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ARTANCIENT



# TIMELINE

by

ARTANCIENT

4.5 billion years, 54 objects



### **The Sun Ignites**

Somewhere in the Milky Way a mass of gas and dust collapses in on itself.

4.56 Billion Years Ago (BYA)

### **Earth Forms**

Rocky debris accumulates, forming the first planets. Some leftovers are trapped between Mars and Jupiter, creating the asteroid belt; the source of nearly all meteorites.

4.54 BYA

### **Sculptural iron meteorite**

Coarse octahedrite.

Impacted Sikhote-Alin mountain range, Russia, 1947.

28.79 kg

### **The Moon Form**

4.53 BYA

### **Oceans Form**

4.4 BYA

### **Lunar meteorite**

Anorthositic breccia.

Impact date uncertain. Recovered  
from the Sahara Desert.

277 g

Classified and recorded by  
Dr. Anthony Irving as NWA10495.





"This anorthositic breccia was ejected from the lunar surface by a tremendous impact. After spending a few million years in space, the Earth's gravity caught up with it. The rock plunged through the atmosphere, broke up and fell as a shower of dark stones over northern Africa. Fierce winds sandblasted the rock and removed the fusion crust, forming this beautiful desert-polished piece."

**Dr. Alan Rubin**

### **Life**

The building blocks of life may have been seeded from extraterrestrial worlds.

4.1 - 3.5 BYA

### **Murchison meteorite**

Carbonaceous chondrite, rich in extraterrestrial organic compounds.

Impacted Victoria, Australia, 1969.

9.65 g

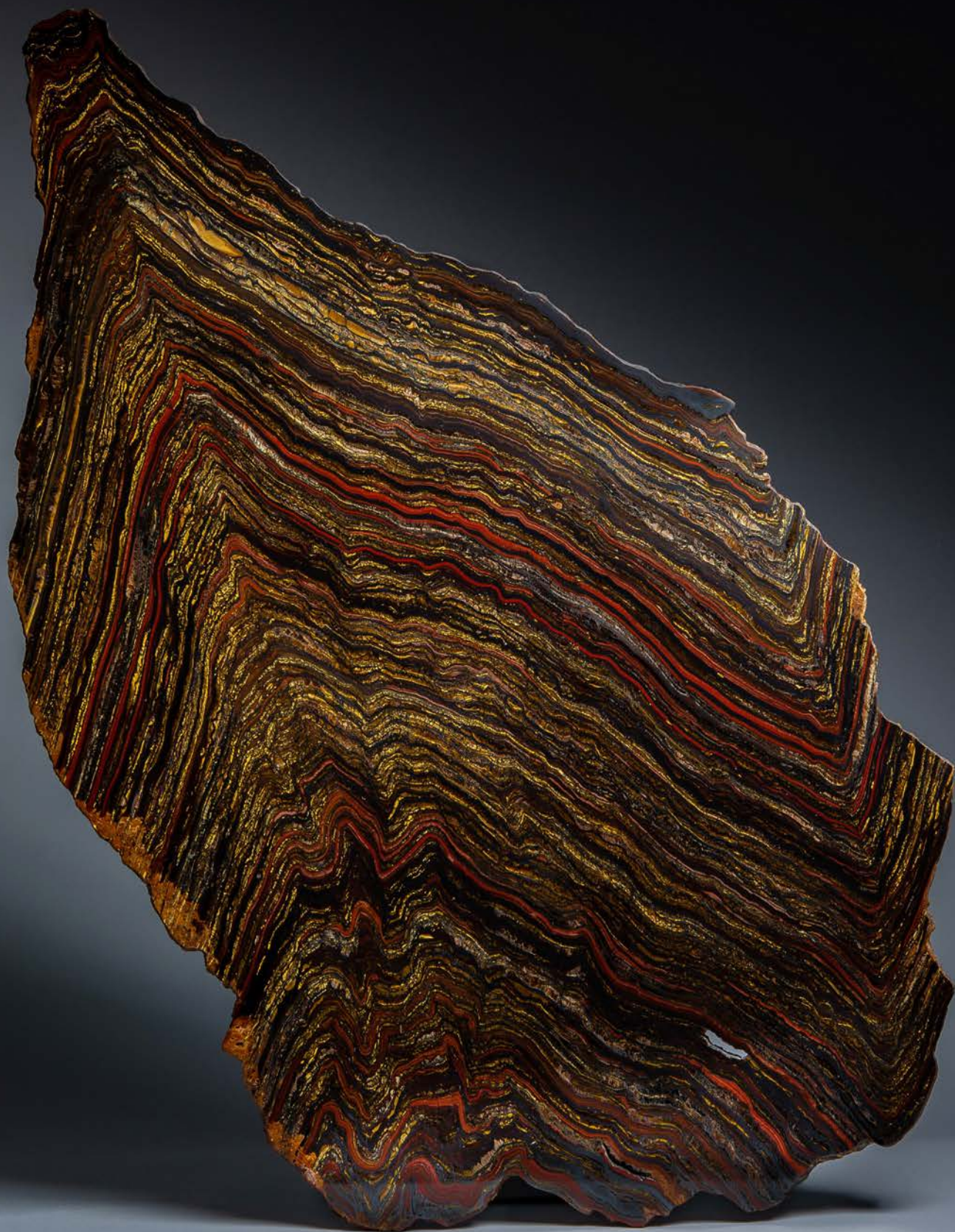
Ex. American Meteorite Laboratory. With original Glenn Huss specimen container.



