

King Ramses II visits Cologne

Nevine El-Aref, Monday 22 Jul 2024

German audiences are flocking to the Ramses and the Gold of the Pharaohs exhibition that has opened in Cologne.



Distinguished artefacts of Ramses the great at cologne

Cologne, the historical, cultural, and economic capital of Germany's fourth largest state of North Rhine-Westphalia and the Rhineland region, is hosting the "Ramses and the Gold of the Pharaohs" exhibition from 13 July to 6 January next year. This is the exhibition's fifth stop following two stops in the US, one in the French capital Paris, and one in New South Wales, Australia, with total visitors amounting to 500,000.

Cologne's streets, metro and bus stations and residential buildings now carry banners showing some of the pieces from the exhibition in a bid to attract even more visitors.

The façade of the Odysseum, a Cologne museum where the exhibition is being held, features an image of Ramses II's coffin, a star exhibit in the exhibition. Images of the king's coffin and some of the exhibition's artefacts have appeared on the front pages of German newspapers and magazines, and some of them have devoted pages to telling the story of the Great King and the discovery of his mummy in the Luxor cachette at the end of the 19th century.

On the day of the exhibition's opening, visitors queued in front of the Odysseum, waiting for their turn to enter the exhibition and explore the history, life, and achievements of Ramses II throughout his 67-year reign, one of the longest of any Pharaoh in ancient Egyptian history.



"Ramses was a great king and warrior," said archaeologist and former antiquities minister Zahi Hawass. He pointed out that although Ramses II fought many battles, he was the first to establish a peace treaty. Moreover, he was also a prolific builder, and traces of his activity can still be found throughout Egypt.

"Our modern world differs greatly from ancient Egypt. This exhibition allows visitors to immerse themselves in Ramses II's world and discover a completely different way of life," Hawass said.

Tickets for the first day of the exhibition had sold out, and 35,000 tickets have been sold altogether, according to Mohamed Ismail Khaled, secretary-general of the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA).

He said that the great interest in the exhibition in Germany, as shown by the very significant turnout, would result in more Germans visiting Egypt to learn more about ancient Egyptian civilisation and visit the places where these artefacts originated.

They would want to see the temples, shrines, and tombs king Ramses II built for himself and his wife queen Nefertari for themselves.



The exhibition presents a collection of 180 priceless artefacts, some of which have never been shown outside Egypt. The wooden coffin of Ramses II, considered the most remarkable ever unearthed from ancient Egypt, is among the showcased pieces.

The exhibition also features a virtual reality experience that takes visitors on a whirlwind tour of two of Ramses's most impressive monuments: the Temples of Abu Simbel and that of his beloved wife queen Nefertari.

Seated in dynamic motion chairs, attendees can soar through temples, navigate sandstorms, and encounter the mummy of Ramses II in a thrilling animated adventure.

Before entering the exhibition, a four-minute introductory film on a 120-degree screen takes visitors on a journey back in time to acquaint them with the history of the great ancient Egyptian king.

The exhibition explores the world of Ramses II himself, showing royal statues, sarcophagi, spectacular masks, magnificent jewellery, and ornate golden treasures that reveal the fabulous wealth of the Pharaohs, the astonishing skill of ancient Egyptian tomb builders, and the superb workmanship of Egyptian artists.

Recently discovered animal mummies, including those of cats, lion cubs, and a mongoose, from the Saqqara Necropolis are on view, as well as fabulous treasures discovered in the royal tombs at the Dahshour and Tanis archaeological sites.

The exhibition also includes precious objects from several other periods of Egyptian history to showcase the opulence of Egypt's ancient civilisation and the beauty of its treasures.

Many of these precious gold and silver objects come from intact royal tombs of the Middle Kingdom.

King Ramses died at the age of 92 and was buried in the Valley of the Kings at Luxor.

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