



RAMSES THE GREAT AND THE GOLD OF THE PHARAOHS

Opening August 20, 2022 \ de Young

Ramses The Great and the Gold of the Pharaohs Brings Splendors of Ancient Egypt to San Francisco

most remarkable rulers in world history, Ramses II, known today as Ramses the Great. Bringing more than 180 dazzling objects to San Francisco—many newly discovered and having never left Egypt before—the exhibition features exquisite sculpture, precious treasures, and state-of-the-art multimedia productions that will demonstrate the opulence and power of ancient Egyptian civilization.

SAN FRANCISCO – The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco are thrilled to announce the exclusive West Coast presentation of the international touring exhibition *Ramses the Great and the Gold of the Pharaohs*. This once-in-a-lifetime installation at the de Young museum will explore the life and accomplishments of one of the

"We are delighted to share these rarely seen treasures from Egypt's Golden Age with Bay Area audiences," said Thomas P. Campbell, Director and CEO of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. "*Ramses the Great and the Gold of the Pharaohs* reveals the power and splendor of ancient Egypt, and expands on the history conveyed within our own collection of ancient art. Once the exhibition completes its international tour, these objects will return to Egyptian museums and will likely not travel again for decades."

Ramses the Great and the Gold of the Pharaohs focuses on the life of the eminent military officer Ramses II, a crown prince who eventually became one of the longest-ruling kings of Egypt in a 67-year reign. Appropriately known through time as Ramses the Great, he was the third pharaoh of the Nineteenth Dynasty and is regarded as the mightiest and most celebrated pharaoh of the New Kingdom—Egypt's Golden Age—when it was a wealthy and powerful empire. The exhibition is brought to you in partnership with the Supreme Council of Antiquities of the Arab Republic of Egypt and is produced by World Heritage Exhibitions, a subsidiary of Cityneon Holdings.

"Kings before and after Ramses erected colossal statues of themselves, but none are larger or greater in number than those commissioned by Ramses the Great," said Renée Dreyfus, George and Judy Marcus Distinguished Curator and Curator in Charge of Ancient Art at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. "The temples he erected, statues he commissioned, monuments he inscribed throughout Egypt and Nubia, and funerary temple and royal tomb he built were reminders of his earthly power and closeness to the gods. The proliferation of his name led to it becoming almost a synonym for kingship."

This exhibition marks the first for Dreyfus under her new title of George and Judy Marcus Distinguished Curator and Curator in Charge of Ancient Art, establishing the Museums' first-ever staff endowed position. George and Judy Marcus, who have been longtime supporters of the Fine Arts Museums, have generously donated to establish this position and have worked closely with Dreyfus over her remarkable 45-year tenure with the Museums. This endowment will support Dreyfus's exceptional work in the Ancient Art department, including the Museums' study and promotion of ancient art, exemplified in exhibitions like *Ramses the Great and the Gold of the Pharaohs*.

Ramses the Great's tomb is located in the Valley of the Kings, the final resting place of New Kingdom pharaohs for over 500 years. This tomb was plundered in ancient times. *Ramses the Great and the Gold of the Pharaohs* includes objects

from royal tombs found elsewhere in Egypt to offer an idea of the extraordinary objects that Ramses's tomb must have included.

“Ramses II is considered to be the greatest king ever to rule Egypt,” says Egypt’s Secretary-General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, Dr Mostafa Waziri. “This exhibition will illuminate the pivotal moments that earned the great pharaoh his place in history, while bringing visitors face-to-face with absolutely stunning Egyptian artifacts. *Ramses the Great and the Gold of the Pharaohs* is one of the most remarkable exhibitions to ever tour the globe, and it is a true honor for it to visit the great city of San Francisco and the de Young museum. We encourage patrons from across the region, and the country, to make it a point to come and see this splendid display.”



The first exhibition about Ramses the Great in over 30 years is the first ever to be presented in San Francisco. The installation features the most important trove of works of art and treasures related to Ramses the Great to ever leave Egypt. Royal statues, sarcophagi, spectacular masks, magnificent jewelry, and ornate golden tomb treasures reveal the

fabulous wealth of the pharaohs, the astonishing skill of ancient Egyptian tomb builders, and the superb workmanship of Egyptian artists. The grand installation also includes recently discovered animal mummies—including those of small cats, lion cubs, and a mongoose—from the Saqqara necropolis, on view for the first time, as well as fabulous treasures discovered in the royal tombs in Dahshur and Tanis (many of which have never traveled to the United States before).

