

Humanities Writing Competition 2017-18



This competition is for Year 12 (or equivalent) students and is aimed at anyone with interests in the Humanities. It is based on five objects from the College's small antiquities museum. Named after a Girton student, the Lawrence Room contains Anglo-Saxon finds from the College grounds, Egyptian material including the rare portrait mummy 'Hermione', and Mediterranean material from the Classical and pre-Classical worlds. This competition is an opportunity for research and writing beyond the curriculum using one or more of the five objects as your focus. Essays or creative responses (such as dramatic monologues or short stories) are

equally welcome. We are looking for the ability to connect different areas of knowledge, to think about details and to communicate clearly.

An online Lawrence Room catalogue is available for use. Detailed pictures, descriptions and backgrounds of all the objects in the Lawrence Room collection are available to be browsed through, so please make use of it as an aid to your research. <http://www.lrc.girton.cam.ac.uk/>

Here are examples of issues raised by the five objects, which are offered as starting points for thought from any angle you choose, with reference to any texts, periods or other contexts you are interested in.

- Bodies, female and male
- Vision and transparency
- Animals – friend or foe?
- Funeral rites

Competition Rules

- The word limit is 1800 words (though creative writing in particular may be shorter). Include a word count, and a list of references if applicable.
- There is a limit of 3 entries per school.
- Submissions must relate to one or more of the Lawrence Room objects.
- Submissions should be typed in English in a standard font, lines 1.5 spaced, and every page should be marked with the entrant's name.
- Submissions are to be posted to: **Schools Liaison Officer, Girton College, Cambridge, CB3 0JG to arrive by Friday 16th March 2018 with a completed cover sheet.** Teachers must sign this to certify that the submission is the entrant's own work and does not replicate anything submitted for examination.

The cover sheet and further information can be found on the Girton College website:

www.girton.cam.ac.uk/undergraduates/for-schools/humanities-writing-competition

Prizes

The prize fund, which may be divided between several winners, consists of £100 cash and £200-worth of books from Cambridge University Press, each prize to be shared between the winning entrants and their schools. (Funding is provided by the kind sponsorship of Cambridge University Press and Miss C. Anne Wilson, sponsor of the Wilson Bursary fund for Classics students at Girton). The prizes will be presented by the Mistress at Girton College in late April/early May 2018. Runners up will also be invited.

This year's winning entries will be put on display in the Lawrence Room, to enhance visitors' experience of our collection (subject to the entrants' approval).

Receipt of your essay will be acknowledged by email. It will not be possible to provide feedback on all the essays, nor to return them, so do ensure you keep a copy. The judges reserve the right not to award prizes if there is no entry of sufficient merit.

For further information, please email Frances Ballaster Harriss at humanities-comp@girton.cam.ac.uk.



HUMANITIES WRITING COMPETITION 2017-18 OBJECTS IN THE LAWRENCE ROOM COLLECTION



1. Tanagra athlete figure (LR 801)



‘Tanagra’ figures, dating from the third century B.C., are named after the town in Greece where they were first found in large quantities, most often in tombs. They are small terracotta human figures made in hollow moulds, brightly painted in watercolour after firing. Although they follow an older tradition of terracotta figures used as cult images or votive objects, they may have been used simply as ornaments.

Place: Boeotia, Greece

Date: B.C. 300-201

Acquisition Source: Hon. Evelyn Samaurez

Dimensions: Height 20.06 cm

2. Bull figurine (LR 813)

Pottery bull figurine, originally part of a Red Polished Ware III jug. Bull figures were much used in Bronze Age Cyprus, both as religious symbols and in functional and decorative forms in animal-shaped ceramic objects: the character of the bull in Cyprus seems to be generally more placid and even playful than its depictions in other parts of the ancient world.

Place: Cyprus

Date: B.C. 2100-2000



3. Boar Figurine (LR 779)

Animal figurines in Greece could be votive (found in temples) or funerary (found in tombs) but may also have been used simply as children’s toys.

Place: Lake Copais, Boeotia, Greece

Date: B. C. 400-301

Acquisition Source: Ethelwyn Pearson? Dug up near Lake Copais c. 1895.

Dimensions: Length 12 cm; height 6.7 cm



4. Egyptian 'tomb group' figurine (LR 408)



A wooden painted figure of a walking woman, carved in low relief in the round. Arms, lower legs and feet are missing. This is presumed to have been included in a burial, but its function is somewhat mysterious.

Place: Egypt

Date: B.C. 2055-1985 (Dynasty XI)

Acquisition Source: Gwendolen Crewdson, 1918-19, 'from a tomb group', Cairo Museum, 1905

Dimensions: Height 15.8 cm

5. Roman glass cremation urn



Square glass cinerary urn, made in the Rhineland, containing cremated human remains. This was found at Girton College, part of a Roman cemetery that was subsequently re-used as an early Anglo-Saxon burial ground. Recent excavations during the development of the 'North-West Cambridge' site nearby indicate that this was part of a large 'suburban' extension of the Roman town of Cambridge.

Place: Romano-British cemetery at Girton College

Date: A.D. 100-150

Acquisition Source: Excavation at Girton College, 1881

Dimensions: Height 25.9 cm; rim diameter 9.2 cm; base diameter 12.4 cm

To look up the full entries of these and other items in the Lawrence Room Catalogue online, see

<http://www.lrc.girton.cam.ac.uk/>

For further information about the Lawrence Room, with links to information leaflets, see

<http://www.girton.cam.ac.uk/lawrenceroom>