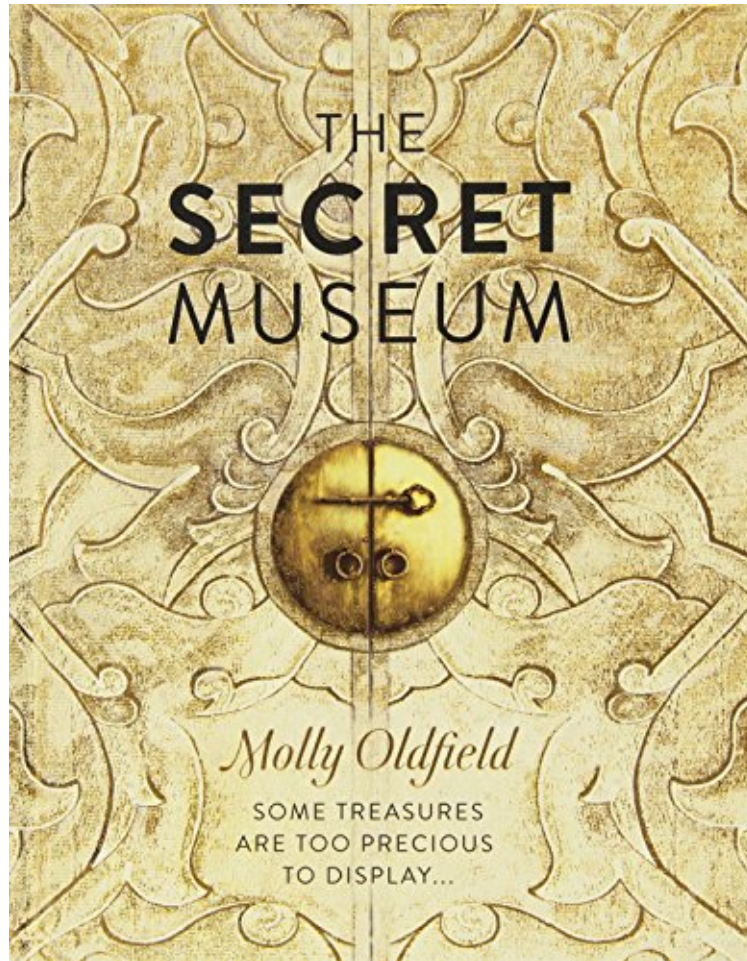


[Free and download] The Secret Museum: Some Treasures Are Too Precious to Display...

## The Secret Museum: Some Treasures Are Too Precious to Display...

*Molly Oldfield*

*ePub | \*DOC | audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#860529 in Books Firefly Books 2013-09-05Ingredients: Example IngredientsOriginal language:EnglishPDF # 1 10.00 x 1.13 x 8.00l, 2.80 #File Name: 1770852573352 pages | File size: 47.Mb

**Molly Oldfield : The Secret Museum: Some Treasures Are Too Precious to Display...** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Secret Museum: Some Treasures Are Too Precious to Display....:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The other issue is that most of these items will never be put on display so what a great way to access knowledge with these littBy birdiebirdThis is the book we use when we know we have a wait such as a doctor's appointment. We keep it in the car so that we always have something interesting to learn. The stories on each item are a page or two and we haven't found one that doesn't fascinate. The other issue is that most of these items will never be put on display so what a great way to access knowledge with these little thumbnail sketches on such a variety of objects that sit in the vaults of museums. We have also used this book for the gift that will work for almost anyone who is curious.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Style and contents are both terrific. A must read if you are interested in ...By CustomerStyle and contents are both terrific. A

must read if you are interested in historical information. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I've recommended it to all my friends  
By Elise Hopkins  
So interesting. I've recommended it to all my friends. Every page something new.