"I should infer from analogy that probably all the organic beings which have ever lived on this Earth have descended from some one primordial form, into which life was first breathed."

**Charles Darwin, *On the Origin of Species***





## Great Oxygenation Event

Cyanobacteria, simple photosynthesising lifeforms, have now produced so much oxygen that it can no longer be contained within Earth's early oceans. It begins to escape into the atmosphere, poisoning nearly all anaerobic life but paving the way for oxygen dependent lifeforms to develop.

2.4 BYA

## Multicellular life

1.7 - 1.2 BYA

## Banded iron formation

Alternating haematite, red jasper and tiger's eye.

Formed 2.9 billion years ago during the 'mass rusting' of the oceans.

29 inches.

From the Ord Ranges, nr. Port Hedland, Western Australia.

### **First plants and animals**

934 - 750 Million Years Ago  
(MYA)

### **Body symmetry and brains**

Forward motion leads to a reorganisation of animal bodies, with sensory cells at the front and a central nerve cord to carry information. This innovation creates a new body plan, with midline symmetry.

600 MYA

"In all the arts it is symmetry that gives pleasure, preserving unity and making the whole beautiful."

**St. Augustine**



### **Cambrian Explosion**

In the Cambrian Period a massive diversification of life on Earth occurs. This apparently sudden appearance of complex life has been called an evolutionary "big bang".

510 MYA

### **Vertebrates reach land**

Vertebrates emerge from the oceans, heralding the age of land-dwelling creatures.

395 - 375 MYA

### **First trees**

380 MYA

### **Fossilised seed fern (*Neuropteris dussartii*)**

Upper Carboniferous, 359 - 300 million years before present.

23 1/2 inches.

Recovered from the Piesberg quarry, NW Germany.

### Reptiles Evolve

310 MYA

### Dinosaurs

On land, reptiles diversify to spectacular effect. The largest creatures to walk the Earth evolve; from giant herbivores to ferocious predators.

231 - 66 MYA

### *Allosaurus*

The apex predator of the Jurassic.

155 MYA

### Fossilised *Allosaurus* claw

Late Jurassic, 150 million years before present.

4 1/2 inches.

Discovered in Big Horn County, Wyoming, USA.





***Archaeopteryx***

150 MYA

**Flowering plants**

Flowering plants become widespread.

140 -120 MYA

**Continents drifting**

By the late Cretaceous the continents resemble their current form, although North America is split by an enormous sea called the Western Interior Seaway.

