



The Friends of the ANU Classics Museum present

**Dr Michael Turner
Senior Curator Nicholson Museum
University of Sydney**

***Volcanoes, Vases and Vanity:
the Extraordinary Life of Sir William Hamilton***

Sir William Hamilton is best remembered as the great cuckold, the victim of the tempestuous affair between his considerably younger second wife Emma and the great British naval hero, Horatio Nelson. What is often forgotten however, is that Emma was the third of Sir William's great passions, the other two being antiquities and volcanoes. The British ambassador in Naples from 1764 to 1800, he was ideally placed to indulge these other passions with Mount Vesuvius and the recently discovered Pompeii both on his doorstep. In the process he was to become a central figure in the rise of Neo Classicism in the late 18th century, a movement that was to profoundly influence everything from art, architecture and philosophy to interior design, fashion and literature. A great collector, author, and antiquarian, he was admired by Goethe and became the most important influence on Josiah Wedgwood. It was he who sold a very famous, small blue and white glass vase, previously in the collection of the Barberini family, to a certain Lady Portland



Sir William Hamilton, 1775
by David Allan © National Portrait Gallery, London

**Haydon-Allen Lecture Theatre (The Tank) at ANU
Thursday, 2 October 2008 at 8pm**

Michael Turner became Senior Curator of the Nicholson Museum in 2005. He has curated several major exhibitions including two on the secret lives of antiquities in the museum (*Unearthed Tales: Treasures of the Nicholson Museum* and *Unearthed Tales 2: A Fascination With Death*), on Lebanon (*Lebanon: Ancient & Modern*), on Roman coins (*Faces of Power: Imperial Portraiture on Roman Coins*), on Sigmund Freud (*Sigmund Freud's Collection: An Archaeology of the Mind*) and most recently on the rise of Neo Classicism in the 18th century (*Classical Fantasies: the Art of South Italy*) [See Over]. He is currently working on an exhibition to mark the bicentenary of the birth of Sir Charles Nicholson (*Charles Nicholson: The Man & His Museum 1808-2008*) due to open in November) and on *Unearthed Tales 3* (due to open in April 2009). He is also working on 3 books, one of which, written together with Alexander Cambitoglou, is the first Australian *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum*, due for publication in December

This lecture is free and open to the public.

Supper will be served in the Classics Museum after the lecture.

Museum merchandise will be on sale.

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