

# SHEDDING NEW LIGHT ON THE PAST

July 29, 2011 Kathryn E. Piquette Day of Archaeology, Day of Archaeology 2011, Digital Archaeology, Egypt, Museum Archaeology Abydos, Archaeology, Bat, Battlefield Palette, British Museum, Cosmetic palette, Database Enhancement for Impact, Digital Equipment, digital imaging, Egypt, Hunters Palette, Imaging, job applications, Oxford, Predynastic Egypt, RTI dome, technology process, UK Arts and Humanities Research Council, University of Oxford I

I'm finally getting down to writing my first post of the day! I am occupied with several tasks today which capture the essence of my past few weeks, basically doing museum and desk-based archaeology:

- . Finishing up various loose ends for a 1-year research project at the University of Oxford I was working on until recently: *"Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI) System for Ancient Documentary Artefacts"* (RTISAD);
- . Submitting job applications (and trying not to get too depressed about the lack of jobs in my field of Egyptian Archaeology!);
- . Taking advantage of the time I now have to address my publication backlog (important for the success of no. 2).

I'll write a bit about about no. 1 now, and then must get back to drafting a chapter for a publication on the development of early Egyptian writing/art. [RTISAD](#) involves some super exciting developments in the digital imaging of cultural heritage. The RTISAD project is a collaborative endeavour funded by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council in 2010 via the Digital Equipment and Database Enhancement for Impact (DEDEFI) scheme. A press release about our project results can be found [here](#) and a more detailed explanation of RTI is found on our project partner's (Cultural Heritage Imaging) [website](#). My task at Oxford was to test the RTI lighting dome on various inscribed material types. I had the fantastic opportunity of working with Ashmolean collections, imaging cuneiform inscribed clay tablets, early Egyptian and other objects (for a pic of the RTI dome and some results click [here](#)).

I also spent a week at the British Museum where I imaged the so-called [Battlefield Palette](#) (or Lion Palette) and [Hunters Palette](#), 1st Dynasty inscribed [labels](#) and more.

RTI has been brilliant for my research on early Egyptian graphical culture as technology process and material practice. For the chapter I now need to go work on I have been analysing surface marks on the palettes to understand how the production process such as evidence for tool types and the techniques the artisen(s) used to produce these incredible scenes. For now I will leave you with a close up of the Battlefield Palette (right) on which I have found evidence for recarving.



*PTM detail of the Battlefield Palette, perhaps from Abydos, EgyptLate Predynastic period, c.3150 BCE, EA 20791, © The Trustees of the British Museum*