75 MYA

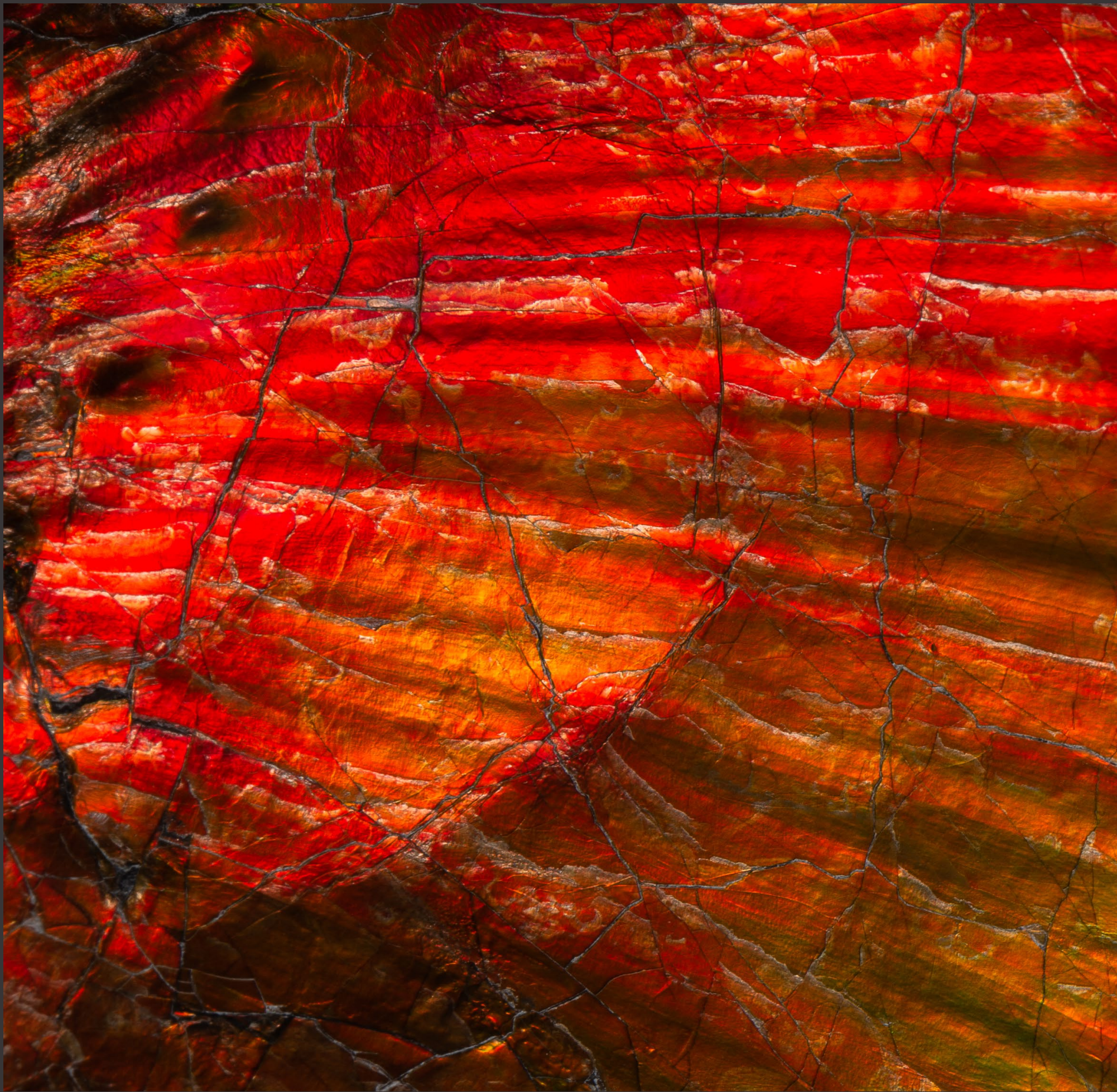
**Ammonite (*Placenticerus costatum*)**

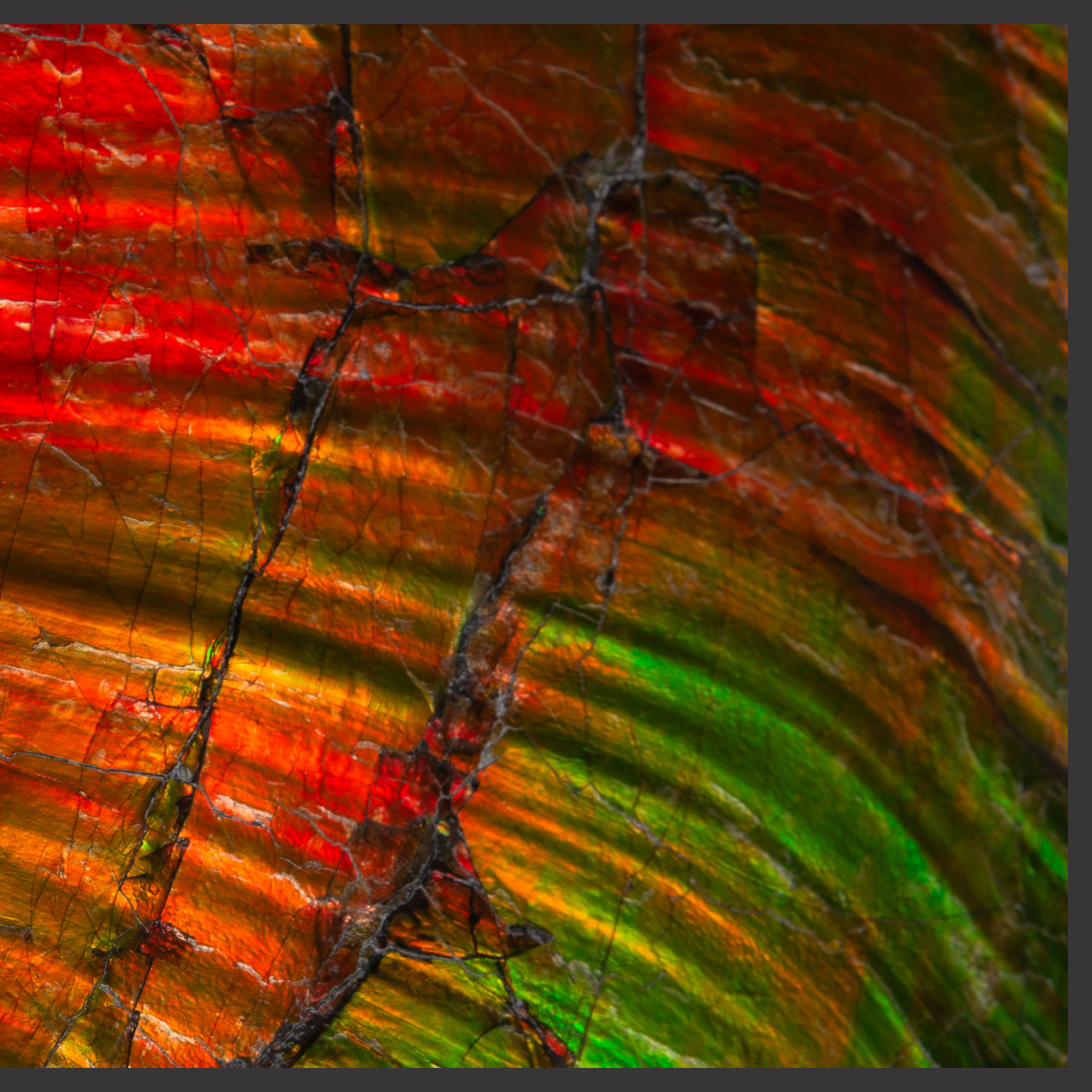
Fossilised Ammonite (Ammolite).