60 unseen artifacts from the world's best museums. In Manhattan, priceless books sit on rows of shelves under traffic-jammed streets; at the Museum of Sacred Art in Brazil, a 17th century bejeweled processional cross is squirreled away under the floor; body bags in Washington protect spacesuits covered in moon dust; and in an unvisited aircraft hangar sits Auguste Piccard's extraordinary invention, the balloon gondola. In fact, a great many of the world's most precious objects are kept in secret locations, protected from public view and safe from harmful conditions. Too fragile to be handled or exposed, too likely to be stolen, or too big to display, they hide in secure darkness or locked rooms, waiting for an obsessive treasure hunter to find them. Museum enthusiast and researcher Molly Oldfield is just that. Consumed by curiosity about what is behind the closed doors of museums' back rooms, she spent two years touring the world in search of the most extraordinary inventions, legacies and artifacts hidden from the public. She has curated the best of what she found into this remarkable collection. The Secret Museum reveals sixty unseen artifacts whose stories touch all five continents, for example: An original Gutenberg Bible printed on vellum in the Morgan Library and Museum in New York City A piece of Newton's apple tree at the Royal Society in London, England The artist's sketchbooks at the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam Charles Dickens' favorite feline letter opener at the New York Public Library Vladimir Nabokov's cabinet of butterfly genitalia at Harvard University Logbook of the Kon-Tiki expedition in Oslo, Norway Livingstone and Stanley's hats at the Royal Geographical Society Christmas telegram from double agent Little Fritz aka Agent Zigzag, at Bletchley Park, the top secret World War II MI6 decoding location Delightful illustrations accompany Molly's descriptions and the lively stories of how she came to see the artifacts. Like the very best mornings spent exploring a museum, The Secret Museum is enlightening and enormously good fun.

A boundlessly fascinating inventory of sixty never-before-seen "treasures too precious to display," culled from the archives and secret storage locations of some of the world's top cultural institutions. (Maria Popova Brain Pickings.com 2013-09-30)The Secret Museum is a collection of stories, not only of 60 strange and interesting objects but also of the museums that house them and the collectors and curators who care for them. (Oldfield) shares her enthusiasm for rare, forgotten, nostalgic, grisly, and beautiful objects... She has a knack for finding little-known stories, such as the history of Vladimir Nabokov's butterfly collection or exactly how fragile space suits are stored... Each entry can be understood on its own, so the volume is a pleasure to dip into... An excellent work for any museum or library patron, younger reader or adult, who is a history buff. (Jessica Spears, Monroe College Library, Bronx, NY Library Journal 2013-12-15)Those who love secrets, museums or just a twisty tale of the entirely true variety will enjoy The Secret Museum. (Aaron Blanton January Magazine 2013-11-18)A treasure in itself, Oldfield's book entices readers to discover a wide variety of little-known and rarely seen artifacts that lie hidden away in vaults, warehouses and archives in zoological, anthropological, scientific, historic, literary and artistic museums around the world. In her travels, she connects with experts who provide the context needed to make the treasures come alive. In her very readable, enthusiastic, and often amusing style, Oldfield describes each discovery in a way that takes it from a formal introduction to an intimate encounter... Oldfield introduces readers to objects few people outside of researchers and curators will ever see. Because of security risks, fragility, size, pricelessness or the need for a controlled environment, unless specifically ferreted out, these treasures will remain unknowns. Oldfield's collection is an absolute must for anyone with a nose for secrets and treasures. (Publishers Weekly Web Exclusive 2013-10-28)Molly Oldfield is a storyteller. She takes the reader on a journey through the hidden collections of museums around the world via a descriptive, breezy vernacular.... It is evident that this work is a product of the author's emotional, personal discovery, and yet reflects great attention to detail and fastidious research. (Laura J. Bender American Reference Books Annual 2014 2014-09-01)Though the book is mainly designed for enjoyment, the author reveals the diversity of objects in museums, the struggle of museums in many countries with inadequate resources to protect or spark conversation about the objects in their care, and the crucial but unseen function of museums as libraries and arks for the future. (Protoview 2014-09-01)(starred review) One would assume that every library displays all of its most valuable items, right? Or at least every great item is occasionally on display, right? No, as this amazing book describes, many museums keep some of their most treasured possessions locked away and out of sight.... Researcher Molly Oldfield describes all these items joyfully and reverentially. The book has a huge number of illustrations... truly a unique and wonderful book. (James W. Kalat, North Carolina State University, R Science Books and Film 2014-05-01)This delightfully informative art book guides us to forgotten treasures around the world. (Foreword s 2013-12-01)About the Author Molly Oldfield, who considers herself a museumophile, has been a writer and researcher for the landmark BBC1 program QI (Quite Interesting), presented by Stephen Fry. She writes a weekly QI column in the Saturday Telegraph and researches QI's sister Radio 4 program, The Museum of Curiosity. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. Introduction Usually there is more hidden away than there is on display. There are all sorts of reasons why. As the seed of my idea grew into a seedling, I began to unearth some of these reasons. Since 2002 I have been a writer and researcher for the

