

**a new  
laboratory  
at  
Missouri**



*An agate sealstone, only one inch in diameter, illustrates the high achievements of gem cutters in Greece in the 15th century B.C. The scene portrays the sport or ritual act of bull-vaulting, as practiced in Crete during the Minoan period.*



*A pair of gold earrings demonstrates the skill of jewelers of the Hellenistic period; these are of the 3rd century B.C. The bodies of the Erotes or Cupids are of solid gold, the other parts of sheet gold. Small carnelian beads form the link between the lobe discs and the pendant figures.*

The place of the laboratory in teaching has long been established. Used first for the sciences and engineering, the laboratory has more recently found its way into the teaching of a wide variety of subjects, so that we now have it used as an adjunct to instruction in most modern languages, and even in Latin and Greek; there are laboratories for such subjects as speech, geography and journalism. To these Missouri now adds a laboratory connected with the teaching of Art History and Archaeology, a logical development in a subject so dependent on visual and tactile appreciation.

Perhaps most analogous of the usual laboratories is that in geology, which brings to students the specimens which they must learn to recognize by sight, to

analyze. But while the geologist's material is to be had for the seeking in nature, that with which the art historian and the archaeologist must become familiar is a highly valued part of our cultural heritage, often of great aesthetic value as well, and usually much sought after by museums and collectors the world over.

To illustrate the beginnings and development of man's material culture throughout the world and in all periods is a vast project, one which is rarely achieved in even the greatest museums; most collections emphasize one or another area or time. Most universities do not cover anything like the whole scope of the subject in their teaching; they must limit even more their attempts to bring to the student the

*The drinking cup was always one of the favorite vessels of the vase painters, decorated with mythological scenes or with views of daily life such as those on this attic cup of the end of the 5th century B.C.*



products of different civilizations. Wherever the emphasis lies in instruction, there too the collections should be built. At Missouri, the beginnings of the collecting of study materials have now been made in the field of Mediterranean cultures, with emphasis on the Greek and Roman periods.

Missouri's first archaeological expedition abroad (see *The Missouri Alumnus*, January 1956) brought to the University a fine and very valuable collection of Cypriote objects of the third millennium B.C. Their enthusiastic reception emphasized the need for a more varied teaching collection. While it has been possible to borrow from museums (thus far from the Metropolitan Museum of Art of New York and the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania), such loans have a limited usefulness since students are not allowed to handle the objects in order to examine them closely and to get the *feel* of them, which is so important. The only way to achieve this is to acquire the objects, and the University has now set out to do just this.

In making such a collection, objects are sought which are either typical examples of a whole class, a period, an artistic style, or are in themselves important study pieces that may be used by students in their research programs. These have been the criteria for selecting the many objects recently added to our collections, such as those which are shown here. With these it is already possible to illustrate in a spotty fashion various phases of Greek and Roman art, from the fifteenth century B.C. to the second century A.D. There are many gaps to be filled in this one area; there are many whole areas not yet touched.

Our experience in hunting for the objects already acquired shows that the possibilities for getting the kinds of things needed for teaching almost any phase of art history and archaeology are limitless. They are not the very valuable art objects usually sought after by the larger museums—which one would not want to pass around among students or work with in a laboratory—nor are they often in the category of decorative arts so actively sought by private collectors. But universities often compete with one another for them, for such teaching collections are today rapidly growing in importance. The best collections have grown largely through the interest of alumni, either through gifts of actual objects in their possession which fitted into the teaching program of their university or, more often, through the gift of funds with which such objects may be purchased. Most popular has been the name fund, given in memory of a person whose name is thus permanently connected with a series of works of art—often the most appropriate tribute that can be made to one who in life wishes to be surrounded with beautiful things.

The Study Collections in Art History and Archaeology are already proving an exciting experience for students in courses in these fields. They have further application in courses in ceramics, jewelry making, sculpture, and the studio arts and crafts in general. As they grow, even wider applications to the University's teaching program will become evident. At the same time, the permanent exhibition of the collections brings to the community and to Central Missouri an opportunity to see art objects, the first answer to a long-felt need in this area. *Saul S. Weinberg.*