Late Cretaceous, 75 million years before present.

22 inches.

From the Bearpaw formation of the prehistoric Western Interior Seaway. Excavated in Alberta, Canada.





***Tyrannosaurus rex***

68 MYA

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***Tyrannosaurus rex* tooth**

Late Cretaceous, 67 million years  
before present.

3 inches.

Hell Creek Formation, Powder  
River County, Montana.





***Triceratops***

68 MYA

**Luke Jr., a fossilised partial  
*Triceratops prorsus* skull**

Late Cretaceous, 67 million years  
before present.

86 inches.

Discovered by Luke Phelps in  
Garfield County, Montana,  
November 2017.



### **KT extinction event**

An enormous meteorite strikes the Earth, causing the extinction of 75% of all species, including the dinosaurs. The great age of reptiles is over and the age of mammals is about to begin.

66 MYA

### **First primate**

The earliest known primate, *Altiatlasius koulchii*, lives at this time.

60 MYA

### **A complete "re-entry" tektite**

Olive-green glass.

Formed from vitrified Earth following a cataclysmic impact.

Impact date circa 800,000 years before present.

Dia. 7/8 inch.

Discovered in the Flinders Ranges, South Australia.

**First rodent**

60 MYA

**Eocene**

During the early-mid Eocene, much of the Earth resembles a tropical rainforest, with palm trees found as far north as Alaska.

55 MYA

**First caniforms**

Fossils of doglike creatures dating to this point have been found in North America.

40 MYA

**Fossilised giant lily**

Eocene, 50 million years before present.

27 1/2 x 23 inches.

From the Green River formation, Wyoming, USA.





### **Grasslands expand**

Grasses, which include the ancestors of modern cereal crops and bamboo, evolved in the late Cretaceous but have now spread, replacing forests. This change of habitat greatly reduces the food supply for megafauna such as *Megacerops*, whereas other, better adapted mammals flourish.

20 MYA

### **Fossilised *Megacerops* skull**

Late Eocene 38 - 34 million years before present.

29 inches.

Found in Pennington County, South Dakota, late 1970s - early 1980s.



### **Giant sharks**

In 1667 Nicolaus Steno was the first to propose that "tongue stones" were in fact teeth, from a giant shark. This observation led to the understanding that fossils must be evidence of previous life on Earth. We now know that the shark in question was a Megalodon.

20 MYA

### **Walking upright**

Some tree-climbing apes begin to walk upright.

7-6 MYA

### **Megalodon (*Charcharocles megalodon*) tooth**

25 - 2 million years before present.

5 7/8 inches.

Georgia, USA.

"Beautiful is what we see.  
More beautiful is what we  
understand. Most beautiful is  
what we cannot comprehend."

**Nicolaus Steno**



***Australopithecus afarensis***

The earliest hominid known to have made stone tools inhabits the forests and savannas of East Africa.

4-3 MYA

***Homo erectus***

These hunter gatherers discover how to make fire and develop advanced stone tools.

2 MYA

***Homo antecessor***

1.2 MYA

**Axe**

Knapped flint.

Lower Paleolithic, circa 600,000 - 500,000 BC.

7 1/4 inches.

Found on Happisburgh beach, Norfolk, June 7th 2018. Recorded under the Portable Antiquities Scheme (NMS-399665).





***Homo heidelbergensis***

600,000 - 300,000 Years Ago  
(YA)

**Axe**

Knapped flint.