Ramses the Great and the Gold of the Pharaohs includes precious objects from several other periods of Egyptian history to present the opulence of Egypt’s ancient civilization and the beauty of its treasures. Many of these precious gold and silver objects come from royal tombs of the Middle Kingdom (Twelfth Dynasty), about 600 to 700 years before Ramses, and of the Twenty-First and Twenty-Second Dynasties, Egypt’s Third Intermediate Period—about 200

to 300 years after him.

Drone photography, immersive video settings, multimedia productions, and photomurals will re-create the life and accomplishments of Ramses, including his monumental building projects and his triumph at the Battle of Kadesh (considered the largest chariot battle ever fought). The exhibition will also offer a VR component, *Ramses and Nefertari: Journey to Osiris*, which will be installed in the museum's Piazzoni Murals Room (viewable at extra charge). The immersive VR experience includes cinematic-motion chairs that take visitors on a whirlwind tour of two of Ramses's most impressive monuments, Abu Simbel and Nefertari's Tomb.

"This is an opportunity to experience Ancient Egypt like never before," described World Heritage Exhibitions President, John Norman. "Visitors will not only see priceless historical artifacts but can also transport themselves to Egyptian temples in an electrifying virtual reality journey across the sands of the Sahara Desert. We are, once again, proud to bring these immersive, one-of-a-kind experiences to visitors across the globe."

The de Young's presentation of *Ramses the Great and the Gold of the Pharaohs* is organized by Renée Dreyfus, George and Judy Marcus Distinguished Curator and Curator in Charge of Ancient Art at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. The exhibition's curator is Zahi Hawass, world-renowned Egyptologist and former Egyptian Minister of Antiquities and Secretary-General of Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities. The exhibition is produced by World Heritage Exhibitions, a subsidiary of Cityneon, in partnership with the Houston Museum of Natural Science. *Ramses the Great and the Gold of the Pharaohs* will be on view at the de Young museum beginning August 20, 2022.

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF ANCIENT ART

Ancient art has been an integral part of the Legion of Honor and the de Young since each museum was founded. Antiquities were considered essential to any museum in the early 20th century, and both M.H. de Young, founder of the de Young, and Alma Spreckels, founder of the Legion of Honor, furnished their institutions with a variety of ancient objects. The works they brought to each museum and those that have been added over the years cover a broad geographical and chronological range across the ancient Mediterranean basin—primarily Egypt, the Near East, Greece, the Aegean Islands, Etruria, and Rome.

The Legion of Honor is home to a number of rare works of high quality and importance dating from the fourth millennium BC through the classical, late antique, early Christian, and Islamic periods. Splendid examples of art from these early civilizations, spanning more than 5,000 years, provide the foundation for the understanding of Western art and the procession of cultures through the ages. Ancient art objects on view at the Legion feature a wide gamut of sculptures, figurines, vessels, jewelry, and carved reliefs made of diverse materials, such as marble and other stones, bronze, gold, ivory, terracotta, wood, and glass. Notable works include an Assyrian stone relief and carved ivory plaques from the ancient site of Nimrud; an Achaemenid Persian wall relief from the palace of Xerxes in Persepolis; Egyptian mummies and coffins; a 4,000-year-old carved wood figure of Seneb, the Egyptian royal scribe; and a Sasanian silver-gilt bowl, as well as classical marble sculptures and painted vases.

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Exhibition Organization

Major Support: The Bernard Osher Foundation. Additional support is provided by Bernard and Jane von Bothmer, in honor of the late Bernard V. Bothmer, and Elizabeth D. Moyer, Ph.D. and Michael C. Powanda, Ph.D.

Visiting \ de Young

The de Young Museum is open Tue - Sun 9.30 am - 5.15 pm. For more information, please visit deyoungmuseum.org.

