



For Immediate Release  
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### ROYAL BC MUSEUM TO HOST PRICELESS EGYPTIAN EXHIBIT

VICTORIA, BC – It is one of the greatest exhibitions to ever be mounted on one of the world’s most popular subjects. **Eternal Egypt: Masterworks of Ancient Art from The British Museum** will open July 10, 2004 at the Royal BC Museum in Victoria and run until October 31, 2004.

The museum will be the only venue in Western Canada and the Pacific Northwest to host this priceless exhibit of 144 masterworks from the British Museum, home to the finest collection of Egyptian art outside of Cairo.

“This tour marks the first time that many of these objects from the British Museum’s renowned collection are on view in North America,” said Pauline Rafferty, CEO of the Royal BC Museum. “Being chosen to present this exhibit is a testament to the museum’s high standards and experience in displaying major international exhibitions.”

The Royal BC Museum will be part of a limited 11-city North American tour for the exhibit. **Eternal Egypt** is the first comprehensive exhibition study to focus on the art history of one of the earliest and greatest of all cultures.

The masterworks on display have been carefully selected by the British Museum for rarity, beauty, and historical significance. They span more than 3,000 years beginning during the time of the great pyramids and ending with the era of Cleopatra. Highlights include a splendid gilded mummy mask, gold jewelry, seven sections from papyrus rolls containing the Book the Dead, a colossal quartzite sculpture of the head of Amenhotep III, a haunting Greco-Roman period mummy portrait and a marvelously sculpted 2,300-kilogram (5,000-pound) red granite lion.

“Eternal Egypt will not only breathe life into a fascinating ancient world but will place this institution among an elite group of museums,” said John Walton, Chair of the RBCM Board of Directors. “Our new Crown corporation status will allow us to do some very creative and exciting things and hosting this exhibit is one such example.”

Arranged chronologically, the installation allows viewers to see the evolution of ancient Egyptian art and provides an overview of its richness and scope. The works in the exhibition comprise a wide variety of materials including stone, ivory, terracotta, wood, papyrus, glass, and gold – the metal of the pharaohs.

Following its stay at the Royal BC Museum, the exhibit will make its final stop at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. When this exclusive tour is complete, it will be disassembled and returned to the British Museum.

“From Ramesses the Great to Cleopatra, the exhibition will take people back to another time and place,” said Rafferty.

The exhibition of **Eternal Egypt: Masterworks of Ancient Art from The British Museum** is organized by the American Federation of Arts and The British Museum. This exhibition and its North American tour have been made possible by Ford Motor Company. Additional support has been provided by the Benefactors Circle of the AFA. The catalogue is supported, in part, by Helen H. Scheidt.

### Museum Extends Dragon Bones Exhibit Until October 15

The announcement of **Eternal Egypt** comes on the heels of the popular *Dragon Bones: When Dinosaurs Ruled China* exhibit, which due to its popularity, has been extended to October 15, 2003. More than 189,000 visitors have toured the Chinese fossil display since its opening on March 13, representing an increase of over 80 per cent in museum attendance over the same period last year.

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