Lower Paleolithic, circa 400,000 -  
150,000 BC.

7 3/4 inches.

Found at Keswick Mill gravel pit,  
Norfolk, 1959. Subsequently in the  
collection of L.G. Kett. Illustrated  
by G. I. Moss at the Norwich  
Castle Museum, 1961.

### ***Homo neanderthalensis***

Neanderthals are associated with smaller flint tools, rather than large hand axes. They shared many characteristics with modern humans and may have interbred. Some are known to have collected shells and raptor talons.

400,000 - 40,000 YA

### **Neanderthal tools**

Flaked jasper.

Mousterian, circa 60,000 years ago.

2 7/8 inches, longest.

Ex. collection of M. Marchet, subsequently Celtic & Prehistoric Museum, Ireland.



### ***Homo sapiens***

Language, collective learning, and creativity characterise this new species of human.

200,000 YA

### **Ice Age**

At the end of the last Glacial Period, *Homo sapiens*, still hunter gatherers, survive as the only hominin species and are to be found in almost every habitable part of the globe.

110,000 - 12,000 YA

### **Agricultural revolution**

Human hunter-gatherers begin to cultivate grasses. Initially this occurs in the Fertile Crescent, where wheat and barley are indigenous. Humans move from a life of foraging to one based on food surplus and permanent settlement.

9,000 YA

### **Greek Neolithic idols**

Terracotta and marble.

6th - 4th Millennium BC.

3 1/2 inches and 4 1/4 inches.

Ex. European and American collections, prior to 2000.





"Homo sapiens: a tiny twig on an improbable branch of a contingent limb on a fortunate tree."

**Stephen Jay Gould, Paleontologist**

**"Proto city" of Çatal Höyük**

7300 BC

### **Copper Age in Cyprus**

Cypriot farmers work the copper deposits they find on the surface of the Earth into tools and jewellery.

3800 BC

### **Cruciform idol**

Picrolite.

Middle Chalcolithic, 3800 - 2500 BC.

1 1/2 inches.

Ex. Collection of the anthropologist Desmond Morris, prior to 1985.





### **First cities in Mesopotamia**

By 2900 BC, at its height, the city of Uruk on the Euphrates River has a population of 50 - 80,000 people. Cities along the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers are described as forming the Sumerian civilisation. The age of agrarian civilisation emerges.

3500 BC

### **Predynastic Egypt**

3500 BC

### **Fishtail knife**

Knapped flint.

Naqada I, early 4th millennium BC.

4 1/2 inches.

Maurice Bouvier Collection, acquired prior to 1959.



### **Agriculture in Scandinavia**

While South Eastern Europe is experimenting with the revolutionary new material of copper, flint axes are still being made in Scandinavia to clear forests for farmland.

3500 BC

### **Polished axes**

Knapped and polished flint.

Scandinavian Neolithic, circa 3000 - 2000 BC.

Tallest 14 1/2 inches.

Ex. European collections, prior to 1970.

## Egypt Unites

Upper and Lower Egypt are united and Egypt's Dynasty I commences. Exploitation of the fertile land around the Nile creates the conditions for one of mankind's most extraordinary and enduring civilisations.

3200 - 3000 BC

## Writing

Using a pointed stylus to make impressions in soft clay, language can be expressed in the form of symbols.

3100 BC

## Minoan bronze age

This Aegean culture has been described as the first European civilisation.

2700 BC

## Proto-cuneiform tablet, with an account of monthly rations

Sun baked clay.

Late Uruk period, circa 3100 - 3000 BC.

3 inches.

Ex. Collection of Prof. Hans and Marie-Louise Erlenmeyer, acquired 1950s.





"Because the messenger's mouth was heavy and he couldn't repeat (the message), the lord of Kulaba patted some clay and put words on it, like a tablet. Until then, there had been no putting words on clay."

**From the Sumerian Epic poem Enmerkar and the lord of Aratta.**



### **Great Pyramid**

Great Pyramid at Giza constructed.

2560 BC

### **Akkadian Empire**

Peak of the Akkadian Empire:  
arguably the world's first empire.

2200 BC

### **Pepi II**

Possibly the world's longest  
reigning monarch.

2278 BC

### **Relief with offering-bearers**

Carved and painted limestone.

Egyptian Old Kingdom, 6th  
Dynasty, circa 2323 - 2150 BC.

19 inches.

Ex. Elizabeth Stafford collection,  
acquired 1954.

#### **4.2 kiloyear event**

A severe climatic event leads to the collapse of multiple civilizations, including Egypt's Old Kingdom and the Akkadian Empire.

2200 - 2100 BC

#### **Middle Kingdom**

Mentuhotep II reunifies Egypt after the collapse of the Old Kingdom and First Intermediate Period.