About the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco

The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco oversee the de Young museum, located in Golden Gate Park, and the Legion of Honor, in Lincoln Park. It is the largest public arts institution in San Francisco, and one of the most visited arts institutions in the United States.

The de Young originated from the 1894 California Midwinter International Exposition in Golden Gate Park and was established as the Memorial Museum in 1895. It was later renamed in honor of Michael H. de Young, who spearheaded its creation. The present copper-clad landmark building, designed by Herzog & de Meuron, opened in October 2005. Reflecting an active conversation among cultures, perspectives, and time periods, the collections on view include American painting, sculpture, and decorative arts from the 17th to the 21st centuries; arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas; costume and textile arts; and international modern and contemporary art.

About World Heritage Exhibitions

World Heritage Exhibitions (WHE) is a worldwide leader in producing, promoting, and designing blockbuster exhibitions. WHE is renowned for producing the finest quality museum content that captivates, educates, and inspires visitors across the globe. With a combined 150 -years of exhibition experience, the executive team is responsible for touring many of the world's most valuable treasures, including objects from King Tutankhamun's tomb, relics from Cleopatra's Royal Palace, artifacts from the Titanic, items from the discovery of Pompeii, and more. Their exhibitions have now been enjoyed by over 30 million people, spanning six continents, and their collective expertise has come together in one of the most influential touring exhibition companies on the planet.

About Cityneon Holdings

Cityneon is a global leader in immersive experiences that holds global partnerships with billion-dollar studios such as The Walt Disney Company and Marvel Entertainment for Marvel Avengers S.T.A.T.I.O.N. and Marvel Avengers Station: Evolution and 20th Century Studios for AVATAR: The Exhibition, Hasbro for Transformers: The Experience, NBCUniversal for Jurassic World: The Exhibition, and Lionsgate for The Hunger Games: The Exhibition. Cityneon has also recently announced a partnership with Warner Bros. Themed Entertainment to produce two brand-new, unique global touring themed art experiences inspired by DC and the Wizarding World, slated to launch in 2023. The company also partners with the governments

of Peru and Egypt for their original artifact IP experiences, Machu Picchu and the Golden Empires of Peru and Ramses the Great and the Gold of the Pharaohs respectively, plus original artifact tours Pompeii: The Exhibition, Mummies of the World: The Exhibition and Victoria the T. Rex. These partnerships have enabled the Group to bring compelling experiences that leave lasting memories to visitors in more than 50 cities to date globally.

With its global reach and international partnerships, Cityneon has the capability to serve its clients anywhere in the world. Cityneon was listed on the Mainboard of the Singapore Stock Exchange since 2005, and was privatized on February 2019 by West Knighton Limited, a company wholly owned by Cityneon's Executive Chairman and Group CEO, Ron Tan, together with Hong Kong veteran entrepreneur and investor, Johnson Ko Chun Shun. Johnson is a capital markets veteran and has held controlling interests and directorships in many listed companies. In May 2019, Cityneon welcomed CITIC Capital as a new shareholder, who holds approximately 9% shares in Cityneon. CITIC Capital is part of CITIC Group, one of China's largest conglomerates, and has over US\$29B of assets under its management across 100 funds and investment products globally. Other institutional shareholders of the Group include EDBI – a Singapore government-linked global investor, and Pavilion Capital - a Singapore-based investment institution which focuses on private equity investments, that made strategic investments to the Group in August and October 2019 respectively. In April 2021, Cityneon welcomed new investors Seatown Holdings International, Qatar's Doha Venture Capital, which will now own approximately 4% of the Group, and other financial institutions and family offices in Singapore and China, joining the already strong stable of shareholders to support the Group's further expansion globally. For more information, please visit www.cityneongroup.com.

Image credits: Installation view of "Ramses the Great and the Gold of the Pharaohs", Image provided by World Heritage Exhibitions; Funerary mask of Wendjebauendjed , Egyptian, Third Intermediate Period, Dynasty 21, Gold, alabaster, and glass, 8 x 7 x 6 in. (20.3 x 17.8 x 15.2 cm) Egyptian Museum, Cairo, JE 87753, SR 1/10013, Photograph by Sandro Vannini, Image courtesy of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco