

REAL MUMMIES. REAL SCIENCE. REAL PEOPLE.

MUMMIES OF THE WORLD



THE EXHIBITION

Press Kit 2024



EXHIBITION BACKGROUND

Featuring one of the largest collections of real mummies and related artifacts ever assembled. Mummies of the World: The Exhibition presents a one-of-a-kind collection of naturally and intentionally preserved human and animal mummies. This compelling exhibition, presented with reverence and dignity, includes ancient mummies from South America, Europe and ancient Egypt, some dating back thousands of years.

1. Natural Mummification Gallery

This gallery explores several environments in which bodies can preserve as a result of the natural environment. Human and animal mummies in this gallery will include those from hot, dry environments in South America, a natural sand-salt environment of Egypt, an African desert, an alpine glacier, and a German castle crypt with constant airflow.

2. Artificial Mummification Gallery

This gallery presents mummies that have been prepared by humans for cultural reasons. The human and animal mummies in this gallery include falcons, an elaborately-bandaged cat, two adults from Ancient Egypt, and a shrunken head from South America. Various artifacts associated with the preparation of the dead in Ancient Egypt are also included, such as a beautifully-painted wooden sarcophagus, ushabtis, and mummy beads.

3. Experimental Mummification Gallery

This gallery centers around Mumab, a body recently mummified following the techniques used by Ancient Egyptian embalmers, with detailed scientific documentation of the process. This gallery includes not only the mummy, but several of the tools used to prepare the body, all of which were replicated from original Egyptian embalming equipment.

4. Science & Medicine Gallery

This gallery explores the links between mummies, science and medicine. Aside from showing mummies prepared for medical purposes, this gallery includes examples of the application of scientific and medical techniques for the analysis of mummies, and the important shift from autopsy to modern medical science to study mummies. The exhibits include several anatomical mummies from the Burns Collection of the Maryland School of Medicine, South American mummies (with detailed 3D animations from the CT scans of the mummies) and church crypt mummies from Hungary (with discussion of the past and present scientific studies of tuberculosis).

FACT SHEET



1. The Burns Collection

From the University of Maryland, Baltimore, this collection showcases historic mummies created to teach anatomy. These mummies were created during the early 19th century by Allen Burns, a Scottish anatomist. Burns developed his own method of mummification, the exact details of which are still unknown to this day. The specimens came to Baltimore, Maryland in 1820 and became a permanent part of the University of Maryland Medical School. Although the mummies are no longer used for teaching anatomy, they are important examples of how the subject was taught in the past and represent an unusual type of artificial mummification.

2. MUMAB

Known as the “Maryland Mummy,” is a modern-day ancient mummy created by scientists in 1994 using the same methods as ancient Egyptians. This project, conducted for scientific research purposes, gave mummy studies’ researchers insights into the processes used by the ancient Egyptians to prepare the dead for the afterlife. MUMAB is displayed with replicas of objects that would have been common for the dead to take into the afterlife, such as canopic jars and ushabtis, and the tools used for the mummification of the body.

3. The Baron von Holz

The Baron von Holz is a 17th-century nobleman who is believed to have died in or near Sommersdorf, Germany during the Thirty Years’ War (1618–48). He was discovered in the family crypt underneath the church of the von Crailsheim family’s late 14th-century castle, where the bodies of five people had mummified naturally due to the environmental conditions. The Baron was still wearing his leather boots, as depicted in an 1833 lithograph of the mummies in the crypt.

4. The Orlovits Family

The Orlovits Family is part of a group of 18th-century mummies discovered in Vác, Hungary in 1994. Reconstruction on parts of a Dominican church just north of Budapest uncovered two long-forgotten burial crypts dating back to 1674 and sealed in 1838. Michael (born 1765) and Veronica Orlovits (born 1770), and Johannes (born 1800), were among those preserved by the cool, dry air of the crypt and the oil from the pine boards used to build their coffins.

5. Shrunken Head from South America

Typically associated with the Jivaro culture of Ecuador, members of the group have traditionally shrunk the head of enemies captured in battle. Young men learned the traditional process of making a shrunken head from older men in the community. The sloth head in the exhibition was likely used to train a young man in the art of head shrinking.

AVAILABLE SPOKESPERSONS

For Mummies of the World: The Exhibition

To request a quote, visit, or interview, please email marketing@dcidaho.org



ERIN SEYMOUR

Education Director, Discovery Center of Idaho

The Education Director provides leadership in planning, developing, implementing and assessing all educational programs offered by the Center.

"Forget everything you thought you knew about mummies! We are thrilled to host the Mummies of the World: The Exhibition this spring and throughout the summer. Researchers from fields including archaeology, biology, chemistry, engineering and anthropology among many others have carefully worked together to collect and interpret valuable details about the lives (and deaths) of animals and humans. These incredible artifacts have defied decomposition for thousands of years and continue to stand the test of time. Learning about these purposeful and accidental preservation techniques, as well as delving into these mummies' stories, gives us a unique opportunity to explore the past and shape the future!"



KIRSTEN PEDERSON

Marketing & Communications Manager, Discovery Center of Idaho

The Marketing & Communications Manager is responsible for overseeing and coordinating all marketing asset production, social media, public relations and communications platforms.

"Mummies of the World: The Exhibition offers Idahoans an opportunity to see a number of historical artifacts and learn more about each mummies' rich history! Our hope is visitors of all ages will be able to learn something new about preservation techniques and see artifacts not often offered in Idaho to view."

DOWNLOADS



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