

RAMSES & THE GOLD OF THE PHARAOHS EXCLUSIVE TO SYDNEY THIS SUMMER

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Australian Museum

Sydney, 9 July, 2023: The Australian Museum, in cooperation with Egypt's Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and World Heritage Exhibitions/Neon Global, is proud to present the blockbuster Ramses & the Gold of the Pharaohs, which will be the largest cultural exhibition to visit Australia in over a decade when it opens in Sydney on 18 November this year.

Exclusive to Sydney, Ramses & the Gold of the Pharaohs is an interactive museum experience that features 181 priceless artefacts and ornate golden treasures, including one-of-a-kind relics such as sarcophagi, animal mummies, magnificent jewellery, spectacular royal masks, exquisite amulets – many of which have never left Egypt before.

All of the objects in Ramses & the Gold of the Pharaohs have come from museums and historical sites in Egypt and are on loan to the exhibition from Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities. The Secretary-General of Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities and renowned archaeologist, Dr Mostafa Waziry, today launched the countdown to Ramses at the Australian Museum.

Ramses & the Gold of the Pharaohs provides visitors with a window into the life and accomplishments of King Ramses II, more commonly known as Ramses the Great, who ruled Egypt for nearly 67 years – the second longest reign for any pharaoh in Ancient Egyptian history. Ramses the Great, who lived to about 92 years of age, came to epitomise the power and wealth of Ancient Egypt during the New Kingdom period, 1539-1075 BC, when Egyptian civilisation was at its height. Ramses was known as a mighty warrior who secured peace with his neighbours, led an extensive building campaign that included scores of gigantic monuments to himself, and is believed to have fathered over 100 children.

Ramses & the Gold of the Pharaohs also features a virtual reality experience that takes visitors on a whirlwind tour of two of Ramses' most impressive monuments: the Tomb of Queen Nefertari, his favourite Royal Consort, and the temples of Abu Simbel.

NSW Minister for Arts, Music, Night-time Economy, Jobs and Tourism, the Hon John Graham, said Sydney is the only city in the region to host Ramses & the Gold of the Pharaohs, funded by the NSW Government through the Blockbuster Fund: "Egypt was one of the most powerful civilisations in the centre of the ancient world, and we are thrilled some of the greatest Egyptian treasures are coming to Sydney with Ramses & the Gold of the Pharaohs. This is a magnificent exhibition, set to produce a new generation of young Australian Egyptologists. I encourage all Australians to experience this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see these magnificently preserved 3,300-year-old artefacts at the Australian Museum."

Australian Museum Director and CEO, Kim McKay AO said the objects in Ramses & The Gold of the Pharaohs are drawn from Egypt's finest museums and historical sites, and bring to life the fascinating, rich culture of ancient Egypt.

"The AM is thrilled to present these exceedingly rare objects in an exhibition where visitors can appreciate their astonishing beauty and enduring history first-hand," McKay said. "Ancient Egypt holds intrigue and fascination for all age groups, and I know Ramses & The Gold of the Pharaohs in Sydney will introduce the mystery of the pharaohs to new generations of locals and visitors alike."

Dr Mostafa Waziry, visiting Sydney from Cairo, said that Egyptian antiquities and treasures have dazzled the world for centuries: "Mystery surrounds Egypt's origins, religions and monumental architecture – many of which were built during the reign of Ramses II, 1279 to 1213 BC. This ability to transcend age and time has ensured the Egyptians have an eternal place in history, and I invite visitors to discover for themselves why Ramses II is often regarded as the greatest, most celebrated, and most powerful pharaoh of all time."

World Heritage Exhibitions CEO John Norman said Ramses & The Gold of the Pharaohs is seeing record-breaking attendance around the world: "Our team has created an amazing experience celebrating the greatest Pharaoh in Egypt's history and the reaction from people has surpassed our highest expectations. We are so excited to bring the exhibition to Sydney and know Australians are going to be similarly amazed."

Ramses & the Gold of the Pharaohs comes to Sydney after successful seasons in Houston, San Francisco and Paris, where it is currently on show until September.

Ramses & the Gold of the Pharaohs is presented in partnership with World Heritage Exhibitions, Neon and the Houston Museum of Natural Science, with the support of Egypt's Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. Proudly supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW Blockbusters Funding initiative.

Ramses & the Gold of the Pharaohs opens at the Australian Museum on 18 November 2023.

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