



MYSTERY OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN FUNERARY AND AFTERLIFE REVEALED AT INDIANAPOLIS MUSEUM OF ART

Approximately 120 objects including statuary, coffins, jewelry and vessels from the Brooklyn Museum highlight Egyptians' beliefs about death and the afterlife

INDIANAPOLIS, February 1, 2008—The Indianapolis Museum of Art will be the first venue to host *To Live Forever: Egyptian Treasures from the Brooklyn Museum*, which will be on view July 13 – September 7, 2008. Featuring approximately 120 objects dating from 3600 B.C. to 400 A.D. from the world-renowned Egyptian art collection of New York's Brooklyn Museum, the exhibition will illustrate the range of strategies and preparations the ancient Egyptians developed to defeat death and to achieve success in the afterlife.

“The IMA is pleased to be the first museum in a multiple-city tour for this exhibition,” said Maxwell L. Anderson, the Melvin & Bren Simon Director and CEO of the IMA. “Through a vibrant selection of artworks from one of the world's leading collections of Egyptian antiquities, our visitors will gain real insight into the ancient quest for survival into eternity.”

The exhibition explores the belief that death was an enemy that could be vanquished, one of the primary cultural tenets of ancient Egyptian civilization. In order to survive in the next world, Egyptians would purchase, trade, or even reuse a variety of objects—statues, coffins, vessels, and jewelry for example—that would protect them in the afterlife. The exhibition explains the process of mummification, the economics and rituals of memorials, the contents of the tomb, the funeral accessories—including the differentiation of objects used by upper, middle, and lower classes—and the idealized afterlife.”



Sunk Relief of Queen Neferu
ca. 2008 B.C.-1957 B.C.
Limestone, painted
7 ½ x 9 5/16 x ¾ in. (19 x 23.6 x 1.9 cm)
Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund

Exhibition highlights include:

- a vividly painted coffin of a Mayor of Thebes (about 1075-945 B.C)
- the mummy and portrait of Demetrios, a wealthy citizen of Hawara (95-100 A.D.)
- two mummies of dogs (664 B.C.-395 A.D)
- stone sculpture and statues
- protective gold jewelry made for nobility
- amulets (items for protection in the afterlife)
- canopic jars (used to store the body's major organs)
- ceramic vessels

“Many of the objects in the show have never been exhibited before,” said Theodore Celenko, curator of African art at the IMA. “And one piece in particular—a limestone statue of a father, mother and child that's more than 2,000 years old—will only be shown in Indianapolis.”

In addition to the exhibition, the IMA will host a lecture by the exhibition's curator Edward Bleiberg. On Sunday, July 13 at 2 p.m., Bleiberg—the curator of Egyptian, Classical, and Ancient Middle Eastern Art at the Brooklyn Museum—will discuss religion, aesthetics and immortality of ancient Egypt in relation to the exhibition.

Admission to *To Live Forever: Egyptian Treasures from the Brooklyn Museum* will be \$12 for adults (ages 18-64); \$6 for children (ages 7-17) and college students; \$10 for seniors (65+) and groups of 10 or more. The exhibition is free for children six and under and for all school groups booked through the IMA Education Division. General admission to the IMA and Lilly House is free.

The Art of Africa at the IMA

The IMA also exhibits an acclaimed permanent collection of African art, which totals more than 2,000 works. The Eiteljorg Gallery of African Art features more than 400 objects including masks, figures, and textiles from all major regions of the continent, including Northern, Eastern, Central, Southern, and Western Africa. Twenty-eight pieces from ancient Egypt and Nubia are currently on display. Admission is free to the IMA's permanent galleries.

Exhibition Organization and Catalogue

To Live Forever: Egyptian Treasures from the Brooklyn Museum has been organized by the Brooklyn Museum. Edward Bleiberg, Curator of Egyptian Art at the Brooklyn Museum, has authored a catalogue that will accompany the exhibition, which also includes an essay by the scholar Kathlyn M. Cooney. The catalogue is being published by the Brooklyn Museum in association with D. Giles Ltd., London. The recipient of an M.A. and Ph.D. in Egyptology from the University of Toronto, Dr. Bleiberg is the author of several books and scholarly articles, among them the exhibition catalogues *Jewish Life in Ancient Egypt* and *Tree of Paradise*, both presented at the Brooklyn Museum.

After its debut at the IMA, *To Live Forever* will travel to the John and Mable Ringling Museum in Sarasota, Florida; the Columbus Museum of Art in Ohio; the Chrysler Museum of Art in Norfolk, Virginia; the Norton Museum of Art in West Palm Beach, Florida; and the Frist Center for Visual Arts in Nashville, Tennessee, with additional venues to be announced.

The Brooklyn Museum galleries of ancient Egyptian art contain more than 1,200 objects ranging from Predynastic times through the reign of Cleopatra. The collection, noted for its scope, artistic quality, and historical significance, was begun the early twentieth century through Museum excavations and the support of collectors who donated works and entire collections. The collection of Charles Edwin Wilbour, formed in the nineteenth century and donated to the Museum between 1916 and 1947, and an endowment given by the Wilbour family in 1931, further strengthened the Museum's holdings.

IMA Information

Encompassing 152 acres of gardens and grounds, IMA connects visitors to its unique and expansive view of art with its Indianapolis Museum of Art, the future Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park and Oldfields—Lilly House & Gardens. The Indianapolis Museum of Art is the fifth largest encyclopedic art museum in the United States and features significant collections of African, American, Asian, European, contemporary and decorative art, including paintings, sculpture, prints, drawings and photographs, textiles and costumes.

The IMA completed a \$74 million expansion project in May 2005 that featured three new wings, 50 percent more gallery space, expanded educational spaces, two new restaurants by Wolfgang Puck Catering and an enhanced museum store. The construction added 164,000

square feet to the Museum and includes renovation of 90,000 square feet of existing space. In order to present major exhibitions of its own and to accommodate major traveling exhibitions, the expanded Museum was outfitted with new 10,000-plus square foot Clowes Special Exhibition Gallery on the Museum's first level.

Located at 4000 Michigan Road, the IMA and Lilly House are open Tuesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Thursday and Friday, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.; and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. The IMA is closed Mondays and Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's days. For more information, call 317-923-1331 or visit www.imamuseum.org.

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