe to New York.



Left: **Figurine of a Sitting Man, "The Thinker"**,  
Hamangia Culture, 5000-4600 BC

Center: **Anthropomorphic Vessel**, Vadastra Culture, 5500-5000 BC

Right: **Globular Vessel with lid**, Cucuteni Culture (Cucuteni A3), 4200-4050 BC

## TOUR ORGANIZATION

The exhibition will be displayed in two galleries. The first gallery will focus on the technical and iconographic perspectives of human and zoomorphic figurines, including the way different cultures' perceived and depicted the human body and the roles the figurines played in society. The second gallery highlights a wide range of topics and offers the teacher an opportunity to customize the second part of the tour by selecting two to three topics for the guide to concentrate on.

Available topics:

1. The Varna Cemetery – A display of artifacts found in a grave in Varna, Bulgaria, a Neolithic Bulgarian site from 4400-4200 BC, will allow for the discussion of grave goods, elite burials, the relationship between the gender of the deceased and the artifacts he/she was buried with and the role of the deceased in the community.

2. Prestige Objects – Gold jewelry and idols as well as necklaces, pendants, and bracelets made of Spondylus, a shell native to the Aegean Sea, will allow for the discussion of trade in rare materials and their use by individuals of Neolithic societies as symbols of power and prestige.
3. House Models – A display of house models and altars will allow for a discussion about miniaturization and its possible religious connotations.
4. Pottery – The large selection of pottery on display will allow for discussion of pottery production techniques (shaping, decorating and firing), the meanings behind the different decorative patterns and the relationship between the shapes of the vessels and their use.
5. Pintadera – A small round stamp, the Pintadera, which was most probably used for decorating clothing and as a precursor to the seal will allow for a discussion on the concept of ownership in Neolithic societies.
6. Metallurgy – The selection of axes from different Neolithic cultures will allow for the discussion of their use in agriculture, hunting and warfare and the early technological achievements of the societies that used them.
7. Hoards – The display of four hoards, which date between the very end of the Neolithic period and the first waves of invasion by the populations known as Indo-Europeans will allow for the discussion of the sudden and radical end of Neolithic society in the Danube Valley.

### VISITING THE EXHIBITION

ISAW offers guided tours for high school students. The tours are given by experienced graduate student lecturers and serve as an introduction to the history and art of Old Europe. The tours are interactive, engaging the students through questions and discussions. They also have the freedom to sketch the objects (only pencils are permitted in the galleries). Self-guided tours are not permitted.

### GUIDED TOURS

Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, 11 AM – 1 PM.  
 Tours are 45 minutes long and start promptly on the hour.  
 A maximum of 30 students are permitted.  
 One chaperon for every ten students is required.

### GUIDED TOUR FEE

NYC Public Schools	\$100 flat fee
Other Schools	\$150 flat fee

### PRE-TOUR PACKAGE

An introductory lesson will be sent to the teacher upon confirmation and payment of tour.

## REQUEST A GUIDED TOUR

To schedule a tour please fill out and mail the attached form to:

Irene Gelbord  
Exhibitions Administrator  
Institute for the Study of the Ancient World  
New York University  
15 East 84<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10028

or fax to:

212.998.7809 with attention to Irene Gelbord

Confirmation of the date and time of the tour will be sent via email. Please feel free to contact Irene Gelbord, 212.992.7859 with any questions.

Guided tours must be scheduled and paid for in full a minimum of three weeks in advance. Payments can be made in cash or by check. Checks should be made out to the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World at New York University.

## CANCELLATIONS

Cancellations must be received in writing at least one week before scheduled tour for a full refund. No refund will be given if cancellation occurs within the week of scheduled tour.

## DAY OF YOUR VISIT

Please arrive no earlier than 15 minutes before your scheduled visit.

Coat and book bag check is available free of charge. ISAW is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Lunch facilities are not available in ISAW.

INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number \_\_\_\_\_

Check One    NYC Public School    \_\_\_\_\_                      Other School    \_\_\_\_\_

TEACHER INFORMATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

COORDINATOR INFORMATION

(if different from teacher)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

CLASS INFORMATION

Grade \_\_\_\_\_    Number of Students \_\_\_\_\_    Number of Chaperons \_\_\_\_\_

Special Needs \_\_\_\_\_

DATE(S) AND TIME(S) REQUESTED

First Choice \_\_\_\_\_

Second Choice \_\_\_\_\_

Third Choice \_\_\_\_\_

Fax to 212.992.7809 with attention to Irene Gelbord