

# CLEOPATRA

· THE SEARCH FOR THE LAST QUEEN OF EGYPT ·

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**NEW CLEOPATRA EXHIBITION TO MAKE WORLD PREMIERE AT PHILADELPHIA'S  
FRANKLIN INSTITUTE IN SPRING 2010**

*Five-City North American Tour Will Feature Artifacts from Ongoing Searches into the  
Life and Times of Egypt's Legendary Queen*

PHILADELPHIA (December 1, 2009) — The world of Cleopatra, which has been lost to the sea and sand for nearly 2,000 years, will surface in a new exhibition, “Cleopatra: The Search for the Last Queen of Egypt,” making its world premiere in June 2010 at The Franklin Institute in Philadelphia. Organized by National Geographic and Arts and Exhibitions International, with cooperation from the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities and the European Institute for Underwater Archaeology (IEASM), the exhibition will feature about 150 artifacts, and take visitors inside the present-day search for Cleopatra, which extends from the sands of Egypt to the depths of the Bay of Aboukir near Alexandria.

The exhibition about the legendary queen, who remains one of history's greatest enigmas, debuting at The Franklin Institute from June 5, 2010 – January 2, 2011, will travel to five North American cities. The Franklin Institute hosted “Tutankhamun and the Golden Age of the Pharaohs,” developed by the same organizers, which became the most attended touring museum exhibition in the world in 2007 after drawing more than 1.3 million visitors.

“Philadelphia was captivated by King Tut, and we are honored to be the first choice to launch this new world premiere exhibition that promises to combine the public's fascination with Egyptology with the allure of Egypt's last queen. We look forward to welcoming this magnificent queen to our halls, and to be the first in the world to share with residents and visitors new discoveries from her life, which are being achieved with the help of advancing science and technology,” said Dennis Wint, president and CEO of The Franklin Institute.

Cleopatra, the last great pharaoh of Egypt before it succumbed to Roman opposition, lived from 69 – 30 B.C., and her rule was marked with political intrigue and challenges to her throne. She captivated two of the most powerful men of her day, Julius Caesar and Mark Antony, as she attempted to restore Egypt to its former superpower status. Later, her Roman conquerors tried to rewrite her history and destroy all traces of her existence. Although her body has never been found, her story survives.

In “Cleopatra: The Search for the Last Queen of Egypt,” remnants from her rule will be woven into the story of the modern-day search for her complete history and her tomb, in a dramatic setting that will incorporate high-definition multimedia and original soundscapes.

Visitors to the exhibition will be treated to an inside view of the search for Cleopatra through two ongoing expeditions by modern explorers Dr. Zahi Hawass, Egypt’s pre-eminent archaeologist and Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, and Franck Goddio, French underwater archaeologist and director of IEASM. Goddio’s search has resulted in one of the most ambitious underwater expeditions ever undertaken, which has uncovered Cleopatra’s royal palace and two ancient cities that had been lost beneath the sea for centuries after a series of earthquakes and tidal waves.

On land, Hawass and a team of archaeologists continue to search for the tomb of the ill-fated lovers Cleopatra and Mark Antony. Never-before-seen artifacts referencing Cleopatra, excavated by Hawass’ team at Taposiris Magna in Abusir, west of Alexandria, will be featured in the exhibition.

“Queen Cleopatra has captured the hearts of people all over the world. Remembered as a beautiful, charismatic and powerful woman, many things about her life are still shrouded in mystery. In 2005, we began to search for the tomb where she was buried with her lover, Mark Antony, which we believe was in an ancient temple near Alexandria,” said Zahi Hawass, Secretary General of Egypt’s Supreme Council of Antiquities. “So far, we have found coins, statues, and even shafts that are leading us closer to what would be one of the most important archaeological discoveries in history. I dream of the moment when we will enter this hidden tomb, and reveal secrets and treasures that have been lost for millennia. This exhibition, which includes objects found in our current excavations, will give the American people the chance to learn about our search for Cleopatra, and will share with them the magic of this fascinating queen.”

As a highlight, the exhibition will showcase artifacts from Franck Goddio's continuing underwater search off the Mediterranean coast of Egypt, begun in 1992 and sponsored by the Hilti Foundation. Goddio's remarkable finds will bring visitors inside his search for the lost world of Cleopatra, including remnants from the grand palace where she ruled. Visitors will also see underwater footage and photos of Goddio's team retrieving artifacts from the ocean and bringing them to the surface for the first time in centuries.

"The aim of our work is to reveal traces of the past and bring history back to life. We are delighted to present our underwater archaeological achievements and discoveries off the coast of Egypt to the American public," said Franck Goddio.

"Cleopatra is one of the most fascinating figures of ancient Egypt, and we are delighted to be able to share her true story with the world," said Terry Garcia, National Geographic's executive vice president for mission programs.

The roughly 150 artifacts in the exhibition – from the smallest gold pieces and coins to colossal statues – provide a window into Cleopatra's story as well as the daily lives of her contemporaries, both powerful and humble. The artifacts weigh in at about 30 tons in total, and will include two 16.4 foot tall red granite statues, dating from the 4th – 3rd centuries BC. One of the statues is of a queen of Egypt dating from the Ptolemaic era in which Cleopatra ruled, and the other is of the Nile god Hapi, both of which Goddio's team pulled from the sea.

"This exhibition is conceived to leave visitors with a sense of adventure and discovery. As guests walk through her history, they will be captivated by the magic and mystery that still surrounds the life of the elusive last queen of Egypt," said John Norman, president of Arts and Exhibitions International.

For more information about the explorations that will be featured in "Cleopatra: The Search for the Last Queen of Egypt" at The Franklin Institute, visit [www.drhawass.com](http://www.drhawass.com), or [www.franckgoddio.org](http://www.franckgoddio.org).

A number of hotels in Philadelphia also will feature **Cleopatra VIP Hotel Packages**, complete with two exclusive VIP tickets to the blockbuster exhibition. For information about travel to Philadelphia and hotel packages, visit [visitphilly.com](http://visitphilly.com) or [uwishunu.com](http://uwishunu.com) or, call the Independence Visitor Center, located in Historic Philadelphia, at (800) 537-7676.

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### **About National Geographic**

The National Geographic Society is one of the world's largest nonprofit scientific and educational organizations. Founded in 1888 to "increase and diffuse geographic knowledge," the Society works to inspire people to care about the planet. It reaches more than 360 million people worldwide each month through its official journal, National Geographic, and other magazines; National Geographic Channel; television documentaries; music; radio; films; books; DVDs; maps; exhibitions; live events; school publishing programs; interactive media; and merchandise. National Geographic has funded more than 9,000 scientific research, conservation and exploration projects and supports an education program promoting geographic literacy. For more information, visit [nationalgeographic.com](http://nationalgeographic.com).

### **About Arts and Exhibitions International (AEI)**

Founded in 2003 by president John Norman and international vice president Andres Numhauser, AEI produces the award-winning exhibition "Diana: A Celebration" in association with the Althorp Estate in the United Kingdom, two touring exhibitions dedicated to the treasures of King Tutankhamun and "Real Pirates: The Untold Story of the Whydah from Slave Ship to Pirate Ship." Norman and Numhauser have nearly 40 years combined experience in the entertainment and exhibition business, working over the years on such projects as "Titanic: The Artifact Exhibit" and "Saint Peter and the Vatican: The Legacy of the Popes." The company has relationships with the most important museums in the world and has presented traveling exhibitions on four continents. AEI is part of AEG Exhibitions, an affiliate division of AEG LIVE. AEG LIVE is the live-entertainment division of Los Angeles-based AEG, one of the leading sports and entertainment presenters in the world. For more information, visit [www.artsandexhibitions.com](http://www.artsandexhibitions.com).

### **About the European Institute for Underwater Archaeology (IEASM)**

Founded in 1987 as a French non-profit organization by president Franck Goddio for the location, exploration, excavation and restoration of sunken sites. The Institute calls upon scientists and specialists of different scientific field to support its research missions, study and publish the findings. Furthermore it sets up exhibitions allowing the general public to get access to its discoveries. For more information, visit: [www.franckgoddio.org](http://www.franckgoddio.org)

### **About The Franklin Institute**

Located in the heart of Philadelphia, The Franklin Institute is a renowned and innovative leader in the field of science and technology learning, as well as a dynamic center of activity. Pennsylvania's most visited museum, it is dedicated to creating a passion for learning about science by offering access to hands-on science education. For more information, visit [www.fi.edu](http://www.fi.edu).

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