

THE BRITISH MUSEUM



Mummy: the inside story

A TOURING EXHIBITION FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM

Mummy: the inside story

This exhibition tells the story of life and death in ancient Egypt through the virtual unwrapping of Nesperennub, a priest who lived and died in Egypt nearly 3,000 years ago. The exhibition brings visitors face to face with a man from the remote past in a unique and fascinating way.

The British Museum holds one of the world's finest collections of artefacts from ancient Egypt and is at the forefront of research in the field of Egyptology. Mummies are perennially popular with museum visitors, and their continuing relevance in the 21st century is ensured by the fact that they are an unparalleled source of scientific data, addressing a host of questions about life in one of the most highly developed societies of the ancient world. Written records from ancient Egypt only tell part of the story and researchers rely heavily on human remains to throw light on physical anthropology, family relationships, life expectancy, nutrition and health, disease and the causes of death. They also provide a unique insight into the fascinating and complex processes of mummification and the ritual elements which played such an important part.

Since 2003, the British Museum has undertaken a unique project to unlock the secrets of a 3,000-year-old mummy, a priest called Nesperennub, by using cutting edge CT scanning technology and computer visualisation techniques.

Content

- Pre-show: A five-minute film giving the context to the historical and social background of Nesperennub's life.
- The 3D film: The images from the 3D scanning are used to show visitors how mummification was achieved, the various layers of wrappings and amulets placed within, and the new physiological discoveries revealed.
- The exhibition: Designed to showcase both the mummy and life of Nesperennub, providing an introduction to Egyptian funerary beliefs.



1. Mummy of the priest Nesperennub. From Luxor, Egypt, c. 800 BC.
Original and CT scan. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

2–4. 3D show in immersive theatre © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Further information

Curator

John Taylor joined the British Museum in 1988, having obtained a PhD in Egyptology at the University of Birmingham (1985). He is an authority on the Libyan and Kushite periods of ancient Egyptian history, on funerary beliefs and practices, and on the history of Egyptology. He has published numerous books, articles and reviews, and has played a leading role in developing new permanent and temporary exhibitions. Several of these projects have involved the application of advanced technology and scientific methods. He has arranged the CT scanning of a number of mummies, revealing a wealth of new data about health, disease, life expectancy and mummification techniques. John has close links with the Egypt Exploration Society of London and features regularly as a lecturer and contributor to television documentaries.

Practical details

- The exhibition is made up of 3 sections: pre-show area; immersive theatre; and artefact exhibition.
- Total number of artefacts: approximately 80
- Space requirements: 500–1000m² (theatre size is very flexible)
- All audio commentary, artefact description and text is provided in English
- The suggested minimum display period is three months

For further details of this exhibition

Email internationaltours@britishmuseum.org
or visit www.britishmuseum.org/internationaltours

Note: A confirmed exhibition object list will be provided at a later date.



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COVER: Mummy of the priest Nesperennub. From Luxor, Egypt, c. 800 BC. Original and CT scan. © The Trustees of the British Museum.
ABOVE: Gilded cartonnage mummy-mask. From Egypt, Graeco-Roman Period, late 1st century BC–early 1st century AD.