2055 BC

#### **Early shabti**

Carved serpentine.

Middle Kingdom, Dynasty XII,  
1981 - 1802 BC.

3 3/4 inches.

Ex. Harer collection, acquired  
early 1980s.



### **Island of Copper**

Cyprus becomes the world's largest exporter of copper for use in bronze production.

2000 BC

### **Plank idol**

Red polished ware pottery with lime-filled incisions.

Early - Middle Bronze Age, circa 2100 - 1800 BC.

10 inches.

From the collection of Charles Gillet (1879 - 1972), acquired prior to 1965. Subsequently in the collection of the anthropologist Desmond Morris.





"Behold, now I have sent 500 talents of copper to you as a present ... Send your messenger along with my messenger quickly and all the copper that you desire I will send you, my brother."

**Letter from the king of Alashiya (Cyprus) to Pharaoh Akhenaten.**

### **Minoan Eruption of Thera**

One of the largest volcanic eruptions in history causes regional devastation.

1600 BC

### **Blossom bowl**

Carved serpentine.

1600 - 1450 BC.

Dia. 5 1/2 inches.

Ex. Charles Gillet (1879-1972) collection.



## **New Kingdom**

Egypt reaches the peak of its power.

1550 BC

## **Tutankhamun**

1332 BC

## **Shabti for Iweferbaku**

Carved wood with remnants of gold and blue gesso and Egyptian blue.

New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty, 1550 - 1295 BC.

9 1/2 inches.

Ex. British private collection, acquired 1930s.





### **Ramesses**

Ramesses the Great ascends to the throne and embarks on ambitious building projects and military campaigns.

1279 BC

### **Relief fragment with cartouches for Ramesses the Great**

Limestone.

Circa 1279 - 1213 BC.

11 3/4 inches.

Ex. Collection of Rugby school,  
England, gifted by Matthew  
Holbeche Bloxam (1805 - 1888).



**Trojan war**

1260 BC

**Bronze Age collapse**

The collapse of Mycenaean Greece heralds the beginning of the Greek Dark Age. In Egypt the New Kingdom is also in decline.

1200 -1150 BC

**Ceremonial Sword**

Bronze.

Northwest Persia, Iron Age, 1300 - 800 BC.

23 1/2 inches.

Ex. French collection.

### **Third Intermediate Period & Decline**

Egypt is mostly divided in the centuries after the New Kingdom. It never reaches its former glory, being controlled by a succession of Nubian, Persian, Greek and eventually Roman rulers.

1070 BC - 246 BC

### **The Polis**

Greece emerges from the Dark Ages and small settlements, such as those of Athens and Argos, begin to coalesce and urbanise. The polis, or city state, develops as a political unit. Greece's population doubles in the 8th Century and colonies are formed in South Italy and elsewhere.

800 BC

### **Relief depicting a Nile god**

Granite.

Ptolemaic period, circa 285–246 BC.

32 inches.

With Maurice Nahman, acquired 1910. Subsequently with Ernest Brummer, purchased from the above in Cairo, 1928.





### **Aegean trade**

Commerce flourishes in the Aegean and islands such as Aegina are major trading posts.

750 BC

### **Hoplite**

The hoplite, or citizen-soldier, is the most important infantry unit in Archaic and Classical Greece. Most wealthy citizens are expected to purchase their own armour and are called upon to fight in times of need.

675 BC

### **Corinthian helmet**

Bronze.

Archaic Greece, circa 650 BC.

8 3/4 inches.

Ex. early 20th century collection. Subsequently Axel Guttman (1944 - 2001) collection.

"And he lifted the  
mighty helm and set it  
upon his head; and it  
shone as it were a star  
— the helm with crest  
of horse-hair ... And  
goodly Achilles made  
proof of himself in his  
armour".

**Homer, *Iliad***





### Coinage

650 - 550 BC

### Bimetallic coinage

Croesus issues the first standardised coinage in gold and silver.

550 BC

### Double siglos from Lydia

Silver.

Circa 550 BC.

10.72 g

Ex. Jean Vinchon, Paris, April 1999, Lot 212.



### **Coinage in Greece**

Aegina becomes the first state to adopt this new invention for trade.

550 BC

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### **Stater from the island of Aegina**

Silver.

Circa 480 BC.

12.30 g

Ex. Bank Leu 79, 31st October 2000, lot 578.



### **Democracy**

Cleisthenes reforms the constitution of Athens, setting it on a democratic footing.

508 BC

### **Battle of Marathon**

490 BC

### **Battle of Salamis**

480 BC

### **Tetradrachms of Athens.**

Silver.

Circa 490 BC & 454-404 BC.

17.35 g & 17.20 g

Ex. Jean Vinchon, Paris, 20th December 1976, lot 37 & British private collection.

"Forward, you men of Greece.  
Free your native land. Free  
your children, your wives, the  
temples... Now you are fighting  
for everything!"

Aeschylus, *The Persians*





**Peloponnesian War**

431 BC

**Athens defeated at Syracuse**

Spartan/Syracusan victory marks the beginning of the end for Athens in the Peloponnesian War.

413 BC

**Syracusan decadrachm,  
signed by Kimon**

Silver.

405 - 400 BC.

43.50 g

Ex. Bibliothèque nationale, Paris,  
acquired prior to 1878.



### **The rise of Macedon**

Philip II comes to power in Macedonia, reforms the army and eventually establishes hegemony over Greece after the Battle of Chaeronea.

359 - 338 BC

### **Tetradrachm in the name of Alexander the Great**

Silver.

323 - 319 BC.

17.20 g

Ex. Collection of Henry de Nanteuil de la Norville (1876 - 1941).

### **Death of Alexander**

Alexander the Great dies, leaving his enormous empire, stretching from the Adriatic sea to the Indus River, to be split up among his successors, the Diadochi.

323 BC

### **Rome**

Rome emerges as the dominant power on the Italian peninsula.

282 BC

### **Stater, issued under Philip III, bearing the portrait of Alexander**

Gold.

Circa 322 - 319 BC.

8.60 g

Ex. A. Tkalec, Zurich, 29th February, 2000, lot 36.



### **Great Library of Alexandria**

280 BC

### **Punic wars**

A series of conflicts between the Roman Republic and the Carthaginian Empire result in over one million dead. Rome also defeats the Seleucid ruler Antiochus III during the Macedonian Wars. By 146 BC Rome has control over the Mediterranean basin.

264 - 146 BC

### **Ptolemy III**

The Ptolemaic kingdom reaches its height. Ptolemy III expands the library of Alexandria and promotes religious freedom, constructing the Serapeum at Alexandria.

246 - 222 BC

### **Portrait of Ptolemy III**

Marble.

3rd century BC.

14 inches.

With Joseph Altounian prior to 1922. Acquired by Ernest Brummer from the above.





**Crisis of the Roman Republic**

134 BC

**Julius Caesar assassinated**

Internal confrontations and political manoeuvres characterise the late Republic. Conflicts involving Julius Caesar and Pompey lead to a civil war, the aftermath of which effectively ends the Republic and leads to the Imperial age.

44 BC

**Augustus**

27 BC

**Denarius celebrating the assassination of Julius Caesar**

Plated silver.

Northern Greece, circa 43 - 42 AD.

3.42 g

Ex. Swiss collection, prior to 1970. Published in Cahn, *EIDibus MARTiis*, Q. Tic. 18, 1989, 29a.

**Claudius invades Britain**

43 AD

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**Inscription for Bassus, a  
veteran of the Roman Army,  
retired to Britain**

Carved purbeck marble.

Mid 1st - Early 2nd century AD.

35 1/2 inches.

Found in Dorchester in 2016, whilst  
undertaking building works.

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"Most of Britain is marshland because it is flooded by the continual ocean tides. The barbarians usually swim in these swamps or run along in them, submerged up to the waist. Of course, they are practically naked and do not mind the mud because they are unfamiliar with the use of clothing... Because of the thick mist which rises from the marshes, the atmosphere in this region is always gloomy."

**Herodian, 3rd century**





### **The Great Revolt**

Jewish rebels take control of Jerusalem and set up a revolutionary government. The future Emperor Vespasian and his son, Titus, are sent to quash the revolt.

66 AD

### **Shekel from year 4 of the Great Revolt**

Silver.

Circa 69 - 70 AD.

14.00 g.

Ex. Collection of Pastor Sahlberg, acquired 1906.

**Cult of Serapis gains  
popularity**

Emperor Vespasian sees a vision  
when visiting the Serapeum in  
Alexandria.

69 AD

**Monumental head of Serapis**

Marble.

2nd century AD.

17 1/8 inches.

Ex. Hôtel Drouot, Paris, Jozon-  
Rabourdin-Choppin de Janvry,  
February 23rd, 1981.





**Fall of Jerusalem and  
destruction of the Second  
Temple**

70 AD

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**Sestertius of Titus, struck to  
commemorate victory in the  
Jewish war**

Orichalcum.

72 AD.

26.85 g

European private collection,  
formed in the mid 20th century.

"Deeply as one must mourn [the Temple] ... Yet there is no escape from fate, for works of art and places, any more than for living beings."

