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Fish oils and omega-3:
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dinner for me

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years of Byzantine art

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tuesday
March 28 2006



Classicism, this show argues, did not fade away

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4th-century tapestry
representing the goddess
Ge; below left, 3rd-century
gold bracelet; and, right,
First Swallow vase

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Swallow vase, its graceful genre scenes (including one of a group of people delighting at the sight of the first swallow of spring) eloquently establish a Classical tradition. Here are images from mythology (a half-naked Poseidon pursues an alarmed maiden; Achilles falls in love by a well) or contemporary life (musical revellers return from a symposium in the days when a symposium obviously meant

A decorative bowl from the mid-4th century celebrating the triumph of Constantius II (Constantine's son) might seem to forecast the decline of ancient tradition. A flattened frontal posture and disregard for proportion, as well as the ostentatious inclusion of Christian symbolism, could certainly be said to anticipate the new and very different sort of aesthetic so familiar

the products of a highly standardised and rigorously Classical educational programme. This would have served as a common bond between them whatever their relative ranks and however far away from each other they lived. A common mythology would have been a bond. And a shared visual heritage, diffused among the diverse peoples of an empire that stretched from

moment he looks like a drunken pagan reveller, the next he can stand in for the joyfully risen Christ. If you were the owner of his delicate little 2nd-century Roman statuette, why would you want to get rid of it when you could simply rebrand it by inscribing the sacred words of a psalm round its waist. Maybe this sort of adaptation even felt a bit like some fail-safe. It

Oh you pretty things



DERWENT MAY

AROUND £100

Olive wood box modelled as an apple
Hermitage Antiques is selling a treasure trove of Russian and Biedermeier furniture and objets d'art, collected over 30 years, in 450 lots at Christie's South Kensington on April 4. This little box has an estimate of £100-£150: Christie's, SW7. www.christies.com (020-7930 6074).



AROUND £1,000

Pool, Cascais, Portugal by Karine Laval
The French photographer Karine Laval has an exhibition of her pictures of European swimming pools and lidos called *The Pool* until May 6 at the Crane Kalman Gallery in Brighton. This one costs £1,000. www.cranekalmanbrighton.com (01273 697096).



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Who am I?

The British man who lost his memory in New York