

CLEOPATRA

· THE SEARCH FOR THE LAST QUEEN OF EGYPT ·

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE FOR WORLD PREMIERE OF CLEOPATRA EXHIBITION AT PHILADELPHIA'S FRANKLIN INSTITUTE

*Exhibition Featuring Artifacts from Ongoing Searches into the Life and Times of
Egypt's Legendary Queen Opens June 5*

PHILADELPHIA (May 5, 2010) — Tickets are now on sale for the world premiere exhibition “Cleopatra: The Search for the Last Queen of Egypt,” debuting in Philadelphia at The Franklin Institute on June 5. 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, will debut in the Mandell Center at The Franklin Institute from June 5, 2010 – January 2, 2011, then travel to four other North American cities. Remnants from the time surrounding Cleopatra’s rule will be woven into the story of the modern-day search for her complete history and her tomb in a dramatic setting with high-definition multimedia and original soundscapes.

Visitors to the exhibition will experience an inside look at two ongoing expeditions led 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.

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 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, including two colossal 16.4-foot granite statues of a Ptolemaic king and queen from the 4th – 3rd centuries B.C., which Goddio’s team pulled from the sea.

TICKET INFORMATION

“Cleopatra: The Search for the Last Queen of Egypt” ticket pricing at The Franklin Institute:

DAYTIME TICKETS

Monday – Thursday

Adults \$26.50

Senior (62+) \$24.50

Children (4-11) \$19.50

Friday – Sunday

\$29.50

\$27.50

\$19.50

Daytime admission includes general admission to The Franklin Institute and one Fels Planetarium show.

EVENING TICKETS

Thursday – Sunday only (for entry at 5 p.m. or later)

Adults: \$19.50

Seniors (62+): \$17.50

Children: \$11.00 (ages 4-11)

Admission to CLEOPATRA only. Other Museum areas close at 5 p.m.

SPECIAL DOUBLE TICKET OFFER WITH PENN MUSEUM

During the *Cleopatra* exhibition at The Franklin Institute, the Penn Museum will offer a self-guided tour, “Land of the Pharaohs”—in print and as a downloadable podcast—exploring the long tradition of pharaonic rule that ended, forever, with the suicide of Cleopatra in 30 BC. There will be a discounted DOUBLE TICKET offer to visit both *Cleopatra* and the Penn Museum. These tickets can be purchased by calling 1-877-TFI-TIXS or onsite at The Franklin Institute only.

DOUBLE TICKET PRICING

Adults: Weekday \$32 | Weekend \$35 | Evening \$25

Seniors (62+): Weekday \$28 | Weekend \$31 | Evening \$21

Children (ages 4-11) and students: Monday - Sunday \$22 | Evening \$14

The exhibition will be open 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.). Tickets are timed and dated, and advance ticket purchase is strongly recommended. For information on purchasing tickets, please call 1-877-TFI-TIXS or visit www.fi.edu. Information on discounted tickets for groups of 15 or more is available at 1-800-285-0684.

A number of hotels in Philadelphia also will 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 or 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.

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.

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.

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.

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