

# CLEOPATRA

· THE SEARCH FOR THE LAST QUEEN OF EGYPT ·

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**PRESS CONTACTS:**

Laura Calliari  
Arts and Exhibitions International  
310-941-8780  
[laura@artsandexhibitions.com](mailto:laura@artsandexhibitions.com)

Kat Stein  
The Franklin Institute  
215-448-2375  
[kstein@fi.edu](mailto:kstein@fi.edu)

**WORLD PREMIERE OF NEW CLEOPATRA EXHIBITION  
AT PHILADELPHIA'S FRANKLIN INSTITUTE**  
*Centuries of Art and History Unfold with the First U.S. Tour of Artifacts from  
Two Ongoing Searches into the Life and Times of Egypt's Legendary Queen*

PHILADELPHIA (June 2, 2010) — The world of Cleopatra VII, which has been lost to the sea and sand for nearly 2,000 years, will surface on June 5 when “Cleopatra: The Search for the Last Queen of Egypt” opens its doors to the world for the first time at The Franklin Institute in Philadelphia (through January 2, 2011). The new exhibition features 142 artifacts from Cleopatra’s time and takes visitors inside the present-day search for the elusive queen, which extends from the sands of Egypt to the depths of the Bay of Aboukir near Alexandria.

The exhibition is 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). It features statuary, jewelry, daily items, coins and religious tokens that archaeologists have uncovered from the time surrounding Cleopatra’s rule, all of which are visiting the U.S. for the first time. Also on display is an original papyrus document from Cleopatra’s time containing an inscription that scientists believe was written in Cleopatra’s own hand.

After Egypt succumbed to Roman forces and Cleopatra famously took her own life following the suicide of her lover Mark Antony, the Romans attempted to wipe her legacy from the pages of history. Cleopatra thus has remained one of history’s greatest enigmas, and her final resting place is one of Egypt’s unsolved mysteries. The artifacts in this exhibition are woven into the story of her rule and life in ancient Egypt during her dynasty (Ptolemaic period). The story of her life and time unfolds in a dramatic setting with high-definition multimedia, original soundscapes and a mobile-based social media experience. Additionally each guest receives an audio tour with admission that provides a rich background to the featured artifacts.

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Visitors to the exhibition follow the modern-day parallel stories of two ongoing expeditions being led in Egypt by 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 the two ancient cities of Canopus and Heracleion, which had been lost beneath the sea after a series of earthquakes and tidal waves nearly 2,000 years ago. The exhibition opens on the tenth anniversary of Heracleion's discovery.

On land, Hawass and a team of archaeologists are searching for the tomb of the ill-fated lovers Cleopatra and Mark Antony. Never-before-seen artifacts referencing Cleopatra, excavated by Hawass' team at the temple of Taposiris Magna, about 30 miles west of Alexandria, are featured.

"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. 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."

The exhibition also showcases 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 bring visitors inside his search for the lost world of Cleopatra, including remnants from the grand palace where she ruled. Visitors 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," said Terry Garcia, National Geographic's executive vice president for Mission Programs. "This exhibition tells her remarkable story through rare artifacts excavated from two ongoing archaeological projects in Egypt, bringing ancient Egypt's famous last pharaoh back to life through modern-day exploration."

The exhibition contains "social tags" displayed throughout the exhibit, which encourage and guide visitors in sharing their Cleopatra experience on Twitter, Facebook, Foursquare and other social networks through their mobile devices. The tags also feature links to online videos and information, which take patrons even deeper into the Cleopatra experience, enabling them to learn and enjoy the exhibition even more.

Those who use the tags can send to their friends an exclusive discount coupon for the exhibition. Additionally, The Franklin Institute is teaming up with SCVNGR to build a unique museum experience to be played with an iPhone and Android application, or on any phone via text message. Players are challenged to respond to mysterious clues, answer difficult questions and unlock riddles about artifacts in the exhibition. For more information on this experience, visit [www.scvngr.com/cleopatra](http://www.scvngr.com/cleopatra).

“We are thrilled that The Franklin Institute has been given the first opportunity to host this incredible exhibition, which is a ‘can’t miss’ cultural and educational opportunity,” said Dennis Wint, president and CEO of The Franklin Institute. “We are also excited about the opportunity to launch our ambitious interactive social media efforts around Cleopatra, designed to complement the exhibition’s cutting-edge multi-media and immersive atmosphere – and further enhance the visitor experience.”

### **ABOUT THE EXHIBITION**

Cleopatra, the last great pharaoh before Egypt succumbed to Roman opposition, lived from 69 – 30 B.C., with a rule that 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.

The 142 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, including two colossal 16-foot granite statues of a Ptolemaic king and queen from the 4th – 3rd centuries B.C., pulled from the sea by Goddio’s team.

“Cleopatra’s story of love, power, glamour and tragedy has intrigued us for centuries and has fueled archeologists to continue searching for greater understanding,” said John Norman, president of Arts and Exhibitions International. “Visitors to this new exhibition will gain insight into her life by discovering objects from Cleopatra’s world, even as efforts continue today to piece together new clues and insights into one of history’s most remarkable leaders.”

PECO is the Community Sponsor of the Cleopatra exhibition. Egypt Air is the official airline. From Philadelphia, the exhibition will travel to four other North American cities.

### **TICKET INFORMATION**

Individual tickets for “Cleopatra: The Search for the Last Queen of Egypt” range from \$11 to \$29.50, which includes an audio tour. Tickets are timed and dated, and admission is 9:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Mondays through Wednesdays (last entry at 3:30 p.m.); and 9:30 a.m. – 8:30 p.m. Thursdays through Sundays (last entry at 7 p.m.). There are discounts available for groups of 15 or more and for Franklin Institute Members. Due to high ticket demand, advance ticket purchase is strongly recommended. Information and tickets are available at 1-877-TFI-TIXS, [www.fi.edu](http://www.fi.edu) and [www.searchforcleopatra.com](http://www.searchforcleopatra.com). Information about discounted tickets for groups of 15 or more is available at 1-800-285-0684.

A number of hotels in Philadelphia also feature **Cleopatra VIP Hotel Packages**, complete with two untimed VIP tickets to the blockbuster exhibition. For information about travel to Philadelphia and hotel packages, visit [visitphilly.com/cleopatra](http://visitphilly.com/cleopatra) or [uwishunu.com](http://uwishunu.com), or call the Independence Visitor Center, located in Historic Philadelphia, at 1-800-537-7676.

#### **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 375 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 9,200 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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