

Varieties

# Egypt Bets on Success of 'Ramses and The Gold of Pharaohs' in Australia



The wooden coffin of Pharaoh Ramses II is on display Thursday, April 6, 2023 in Paris. (AP Photo/Aurelien Morissard)

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Egyptian and Australian officials said they are optimistic about the success of the 4th stop of the temporary historic exhibition "Ramses and the Gold of the Pharaohs", set to open on November 17, in Sydney, Australia. Australian curators said they already sold 100,000 tickets a month before the opening.

During a press event to unveil the exhibition's details on Monday, Ahmed Ghoneim, CEO of the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization (NMEC), said he's delighted to lend the coffin of Ramses II, which he described as "one of the most prominent antiquities displayed at NMEC", adding that "it represents a great addition to the exhibition given the fame of Ramses II".

The CEO believes that the participation of this coffin at the exhibition is "the best ambassador of Ancient Egypt and its eternal civilization."

In its debut at the Houston Museum, US, in 2021, the exhibition hosted hundreds of thousands of visitors, and few more during its stop in San Francisco in 2022; but its third stop in Paris, at Lafayette Gallery during the first half of this year, it welcomed, 817,000 visitors within five months, according Mostafa Waziry, secretary-general of the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA).

Waziri hailed the "great interest" the Australian museum showed in hosting and promoting the exhibition, which promises success similar to that achieved in Paris.

He also expected the exhibition to achieve "a huge turnout and boost the influx of Australian tourists to Egypt in the near future, similar to the influx the country saw following the exhibition's stop in France."

The "Ramses and The Gold of Pharaohs" displays 181 antiquities from the collection of the Egyptian Museum, dating back to the Ramses II era, in addition to some antiquities discovered by the Egyptian expedition in the Bubasteum area in Saqqara.

Speaking at the press event, Zahi Hawass, a renowned Egyptologist and former Minister of Antiquities, described Ramses II, who ruled for 66 years, as the "King of Kings" and "ruler of the greatest and strongest Egyptian era", noting that he was also known as "master of builders" because he built temples, statues, and obelisks more than any other king in Ancient Egypt.

For his part, John Norman, president of the firm curating the exhibition, expected the event to bring major success as over 100,000 tickets were sold before the opening.

"The coffin of Ramses II will be the star attraction in the exhibition," said Kim McKay, the Australian Museum's director and CEO, adding that "exhibiting this priceless antiquity, a strong symbol of one of the greatest leaders in the ancient world, is a remarkable success for our museum. Sydney is the world's second city, after Paris, to display it. It's an amazing opportunity for the Australian audience to see it alongside the other unique antiquities."