**Josephus, War**



IMP CAESAR DIVI HADRIANI F DIVI TRAIANI  
PARTHICI NEPOS DIVI NERVAE PRONEPOS  
TAEIUS HADRIANUS ANTONINUS AVO  
PULVS PONT MAX TRIB POTV IMP II COS IIII P  
HVSVM MILITAV ERVNT IN CLASSE PRAETORIA  
RAVENNATE QVAE EST SVB VALERIO PAETO  
SEX ET VICINTI STIPENDI SE MERITIS DI  
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QVAE FIXA EST ROMAE IN MVRO POST  
TEMPI DIVI AVG AD MINERVAM

**Roman Empire reaches its maximum extent under Trajan**

117 AD

**Construction of Hadrian's Wall**

122 AD

### **Antoninus Pius**

Pius' reign coincides with one of the most peaceful periods in Rome's history.

138 - 161 AD

**Two part fleet diploma for L. Petronio, issued on his discharge from the Roman Navy and granting him citizenship**

Bronze.

143 AD.

6 1/4 inches.

Reputedly found in Bulgaria in the 20th century.

TI CLAUDI

F. ATTI

L. PVLLI

P. ATTI

M. SENTIN

TI IVLLI

C. IVLLI

MENANDRI

SEVERI

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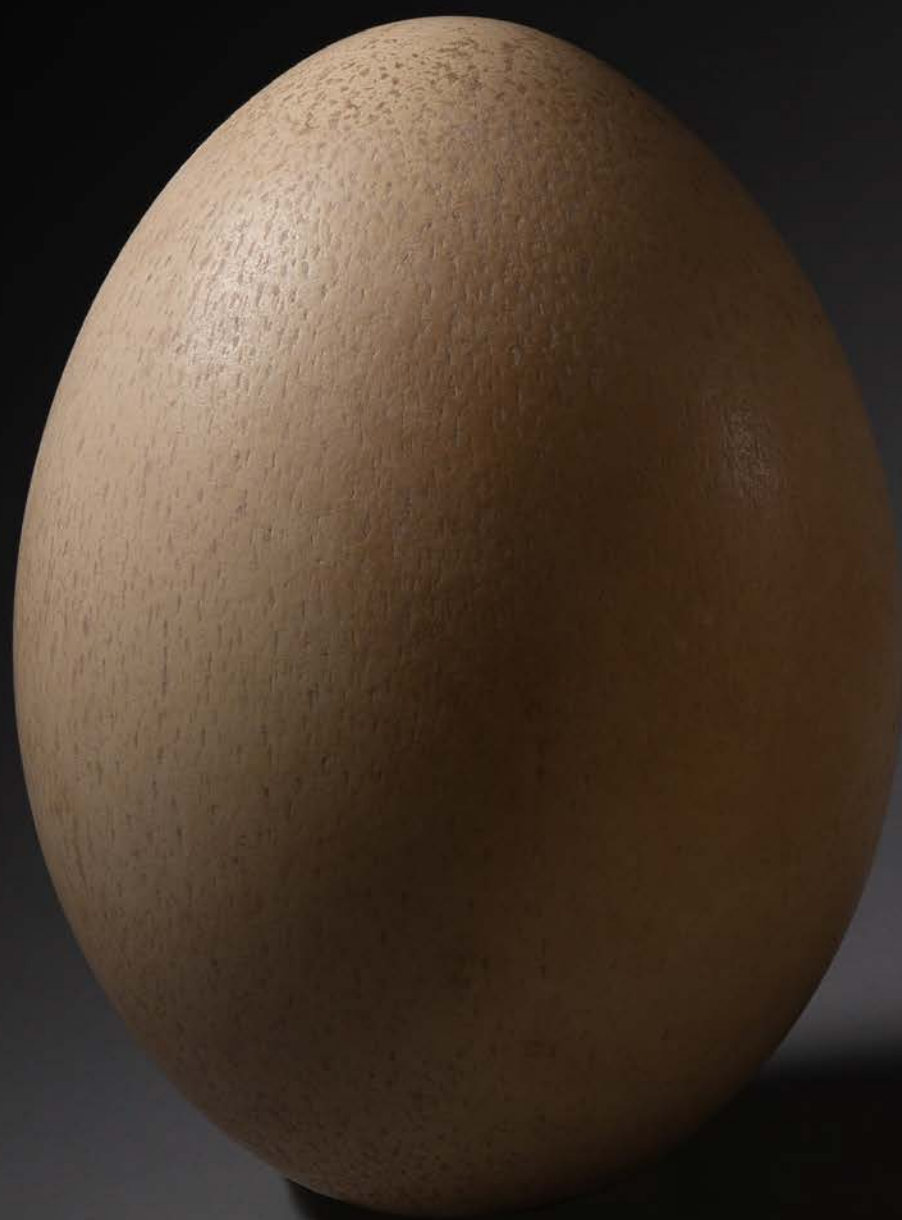
### **Anthropocene**

A newly proposed geological epoch characterised by human impact on the environment.

**Three intact eggs from the elephant bird (*Aepyornis maximus*). Extinct circa 17th century.**

Egg shell.

French private collections, acquired early 20th century.





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