television show QI. I also co-write a weekly QI column in the Saturday Telegraph and research a Radio 4 programme called The Museum of Curiosity. One of the things I'm often asked is 'How do you find the script questions?' My answer is that I find a lot of ideas in museums -- they're a great place to go to learn, to get fresh ideas and to wander around in beauty. I used to visit the public areas, notebook in hand, scribbling down question ideas without realising that behind closed doors, most of each museum's collection is hidden away from public view. That changed when two fish curators from the Natural History Museum invited me to look around their fishy realm. I went excitedly, thinking it would be fun but really with no idea of quite how surprising and wonderful the behind the scenes fish collection would be. We spent three hours pushing open high security doors and peering into tanks to marvel at specimens like Archie the Giant Squid (and his tank mate, the even bigger Colossal Squid) who is too big to fit in the galleries, and sharks that inspired super fast Olympic swimwear. The curators showed me their favourite specimens that live amongst shelves of glass jars containing fish from every country on earth. One of those specimens, an Anglerfish couple, made it into the pages of this book. The endless shelves full of fish have been collected over the course of a century: Darwin's collection from the Beagle is on a shelf not far from some rare fish from Borneo that the current curators had picked up on a fishing trip earlier that month. The space was zinging with possibility and stories, and I caught the bug for backstage. As I emerged from the storage into the light of the museum itself, the seed of the idea for a book landed lightly upon me. I began to wonder if all museums were like this -- housing things that only researchers and curators know about? A few days passed and the seed began to unfurl its roots and I decided to call a few more museums and ask them whether they had any treasures behind the scenes that they rarely display. It turned out that they do. The Science Museum told me about a huge ex-RAF airbase in Wiltshire, filled with enormous objects they don't have space to display. The Foundling Museum has a collection of tokens, left by the mothers of foundlings, hidden away in an archive. The Van Gogh Museum, in Amsterdam, cares for Van Gogh's sketchbooks, which they have never exhibited. Writing this a year later, looking back, it seems funny that I had to ask the museums the question. Of course, almost all museums have a storage collection filled with objects that are an integral part of the collection but are rarely put out for exhibition. Usually there is more hidden away than there is on display. There are all sorts of reasons why. As the seed of my idea grew into a seedling, I began to unearth some of these reasons. Sometimes, objects are too precious to exhibit and for their own security they need to be kept securely in a vault. This was the case with a bejewelled cross that lives in a museum in Brazil, in a dangerous part of Salvador de Bahia. Very often the treasures are too fragile to show, so it is best to keep them in a climate controlled, dark environment because lengthy exposure to light would destroy them. I found four of Van Gogh's sketchbooks, in Amsterdam, and at the Peggy Guggenheim museum in Venice I saw a piece by Duchamps in the 'bunker' which is very rarely put out in the light of the galleries and lives with other fragile treasures, protected by covers, which the museum nicknames 'pyjamas'. Sometimes it's a question of size -- there isn't space for enormous objects in a museum and it's impossible to effectively display tiny, microscopic specimens. It's also a matter of not having enough space -- there isn't room to show everything. Natural History Museums keep between 90 and 99 per cent of their specimens as reserve collections, behind closed doors, ready for researchers, conservation groups, climate change specialists to delve into the vast array of species collected over the centuries across the Earth. Like the fish collection at the Natural History Museum, this is where the action happens. No matter what the subject of the museum or why each object is in a reserve collection, everything that isn't on display is valued in its own right and conserved for the future. Usually you can actually see anything you would like to, if you ask the museum to see it, but if you're at all like me perhaps you didn't know that all of these treasures were there. Once I realised quite how much lay unexplored beneath the waterline of the public space of each museum I felt compelled to take some of these treasures that lurk in cupboards, basements and vaults and lift them into the light and onto the pages of this book. The seedling of this book was fed and watered with the help of curators and conservators at each museum, keepers of the keys to the hidden realms. Each time a door was unlocked and a curator ushered me into the collection they knew so well I found myself in a world of stories, lucky enough to be with the one person on Earth who could best explain the significance of the objects that surrounded us. I picked things intuitively, selecting those I liked, or that provoked an emotional reaction in me. Sometimes curators suggested precious things in storage that they would rarely display, other times the curator and I roamed freely around the storage areas until I found something that looked interesting and the curator and I would then research the item's history. If you were to write this book you would no doubt pick totally different treasures, but these are some of the things I discovered that I think are wonderful. Whatever you're into, there ought to be something here for you: take your pick -- what about a space suit covered in moon dust? Or maybe three pieces of Mars, kept in storage at the Vatican Observatory? A letter opener made from the paw of Charles Dickens' cat? A friendship book written in by Anne Frank? Perhaps a tutu danced in by Margot Fonteyn? Delve in and have a look around. I hope you will find ideas, people, stories and treasures that will fascinate and inspire you.